

# **CONSTITUTION**

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## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the South Carolina High School League.

## **ARTICLE II – MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of the South Carolina High School League is to provide governance and leadership for interscholastic athletic programs that promote, support, and enrich the educational experience of students.

## **ARTICLE III – PURPOSE STATEMENT**

The purpose of the League is to formulate and maintain policies in accordance with its mission and beliefs that will:

- safeguard the educational values of interscholastic athletic competition;
- advance high ideals of sportsmanship;
- develop and direct a program which will promote, protect and conserve the health and physical welfare of all participants; and
- promote uniformity of standards in all interscholastic athletic competition

## **ARTICLE IV – BELIEF STATEMENT**

We believe the South Carolina High School League, governed by its member schools, is the recognized state authority on interscholastic athletic programs.

We believe participation in interscholastic athletic programs is a privilege.

We believe interscholastic athletic programs should be student centered.

We believe interscholastic athletic programs should:

- enrich each student's educational experience;
- promote student academic achievement;
- promote good citizenship and a healthy lifestyle;
- foster involvement with a diverse population;
- promote fair play, honesty, sportsmanship and equity;
- promote the participation of students in athletics and multiple sports.

We believe properly trained administrators, coaches, officials, and related support staff promote the educational mission of the academic program of our schools.

We believe interscholastic athletic programs promote positive school/community relationships.

## ARTICLE V – MEMBERSHIP

### Section 1 Who May Join

- A. Public high schools, including public charter high schools, but excluding virtual schools, accredited by the South Carolina Department of Education whose principal or superintendent, with the approval of the governing board, agrees to conform to the rules and regulations of the South Carolina High School League shall be eligible for membership. Before being considered as a member of the South Carolina High School League, the public charter high schools must clearly define its attendance area for athletic eligibility, as the attendance area of the traditional public school in which the school is located.
- B. South Carolina private high schools, excluding virtual schools, accredited by an organization recognized by the United States Department of Education or the South Carolina Department of Education whose principal or superintendent, with the approval of the governing board, agrees to conform to the rules and regulations of the South Carolina High School League shall be eligible for membership. Before being considered as a member of the South Carolina High School League, the private school must clearly define its attendance area for athletic eligibility, as the attendance area of the traditional public school in which the school is located
- C. Junior high schools and middle schools accredited by the South Carolina Department of Education and 7th and/or 8th grades housed in the same building with a senior high school shall be eligible for associate membership, provided they fall under the governing board of a member school, and the principal, with the approval of the governing board, agrees to conform to the rules and regulations of the South Carolina High School League.
- D. Any high school not accredited by one of the above-mentioned agencies, and presently a member of the League, may retain membership as long as the school is approved by the Executive Committee of the South Carolina High School League for continuing membership.
- E. All sections of the Constitution not so noted will apply to members and associate members

## Section 2 How to Join

- A. Application for membership shall be made in writing to the coordinator of the region in which the school wishes to compete and to appropriate classification. Before being admitted, the application must be approved by two-thirds majority of the schools in the region and by the Classification Executive Committee. The South Carolina High School League Executive Committee must grant final approval. During periods of reclassification/realignment, application for membership shall be made in writing to the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee for consideration and possible approval. The school must offer and field at least one female and one male League sponsored varsity sports team for the entirety of each sports season (i.e. Fall, Winter, and Spring) of the school year. A team consists of the minimum number equal to a starting line-up. Failure to meet this requirement will result in a fine not to exceed \$5,000 per sport season.
- B. If a school is unable to comply with the above, the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee may accept the school as a Member-At-Large.
- C. A school becomes a member when final approval for membership is approved by the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee and upon payment of its dues according to Section 5 below

## Section 3 Classification and Membership

- A. The membership will be divided into a minimum of three (3) classifications and a maximum of six (6) determined by enrollments in grades 9-11. The reclassification process will use the 45 ADM (Grades 9-11) from each school during the fall semester of odd number realignment years. The realignment will become effective the fall semester of the following even-numbered year, for a period of two (2) years.
- B. The number of classifications will be determined by the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee. In making this decision the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee will consider the number of schools to be in each of the resulting classifications and the number of regions into which these will be further divided. The schools will be divided among classifications, numerically, as evenly as possible, based on school enrollment count.
- C. Representatives of the schools in each class will meet and determine the divisions that are necessary. By vote of the Legislative Assembly, this may be delegated to a single committee representing all classifications or to a separate committee for each classification. The division of schools will be presented as a final document from the group(s) assigned to complete the task.
- D. Any appeals from the classification and/or region placements will be heard by the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee, or its designee. The South Carolina High School League Executive Committee may delegate classification and/or region appeal duties to Classifications Executive Committees selected to represent the member schools of the class, which will determine the appeal as to region assignment. Member schools may appeal decisions made by the Classification Appeals Committee to the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee and Appellate Panel.

- E. Conference and region organization must be perfected and reported to the Commissioner by May 1 of each year. This organization will be determined by the executive committee of the classification.
- F. If a member school is an at-large member, and not assigned to a class or region, then that at-large member may participate against other member schools. The at-large member school may participate for a state championship if it does not require qualifying through the region.

#### **Section 4 Membership Renewal**

- A. A school's membership is renewed upon payment of its dues according to Section 5 below.
- B. If a school fails to pay its dues by December 1, the school will be fined \$50.00.
- C. If the dues and fines are not paid within thirty days, the school will have allowed its membership to lapse and will have to apply for membership under Section 1 above.
- D. The South Carolina High School League year shall be from July 1 to June 30.

#### **Section 5. Dues**

- A. Annual membership dues shall be based on each school's classification according to a schedule based on the school class. The schedule shall be set by the Legislative Assembly at the annual meeting by majority vote. The schedule shall be set forth in the rules of the South Carolina High School League.
- B. All annual dues will be payable on July 1.
  - 1. Membership will terminate if not paid by December 1.
  - 2. Schools playing football must pay dues by September 15 to be eligible to play the current season.
- C. Any school becoming a member of the South Carolina High School League will pay an initiation fee equal to a present member's proportionate share of the South Carolina High School League surplus at the end of the preceding year. This fee will be paid in addition to the school's annual dues.
- D. If the South Carolina High School League's cash surplus exceeds the South Carolina High School League's budget for the following year, the excess will be distributed to the schools in the form of credit on their dues for the following year

### **ARTICLE VI – ADMINISTRATION**

#### **Section 1 South Carolina High School League Officers and Executive Committee**

- A. The officers shall be a president, vice-president and the commissioner. All committee members, excepting the commissioner, the State Superintendent of Education or designee, the representative of the South Carolina School Boards Association, the representative of the associate members of the League and the representative of the officials, shall be employed at a member high school during their tenure in office. During their tenure in office, each member below, who must be certified by the State Department of Education in order to hold their employment, must be employed with a member school or as an administrator over member schools.

- B. The governing body shall be the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee composed of the president, the vice president and the following:
1. Administrators (superintendents, assistant superintendents, secondary principals or assistant principals) representing each class and elected by their class delegates of the Legislative Assembly.
  2. The State Superintendent of Education or a designee, which designee shall be an employee of the State Department of Education.
  3. A representative of the South Carolina Association of School Superintendents, elected by the said Association, which person is actively serving as a superintendent
  4. A representative of the South Carolina Association of Secondary School Principals, elected by said Association, which person is actively serving as a high school principal.
  5. A representative of the South Carolina School Boards Association, elected by said Association, which person is actively serving as a board member.
  6. A representative of the South Carolina Athletic Coaches Association, elected by said association and actively coaching at the high school level in a member school.
  7. A representative of the associate members of the South Carolina High School League, elected by these members
  8. A representative of the certified game officials of the South Carolina High School League, elected by the game officials which, person is actively serving as a game official.
  9. A representative of the South Carolina Athletic Administrators Association, elected by the said Association and currently serving as an athletic director at the high school level.
  10. Up to five members at large, representing superintendents, assistant superintendents, and principals may be appointed by the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee to insure gender, geographical, ethnic, private schools and charter schools representation. Up to three of the at-large members will be selected by the S.C. Association of School Administrators to insure gender, geographical and ethnic representation. Geographical areas for representation are as defined in the Bylaws.
- C. The vice-president shall be elected at the annual meeting of the Legislative Assembly. The election of the vice-president of the League shall be rotated among the classifications within the South Carolina High School League. The presidency and vice-presidency will be two-year terms respectively.
- D. It shall be the duty of the president to preside at the Legislative Assembly and all meetings of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee.

## **Section 2 Qualifications and Terms for Executive Committee**

- A. Superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, assistant principals, and other school administrators of member schools shall be eligible to hold office in the South Carolina High School League. The president and vice-president must be superintendents, assistant superintendents, principals, assistant principals or other school administrators at the time of their election to office in the South Carolina High School League.
- B. With the exception of the State Superintendent of Education, the officers and the members at large, the term of office for each executive committee member shall be four years. The terms of office for the members at large shall be two years. Elections shall be staggered so one class representative and at least one association representative will be elected each year. Should a member of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee cease to hold the position which initially qualified him/her as a member of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee, then the individual's position shall be declared vacant and another person selected to fill the balance of the term. The replacement shall be selected by the same group or Association from which the vacating member was elected.
- C. A South Carolina High School League executive committee member, other than the State Superintendent of Education and the members at-large, shall not serve successive terms in any capacity, except when a member holds office in a nationally recognized athletic organization. After a person has been off the committee for four years, they will be eligible to return. This restriction does not apply to the vice-president or to a person who is appointed to fill an unexpired term.
- D. A person selected to fill the remainder of another person's term under section B above shall be eligible to succeed himself/herself.

## **Section 3 Vacancies on Executive Committee**

- A. Should a vacancy occur in the office of the president in the interim between Legislative Assembly meetings, the vice-president shall succeed him/her.
- B. If a South Carolina High School League Executive Committee representative changes his/her status so that he/she is no longer a member of the group which he/she was elected to represent, he/she must relinquish his/her place on the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee and a new representative will be selected in accordance with the provisions of this Constitution.

## **Section 4 Meetings**

- A. The South Carolina High School League Executive Committee will have four scheduled meetings each year. These will be held on or around August 15, November 25, January 15 and February 25.
- B. Other meetings of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee shall be called at the discretion of the president or at the request of any five members of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee.

## **Section 5 Powers and Duties of the Executive Committee**

- A. The South Carolina High School League Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the South Carolina High School League, deciding all questions and performing all duties not delegated in the constitution. The South Carolina High School League Executive Committee will have the authority to interpret sections of the constitution using notes and examples where appropriate. No note or interpretation shall be a part of the constitution for more than two years. The Legislative Assembly shall determine whether or not the note or interpretation shall be a permanent portion of the constitution.
- B. The South Carolina High School League Executive Committee shall hear appeals from classification executive committee decisions and protests between schools in different classifications.
- C. The South Carolina High School League Executive Committee shall hear appeals of decisions made by the commissioner.
  - 1. Appeals may be heard at any properly convened meeting of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee. Appeals to be heard at regularly scheduled meetings must be filed in writing at least seven days prior to the meeting.
  - 2. Any school granted a special meeting of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee to hear an appeal to a ruling shall pay the expenses of the meeting if the ruling of the commissioner is sustained.  
When an appeal is scheduled, the superintendent and principal of all schools involved in the matters leading to the hearing shall be notified in advance of the hearing.
- D. The South Carolina High School League Executive Committee shall adopt and promulgate the Rules and Regulations of the League consistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the League. Such shall be published to the membership on a regular basis and may be amended by the Legislative Assembly by majority vote at the annual meeting provided that the member proposing same shall give notice of his/her proposal with the call to the meeting.

## **Section 6 Powers and Duties of the Commissioner**

- A. The commissioner shall be employed by the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee who shall determine the term of employment, duties, salary and expenses.
- B. The commissioner will have charge of all funds of the South Carolina High School League and his/her designee will make a detailed report at the Legislative Assembly of all monies collected and paid out by the South Carolina High School League. He/she shall pay out all monies under instructions from the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee, and shall furnish bond in the sum of \$100,000.00. The South Carolina High School League will pay this premium.
- C. The commissioner shall have control of all protests, contests, and appeals, subject to review of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee which can, for cause, overrule his/her decisions.
- D. The commissioner may set aside the provisions of the governance documents concerning eligibility if he/she determines that special conditions exist.

## **ARTICLE VII - LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

### **Section 1 Delegates**

- A. The legislative power of the South Carolina High School League shall be vested in a Legislative Assembly, composed of delegates representing the membership.
- B. Each classification will have one delegate representative from each region. At least one-third of the delegates in each classification must be superintendents or superintendent's designee to include assistant superintendent or district athletics director.
- C. Each classification will be permitted one vote for each 1,000 (or major part of 1,000) students represented by the class.
- D. Associate members will elect two delegates, each of whom will have one vote.
- E. At the time of his/her, election, a delegate to the Legislative Assembly must be a superintendent, a principal, or a school administrator officially designated as such by the governing board if the administrator is neither principal nor superintendent, he/she must have at least six years' experience certified by the State Department of Education.
- F. By November 15 delegates and alternates to the Legislative Assembly for the ensuing year shall have been elected by all classifications and submitted to the commissioner. Failure to submit the delegate(s) by this date may cause the loss of the delegate(s) for that year.

### **Section 2 Annual Meeting**

- A. The annual meeting of the Legislative Assembly shall be held on or before the second Wednesday in April.
- B. The purpose of this meeting shall be to consider legislative proposals and resolutions submitted by members of the South Carolina High School League and to consider the adoption of notes and interpretations of the Executive Committee.
  - 1. Proposed amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws must be submitted to the commissioner by the principal or superintendent of a member school prior to January 1. The Commissioner may also submit proposed amendments to the Constitution and/or Bylaws for consideration and/or legislative action.
  - 2. The commissioner shall submit the proposed amendments to the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee prior to January 15.
  - 3. The South Carolina High School League Executive Committee will publish the proposed amendments, including recommendations for permanent placement of notes and interpretations, in the January Bulletin of the South Carolina High School League with its recommendations on each proposal.
- C. The president and the commissioner, or a designee, shall be speaker and secretary respectively of the Legislative Assembly. The secretary shall record the minutes of all Legislative Assembly meetings and provide copies to each member school.
- D. The Legislative Assembly, by majority vote, may edit any amendment or resolution submitted for legislative action.



1. A two-thirds majority shall be required for adoption of a proposed amendment to the Constitution and/or Bylaws and a majority shall be required for the adoption of a resolution.
  2. The president, in case of a tie vote, shall cast the deciding ballot.
- E. A delegate must be present at the Legislative Assembly in order to vote.
- F. Any delegate speaking must first give his/her name and the school area represented.
- G. The South Carolina High School League, as determined by the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee, will pay expenses of the delegates.
- H. Any superintendent or principal who has submitted a proposed amendment may speak to the amendment if he/she, has made a request to speak in writing at least one week prior to the annual meeting of the Legislative Assembly. Said speaker is limited to five minutes.
- I. The most current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised will govern the procedures of the Legislative Assembly, and the Executive Committee will employ a professionally certified parliamentarian.
- J. The South Carolina High School League Executive Committee will have the responsibility of clarifying amendments by using interpretations and notes. The interpretations and notes of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee shall be effective for only twenty-four months unless adopted by the Legislative Assembly as a portion of the Constitution or Bylaws.
- K. The Legislative Assembly recognizes and appreciates that any change in state or federal law which affects the activities of this organization shall supersede the governing documents of this organization which are its Constitution, Bylaws, Rules and Regulations.

## **ARTICLE VIII – APPELLATE PANEL**

### **Section 1 Powers and Duties**

The Appellate Panel shall be the final authority in all appeals involving member schools. Member schools must have the ability to appeal a ruling of the subdivisions, conferences, or regions of the South Carolina High School League. The Appellate Panel must provide the final ruling in any appeal brought against a decision on appeal from the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee. Decisions of the Appellate Panel shall be the final administrative appeal. Any school or person granted a meeting of the Appellate Panel to hear an appeal shall pay the expenses of the meeting if the ruling of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee is sustained. Individual(s) not representing a school must post a \$200 deposit prior to their appeal.

## **Section 2 Membership**

The Appellate Panel shall consist of seven members who shall serve four-year terms. Members are appointed in the following manner: One person appointed by the legislative delegations of each congressional district. Members of the Appellate Panel may not concurrently serve as officers of any the South Carolina High School League subdivisions, conferences or regions and may not have served as a member of the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee within the last three years.

## **Section 3 Evidence**

In order to support a position before the Appellate Panel using newly discovered evidence, the party seeking to use newly discovered evidence must establish that the newly discovered evidence:

1. will probably change the result if considered by the Appellate Panel,
2. has been discovered since the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee hearing,
3. could not have been discovered with due diligence before the South Carolina High School League Executive Committee hearing,
4. is material to the issue, and
5. is not merely cumulative or impeaching.