

THE OHIO HIGH SCHOOL SPEECH LEAGUE CONSTITUTION

Article I – NAME

This organization shall be known as The Ohio High School Speech League

ARTICLE II - SPONSORSHIP

The Ohio High School Speech League is sponsored and supported by participating Ohio high schools.

ARTICLE III – PURPOSES

Section 1. The purposes of this organization shall include, as far as personnel, facilities, and finances permit, these major objectives:

- A. To provide guidance and aid to Ohio high school directors of debate, speech, and drama, henceforth referred to as forensics, in the development of their curricular, co-curricular and extra-curricular work in those areas.
- B. To provide opportunities for the effective speech training of high school students as outlined in Section 3 below.
- C. To encourage practice tournaments throughout the state.
- D. To supervise the conducting of District and State Tournaments in competitive communicative arts.
- E. To recognize excellence of performance at these tournaments.

Section 2. Since its activities in promoting interscholastic forensics competition are educationally sound, worthy, and timely, and contribute directly to the educational, civic, social, and ethical development of the students involved, this organization endorses the guiding principles and criteria established by the Activities Committee of the Ohio Association of Secondary School Administrators.

Section 3. The objectives of the forensics training opportunities provided by this organization include:

- A. Educational development - to develop the skills of analysis, research, critical thinking, and informative and persuasive communication, understanding and appreciation of literature, oral interpretation of literary, dramatic, and oratorical selections.
- B. Civic development - to develop understanding of public issues on local, national, and world levels, to prepare for the responsible exercise of citizenship rights and duties, especially to prepare for articulate and informed civic leadership.

C. Social development - to develop better understanding and tolerance among students of different schools and communities, to stimulate interest in the solving of social problems, to develop well-balanced personalities in competitive situations.

D. Ethical development - to develop personal qualities of truthfulness, fairness, and tolerance in bearing the ethical responsibility of public speakers to be honest and to learn to win or lose graciously.

Section 4. The OHSSL is organized exclusively for educational purposes.

ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Any Ohio school enrolling students in grades 9, 10, 11, or 12 may become a member upon registration with the Executive Director and the payment of the annual membership fees, as herein provided in Part 1; Article 1; Section 1 of the By-Laws.

Section 2. Contestant Eligibility

A. All contestants in Pre-District Qualifying, District, or State Tournaments must be students less than twenty years of age, enrolled at the member school entering that event. A student is ineligible after eight semesters of attendance beyond the eighth grade. A student earning credit or receiving grades in any of those eight semesters shall be considered as having attended a full semester, unless exception is granted by the Executive Committee.

B. No student below the ninth grade may compete in Pre-District Qualifying, District or State Tournaments.

C. Once a student has competed in forensics on the college level, she or he shall be ineligible to compete at the high school level at Pre-District Qualifying, District, and State Tournaments.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall determine the number of districts and shall have the authority to group member schools into districts.

ARTICLE V – LEAGUE ASSETS

Section 1. Annual membership fees, the State Tournament fees, and other monies received by the League shall constitute a fund known as The Ohio High School Speech League Fund.

Section 2. The Financial Secretary shall provide to the members of the Executive Committee the reports of the financial situation of the League at regularly scheduled meetings. The Executive Director and Financial Secretary shall submit an annual written report of receipts and expenditures at the close of each school year to the Executive Committee and to the members of the League. Representatives of each member school shall have the right to examine financial records, which shall be kept in the office of the Executive Director.

Section 3. The Executive Director shall be empowered to contract for the ordinary expenditures of the League.

Section 4. Extraordinary expenditures for The Ohio High School Speech League must be authorized by the Executive Committee.

Section 5. The expenses of the Executive Director and anyone else providing services to the League shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

Section 6. Under the dissolution of the OHSSL, assets shall be distributed for one or more exempt purposes within the meaning of Section 501 ©) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code or corresponding section of any future federal tax code or shall be distributed to the federal government or to a state or local government for a public purpose. Any assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by the Court of Common Pleas of the County in which the principal office of the Organization is located.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

Section 1. All matters of basic League policy shall be determined by the Executive Committee, which shall consist of twelve members elected by one voting representative of each member school. This voting representative shall be an active coach or forensics director, as designated on the registration. Only a debate, speech, drama coach, or forensics director so designated shall be eligible for nomination to the Executive Committee. To be considered for nomination, each candidate must be self-nominated and nominated by two voting representatives.

A. If more than one ballot from a member school is received, the vote from that school shall be invalidated.

B. Each elected member of the Executive Committee shall serve a term of three years, with one-third of the members being elected each year in April. Those nominees placing fifth and sixth shall be designated as first and second alternates. The terms of office of the elected members and the alternates shall commence with new business at the next regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting. In the event of a tie for the fourth position, a special runoff election shall be conducted by the Executive Director.

C. If any Committee Member is unable to fulfill his/her office for any reason that Committee Member's position shall be filled by the alternate who had received the next highest number of votes in the previous election. The alternate will complete that member's term of service. If there is a tie for the alternate position in the previous election, a special runoff shall be conducted by the Executive Director.

Section 2. In the event that a District does not have a representative on the Executive Committee, the Executive Committee shall appoint an active coach from that district to serve a one-year term on the Executive Committee.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall elect a Chair, Secretary, and Financial

Secretary for a term of one year or until their successors are elected. This election shall take place beginning with new business at the next regularly scheduled Executive Committee meeting after the Executive Committee election results are known. No Executive Committee member may serve more than three consecutive terms in any one of the aforementioned offices.

Section 4. The Executive Committee is accountable directly to League schools, and any Executive Committee member may be removed by a majority vote of member schools.

Section 5. The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Executive Committee to serve for a period of one year. The Executive Director will administer the work of the League and attend the meetings of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE VII - MEETINGS

Section 1. The Executive Committee shall meet annually at the end of the school year on a date previously selected. At this time, a calendar of regularly scheduled meetings shall be set and published in the newsletter.

Section 2. Other meetings may be called by the Chair of the Executive Committee, or the Executive Director, or at the request of four or more members of the Executive Committee.

Section 3. It is the responsibility of each Executive Committee member to attend each meeting unless excused. Notification of absence should be sent to either the Executive Director or the Chair. Upon the third absence of an Executive Committee member within one school year, the Executive director shall notify the member in question that the alternate from the previous balloting will be asked to fill that seat unless the member in question petitions the Executive Committee for reinstatement within one week of notification.

Section 4. Executive Committee members shall be reimbursed for legitimate expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

Section 5. In all matters not specified in the Constitution and/or Bylaws, the procedural authority shall be Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised.

Section 6. Seven members of the Executive Committee shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE VIII - APPEALS TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Appeals resulting from District and State Tournaments may be brought to the Executive Committee (see Tournament manuals). All other appeals must be made in writing to the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE IX - ROYALTY DISCLAIMER

The OHSSL assumes no responsibility for the payment of royalties or other fees

connected with the performance of any material in any contest at its District of State Tournaments.

ARTICLE X - ELECTRONIC DEVICES

Section 1. Debaters may use computers to take notes and to access previously stored material during a round. However, no electronic equipment can be used to access an outside person or source during a round. The illegal use of electronic retrieval devices will result in disqualification.

Section 2. Debate judges may use a computer to take notes during a round.

Section 3. No electronic devices are permitted in any Individual Event.

Section 4. If a competitor's cell phone goes off and/or a competitor uses an electronic device such as an iPod, cell phone, or any other electronic device, other than for timing purposes, during a round, the competitor will receive a loss or a rank of last for that round.

Section 5. If a judge's or observer's cell phone goes off and/or a judge or observer uses an electronic device such as an iPod, cell phone, or other electronic, other than for timing purposes, device during a round, the school of that judge or observer will be fined twenty-five dollars (\$25.00) for each infraction in that round.

ARTICLE XI - AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Executive Committee at any meeting. An Amendment proposed by any voting representative of a League school must be submitted in writing to the Executive Director at least a month before it is considered by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE XII - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE POWERS

The Executive Committee shall adjudicate all matters not specifically covered by the Constitution, By-Laws or Tournament Manuals.