

Constitution of Sample Middle School

Preamble

We, the students of Sample Middle School, in order to form a more perfect learning environment, believe that:

1. All students and staff, regardless of gender, religion, color or creed should have the opportunity to be involved in the school's Student Government.
2. All participants in the Student Government should be responsible members of the Sample Middle School Community.
3. The Student Government should be based on democratic principles.
4. All staff and students should work to create a safe and orderly learning environment.
5. All students shall have certain rights and freedoms as guaranteed to them as students of the school.

Article 1 Name of the Organization

The Sample Middle School Student Government Association shall hereafter be referred to as the SGA.

Article 2 Affiliations

The SGA shall maintain affiliations with the Parent Teacher Student Association of Sample Middle School, hereafter referred to as the "PTSA," the (name of region here), hereafter referred to as (regional acronym) and the Maryland Association of Student Councils, hereafter referred to as "MASC," and the National Student Council, hereafter referred to as "NatStuCo."

Article 3 Composition of the Student Government

Section 1: The Representative Assembly is comprised of one representative from each homeroom, advisory, or social studies class. (For gender equity, schools may want one male and one female in lieu of an alternate.)

Section 2: The Executive Board is comprised of elected and appointed officers/directors/deputy directors.

Section 3: The General Assembly is comprised of all class representatives and the Executive Board.

Article 4 Powers of the Student Government Association

Section 1: The power of the Student Government is provided by the administration. Within this authority, the SGA general assembly and executive board shall have the power to pass legislation in matters concerning the best interests of the student body. All actions of the Student Government are subject to the approval by the principal.

Section 2: The administration, with student input, will appoint a faculty advisor to the SGA. The advisor's role is to direct and guide the actions of the SGA. He/she does not have voting rights. The student government advisor has the responsibility to:

- a) Provide guidance in all SGA sponsored activities
- b) Chaperone all SGA activities (and secure additional chaperones as needed)
- c) Excuse the absences of students who miss class because of student government activities

Section 3: General Assembly

The General Assembly shall have all legislative powers. All expenditures of the SGA over and above ten percent (10%) of the treasury must be authorized by the general assembly. All general assembly expenditures of the SGA over and above twenty percent (20%) of the treasury must be authorized by the principal.

Section 4: The Executive Board

The Executive Board shall have all legislative powers save those superseded by the Constitution. The Executive Board has the responsibility to involve the general assembly in as many actions of the SGA as possible because it is the representatives, therefore the general assembly, which expresses the voice of the total student body.

Article 5 Qualifications and Terms of Office

Section 1: General Qualifications

- a) All officers and representatives must maintain a 2.0 grade point average or better (see specific policy/regulation for your school system). In addition, any student serving on a SGA committee must maintain the same grade point average as specified above.
- b) All officers and representatives shall exhibit exemplary behavior and academic ethics. If reservations about behavior or academic ethics are brought forth by faculty and staff, the school administration shall make the final decision concerning the qualification of the candidate in question.
- c) All officers and representatives are expected to attend all general assemblies of the SGA. Additional meetings are required as specific to the positions listed below.

Section 2: Specific Qualifications

- a) Officers - In addition to general assemblies, the executive board is expected to attend all executive board meetings. Officers will also attend committee meetings as assigned.
 - 1) President – the president shall be in 8th grade for the year of his/her service
 - 2) Vice Presidents - must be in the grade level of the grade they represent for the year of his/her service (6th grade vice president, 7th grade vice president, 8th grade vice president)
 - 3) Treasurer (or Financial Director)–must be in the 7th or 8th grade for the year of his/her service (*Note: optional if this is an elected or appointed position.*)
 - 4) There are no grade-level stipulations on appointed positions.
- b) Representatives - Representative must attend all general assemblies. Should he or she not be able to attend, he or she should notify the alternate and ask him or her to attend. Should both the representative and the alternate not be able to attend, it is the responsibility of the representative to work with the homeroom/advisory/social studies teacher to make sure the students of that class are represented. (*Note: some schools may choose to have one male and one female representative for gender equity and therefore have no need for an alternate.*)
 - 1) Representatives are expected to participate in the planning and implementation of at least one SGA activity.
 - 2) Representatives must report all actions of the SGA to his/her constituents and be responsible for reporting to the SGA the concerns of his/her constituents.

Section 3: Term of Office

- a) All spring elected/appointed SGA officers and directors/deputies shall serve a one year term beginning the last day of school in June, until the last day of school in June the following year. (All elected/appointed SGA officers/directors/deputies shall serve a one year term beginning immediately upon the announcement of the election/appointment results, until the last day of school in June the following year)
- b) Officers/directors/deputies elected or appointed in the fall (including 6th grade vice president) begin their term of office after election results/appointments are made, until the last day of school in June of that school year. (*This clause would not be required if all elections/appointments are done in the fall.*)
- c) Representatives shall serve a one-year term beginning immediately after their election in the fall, until the last day of school in June. (*Note: some schools may choose to have semester terms thus giving more students an opportunity to serve.*)

Article 6 Responsibilities and Duties

President:

- a) Shall execute and carry out the Constitution of Sample Middle School.
- b) Shall preside at all meetings of the General Assembly and the Executive Board.
- c) Shall represent the student body of Sample Middle School, when called upon to do so by the principal, SGA advisor, or other administration.
- d) Shall appoint, with approval from the Executive Board and Advisor, all chairpersons.
- e) Shall appoint, with the approval of the Executive Board and Advisor, ad hoc committees as necessary.
- f) Shall have the authority, with approval from the executive board and Advisor, to call additional meetings of the SGA.
- g) Shall promote interest and participation within the Student Government.
- h) Shall, if possible, be a delegate to the (list your regional acronym here) and MASC.

8th Grade Vice President:

- a) In case of president's absence or inability to carry out his responsibilities, the vice-president will take charge and assume the responsibilities of the president.
- b) Shall assist the president as directed.
- c) Shall meet as least once a month with grade level resource/team leaders to discuss concerns and issues relevant to the specific grade level.
- d) Shall, if possible, be a delegate to the (list your regional acronym here) and MASC.

7th Grade Vice President:

- a) Shall assist the president as directed.
- b) Shall meet as least once a month with grade level resource/team leaders to discuss concerns and issues relevant to the specific grade level.
- c) Shall, if possible, be a delegate to the (list your regional acronym here) and MASC.

6th Grade Vice President:

- a) Shall assist the president as directed.
- b) Shall meet as least once a month with grade level resource/team leaders to discuss concerns and issues relevant to the specific grade level.
- c) Shall, if possible, be a delegate to the (list your regional acronym here) and MASC.

Treasurer (or Financial Director): *(Note: recommended this as an appointed position called Financial Director and not elected as a treasurer.)*

- a) Shall be responsible for the record keeping concerning all student government expenditures and income.
- b) Shall, at Representative Assembly Meetings, submit a report on the financial status of the SGA.
- c) Shall be responsible for preparing a budget for the Student Government Association's General Assembly.
- d) Shall, if possible, be a delegate to the (list your regional acronym here) and MASC.

Recording Secretary: *(Note: recommended this as an appointed position)*

- a) Shall be responsible for recording all minutes of the SGA's meetings.
- b) Shall be responsible for copying and distributing all records of the SGA to the Representative Assembly.
- c) Shall maintain all SGA Records.
- d) Shall be responsible for all secretarial and clerical duties of the SGA.

Corresponding Secretary: *(Note: recommended this as an appointed position)*

- a) Shall be responsible for all approved correspondence including appropriate memos, thank you notes, etc.
- b) Shall work with the Public Relations and Publicity chairman to write the SGA articles for appropriate newsletters

Directors/Deputy Directors:

- a) Shall be responsible for the agenda, proceedings, and work of the assigned committee.
- b) Shall prepare, with the help of his/her committee, a project plan for the assigned activity.
- c) Shall prepare a report on committee activities to the general assembly.

Representatives:

- a) Will share SGA news with their constituents.
- b) Shall bring issues to the general assembly that are of concern to his/her constituents.
- c) Will notify the alternative* and SGA advisor if he/she is unable to attend a required meeting *(Note: recommended a male and female representative for gender equity so no need for an alternate.)*
- d) Will actively serve in the planning and implementation of at least one SGA activity.

Article 7 Elections and Appointments

Section 1: Election/appointments of the Executive Board shall take place in April/May the spring before the year of service. *(Note if fall elections: Election/appointments of the Executive Board shall take place in September/October, the year of service. Having spring elections/appointments allow for "role-alike" time to shadow the current position and be "trained.")*

Section 2: Specific election guidelines will be reviewed two months before elections and submitted to administration for approval. Candidates shall receive a copy of all election guidelines.

Section 3: Spring Elections: The students in 6th and 7th grade will vote for their choice of candidates for the office of President (*and if electing, Treasurer*). (Fall elections) The students in 7th and 8th grade will vote for their choice of candidates for the office of President (*and if electing, Treasurer*).

Section 4: Grade Level Vice Presidents – only those students in the appropriate grade-level will vote for the vice president of their grade level.

Section 5: The candidate receiving the majority votes cast, will win the election. Election vote counts will not be announced.

Section 6: The president, with approval of the SGA advisor and administration, shall appoint the Recording and Corresponding Secretary, as well as the committee chairpersons, (from applications). Appointments will take place as soon as possible after elections.

Article 8 Meetings

Section 1: All meetings, as deemed appropriate, shall be conducted using *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

Section 2: The executive board shall meet a minimum of twice a month.

Section 3: The general assembly shall meet a minimum of once a month.

Section 4: Committees shall meet as needed.

Section 5: Some meetings may be conducted virtually.

Article 9 Impeachment and Succession

Section 1: Impeachment

- a) All officers (elected/appointed) and representatives shall be subject to impeachment for behavior deemed inappropriate by the administration.
- b) Suspension or expulsion from school requires automatic impeachment from any SGA position.
- c) A report card with lower than a 2.0 grade point average (*check your regional policies/regulations*) requires automatic impeachment from any SGA position.
- d) Missing 3 or more meetings, unexcused, shall be subject to impeachment proceedings.
- e) Any officers or representative who fails to carry out his/her duty in a responsible manner may have impeachment charges brought against him/her.
- f) Impeachment proceedings are defined in the bylaws.

Section 2: Succession

- a) In case of the president's permanent inability to serve, the SGA 8th Grade Vice President will assume all responsibilities of the office of president. The 8th grade Vice President will be replaced following clause (b) below.
- b) In case of all other elected/appointed officer's inability to serve, the president shall appoint from general applications or previous candidates, with approval from the executive board and Advisor, a person to complete the term. The principal must confirm the appointment.
- c) When Representative vacancies occur, they will be filled by special election or appointment in the homeroom/advisory/social studies class where the vacancies exist.

Article X Amendments

This constitution may be amended by two-thirds (2/3) of the legislative body pending principal approval.

**Article XI
Ratification**

This Constitution shall be in effect when it is approved by the administration then receives two-thirds (2/3) vote of the student body (*or representative general assembly*).

Date Constitution ratified and amended

Bylaws to the Constitution

**Article I
Standing Committees**

Section 1: All standing committees shall be composed of any student that wishes to serve on them. Students must have met all eligibility requirements for extra-curricular activities.

The appointed staff and directors of standing committee positions listed below shall have a deputy position if applicable. When possible, the deputy position shall be filled by an underclassman to ensure training of future student leaders and allowing a “history” of the SGA to remain at the school each year without having to retrain student leaders each year.

Section 2: The standing committees shall be as follows:

- a) Chief of Staff – Is responsible to work closely with the officers and advisor in following up on staff goals, project due dates and deadlines, and notifying staff at least 48 hours before any meeting or event.
- b) Leadership or Legislative Affairs – Is responsible to advocate for student rights and responsibilities and advocate for appropriate organizations and offices on issues of concern to the SGA. (*If applicable, help with the election of the Student Member of the Board of Education.*)
- c) Public Relations and Publicity Director/Deputy – Is responsible for the maintenance of the SGA bulletin board, all advertisements for SGA events, working with the corresponding secretary for all newspaper articles, and other school publicity as submitted and approved by the SGA advisor. (*Note: may wish to split this into two committees and add social media*)
- d) Service Director/Deputy – Is responsible for the planning and implementation of any SGA service projects.
- e) Social Director/Deputy – Is responsible for the planning and implementation of any SGA social projects.
- f) Spirit Director/Deputy- Is responsible for the planning and implementation of any SGA spirit projects.
- g) Historian and Deputy – Is responsible for a pictorial record of the events of the SGA. Also responsible to compile a scrapbook (paper or electronic) to show at the end of the year and/or for sharing at the state level.
- h) Facilities Director/Deputy– Is responsible for the set up and clean up of all SGA meetings and events (works with other committees for their events – includes ensuring there is recycling and facilities are left the way they were found.)
- i) Evaluations Director/Deputy– Is responsible for peer evaluations of elected officers, classroom representatives and SGA meetings, and SGA events

Section 3: All committee Directors and Deputies shall:

- a) Attend all Executive Board and General Assembly Meetings
- b) Actively participate in SGA activities
- c) Maintain regular communication with officers, other staff members, and the advisor
- d) Give monthly progress reports on committee activities
- e) Submit a year end report relating to the actions of the committee during that year

**Article II
Ad Hoc Committees**

Section 1: May be formed as deemed necessary by the executive board.

Section 2: Must have specific objectives for a one-time event/program. A project-plan should be completed as required with all SGA events.

Section 3: The president, with the consent of the executive board and approval of the SGA advisor, will appoint a chairman for the committee.

Section 4: The committee will be disbanded at the conclusion of its function.

Article III Impeachment

Section 1: From Article 9, Section 1 in the Constitution, these are the proceedings to be implemented when charges are brought before an elected/appoint SGA officer/chairman/representative.

- a) Charges should be submitted in writing to the SGA advisor
- b) The SGA advisor will inform the Executive Board and a committee of the SGA president, faculty, and administration shall be convened to discuss the charges. If the charge is against the president, the 8th grade vice president shall serve.
- c) If the committee finds the charges to be credible, the SGA member charge with the impeachment shall present his or her defense to the committee.
- d) The committee shall vote by secret ballot to determine the outcome. The principal must confirm the outcome. If the principal overturns the result, he/she must submit in writing, within five school days, to the committee his/her reasons for reversing the decision. (Note: In many regions, the decision of the principal may be appealed following grievance procedures described in policy or regulation).

Article IV Adoption and Amendments

Section 1: This document shall take effect upon its approval by the administration and two-thirds vote of the Executive Board.

Section 2: These bylaws may be amended upon approval by the administration and 3/4 vote of the executive board.

Article V Jurisdiction

Section 1: This document shall be appended to the Constitution for the duration of its authorization, but shall be superseded by the Constitution in any conflicts.

Date Bylaws passes and amended

Note: The possibility of directors/deputies is unlimited....by listing in the Bylaws, only the executive board & principal needs to approve/amend.

Consider the following:

- *Corresponding secretary (assuming the elected secretary does the minutes and keeps attendance)...corresponding secretary writes thank-you notes, etc. (I had my thank you notes pre-written to parents/teachers for chaperoning dances and helping out at SGA events. We laid them out in the hospitality room for chaperones to take a break and pick them up.)*
- *Recording secretary - keeps minutes and attendance (you will often get better students if this position is appointed and not elected)*
- *Communications director/deputy - write news articles for the PTA newsletter and the school sharing reports for regional/state student council....also writes press releases for local papers to advertise or report on SGA events*
- *Regional or State liaison - publicizes the regional or state/national events - helps to distribute/collect permission forms - arranges for representatives from the school to attend, etc.*
- *Publicity director/deputy - coordinates the publicity committee...lines up people to make posters, flyers, PA announcements, etc. for all SGA events (works with all committee chairmen)*
- *Public relations director/deputy - works with a committee to do all of the appreciation days...secretary's day, teacher appreciation, etc. (also could include an IT position to create movies for SGA or work with the SGA web site)*
- *Facilities director/deputy - make sure that a room is set up for a meeting, taking care of a PA, recycling bins, etc. They would be sure that the room is put back in order at the end of a meeting or event.*
- *Evaluations director/deputy - evaluate through survey, interview, etc., after an SGA event, observe representatives reporting back to the class to be sure they are doing their job, etc.*
- *Financial director/deputy (usually better than an elected treasurer)- works with students/parents in selling tickets and reporting the treasury balance – has a committee for fundraising*

- *Citizenship director/deputy – run local elections (making sure election rules, etc. are approved by required deadlines, works with other committees to advertise, etc.) –handles citizenship activities - character education posters, announcements, etc. - answers questions about student rights and responsibilities*

See some specific duties as listed in the high school sample constitution.