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Legislation Title: 2026 Maryland Association of Student Councils' Officer Election Rules
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2026 Maryland Association of Student Councils' Officer Election Rules

Article 1: Purpose of the 2026 Maryland Association of Student Councils' Officer Election Rules

Section 1: The purpose of this document is to serve as the basis, reference, and standard by which all MASC election officials, candidates, voting delegates, and participants shall abide by and follow in the process of electing the President, First Vice President, Second Vice President, and Treasurer of the Maryland Association of Student Councils.

Section 2: A violation of rules listed in this document is grounds for the investigation and appropriate action by the Elections Committee per Article IV, Section 4 of the Operating Principles, using the MASC Elections Committee Guidelines for reference.

Article 2: Candidate Process and Voting

Section 1: Candidate forms must be filed with the Executive Director(s) via Google Form by 5:00 p.m., Monday, February 9, 2026. In the case that there are no candidates filed for a specific office, the office will re-open for one week and candidate forms will be due by 5:00 p.m., Monday, February 16, 2026.

Section 2: Only the names of those candidates who have a completed form shall appear on the ballot.

Section 3: The method of voting in all elections shall be by secret ballot electronically at the beginning of the closing General Session.

Section 4: Only voting delegates from MASC member schools or voting members of the MASC Executive Board may vote.

Section 5: If there are two or fewer candidates for an office, the candidate receiving a simple majority of the votes shall win. Preferential balloting shall be used in all elections involving three or more candidates.

Section 6: Elections will conclude no later than one-half hour after the designated voting times listed in the Convention program.

Section 7: Write-in candidates will not be considered.

Section 8: All candidates and a parent/guardian must attend the early candidate meeting before the Convention. Failure to attend may result in disqualification. The meeting will be held virtually from 7:30–8:15 p.m. on Tuesday, February 10, 2026. An absence will be excused only if a parent/guardian notifies MASC of an extenuating circumstance preventing attendance. In such cases, the candidate and a parent/guardian must schedule a conference call with the Executive Director or MASC President to review the required information.

Article 3: Candidate Campaigning and Electioneering

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Section 1: The definition of Campaigning and Electioneering in MASC is as follows:

The public statement of one's candidacy to voting or non-voting delegates; the act of persuading voters to bolster one's candidacy; the act of distributing materials directly related to a candidate by that candidate and/or the candidate's campaign staff; any action that is directly related to assisting a person's candidacy by a candidate or campaign staff. Buying and preparing materials does not constitute Campaigning and Electioneering. *(See the exception to this rule in Article 4 of this document.)*

- A. Campaign materials are considered any wearable items, documents (flyers/posters), digital correspondence, media posted on social media accounts, and any digital transmission that electioneers use to publicize a candidate.

Section 2: MASC defines Campaign Staff as:

No more than eight delegates attending the Convention who distribute campaign materials and make general announcements about a candidate. MASC Officers, the State SMOB, and host staff are not permitted to serve as campaign staff.

Candidates may receive assistance from individuals who are not officially designated as campaign staff for the purpose of creating digital media. This assistance may include, but is not limited to, the development, design, or editing of social media posts, graphics, videos, and other digital campaign materials.

A list of each candidate's campaign staff—including their school, email, and cell phone—must be submitted to the Executive Director by 5:00 p.m. on March 4, 2026, two weeks before the session at which officer candidates will be announced at the MASC Convention. Only registered campaign staff may participate in campaigning or electioneering, aside from the candidates themselves. Candidates are responsible for the actions of their campaign staff, but not for the actions of other delegates.

Section 3: The total cost of each candidate's campaign materials may not exceed one hundred and twenty dollars (\$120). Donated materials and professional services must be included in the total cost at a fair market value.

- A. Each candidate must turn in a campaign expense report by 5:00 p.m., Sunday, March 15, 2026. This report must include copies of relevant receipts as well as the fair-market value of any donated supplies.
- B. The Executive Director or designee shall certify candidates' expense reports and notify candidates if there are any questions.
- C. Campaigning at the Convention cannot begin until the start of recreation on the first night.

Section 5: No campaign literature may be distributed in or during the General Assembly, in any workshop, or at any regional meeting, excluding the allotted campaign times during lunch on Thursday.

Section 6: Each candidate will be assigned a specific table (MASC to provide one small table easel) where their campaign materials will be displayed. Candidates may place any campaign literature, including flyers or other objects, on their tables.

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- A. No campaign literature, including posters, may be posted anywhere other than the candidate's designated table. Nothing may be taped to ANY walls at the Convention Center.

Section 7: Only the candidate and registered campaign staff may wear wearable campaign materials. This excludes buttons, wristbands, and other jewelry. Shirts worn by candidates and/or their campaign staff must be removed or covered during any undesignated campaigning time (general assemblies, workshops, and regional meetings).

Section 8: Once campaigning begins, candidates may campaign at any time except for general assemblies, workshops, and regional meetings as listed in the Convention agenda. This includes candidates/campaign staff not entering the general assembly room at any time or entering any workshop or regional meeting room within one minute of the specified time in the Convention program. Candidates may not campaign walking to or from hotels.

Section 9: Stickers are NOT permitted as campaign materials.

Section 10: Edible substances are NOT permitted as campaign materials.

Section 11: All campaign materials must bear the candidate's original or reproduced signature. This includes all posters, flyers, and any campaign items that are distributed. Before reproducing flyers, the candidate should include their signature in the design. For objects such as buttons, the President and Executive Director must approve exceptions to this rule – send a picture of the item no later than 5:00 p.m., Monday, March 16, 2026

Section 12: Candidates may not engage in negative campaigning. Negative campaigning is defined as any actions on behalf of a candidate that may libel, slander, or defame another candidate.

Article 4: Utilization of Social Media in Campaigning

Section 1: Candidates may use social media or other web-based platforms to campaign for an officer position once notified by the MASC Executive Director after they participate in the mandatory candidate-parent meeting at 7:30-8:15 p.m., Tuesday, February 10, 2026.

- A. Candidates must use a newly formed social media account, created specifically for the purpose of electioneering. The candidate may not use their personal accounts to campaign in any way. Interactions between candidacy accounts and personal accounts are prohibited.
- B. The use of personal or mass emails for campaigning is prohibited.

Section 2: All candidates will notify the Executive Director of any social media accounts & webpages in which personal campaigning may occur.

Section 3: Candidates must still strictly follow all campaign rules when using any form of social media to campaign, specifically Article 3 Section 12 of these election rules.

Article 5: Candidate Speeches and Question-and-Answer Period

Section 1: All candidates shall have the opportunity to deliver a campaign speech before the voting period. Speeches shall not exceed five (5) minutes for presidential candidates and four (4) minutes for

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all other candidates, and may not include unsolicited applause or interruptions. The MASC Secretary, or a designated timekeeper, will monitor timing for both the speeches and the question-and-answer period.

Section 2: The MASC President shall randomly determine the order of the candidates' speeches. The order will be given at the Candidate/Campaign staff meeting scheduled virtually at 7:00 p.m., Monday, March 2, 2026.

Section 3: There will be a question and answer period following the speeches for each of the candidates for Treasurer, Second Vice President, and First Vice President that shall not exceed fifteen (15) minutes. There will be a question and answer period for the presidential candidates that shall not exceed twenty (20) minutes.

- A. All students will have the opportunity to submit a question to ask the nominees. Google Form responses will be randomly selected and reviewed for decency and appropriateness by a panel of two students and one advisor. The name and school of the student must be on the submitted form to be considered..
- B. Questions may be addressed to any or all candidates; however, all candidates shall have the option of responding to any question.
- C. Responses by candidates will be limited to one minute.
- D. The order in which the candidates respond will be rotated.

Section 4: The time period in Section 3 shall not be changed, although the Chair reserves the right to shorten the question and answer period if there are not sufficient questions to fill the allotted time period or if there is only one candidate for the position.

Section 5: Each candidate may use visuals during their campaign speech. Candidates must inform the Executive Director of any visuals to be projected onstage as the equipment will be provided by MASC. Any electronic presentation must be submitted to the President and Executive Director by 5:00 PM, Monday, March 9, 2026.

Article 6: Procedure for Election Violations

Section 1: Violations of the election rules listed herein are to be reported to the Executive Director and the President via the posted Google Form.

Section 2: All violations must be reported in writing by the beginning of the third General Session.

Section 3: Upon receiving a report of a witnessed violation of these election rules, the President will convene the Elections Committee. The President will present the alleged violation(s) to the Committee, which will investigate and, if necessary, meet with both the nominee and the witness associated with the alleged violation(s).

Section 4: A 2/3 vote of the Election Committee shall be required to take an appropriate measure.
(Article 4, Section 4 of the MASC Operating Principles)

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Section 6: The Election Guidelines will guide all actions made by the Elections Committee.

Section 7: The rulings of the Elections Committee are final.