

Pennsylvania High School

Speech League



CONSTITUTION

Revised: June 2023

Contents

Article C1 - Name	3
Article C2 - Purposes	3
Article C3 - Material	3
Article C4 - Membership	4
Article C5 - Officers	4
Article C6 - Definitions	7
Article C7 - Meetings	7
Article C8 - Contests	8
Article C9 - Judging	9
Article C10 – Protests and Appeals	9
Article C11 - Ethical Behavior	9
Article C12 - Amendments	9

Article C1 – Name

This organization shall be known as the Pennsylvania High School Speech League.

Article C2 – Purposes

The Pennsylvania High School Speech League shall operate with the following purposes:

1. To promote various kinds of speech activities in the high schools of Pennsylvania.
2. To stimulate, through educational competition, an understanding and appreciation of all areas of speech.
3. To encourage the participation of many students instead of a few.
4. To assist the high schools of Pennsylvania in curricular and extra-curricular speech programs.
5. To maintain a high quality of speech achievement.
6. To promote the highest standards in accurate and ethical communication.

Section C2.2

The Corporation is organized exclusively for educational purposes as such purposes are defined by 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code (or the corresponding section of any future Internal Revenue Law of the United States). No part of the net earnings of the Corporation shall inure to the benefit of any individual and no member, director, officer or employee of the Corporation shall receive any pecuniary benefits of any kind except reasonable compensation for services in effecting the corporate purposes. No substantial part of the activities of the Corporation shall consist of carrying the propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation; nor shall the Corporation participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distributing of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Section C2.3

Upon the dissolution of the Corporation, the Executive Board shall, after paying or making provision for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Corporation, dispose of all of the assets of the Corporation exclusively for the purposes of the Corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious, or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization or organizations under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Executive Board shall determine. Any such 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 Corporation is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

Article C3 – Material

Because of the educational nature of the Pennsylvania High School Speech League, the material and its presentation used in competition at district and state tournaments should be suitable for audiences of a high school. Judges ought to take this into consideration when deciding a round.

Article C4 – Membership

Section C4.1

Any public, private, parochial, charter or cyber high school of Pennsylvania may become a member of the Pennsylvania High School Speech League upon written application to the Executive Director and the payment of the annual membership dues, as herein provided. The term "high school" shall apply to grades 9, 10, 11, and 12. Homeschooled students may participate per guidelines for participating in their local district activities.

Section C4.2

Every student participating in the activities sponsored by this League shall be a bona fide, undergraduate student of a member Pennsylvania school which the student attends, and maintaining a passing grade in all subjects. A homeschooled student(s) may participate in accordance with the policies of the school district in which they reside. Participation is based on the school from which the student's diploma is issued. Cyber school students must enter competition where the school's main office is physically located.

Section C4.3

Member high schools may participate in any or all of the different activities. The annual membership fee shall be set by the Executive Board at the summer meeting. In addition, a \$25.00 late fee shall be charged after December 1. All fees must be paid prior to participation in any League activity. A current list of District Schools will be mailed during the first week of February to District chairs. Only paid member schools will be eligible to participate in District and State events. If dues and fees are not paid by February 1, those schools will not be allowed to participate in PHSSL District and/or State events for the year.

Article C5 – Officers

Section C5.1

The officers of the Pennsylvania High School Speech League shall be an Executive Director and 14 Executive Board members. One shall be a college or university representative, one shall be an administrator of a school of the Commonwealth, and the other 12 executive members will be elected by the member schools.

Section C5.2

The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Executive Board for a term of five years. At least 90 days prior to the end of the 5-year term, the PHSSL Executive Board will meet to evaluate both 1) the current director serving a subsequent term, and 2) any new prospective candidates for the role of Executive Director. If the current Executive Director elects not to serve a subsequent term, they should provide notice prior to the meeting. This position is At-Will and subject to termination by either party at any time. There is no limit on the number of subsequent or total terms that an Executive Director may serve. The Executive Director will preside at all meetings of the Executive Board and will administer the affairs of the League.

Section C5.3

The members of the Executive Board shall serve for three years and may be re-elected. One-third of the Executive Board will be up for election each year.

Section C5.4

The Executive Director shall conduct an election for expired terms on the Executive Board. Those members of the Executive Board not running for re-election shall serve as the nominating committee and seek nominations from the general membership. In addition, an announcement will be posted on the PHSSL website calling for nominations from January 1 through March 31. Nominations, with an accompanying biography will be submitted digitally through that time. At least twice as many nominations shall be made as positions to be filled. The election will be conducted electronically over a two-week period in April; paper ballots may be requested from the League office and postmarked by an appropriate date. Each school's name must appear on the front of the returned ballot. Each member school shall be given one ballot to cast for the members of the Executive Board. Each ballot must have four votes to be counted. The Board Secretary and the Recording Secretary will audit the results, and the four nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected by the Executive Director.

Section C5.5

The State Secretary shall be an ex-officio, non-voting attendee of all league meetings, appointed by nomination of the Executive Director, subject to ratification by majority vote of the executive board at a regularly scheduled meeting. The State Secretary shall serve continuously unless removed for any reason by majority vote of the executive committee at a regularly scheduled meeting.

DUTIES

1. Coordinate scheduling, notice, and materials for league meetings, tournaments, and festivals.
2. Prepare minutes of executive board meetings.
3. Maintain corporate records of the league.
4. Assist the Executive Director in the performance of day-to-day financial management of the league, including accounts receivable and accounts payable.
5. Liaise with appropriate officials of the host university, as necessary.
6. All other duties as assigned by the Executive Director.

Section C5.6

The Board shall appoint four individuals to fill the roles of Board Treasurer, Board Secretary, Technical Adviser, and Site Director. The Board Treasurer, Board Secretary, and Technical Adviser shall be an elected board member appointed by a majority vote of the executive committee at a regularly scheduled meeting. Each of these may be removed for any reason by a majority vote of the executive committee at a regularly scheduled meeting. The Site Director shall be any individual selected from the community at large with direct contact to the site where the State Tournament is scheduled to be held.

- A. Board Treasurer. This individual will provide ongoing oversight of all aspects of financial management of the league. The Executive Director and Recording Secretary facilitate day-to-day management of the organization's finances, distinct and apart from the oversight role of the Treasurer.

DUTIES

1. While the Executive Director and State Secretary will directly manage accounts and retain signatory authority, the Board Treasurer shall have access to all electronic and paper documents necessary to perform the duties of the office, including read-only access to online banking.
2. Liaise with the Executive Director and State Secretary about financial matters.

3. Ensure that appropriate financial systems and controls are in place.
4. Oversee and present accounts and financial statements to the executive board.

B. Board Secretary. This individual will guarantee that changes made at Executive Board meetings are reflected in all PHSSL documents. The Board Secretary plays a critical role in fostering communication and ensuring proper management and utilization of important league regards. The Board Secretary provides ongoing oversight of all aspects of communications and records management of the league. The Executive Director and Recording Secretary facilitate day-to-day management of the organization's communications and records management, distinct and apart from the oversight role of the Board Secretary.

DUTIES

1. While the Executive Director and State Secretary will directly manage communications and records management, the Board Secretary shall have access to all electronic and paper documents necessary to perform the duties of the office, including the website.
2. Liaise with the Executive Director and State Secretary about communications and records management matters.
3. Ensure that appropriate communication systems and document controls are in place.
4. Oversee and present reports to the Executive Board.

C. Technical Adviser. This individual will have access to all district qualifying tournaments in order to guarantee that district qualifying tournaments are appropriately set up on Tabroom.com. After each district tournament, this individual will audit each of the district tournaments to ensure that the correct individuals are advancing to the State Tournament. In addition, this individual will have access to the State Tournament on Tabroom.com

The Technical Adviser can appoint an assistant who will help maintain the website, work with Tabroom.com, review district tournaments, review the state tournament, and post bids. This assistant may be granted compensation for their work.

D. Site Director This individual will provide ongoing oversight of all aspects of the State Tournament. The Executive Director and Recording Secretary facilitate day-to-day management of the organization's other activities, distinct and apart from the oversight role of the Site Director.

DUTIES

1. The Site Director will reserve the site space and will liaise with the appropriate officials of the host university, as necessary. This will include arranging for security, parking, maintenance, and internet connectivity.
2. Liaise with the Executive Director and the Tournament Director concerning available rooms at the tournament site(s). The list of rooms will be forwarded to the Tournament Director so that rooms can be placed into the tournament software. In addition to competition rooms, space will be provided for the tabulation staff and the judges' lounge and for general meetings such as registration, opening assemblies and awards presentations.
3. Liaise with the Executive Director and the League Secretary concerning tournament meals for competitors, judges, and staff.
4. Arrange for the purchase of awards for the State Tournament.

Section C5.7

The representatives of the college and the school administrators shall be appointed by the Executive Director. These representatives shall serve terms of three years.

Section C5.8

Unexpired terms on the Executive Board shall be filled by appointment by the Executive Director and the Executive Board. When such vacancies occur, the person who received the next highest vote total in the most recent election shall be offered the position.

Section C5.9

All matters of League policy shall be determined by the Executive Board and implemented by the Executive Director.

Article C6 – Definitions

Section C6.1

A quorum of the Board shall be defined as two-thirds of the members of the Board. A simple majority shall be defined as 50% of the voting members plus one.

Article C7 – Meetings

Section C7.1

Two regular meetings of the Executive Board shall be held annually. One shall be in the Summer on the Wednesday after the NSDA tournament and the other in the Spring at the Pennsylvania High School Speech League State Finals.

Section C7.2

Special meetings may be called by the Executive Director or by a majority of the Executive Board.

Section C7.3

The fiscal year for the League shall be from July 1 to June 30. A financial audit shall be made at the close of each fiscal year.

Section C7.4

Legitimate expenses of the League shall include expenses of awards, stationery, postage, telephone, printing, photocopying, educational materials, secretarial services, and any other expenses of the Executive Board and/or the Executive Director which are necessary for League purposes as described in Article C2.

Section C7.5

The Executive Director may utilize communication technology to conduct urgent business of the League between meetings. Discussion of items will be conducted through electronic channels. Each Board member shall submit a vote on each motion to the Executive Director. Digital motions and the resulting electronic votes will be recorded in the minutes of the next regular meeting of the Executive Board and all member schools will be notified via email in a timely manner.

Article C8 – Contests

Section C8.1

Early in the school year each member school shall be assigned to a District to be determined by the Executive Director. At this time the dates for the District and State contests shall be announced.

Section C8.2

Annually each district shall elect a District Chairperson who shall manage the District contests. These Chairpersons will appoint a committee to assist in the management of the tournament. The District Chairperson shall assess each participating school fees to cover necessary tournament expenses.

Section C8.3

No student will qualify for the State Tournament unless that student has earned the required number of bids in an even or has participated in the District Tournament (except News Broadcasting, Student Congress: House, Extemp Debate, Storytelling, and Impromptu Speaking). No refund of fees shall be made upon failure to appear at the tournament.

Section C8.4

No student shall be permitted to participate in more than one event at the District Tournament or the State Tournament. (See Standing Rules for exceptions).

Section C8.5

The State Tournament shall be conducted by the Executive Director, the Site Director, and the Executive Board members.

Section C8.6

Fees for participation in the State Tournament shall be set by the Executive Board.

Section C8.7

At no time will videotaping of an event be permitted. No live media photographs will be permitted during an event. Any photographs needed to be taken can be “staged” after the event.

Article C9 – Judging

Section C9.1

The judges are to be approved by the District Committee prior to that District's Tournament and by the Executive Board prior to the State Tournament. The final round of each event at the State Tournament shall be judged by a panel of five judges.

Section C9.2

An affiliated individual should never be permitted to judge a student or students from their own school. Coaches and judges who have worked with students from other schools have an ethical responsibility to notify the Tournament Committee in advance of the tournament.

Article C10 - Protests and Appeals

Section C10.1

All disputes relating to the interpretation of the Constitution, Bylaws, and the Standing Rules shall be submitted to the Executive Director. The Executive Director will present all such disputes to the Executive Board for final resolution at the next scheduled meeting of the Board. For disputes arising from tournament procedures see District and/or State procedures.

Article C11 - Ethical Behavior

Section C11.1

The behavior of all adult judges, coaches and tournament attendees associated with PHSSL needs to reflect behavior that is both ethical and in compliance with the wishes of the league. This includes, but is not limited to copyrights, plagiarism, and district and festival policies.

Article C12 - Amendments

Section C12.1

Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by any member of the Executive Board at the meetings of the League when a quorum of the Board membership is present. A two-thirds vote of the elected members at the meeting shall be necessary for the ratification of the proposed amendment.

Bylaws changes take place by a simple majority of the voting members of the Executive Board when a quorum of the Board is present.