

# CONSTITUTION OF THE WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

## ARTICLE I: NAME/OFFICE

The name of this organization shall be the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association, Inc. (WHSFA). The office of the Association shall be located in the State of Wisconsin as the Executive Director, with the approval of the Board of Control, hereafter designates.

## ARTICLE II: PURPOSE

The mission of the Association is:

- A. To provide an opportunity for students in the schools of Wisconsin to enhance communication skills through participation in Theatre, Debate and Speech activities;
- B. To promote and encourage cooperation among various communication organizations within Wisconsin;
- C. To provide a forum for the development of standards, skills and materials for participation in all forensic activities.

## ARTICLE III: ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

Section 1: All middle level and/or high schools in Wisconsin may become a member by making written application to the Executive Director of the Association and paying the annual dues. Current member schools will receive a renewal invoice from the state office in the spring. Non-member schools wishing to join may request membership materials from the state office.

Section 2: All middle level and/or high schools in states bordering Wisconsin may be admitted to membership by making written application to the Executive Director of the Association each year, provided:

- A. A letter is received in the WHSFA State Office from the Forensic Association of the state where the school is located granting permission for participation in Wisconsin activities for each year that the school makes application.
- B. The application is approved by the majority of the member schools in the District to which the applicant requests to be assigned for each year they make application.
- C. The Board of Control shall approve out-of-state membership when A and B above have been satisfied.

Section 3: The annual dues shall be determined by the Board of Control. The membership year shall be from July 1 to June 30.

Section 4: Geographic Administration:

- A. For administrative purposes, high schools shall be divided into geographical districts.

B. For administrative purposes, the districts shall be combined into sections as follows:

<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Section 2</b>	<b>Section 3</b>	<b>Section 4</b>	<b>Section 5</b>
District 1	District 2	District 7	District 9	District 11
District 3	District 5	District 8		District 12
District 4	District 6	District 10		

C. A school may transfer from one District to another by securing written approval from the Executive Director and the District Chairs involved.

D. The Chair of the District shall be empowered to set up Subdistricts in the District, all schools with a Subdistrict being members of the same District.

#### **ARTICLE IV: STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES/BYLAWS**

Section 1: Articles governing the Association shall be the Standing Rules/Bylaws.

Section 2: Standing Rules/Bylaws may be changed or amended by a majority of the voting members of the Board of Control at any regular or special meeting.

#### **ARTICLE V: GOVERNANCE**

Section 1: Board of Control

A. The affairs of the Association shall be administered by the Board of Control comprised of twelve (12) District and five (5) Section Chairs, and five (5) Advisors (Theatre, Debate, Speech and Middle Level Divisions and Administrative). Advisors in Theatre, Debate, Speech and Middle Level Division are Wisconsin university faculty/instructional academic staff members.

B. In the case of a vacancy of a District or Section Chair, the Executive Director of the Association shall appoint a member to complete the term.

C. The duties of the Board of Control shall be direct all affairs of the Association and to enact rules, which shall govern the activities of the Association.

D. The Board shall meet in the fall and spring to conduct Association business. A simple majority of the voting Board shall constitute a quorum. Voting members of the Board are the District and Section Chairs.

E. Special meetings of the Board may be called by the Chair of the Board, the Executive Director, or must be called by the Executive Director upon the request of any five (5) voting members of the Board of Control.

Section 2: Administration

A. District and Section Chairs

1. The District Chairs shall be active administrators or teachers/coaches elected for a term of three years by the member schools of their respective District. Each District Chair shall be responsible for conducting forensic affairs of the District in

- accordance with Association regulations. Each District Chair shall make participation and financial reports to the Executive Director.
2. The Section Chairs shall be active administrators or teachers/coaches elected for a term of three years by the member schools of their respective Section. Each Section Chair shall be responsible for conducting forensic affairs of the Section in accordance with Association regulations. Each Section Chair shall make participation and financial reports to the Executive Director.
  3. The office of the Chair of any District or Section shall be declared vacant when the incumbent of that office resigns the office. Upon declaring a vacancy for the Office of District or Section Chair, the Executive Director shall review the current balance between teachers/coaches and administrators to seek candidates to fill the vacant position in a manner that continues to provide Board balance between teachers/coaches and administrators.

#### Section 3: Elections

- A. Each member school shall be entitled to one (1) vote for its District Chair, one (1) vote for its Section Chair and one (1) vote for any question submitted for referendum.
- B. The election of District Chairs, to be held on a rotating basis, shall be conducted in the following manner: In the spring of each school year, the Executive Director shall send out an electronic ballot by May 10 to the head speech coach of each member school in the District in which a Chair is to be elected for the following year. Ballots shall be returned to the WHSFA State Office within in thirty (30) days after they are received. In the case of a tie, a second ballot of all persons so tied shall be sent to the electorate.
- C. The election of Section Chairs shall be conducted by the Executive Director in a manner corresponding to the method of election of District Chairs.
- D. The election of Advisory Committee members (Theatre, Debate, Speech and Middle Level) shall be conducted by the Executive Director in a manner corresponding to the method of election of District Chairs.

#### Section 4: Officers

- A. The officers of the Board of Control shall be a: Chair, Chair-Elect, Secretary, Treasurer and an Officer at Large. The term of Board Chair is one term of three years, to then be filled by the Chair-Elect.
- B. The term for Secretary, Treasurer and Officer at Large will be for three years and those officials may be re-elected. The elections for term of office for the Secretary and Treasurer will be staggered.
- C. Election of officers will be conducted at the fall Board meeting.

## ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES

Section 1: The following standing committees shall be established by the Board of Control to support the function and continuous operation of WHSFA:

- |              |                          |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| A. Finance   | F. Theatre Advisory      |
| B. Personnel | G. Debate Advisory       |
| C. Awards    | H. Speech Advisory       |
| D. Executive | I. Middle Level Advisory |
| E. Referee   |                          |

Section 2: Ad hoc committees may be appointed at the discretion of the Board Chair/Executive Director as the need may arise.

## ARTICLE VII: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Section 1: The Board of Control will arrange for an Executive Director for the Association.

Section 2: Subject to the general direction of the Board of Control, the Executive Director shall perform the duties outlined in the position description.

## ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS

Section 1: Amendments to the Constitution may be initiated by the Board of Control at any regular or special meeting, or the Executive Director upon petition from twenty five (25) member schools.

Section 2: Ratification of Amendments. After being initiated as required above, a proposed amendment must be submitted to a referendum of all member schools. Ballots must be returned within thirty (30) days after being sent by the Executive Director. If approved by a majority of school voting in the referendum, the proposed amendment must be ratified at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Control in order to be declared adopted. Any adopted amendment to the Constitution shall be published in the next issue of the WHSFA Newsletter.

# WISCONSIN HIGH SCHOOL FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

## STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES/BYLAWS

### Section I: Board of Control

- A. The policymaking body of the Wisconsin High School Forensic Association (WHSFA) is the Board of Control. Members of the Board are the twelve District Chairs, the five Section Chairs and the Executive Director.
- B. The Advisor in Speech, the Advisor in Theatre, the Advisor in Debate, the Advisor to Middle Level and the Administrator Advisor are non-voting members of the Board.
- C. Invited guests are representatives from the Wisconsin Forensic Coaches Association, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, the Wisconsin Association of School Boards and the Wisconsin Debate Coaches Association, Wisconsin Thespians Chapter, and the National Speech & Debate Association.
- D. The Board meets at least twice a year. Dates and place of Board meetings are published with WHSFA calendar information. Additional meetings may be called as needed.
- E. Standing Committees are:
  1. Speech, Theatre, Debate and Middle Level Advisories. Each committee consists of five teachers/coaches who are elected on a sectional basis, one representative per section and is chaired by the respective WHSFA Advisor. The committee meets a minimum of once per year to formulate recommendations to the Board. The Board may refer matters to the committees, but does not act on rule changes in the absence of a committee recommendation.
  2. Finance. This committee is comprised of the Board Treasurer, the Executive Director and 2 at-large Board members. The committee will communicate quarterly to discuss budget recommendations and review finances of the Association.
  3. Referee. The committee is made up of one veteran coach from the Board and two Advisors, and meets as needed.
  4. Personnel. This committee consists of the Board officers and 2 at-large members of the Board not serving as officers. The committee is responsible for performance evaluations of the Executive Director, and for interviewing and presenting appropriate candidates for a vacancy in the position of Executive Director to the Board of Control.
  5. Executive. This committee is comprised of the Board officers and meets on an as needed basis.

6. Awards.
  - a. This committee is appointed by the Board of Control Chair to review Nominations and select recipients for the Theatre Hall of Fame, the Lyn Luce Award for Leadership, the Ethel Heise New Coach Award, any other awards established by WHSFA, and Emeritus recognition. This committee will communicate at least once per year.
  - b. The Executive Director will call for nominations for all awards and recognitions for speech to be submitted by March 1.
7. Among other duties, the Board makes decisions concerning the nature of the Association and its festivals/tournaments, considers the requests of member schools and maintains relationships between WHSFA and other associations and organizations.

## Section II: Leadership

- A. **The Executive Director.** The chief administrative officer of the Association is the Executive Director. The Executive Director:
  1. supervises the finances of the organization,
  2. prepares and distributes WHSFA publications and newsletters,
  3. makes arrangements for Board and Advisory Committee meetings,
  4. maintains necessary communication with member schools,
  5. manages the State Festivals/Tournaments in Theatre, Debate and Speech,
  6. prepares the tri-annual "WHSFA Newsletter" for member schools,
  7. generally represents the Association in matters related to the WHSFA purpose and ideals.The current Executive Director of WHSFA is:

Adam Jacobi	Email: <a href="mailto:office@whsfa.org">office@whsfa.org</a>
3815 Mormon Coulee Rd, Ste 104	Phone: (920) 710-1895
La Crosse, WI 54601-5088	Fax: (920) 710-0870
- B. **Advisors in Speech, Theatre, Debate and Middle Level Division.** The Advisor in Speech, the Advisor in Debate, the Advisor in Theatre, and the Advisor to the Middle Division have the duty of advising the Board of Control, chairing the advisory committee meetings and assisting member schools on matters relating to the nature of WHSFA events. Advisors are appointed by the Executive Director and the Executive Committee.
- C. **Sectional Chairs.** In addition to serving on the Board of Control, the five (5) Sectional Chairs conduct Sectional festivals in Theatre. Also, Sectional Chairs may conduct clinics/workshops for coaches and judges of WHSFA events. Sectional Chairs are administrators or teacher/coaches. They are elected by member schools for three-year terms.
- D. **District Chairs.** Besides serving on the Board of Control, District Chairs supervise the District level festivals in Theatre and Speech. They also organize the member schools in their respective Districts into Subdistricts and supervise Subdistrict Theatre workfests and Speech festivals. District chairs are administrators or teacher/coaches who are elected by member schools for three-year terms.

### Section III: Membership

- A. Eligibility: The WHSFA is an association of schools, not individuals. Only students from member schools are eligible to participate in WHSFA events. The membership year is from July 1 to June 30. Registration and Dues: WHSFA membership registration deadline is October 1. A school which fails to pay its dues by October 1 may incur a late fee determined by the Board of Control. The dues allow schools to participate in all Theatre, Debate and Speech activities sponsored by WHSFA. The Middle Level Division registration and dues deadline is also October 1. The membership fee is a lower amount and allows middle schools to participate in Level I and Level II speech activities sponsored by WHSFA.
- B. Student Eligibility: Any bona fide pupil in good standing and in regular attendance in 6th through 12th grade of the member school shall be eligible to compete in events sponsored by the Association. It is expected that students will participate in only those programs sponsored by their school of enrollment i.e. those schools in which they are primarily enrolled and which have primary responsibility for their curricular study. However, the Board of Control will, through an Eligibility Review Committee, consider petitions for exceptions under two sets of conditions:
1. A student may be attending a special program or class at another school and his/her schedule is such that participation in WHSFA activities at the special school is thought to be more practical.
  2. Schools from separate school districts may desire to combine for a program in Theatre, Debate or Speech due to circumstances which prevent either school from having a program of its own.
- C. Petitions will be considered, but that does not mean the petition will be granted.
- D. School Coaches/Directors: Schools participating in WHSFA activities shall provide the name of an adult coach/director for each applicable activity—debate, speech, theatre, middle level—approved by the school administration as an employee or volunteer, who will supervise students at WHSFA events, unless the school administration approves a substitute and communicates this to the State Office.
- E. **Exceptions due to "special school" attendance:**
1. **Conditions:**
    - a. That the reasons for the exception must be in accordance with the Association's objective of promoting forensic participation.
    - b. That both schools in question must be members of the Association.
    - c. That the Principals/District Administrators of both schools agree to the exception.
    - d. That the student(s) must be enrolled in academic classes in both schools.
  2. **Procedures:**
    - a. The student(s) desiring the exception initiates a written petition which expresses the reason for the exception.

- b. The petition must be signed by the student(s), Principals of both schools and District Administrators of both schools.
- c. The petition must be sent to the WHSFA State Office no later than six weeks prior to the first level of WHSFA participation.
- d. The State Office will distribute the petition to the members of the Eligibility Review Committee appointed by the Board Chair for a decision which will be announced no later than four weeks prior to WHSFA participation.
- e. Any exceptions granted by the Committee shall be in effect for one school year only.

F. **Wisconsin homeschooled/online/virtual school students:**

1. **Conditions:** Students must be members of a homeschool association or enrolled full time in an online school. They cannot participate individually, unless as part of their attendance-area school district, if the school district allows participation.
2. **Procedures:**
  - a. Homeschooling associations may apply for membership by registering and paying the yearly dues. Online/virtual schools headquartered in Wisconsin may apply under the same conditions.
  - b. As members, their students are eligible to participate in all WHSFA events in the District/Section where the homeschool association is located. Students living in Wisconsin who are enrolled in online/virtual schools that are members of WHSFA may participate in the subdistrict and district festivals in which the online/virtual school is located.