

Texas High School Democrats Bylaws

Article I: Name

Section 110 Name

This organization shall be known as the Texas High School Democrats, which may be abbreviated as TXHSD.

Article II: Policy

Section 210 Organizational Functions

Pursuant to the Bylaws of the Texas Democratic Party, the Texas High School Democrats shall:

- Engage our fellow students to be active in the Democratic Party and the entirety of the American political system
- Actively support Democratic nominees in local, state, and national elections and shall conduct an active campaign in support of Democratic nominees
- Make its principle mission the identification, training, and recruiting of Democratic activists in High School, and the insertion of Democratic messaging into high school

Article III: Organization

Section 310 State Organization

The Texas High School Democrats shall be composed of the Executive Board as well as other bodies and positions created at the discretion of the State Chair.

Section 320 Local Organization

The Texas High School Democrats shall organize its membership into local and regional units which will serve to perform the purpose of this organization in their respective jurisdictions. Local chapters will be subject to all pertaining requirements of this document.

Section 330 Parent Organization

The Texas High School Democrats shall:

- Operate as the official High School Branch of the Texas Young Democrats
- Maintain a relationship as a parent organization to all local chapters

Article IV: Membership

Section 410 General Membership

Any self-identified Democrat in a Texas high school, or any Democrat who is a Texas resident, being a public, private, or home school student, shall be eligible for active membership in this organization.

Section 420 Membership Guidelines

All members of the Texas High School Democrats (TXHSD) shall be granted the following rights:

- a) Members can vote in any statewide TXHSD election provided their membership is in accordance with election rules.

- b) Members will not be discriminated against based on gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, age, socioeconomic status, nationality, disability, or any other factor that could cause discrimination
- c) Members must not receive a membership test or oath albeit they must declare support for the Democratic Party
- d) Members shall all have the opportunity to run for state office and the state executive board after two (2) months of membership
- e) Members whose behavior is deemed in violation of the principles enshrined in this document may be subject to removal and/or disciplinary action at the discretion of the Executive Board.

Section 430 Data Privacy

All data collected by the Texas High School Democrats, including membership lists, financial records, and other sensitive information, will be subject to the following guidelines:

- a) Data can only be used for official purposes and must not be shared with external organizations or individuals without explicit permission from the member(s) from whom it is derived.
- b) Any personal information submitted by a member must not be displayed on any public mediums unless the member has consented to this display and has been given the option to opt out; this provision does not apply to TXHSD leadership whose information may be displayed publicly at the discretion of State Leadership.
- c) TXHSD data cannot be used for personal purposes, including, but not limited to, campaigning for TXHSD leadership positions or promoting a cause that is not of official policy.

Accidental leakages of TXHSD membership data cannot be exploited by any members of TXHSD for purposes that violate the above guidelines. Any TXHSD member found to have violated the above restrictions will be subject to disciplinary action, including impeachment.

Article V: Local Chapters

Section 510 Chartering Requirements

In order for a chapter to be chartered with the Texas High School Democrats, the State Chair must confirm that the chapter has at least three (3) members, all of whom are registered, or plan to register, as members of the Texas High School Democrats.

Section 520 Chapter Types

Chapters may be chartered as either:

- A high school chapter centered at a school
- A community chapter centered within a community or locality
- A county chapter centered within a county

Section 530 Chapter Requirements

The following regulations apply to all local chapters:

- a) Registered chapters must maintain close contact with the Texas High School Democrats as is necessary to further the mission and goals of this organization.
- b) Chapter members must be registered as members of the TXHSD.
- c) Registered chapters shall be required to guarantee all rights owed to their members by state and national bylaws
- d) Chapters are encouraged to have democratically elected leadership within a year of first meetings

Section 540 Chapter Revocation

Any chapter not in compliance with this document or shown to be violating the principles of the Texas High School Democrats may have their chapter charter revoked by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board. Chapters whose charters have been revoked shall not be allowed to reform with a similar organization as a new chapter unless granted approval by a simple majority vote of the Executive Board.

Section 550 Chapter Privileges

Local chapters that have been chartered shall have the privilege of participating in both the Texas High School Democrats and the High School Democrats of America. All registered members of chartered local chapters shall be considered members of this organization. local chapters shall be considered members of this organization.

Article VI: Executive Board

Section 610 Role of the Executive Board

The Executive Board shall see to the functioning and growth of this organization and its programs.

Section 620 Composition of the Executive Board

The Executive Board of the Texas High School Democrats (TXHSD) shall be composed of the elected offices of Chair and Vice Chair. Other positions on the Executive Board may be created and appointed at the discretion of the Chair.

Section 630 Tenure of Executive Board Members

Elected members of the Executive Board shall serve for a term of no more than one year after their election, after which they shall either graduate, seek re-election, or discontinue their role. Appointed members of the Executive Board shall serve for a term of no more than one year after their appointment, after which they may seek appointment by the newly elected Chair or discontinue their role.

Section 640 Duties of the Executive Board

The Executive Board shall have the following responsibilities and duties:

- a) The State Chair shall serve as the Chief Executive of the Texas High School Democrats, set the agenda, chair all meetings of the Executive Board, and serve as the official voice of this organization. The Chair must also execute and obey all rules and resolutions adopted by this organization.
- b) The Vice Chair shall fulfill all duties of the State Chair in the absence of the office holder and manage the staff of this organization.

- c) The Chair and Vice Chair may appoint state staff to aid in fulfilling organizational responsibilities and furthering the goals of TXHSD as a whole.

Section 650 Causes for Impeachment

The Chair and Vice Chair are subject to impeachment and removal from office for failure to fulfill assigned duties or for violation of any law or rule of this organization, the Democratic Party, or for the commission of high crimes and misdemeanors, or for generally inappropriate conduct.

Section 660 Impeachment Process

Appointed members of the Executive Board may be removed by the Chair, with the consent of the Vice Chair, at any time.

One-fifth (1/5) of the Executive Board may petition to trigger the impeachment process of the Chair or Vice Chair. A meeting of the Executive Board shall then be called, during which the petitioners shall call upon another HSDA elected leader (from a statewide or nationwide position) to preside and oversee the proceedings. The presiding HSDA leader shall ensure that the process of impeachment is conducted fairly and the following protocols are followed:

In the impeachment meeting, for which at least five (5) days of notice must be provided, the Executive Board members shall be given the opportunity to present evidence and discuss the option of impeachment. Then, in a secret ballot, a three-fourths (3/4) majority of the Executive Board may remove the Chair or Vice Chair.

Section 670 Vacancies

If a member of the Executive Board resigns, is removed from office, or is otherwise incapable of serving, the State Chair shall have the power to fill or not fill the vacancy with any individual.

If the position of Chair becomes vacant, the Vice Chair shall assume the position for the remainder of the term. If the Vice Chair position is vacant, a special election, as specified in Section 790, shall be held. If both Chair and Vice Chair positions are vacant simultaneously, the Chair of the High School Democrats of America (HSDA) shall be asked to appoint an interim Chair from among the existing Executive Board members, who will serve until a special election can be conducted. The interim Chair may not declare candidacy in that election.

Section 680 Executive Board Meetings

Executive Board meetings shall be held weekly by the State Chair, who may also call special meetings for any reason. All Executive Board members must be notified of meetings at least two (2) days prior, except under extraordinary circumstances. A quorum of one more than half (1/2+1) of Executive Board members must be present for business to be conducted, except when the Chair deems it necessary to adjust quorum. Business records shall be taken at all meetings and made accessible to all TXHSD members.

Section 680a Executive Board Meeting Attendance

If a TXHSD Executive Board member misses more than two (2) consecutive meetings without notifying the State Chair at least twenty-four (24) hours in advance for an excused absence, they will be immediately suspended from the state Executive Board. They may request reinstatement, which will be at the discretion of the State Chair.

Section 680b Executive Board Meeting Attendance Exemptions

A TXHSD Executive Board member will be excused without consequence from meetings for the following reasons:

- a. Religious Holidays or Obligations
- b. Family or Pet Emergencies or Bereavement
- c. Medical Emergencies
- d. Immigration Status Crisis
- e. Community Emergencies
- f. Detention by Law Enforcement, not including the period after one has been formally charged with a criminal offense

Any other excused absence must be approved by the State Chair at least twenty-four (24) hours before a missed TXHSD Executive Board meeting.

If the State Chair is chronically absent, they may be subject to impeachment under Section 660.

Section 680c Executive Board Meeting Prohibitions

An Executive Board meeting cannot be held:

- a. Simultaneously with any TXHSD or HSDA-mandated conference, rally, or event
- b. Less than two (2) hours after any mass shooting or similar terrorist attack
- c. During or directly after any immediately devastating natural disaster that directly affects Executive Board members such as an earthquake or wildfire

Section 680d Enactment

This amendment will take effect immediately upon passage. Formal censures may be approved retroactively, but no members will be suspended for past violations.

Section 690 Endorsements

The Executive Board shall hold the power to make endorsements on behalf of the Texas High School Democrats.

An endorsement shall be made for a candidate with a ½ affirmative vote of those present at an Executive Board meeting.

Members of the Executive Board (including the Chair and Vice Chair) may submit offices for which endorsements shall be considered.

Before endorsements that may be deemed exceptionally controversial are voted on by the Executive Board, a minimum of two (2) weeks must pass in which the Members of TXHSD are notified via email of the offices under consideration

- Notified about which offices are being endorsed;
- Notified which candidates are under consideration in the aforementioned offices; and
- Able to submit comments to be considered by the Executive Board when endorsing.

Article VII: Adult Advisor

Section 710 Role of the Adult Advisors

The Adult Advisor shall serve as a source of guidance and long-term institutional support for the Texas High School Democrats (TXHSD) while preserving the integrity of a student-led organization. It shall assist the Executive Board in fulfilling financial, legal, and administrative obligations necessary for maintaining TXHSD's operations and continuity.

SECTION 720 Composition of the Adult Advisors

The Adult Advisor shall be Kendall Scudder: Current Chair of the Texas Democratic Party and Katy Schmader

SECTION 730 Selection of the Adult Advisors

All Adult Advisory Board members shall serve until they choose to resign their position or are removed by the Chair with the consent of the Executive Board. The Chair may appoint any adult to the Adult Advisory Board, with the consent of the Executive Board.

Article VIII: Election of Officers

Section 810 State Elections

The Texas High School Democrats shall hold a statewide election once per year, utilizing traditional ballots designed to be fair, transparent, and readable.

Section 820 Constituency

All members of this organization, as per their rights under Section 420(a), shall be eligible to receive a ballot.

Section 830 Election Coordinator

Elections will be conducted by the State Chair of the departing term, or if preferred by the Chair, the State Vice Chair of the departing term. They shall be known as the Election Coordinator. In the event that both the Chair and Vice Chair are non-seniors, elections shall be led by the Chair or Vice Chair not seeking re-election. In the event that both the Chair and Vice Chair are non-seniors and are both seeking re-election, a graduating member of the executive board shall become the Election Coordinator. The Election Coordinator may appoint additional Election Coordinator(s) to assist them, if preferred.

Section 840 Candidates

All members of the Texas High School Democrats shall be eligible to run for any position in the organization, provided they comply with all bylaws, candidacy requirements, and complete all necessary forms. The Election Coordinator reserves the right to revoke candidacy eligibility for violations of election rules or organizational values.

Section 850 Campaigning

Candidates may begin campaigning twenty-four (24) hours after the filing deadline. Campaigning includes social media posts, website updates, distribution of campaign materials, and contacting members or chapters for endorsements. Candidates who campaign before this period may face consequences determined by the Election Coordinator.

Section 860 Ballots

Ballots shall be designed in such a manner that they are easily understandable, all text is legible, and that they are fair to all candidates. Each member shall be given only one ballot to fill out, and shall not be permitted to “write in” or otherwise select a candidate that is not listed on the ballot.

Section 865 Certification of the Vote

After all votes have been tallied, the Election Coordinator shall hear all appeals from candidates, and choose whether to investigate, or to dismiss, appeals based on the facts of the appeal. All appeals having been heard (at the judgment of the Election Coordinator), and all discrepancies, allegations, and irregularities investigated, the Coordinator may decide to certify the results. Once certified, all results shall be final.

Section 870 Notice

The membership of the Texas High School Democrats shall be notified of statewide elections at least one week (7 days) before the election concludes. Three (3) days prior to the conclusion, members shall be informed of the Election Rules, Election Packet, and Ballot via official communication channels such as the TXHSD Instagram account.

Section 880 Election Coordinator Discretion

The Election Coordinator, deeming it necessary and proper, shall reserve the right to add additional rules and regulations regarding the governance and administration of elections. The Election Coordinator shall also reserve the right to bypass or remove any or all regulations listed in this document with the approval of either the Chair or Vice Chair and a supermajority (two-thirds) of the TXHSD Executive Board. Any rule changes made by the Election Coordinator shall supersede all prior rules and regulations, and those changes shall be observed immediately following passage.

Section 890 Special Elections

If there is a special election with conditions as outlined in Section 670, an Election Coordinator shall be chosen in accordance with the conditions outlined in Section 830. The Election Coordinator shall have the authority to determine the manner in which the special election has run, however they must follow the minimum notice requirements listed in Section 870.

Article IX: Financial Responsibility and Processes

Section 940 Donations

We will accept donations of any amount from individuals or PACs unless an Executive Board member moves to return the donation. This requires a simple majority. Corporate donations of more than \$200 will automatically result in a vote and a simple majority of the Executive Board can vote to reject it.

Section 950 Financial Misconduct

Financial misconduct will result in immediate expulsion; this will be determined by the AAB under the guidance of the Finance Director, Chair, and Vice Chair, unless one of these positions is under investigation. Pressed charges for theft of funds is a possible consequence based on the offense.

Article X: Amendments

Section 1010 Amendment Process

This document may be amended by the consent of the State Chair and the Vice Chair along with the simple majority vote of the Executive Board. Alternatively, this document may be amended with a two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$) majority vote of the Executive Board. Any member of the Executive Board may propose an amendment.

Section 1020 Referendum

This document may be amended by a referendum passed by a two-thirds majority of votes by TXHSD members, and shall be approved or denied by the State Chair. All referendums shall be overseen by the State Chair and Vice Chair, and all referendum options shall be granted the same rights as candidates, and shall be governed by all regulations under Article VIII.