

# **North Arlington High School**

## **Student Government Election Bylaws**

The following rules and regulations have been crafted with input from the faculty advisors and student leadership and have been approved by the North Arlington Board of Education.

### **Article I - Statement of the name and general purpose of the organizations**

Founding Principles of North Arlington High School Student Government:

1. All students and staff, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, or religion should have the opportunity to be involved in Student Government.
2. All participants in the Student Government should be responsible members of the North Arlington High School Community.
3. The Student Government should be based on democratic principles.
4. All staff and students should work together to create a safe and orderly learning environment.
5. All students shall have certain rights and freedoms as guaranteed to them as students of North Arlington High School.

Student Government is comprised of two entities: Student Council and Class Executive Boards.

The mission of the North Arlington High School Student Government Organizations (Student Council and Class Executive Boards) is to serve the students, school and the greater North Arlington community. To this end, the Student Council and Class Executive Boards are assembled to make beneficial decisions from the point of view of the students, to give back to the community, school and students, and to provide a link between them. Finally, all elected members are to promote the vision of North Arlington High School and advocate for the concerns of the student body. In doing so, they will meet regularly with school administration and town government, while growing as leaders and acting as role models for their peers within the community.

### **Article II - Duties and Responsibilities of Student Government Officers**

Membership in the Student Government is an honor. With this honor comes the obligation to continue to fulfill the criteria upon which membership is based.

1. All students who wish to, and are eligible to run must sign and abide by the below pledge:

*I pledge to run a campaign focused on my ability to lead and the positive qualities that I will bring to the position. I will campaign based on why I am a good candidate and I will promote the positive qualities that I have that will benefit the students that I represent. My campaign will not be critical of other candidates. This includes comments made in-person, via text, on social media (group or private), etc. that are directly negative about a person/group or comments that allude to negativity about a person/group.*

Students who do not abide by the terms of the campaign pledge will be disqualified from serving in elected office and may be subject to additional discipline.

2. All officers of student government must be well-organized and responsible leaders. They must be willing to take initiative and driven to complete tasks in a timely, efficient manner. These students must be able to communicate effectively and willing to speak in public, and determined to represent the student body and act in its best interests at all times.
3. All Student Government officers must take an active role in Student Government. If faculty advisors question officers' attendance and/or participation, the attendance review specified in Article VI will be pursued.
4. Must be in compliance with all school attendance and disciplinary policies.
5. Maintaining the standards used for selection; namely scholarship (85 minimum GPA), leadership, character (teacher recommendations/essay) and service.
6. Being role models both in school and in the community.

The possibility of probation or dismissal if the elected official falls below an acceptable standard. See Article V for details

### ***Job Descriptions - Duties of Officers, Members and Committees***

#### ***President***

- Represent the student body at school district, civic events, and other meetings.
- Be responsible for coordinating and selecting members for committees.
- Supervise the functioning of the elected student body officers.
- Develop the agenda for and preside over meetings of Student Government.
- Work closed with faculty advisor(s) and administration in order to ensure policies, procedures, and other mandates are followed closely.

#### ***Vice President***

- Represent the student body at school district, civic events, and other meetings as requested by the President and/or faculty advisor(s).
- Coordinate the work of committees.
- Preside over Student Government meetings in the absence of the President.

#### ***Secretary***

- Prepare agendas for meetings.
- Take and distribute minutes of meetings.
- Represent the student body at school district, civic events, and other meetings as requested by the President and/or faculty advisor(s).
- Type materials and create advertisements as needed.

#### ***Treasurer***

- Coordinate and prepare an annual budget.
- Communicate financial needs to the rest of the Student Government and student body as appropriate.
- Maintain financial records.
- Prepare financial reports for meetings of the Student Government.
- Coordinate fund-raising projects and supervise students engaged in these projects.

***Event Coordinator***

- Plan events throughout the year and prepare seating, dining, guest list, etc.
- Contribute to fundraising activities.

***Historian***

- Gather materials in preparation for the annual publication of Chrysalis.
- Maintain a database of materials about activities of the school.
- Make sure pictures are taken at all activities.
- Coordinate work on slideshows, videos, etc. pertaining to the activities of Student Government and other activities involving the student body.

***Committee Members***

- Students may join committees at the request of the President or other elected officers.
- Committee members are not elected.
- Committee members are led by elected officers and appointed with the approval of the faculty advisor.
- Committee members are considered “active” if they attend 50% or more of the meetings/events.

***9th and 10th Grade Student Council Representatives (Student Council Only)***

- Communicate ideas from the student body to the Student Council.
- Report to the class the results of Student Council action.
- Serve on or chair committees.
- Volunteer as needed and build leadership experience.

**Article III - The Election Processes*****Student Council***

Student Council elections are to be held at the beginning of the academic year (late September or early October). Juniors and Seniors are permitted to run for executive office positions within Student Council and Freshman and Sophomores can run for “Representative” positions for their class. Student Council is the recognized governing body of the student population. Members of Student Council are expected to promote citizenship, scholarship, leadership, human relations, and cultural/community values. It is comprised of the following leadership positions. Students serve for 1 year and will be expected

- President - open to all 11th and 12th graders
- Vice President - open to all 11th and 12th graders
- Secretary - open to all 11th and 12th graders
- Treasurer - open to all 11th and 12th graders
- Event Coordinator - open to all 11th and 12th graders
- Historian - open to all 11th and 12th graders
- 10th Grade Representative x 3 - open to all 10th graders
- 9th Grade Representative x 3 - open to all 9th graders

All twelve (12) positions are chosen via an election. All students (grades 9-12) vote for the following positions: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Event Coordinator, Historian. 9th and 10th graders vote for their representatives.

*Class Executive Officers:*

Elections for all positions to the Class Executive Board are to be held at the end of the academic year (late May or early June). At the end of Sophomore Year, students select leadership to represent their class for their junior and senior years (2-year terms). Only students in grade 10 will be permitted to vote in this election. There are many events that necessitate the need for student leadership to plan and carryout over the summer and into September and these leaders are expected to begin this process upon entering office. .

- President
- Vice President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Event Coordinator
- Historian

*Committee Membership* - All students are welcome to assist their leadership and join committees for specific fundraising activities and/or events. Committee members are not elected. Committee members are encouraged to attend at least 50% of the meetings and events in order to be considered “active.” During freshman and sophomore years, students’ level of participation in committees is monitored and serves as a basis for consideration for future leadership roles.

*Requirements for Nomination:*

- Parent Permission Slip
- Essay
- 3 Teacher Recommendations attesting to leadership capabilities
- Speech (Juniors & Seniors only) - 2-5 minutes in length
- At least 50% participation in class-related activities and meetings (to be tracked by the class advisor)
- A list of all candidates must be submitted for administrative approval

*Campaigning/Voting Process:*

- “Meet the Candidates” event prior to election day
- No campaigning during the school day and/or in the hallways. Campaigning activities should only be restricted to the cafeteria.
- All campaigning must meet the specifications of the pledge in Article II
- Sophomore Class Assembly to present candidates and speeches
- Voting occurs during the lunch periods by paper ballot
- Absentee Ballots
  - One vote prior

- Open to everyone
- Student must physically hand in the ballot unless absent due to medical excuse.
- Closes the day before Election Day.

*Notification of Results:*

- Email notification first through school-based email account
- Digital board and/or PA announcement following email

*Vacancy:*

- If there is a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President shall be promoted if appropriate.
- All other vacancies should be addressed by a committee consisting of the executive board.
- The committee will vote and decide if (1) an appointment can be made, (2) an election is necessary, or (2) the position can remain unoccupied.

## **Article IV - Operations**

*Regular Meetings:*

- Student Government Officers in both Student Council and Class Executive positions shall establish a schedule of regular meeting dates. The time, place, and date may be changed with the consent of the majority of the Executive Officers. The faculty advisor(s) must be present at all regular meetings.
- Committee members are encouraged to attend, but it is not a requirement to remain on a committee.

*Special Meetings:*

- These meetings may be called by the faculty advisor(s) or the President whenever there is a need and all members have been given at least twenty-four hours notice. Failure to attend these meetings do not count toward the attendance requirements referenced in Article II and Article V.

*Minimum Requirements for a Meeting:*

- At least 50% of the elected officers must be in attendance when a vote is conducted.

*General Guidelines:*

- The faculty advisor(s) set the rules of decorum and the general operation of the meetings.
- Students may be removed from the meeting for failure to adhere to the rules of decorum.

*Events:*

- Some events will be deemed mandatory and all executive officers are expected to attend.
- Committee members are encouraged to attend these special events as applicable.

## **Article V - Non-Performance of Duties**

Any Student Government officer may be reviewed for non-performance of duties. A Student Government officer may be recommended for review by any one of the following ways:

- Attendance criteria at meetings - attendance at monthly meetings is a requirement. Any member with 2 or more unexcused absences will be automatically reviewed by the review board

comprised of the student government officers and faculty advisor(s). If a student is absent from school the day of the meeting, the absence will not count toward the maximum allowable absences. If a student cannot attend an event he/she must submit a note to their advisor in order for it to be considered an excused absence. There are no mandatory attendance requirements for non-elected committee members though they are encouraged to participate in all Student Government activities. If they wish to be recognized as active committee members, they must attend over fifty percent (50%) of all meetings or events.

- Attendance criteria at mandatory events - in order for an absence to fall under these criteria, the event must be deemed mandatory by the faculty advisor prior to the event taking place. Any member who missed 4 mandatory events will be automatically reviewed by the review board comprised of the student government officers and faculty advisor(s). If a student is absent the day of the event, the absence will not count toward the maximum allowable absences. If a student cannot attend an event he/she must submit a note to their advisor in order for it to be considered an excused absence. There are no mandatory attendance requirements for non-elected committee members though they are encouraged to participate in all Student Government activities. If they wish to be recognized as active committee members, they must attend over fifty percent (50%) of all meetings or events.
- **Failure to abide by the campaign pledge:** *I pledge to run a campaign focused on my ability to lead and the positive qualities that I will bring to the position. I will campaign based on why I am a good candidate and I will promote the positive qualities that I have that will benefit the students that I represent. My campaign will not be critical of other candidates. This includes comments made in-person, via text, on social media (group or private), etc. that are directly negative about a person/group or comments that allude to negativity about a person/group.*

#### *Review for Non-Performance of Duties*

- The Student Government faculty advisor(s) may recommend members for review by notifying the executive board.
- Any Student Government officer may recommend a member for review by submitting a written letter to the faculty advisor. Student Council officers may recommend other Student Council officers. Members of the Class Executive Board may recommend other members of the Class Executive Board.
- **Act(s) that take place prior to the student being elected to office, while a student is running for elected office, or while they hold elected office may fall under the *Review for Non-Performance of Duties Clause of the Student Government Election Bylaws*, if/when that student is officially elected.**
- Review may be due to any of the following:
  - o Excessive unexcused absences
  - o Failure to fulfill duties
  - o Excessive and/or serious disciplinary violations.
  - o Academic concerns to be reviewed by faculty advisor(s) and administration in order to maintain confidentiality

- The review board shall always consist of the four executive officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer). Each officer shall receive one vote in all review board proceedings. If an executive board member is the member under review he/she must not take part in the review board and must abstain from any voting. In this case, all three remaining votes must unanimously vote to relieve an executive officer of his/her duties.
- Review Procedures
  - Before the official review begins, there must be (1) a documented meeting with the faculty advisor(s) in order to remediate the indiscretion and (2) a meeting with advisor(s) and administration and a temporary probationary period of one month.
  - All Student Government members recommended for review must be reviewed by the review board within the period of one month after they are brought to the attention of the executive board at an official meeting of the executive board. All members up for review must be notified in writing at least two weeks in advance of their hearing and this notification must detail why they are being reviewed.
  - All review board meetings will take place either before or after school in private sessions.
  - When the review board is meeting, the faculty advisor(s) must be present to ensure it is carried out completely according to the rules in this section.
  - The faculty advisor(s) may take part in questioning all people before the review board.
  - The first piece of evidence to be considered by the review board is attendance at meetings and events.
  - Secondly, the member of student government under review shall be brought to the review board and read the reasons why he/she is under review. At this point, he/she may speak on his/her own behalf if desired.
  - Thirdly, the review board may question the member under review.
  - Fourthly, members of the student government, including active committee members may serve as witnesses and speak either for or against the removal of the member from office.
  - Any other members of the student body wishing to serve as witnesses will be permitted at the discretion of the President or the faculty advisor(s).
  - Upon the conclusion of the testimonies, the review board votes to either remove the member from office or allow him/her to continue his/her respective duties.

**\*Due the extracurricular nature of Student Government, the Principal reserves the right to remove students from elected office or from running for an elected office based on code of conduct violation(s).**

## **Article VI - Provisions for Amending the Bylaws**

- The Student Government faculty advisor(s) may recommend amendments to the bylaws.
- Any Student Government officer may recommend amendments to the bylaws by submitting a written letter to the faculty advisor.

- Amendments to the bylaws shall be heard before by the four executive officers (President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer).
- If a majority of the four executive officers vote to amend the bylaws, the faculty advisor(s) must present the amendment to the Principal.
- The Principal can either (1) request further review of the amendment or (2) accept amendment proposals prior to making the recommendation to the North Arlington Board of Education.

**Article VII - Student Representative as Nonvoting Member of School District Board (effective September 1, 2022)**

- The sitting Student Council President will serve as the Nonvoting Member of the School District Board.
- The Nonvoting Member of the School District Board can only serve in the role for one year. In the event that a Grade 11 student is elected President, the sitting Vice President will serve in the President's place as the Nonvoting Member of the School District Board for the President's second year.
- The duties of the student representative shall include:
  - (1) attending all board meetings, except that a student representative shall be excluded from discussions of the board involving subjects that are confidential;
  - (2) representing all public high school students within the district and presenting student proposals and concerns to the board for its consideration; and
  - (3) keeping public high school students informed of the business of the board by providing a monthly report to the student council concerning the activities of the board.
- All bylaws regarding operations and non-performance of duties apply to the position of Nonvoting Member of the School District Board as well.