

Ratified 1988

Updated 1992, 1993, 1997, 1998, 1999 (pending 2017)

SCARSDALE HIGH SCHOOL GOVERNMENT CONSTITUTION**PREAMBLE**

We, the community of Scarsdale High School, in order to establish a more perfect school government, do hereby declare and establish this Constitution to be incorporated as our document of governance.

This Constitution shall be implemented in accordance with the House Meeting format (herein described) through its elected officials, in order to enhance the quality of the school life through broader participation therein by the students and staff.

THE HOUSE

| <u>Voting Membership</u> | <u># of People</u> |
|---|--------------------|
| Student President elected by the entire school community | 1 |
| Student Vice-President elected by the entire school community | 1 |
| Student Treasurer elected by the entire school community | 1 |
| Two Student Secretaries elected by the entire school community | 2 |
| Sixth person | 1 |
| Underclassman representative | 1 |
| “At large” House Representatives elected by each of the classes: | |
| Four each: Freshmen, Sophomores, Juniors, Seniors | 16 |
| Class Officers (selected by each class government) from each grade | 16 |
| Alternative School (A-School) Representative | 1 |
| Teachers selected by Department | 7 |
| Up to two Faculty Advisors to the Student Gov’t and Activities | 2 |
| Department Chairperson or District Coordinator representing the Cabinet | 1 |
| Dean | 1 |
| High School bookkeeper | 1 |
| P.T.A. Liaison, selected by the P.T.A. | 1 |
| Two Parents from the P.T.A. Compact Committee | 2 |
| Custodian | 1 |
| Secretarial Staff Representative | 1 |
| Aide | 1 |
| Assistant Principal for Student Life | 1 |
| Assistant Principal for Instruction | 1 |
| Total Voting Membership: | <hr/> 50 |

Non-Voting Membership

| | |
|-----------|---|
| Principal | 1 |
|-----------|---|

DUTIES OF ELECTED OFFICIALS

- A. The President
 - 1. To conduct House meetings
 - 2. To coordinate and appoint members of the subcommittees of the House
 - 3. To oversee the implementation of House decisions
 - 4. To represent the school community in a variety of roles
 - 5. To oversee school elections and referenda
- B. The Vice-President
 - 1. To assist the President in running House meetings
 - 2. To oversee the implementation of the House decisions
 - 3. To represent the school community
 - 4. To oversee school elections and referenda
- C. The Treasurer
 - 1. To account for the money spent and received by the House and its branches
 - 2. To inform the House on all pertinent financial matters
 - 3. To distribute money to various clubs as determined by S.A.C as a voting member
 - 4. To oversee school elections and referenda
 - 5. To coordinate schedules of fundraisers, including but not limited to, bake sales, pizza days and other such school day events
- D. Club Secretary
 - 1. To communicate with Scarsdale High School clubs
 - 2. To oversee the club approval process
 - 3. To plan and run club fairs
 - 4. To oversee elections and referenda
 - 5. To oversee the Club Committee
- E. House Secretary
 - 1. To take minutes at House meetings and distribute them to all House members
 - 2. To record correspondence and events
 - 3. To give notice of House meetings
 - 4. To distribute agendas to all House members
 - 5. To oversee the Judicial Committee
 - 6. To oversee school elections and referenda
- F. Underclassman Representative
 - 1. To represent the freshmen and sophomore grades
 - 2. To oversee school elections and referenda
- G. Sixth Person
 - 1. To oversee school elections and referenda
 - 2. To participate or lead, when needed, on House subcommittees
- H. Staff Representatives
 - 1. To represent their respective constituent groups
 - 2. To participate, when needed, on House subcommittees

GUIDELINES

- A. House meetings shall be called to set policies and procedures that affect Scarsdale High School. The House recognizes that the ultimate responsibility for school policies and procedures rests with the principal.
- B. The House is the focal point for school decisions on the policies and procedures which relate to student life.
- C. All new school policies must be brought to the House or its officers prior to enactment.
- D. The House recognizes the legal implications of challenging the following areas, however, the House also recognizes the legal implications of challenging the following areas, however, the House also recognizes its ability to challenge these areas if necessary:
 - 1. Local, state and federal laws
 - 2. Collective bargaining agreements
 - 3. Administrative teacher evaluations
 - 4. Board of Education policies

PROCEDURES

- A. Subcommittees
The House shall have the power to create and dissolve sub committees. The President shall appoint the members of a subcommittee. If a student feels that he/she has been neglected by the President in choosing subcommittees, the issue will be put on the agenda for the next House meeting.
- B. Robert Rules of order shall form the general basis of the method in which House meetings are conducted.
- C. A quorum will consist of 50% of the student voting membership and 50% of the staff/P.T.A voting membership

PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING CHANGES

- A. Motions
For rules, policy and/or procedural changes, a simple majority of the House members present and voting is required to carry a vote
- B. School-wide Consultation
By simple majority of those present and voting, the House can call for binding or nonbinding referenda. Referenda shall be carried out through the Forums.
- C. Veto
The principal will review all votes of the House affecting school policies and procedures and may veto any item within ten school days of the principal's receipt of the vote of the House, by notifying the members of the Steering Committee in writing. If the principal does not exercise the veto within ten school days, the change becomes effective.
- D. Veto Appeal

Vetoed items may be reintroduced at the next House meeting. Three quarters of the House members present may vote to appeal the veto to the Superintendent of Schools who may rule on it or pass the matter to the Board of Education for final adjudication.

E. Subcommittees

The House shall have the authority to create and dissolve sub committees, with the exception of the following standing committees:

1. The Government Committee
2. The Judicial Committee
3. The Club Committee
4. The Spirit Committee

GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

A. Composition

1. An Assistant Principal for Student Services
2. The House President
3. The House Vice-President
4. The House Secretary
5. The Club Secretary
6. The House Treasurer
7. Sixth Person
8. Underclassman Representative
9. The Faculty Advisors to Student Gov't and Activities

B. Responsibilities

1. The Government Committee will agree on an agenda for each House meeting
2. The House Secretary will post via email and distribute the agenda for each House meeting 48 hours before the meeting.
3. The Government Committee will propose to the House the agendas for the Forums.
4. The Government Committee will allocate extracurricular funds provided by the Board of Education.

C. Call Out (when the Government Committee withholds an agenda item)

1. By a simple majority of those present and voting, the House can place an item on the agenda.
2. Students and/or staff may present a petition with 50 signatures to either of the House secretaries to place an item on the agenda.

JUDICIAL COMMITTEE

A. Functions of Committee

1. To inform the school community of school governance decisions and actions at least once every other month.
2. To discuss and implement the legislation presented in the school constitution
3. To propose any necessary changes to the school constitution to the House at least twice a year
4. To ensure the posting of the Absent Teachers list

B. Administration of Judicial Committee

1. The House secretary will head the Judicial Committee.

2. The House Secretary will also be a member of this committee to assist in publicizing the work of this committee as well as School Government as a whole
3. The Judicial Committee will consist of school government officers, class government officers, the Faculty Advisors to School Gov't and Activities.

SPIRIT COMMITTEE

- A. Membership
 1. Any house member(s) who are willing to lead the committee.
 2. At least two students from each class government
- B. Responsibilities
 1. To promote school spirit by organizing spirit days.
 2. To brainstorm new activities that might bring together the school
 3. To assist the School Government in executing spirit-related events

CLUB COMMITTEE

- A. Membership
 1. An Assistant Principal for Student Services
 2. The House President
 3. The House Vice-President
 4. The House Secretary
 5. The Club Secretary
 6. The House Treasurer
 7. Sixth Person
 8. Underclassman Representative
 9. The Faculty Advisors to Student Gov't and Activities
 10. Three house students chosen by the president

When there exists a conflict of interest in regards to a member of the committee, said member cannot participate in the meeting. The vote of the Club Secretary does not count, unless there is a tie. A simple majority of those present will be used for voting purposes..

- B. Functions of Club Committee
 1. To create and publicize the club application to the student body
 2. To approve new clubs proposed under the club approval process
 3. To evaluate clubs which exist nominally but are not functioning as intended, with the ultimate authority to remove the clubs' sanctions.

CLUB APPROVAL PROCESS

There are two applications periods. The first application period is scheduled for early October and the second application period will take place early in the third quarter. During this period, an application must be submitted by the proposed club leader which states the purpose, functions, potential members and any other pertinent information deemed necessary by the club committee.

ELECTION PROCESS

A. School Government Elections

1. The Vice President will be the second place winner of the presidential election. If that student does not wish to Vice President, it will be offered to the next-highest vote getter until the position is accepted.
2. The two secretaries will not be voted on separately; however, the government must make known to the student body that there are two separate secretary positions with different roles.
3. There is a 10% vote reduction for every 15 seconds over the established time limit for the speech.
4. The Underclassman Representative will be any current freshman or sophomore and will only be voted upon by the Freshman and Sophomore classes

B. Class Government Elections

1. Each grade will have its own specific election to choose its class officers
2. Class elections will be coordinated the School Government
 - a. Sophomore, Junior and Senior elections shall be held in the spring
 - b. Freshman class elections will be held as soon as possible at the beginning of the school year.
3. Any member of a class is eligible to run for any position in their Class Government
 - a. In order to run for senior class president, a student must receive a signature of approval from the class advisors.
 - b. If a student is already in an officer in a club homeroom and wants to run for a class government, they can only run for house rep.
 - c. If a student becomes an officer in a club homeroom after being elected to a class government position, they must step down from either the government position or the officership.
4. After the election, each class government must form a cabinet.
 - a. The Cabinet must consist of a minimum of 8 members.
 - b. The cabinet must meet with the class government at least once a month.

IMPEACHMENT AND REMOVAL FROM OFFICE

A House member is subject to impeachment and removal from office for failure to perform his/her duties. Both school and class governments shall have the authority to set rules, by majority vote, relating to behavior and ensuing disciplinary action, less than impeachment, for the members of its body.

A. Impeachment and Removal of a House Officer

1. A written complaint must be submitted to one of the faculty advisors to the House and S.A.C.
2. Any member of the Scarsdale High School community may submit a complaint.
 - a. Complaints must be signed by ten students at large, eight students who are current House members, and four faculty House members.
 - b. The accusers have the right to remain anonymous until the trial.
 - c. Complaints may be withdrawn at any time before the initiation of the impeachment process.

3. Charges will be made known to the accused within one month of submission.
4. By a simple majority of members present and voting, The House may initiate a monitoring period of four school weeks during which attendance and performance of the accused will be monitored by the school government advisors.
5. After the monitoring period, all facts relevant to the case will be announced by one of the school government advisors at the House meeting, including the reading of the complaint with the accusers' names. The school government advisors will preside over the trial.
 - a. Three of the signers of the complaint and the appropriate House members must be present at the trial.
 - b. The accused has the right to defend himself/herself against all charges.
 - c. After all parties have spoken, the accused will leave the meeting at which time a secret ballot will be taken. A two-thirds majority is necessary to effect impeachment and removal.
6. A resignation may be accepted at any time, and the case will be dropped.

B. Impeachment and Removal of a Student Representative to the House

1. A written complaint must be submitted to the faculty advisor to the House.
2. Any member of the Scarsdale High School community may submit a complaint.
 - a. A complaint submitted from a student's constituency must be signed by 25 students who are members of the accused's grade, three current student House members, and two House faculty members
 - b. A complaint from another House member must be signed by two current student House members and one faculty member.
 - c. The accusers have the right to remain anonymous until the trial.
 - d. Complaints may be withdrawn at any time before the initiation of the impeachment process.
3. There will be a monitoring period of six school weeks during which attendance and performance of the accused will be monitored by the school government advisors. At the outset of the monitoring period, the accused must be made aware that he/she is being monitored.
4. After the monitoring period, all facts relevant to the case will be announced by one of the school government advisors at the House meeting, including the reading of the complaint with accusers' names. The House President will preside over the trial.
 - a. The accusers must be present at the trial.
 - b. The accused has the right to defend himself/herself against all charges.
 - c. After all parties have spoken, the accused will leave the meeting at which time a secret ballot will be taken. A two-thirds majority is necessary to effect impeachment and removal.
5. A resignation may be accepted at any time, and the case will be dropped.

C. Impeachment and Removal of a Faculty Member of the House

1. (Same as B.1.)
2. (Same as B.2.)
 - a. A complaint from a House member must be signed by three current student House members and two at large faculty members.
 - b. A complaint from a faculty member at large must be signed by three teachers at large, three student House members, and two faculty members.
3. (Same as B.3.)
4. (Same as B.4.)

D. In the event of an impeachment and removal from office, the House will establish procedures for filling the vacated office.

E. In the event a vacancy occurs in the House, the House officers will establish procedures for filling the vacated office.

A class officer is subject to impeachment and removal from office for failure to perform his/her duties.

F. Impeachment and Removal of a Class Officer

1. A written complaint must be submitted to the class advisor.
2. Any member of the class may submit a complaint; only complaints from members of the accused officer's class may be submitted.
3. Complaints will be made known to the accused within one month of submission.
4. If he/she deems the charges to be of sufficient merit as to warrant further investigation, the class advisor shall bring the complaints to the House advisor; all efforts to resolve the conflict within the class should be exhausted before the matter is presented to the House advisor.
5. By a simple majority of the members present and voting, the House may initiate a monitoring period of four school weeks during which the attendance and performance of the accused will be monitored by the class advisor.
6. The House, upon hearing the charges, may by a simple majority vote, choose to delegate adjudication power to the Ad-Hoc Committee on Impeachments.
 - a. The Ad-Hoc Committee on Impeachments shall consist of the class advisor, three class officers appointed by the class advisor, and two student House members not from the same class as the accused and one House faculty member appointed by the school president.
 - b. The House advisor shall set the dates and times of the committee meetings, and one will preside over the committee as a non-voting member.
 - c. Meetings of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Impeachments shall be private.
 - d. After the monitoring period, all facts relevant to the case will be presented to the committee, including the reading of the complaint with the accusers' names.
 - e. Two of the signers of the complaint must present their case to the committee.
 - f. The accused has a right to defend himself/herself against all charges.
 - g. After all parties have spoken, the accused will leave the committee meeting at which time a secret ballot will be taken. A simple majority is necessary to effect impeachment and removal.
7. A resignation may be accepted at any time and the case will be dropped.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Membership in the School Community and eligibility to vote in school elections shall include all of the following:

1. Students enrolled full-time or part-time at Scarsdale High School, with the exception of members of the senior class.
2. Seniors will be designated Members of the School Community, will not be eligible to vote in school elections, but will be able to vote in referendums.
3. All faculty members, secretaries, aides, custodians, and full-time employees of Scarsdale High School.
4. The P.T.A. President and up to four elected Compact Committee members.

5. The Principal, the Assistant Principal for Student Services, and the Assistant Principal for Instruction.

The following individuals are not designated Members of the School Community and are not eligible to vote under the terms of this document.

1. Athletic coaches and club advisors who do not meet one of the above criteria.
2. Parent and community volunteers not designated in section four above.
3. Employees of the Board of Education who are not full-time employees of Scarsdale High School, except as designated above.

RATIFICATION OF AMENDMENTS

Ratification of amendments will require a period of voter education, the length of which will be determined by the House Offices and is not to exceed sixty days, during which the entire school will be informed of the proposal. A two-thirds majority of the voting membership of the House is required for ratification to be achieved.