



The SLS Chapter Constitution and By-Laws

The SLS office is frequently asked for guidelines or sample constitutions. We are also called upon to help resolve conflicts that occur from time to time within chapters. Frequently these conflicts could easily be resolved if a well thought out constitution and by-laws were in place.

SLS would like to provide a sense of direction by suggesting a constitution, which can be beneficial to the vitality and structure of our organization.

A **constitution** can contribute a perception of standards and ideals, which can maintain stability and understanding among members. This document can ensure a productive and effective guideline that may emphasize the obligations of all individuals. We hope all SLS Chapters in Michigan choose to operate by the provisions of this **constitution**. The **constitution** itself is unchangeable by groups that wish to call themselves SLS. This should not be a problem because the language is broad enough to include all, with the exception of those groups that would openly advocate the illegal use of alcohol.

Chapter **by-laws** on the other hand need to be reflective of the specific organizational structure desired by the group. **By-laws** provide comprehensive regulations which members may refer to as a source of guidance. Without **by-laws** there is a struggle for stability within the group. SLS would like to supply these general qualifications and boundaries to all chapters, but does not enforce obligations or limitations. It is the preference of each group to accept each **by-law**. A chapter is expected to tailor these **by-laws** to suit their own local group needs, in order to facilitate a more smoothly running organization.

Constitution

Preamble: Given the power and potential of student activism, service and leadership, we hereby join the Student Leadership Services, Inc. Chapter Network. We pledge to increase positive decision making and end the tragedies resulting from alcohol and other drug related choices.



Article I: Name

This organization shall be known as _____ High School SLS, the acronym which represents Students Leading Students.

Article II: Purpose

Demonstrated through our actions and words, Student Leadership Services, Inc. purpose is to increase positive decision making and reduce negative alcohol and other drug-related choices. We include all students who support this goal. We also recognize the harmful effects of alcohol and the use of other substances by underage teens. We encourage the expansion of our purpose to include those activities that contribute to the positive development of individuals and a caring spirit within the school and community.

Article III: Membership

Membership is open to all students who accept these principles:

- The use of alcohol and other drugs is self-defeating.
- Driving under the influence of alcohol and other drugs endangers our lives and the lives of others.
- Distracted driving endangers lives.
- We endanger our lives when we ride in a vehicle with a driver who is under the influence of alcohol and other drugs, or is distracted or driving recklessly.

Article IV: Affiliation

A local chapter is considered part of Student Leadership Services, Inc. if it supports this constitution. Chapter membership in SLS provides benefits to chapters and students.



Article V: Structure

A local chapter is a school-based, extra curricular, student directed organization. It is assisted by a school staff person identified as an advisor. Selection of an advisor is the cooperative responsibility of student members and school administration.

Article VI: Classes of Membership

Student Leadership Services, Inc. shall include two classes of membership.

Participating Chapters – A participating chapter registers by providing an annual contribution to SLS as a token of their willingness to help support the Student Leadership Services, Inc. network and its services. SLS Member Chapters receive many benefits, including grants, awards, scholarships, media and training opportunities.

Regular Chapters – Any chapter requesting to be included in the network will be, and it will have access to all programs and services of Student Leadership Services, Inc. A regular chapter will continue to be considered part of the network until such time when they inform the Student Leadership Services, Inc. office otherwise.

Article VII: Governance

(See Bylaw # Article II)

Article VIII

Given the sensitive and publicity-visible nature of SLS officers, all officers are expected to make a pledge to remain alcohol, tobacco and other drug-free during their term in office. In addition, officers will obey traffic laws, model safe driving practices and exhibit leadership among their peers.



By-Laws

Section I: Membership

Article I: A local chapter is considered part of Student Leadership Services, Inc. if it supports the constitution and its beliefs.

Article II: The purpose of a local chapter is to protect lives and improve the general well-being of their school and community. Each group should assess the interests of their group, determine which areas they can influence their peers, and set their goals for the year.

Article III: The two classes of student memberships are to be referred to as Active and Inactive.

Article IV: Active membership requirements include:

- A. Attendance at 50% of general meetings
- B. Participation in non-meeting events, including serving on sub-committees
- C. Payment of dues if established by local chapters
- D. Adherence to Article III of the Constitution

Article V: Inactive membership is extended to all students who support, by their beliefs and actions, the local SLS membership and adhere to the provisions of Article III of the Constitution.



Section II: Officers

Article I: There are two different forms of leadership, which may be incorporated within a chapter. The chapter needs to select one of the models defined below or create another design that suits the local chapter wishes.

- A. An Executive Board model which acts as a team instead of individual titles and duties.
- B. A traditional model in which the officers of SLS shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. All officers participate in the development of meeting agendas; grant/funding applications and communication with administration.
 - 1. *President:* Call meetings, provide structure and order during session and adjourn meetings. President will support and assist other officers and committee chairpersons as needed.
 - 2. *Vice President:* In the absence of the President, the Vice-President is assigned presidential duties. Also chairs sub-committees and is public relations and media contact.
 - 3. *Treasurer:* The Treasurer shall keep account of all dues, receipts, expenses and income. The President and Treasurer must approve any payments. The Treasurer must report a clear and correct statement, including grant financial reports.
 - 4. *Secretary:* Responsible for making and keeping contacts in the community. Also responsible for keeping notes at all general business meetings, keeping track of all active members and taking roll at each meeting. Will be in charge of posting meeting time and place. Secretary will be responsible for facilitating all acknowledgements and thank you notes.

Article II: To be eligible for elected office, one should be an active member for at least one year. Officers need to accept Article VIII of the Constitution for each year that they choose to serve.



Article III: These positions shall be elected via open vote by a simple majority of the active members. The election shall take place at the end of the school term. There will be a preliminary vote to limit the nominees to two candidates for each position.

Article IV: Any officer may be asked to resign or removed from their position if they fail to comply with their duties and Student Leadership Services, Inc. constitutional beliefs.

Article V: In the event of the above situation (Article IV), the faculty advisor or the faculty advisor with the other student officers, has the authority to appoint another qualified active member to that position.

Article VI: If an officer resigns or is removed during mid-year, the advisor, in consultation with the remaining officers, will appoint a replacement to complete the unexpired term of his/her predecessor.

Article VII: The faculty advisor can be nominated annually by the SLS members and approved by the school administration. The advisor has an understanding of student voice and choice, supports and opportunities, youth engagement, youth interaction and safety. The advisor remains in the background providing advice and counsel. The advisor will possess the authority to replace an officer in the event of a dismissal. An advisor has no limit as to the number of terms he or she may serve.

Section III: Meetings

Article I: There shall be at least one general business meeting per month. Public notice of the meetings must be made at least two days prior to the event.



Article II: Proper parliamentary procedure will be followed unless the acting president permits otherwise. All active members, except the president, have a vote on general business. The president will vote in the event of a tie.

Article III: A minimum expectation of all Active Members is 50% attendance at all meetings and events. If unable to participate but wishing to vote, active members may give a proxy vote in writing to any officer.

Article IV: Inactive Members are expected to attend meetings and events as the schedule permits. Inactive members demonstrate commitment to the purpose and beliefs of SLS.