

BY-LAWS OF THE SCHOLARS CLUB

ARTICLE I -- NAME

1. The name of this organization shall be _____
Scholars Club Chapter (SCHOOL NAME)

ARTICLE II -- OBJECTIVES

1. The Scholars Club is a co-curricular honor society whose ideals are founded on ***Academic Excellence, Leadership, Service and Citizenship.***
2. Scholars Club began as a supplementary mechanism to address the academic performance disparities among minority students enrolled in the public schools. Its formula of challenging students to higher levels of performance and rewarding those that meet or exceed high academic goals, is helping to create and shape a peer culture of success among the minority student population. Scholars Club has been so successful that it has been expanded to include students in grades K-16, who can be classified as "situational at risk," ***and who is not challenged to achieve performance excellence through other programs or co-curricular interventions.***
3. "**Situational at risk**" is defined as any student who by virtue of their environment is at a disadvantage for achieving academic success when compared to the population at large. The racial, ethnic, cultural, gender or socio-economic status of a student may contribute to their being considered a "situational at risk" student when they are placed in a heterogeneous learning environment, which is unfamiliar to them. ***It is a student's situation and environment, and not simply their ethnic background or race that determines membership eligibility.***
4. The motto of Scholars Club is "***Shaping the Minds of the Future.***"
5. The colors of Scholars Club are ***Red, Blue and Gold.***
6. The principal objective of Scholars Club is to ***develop a peer culture of success among members.*** Specifically, the objectives of Scholars Clubs are to:
 - provide structure for development of student academic excellence
 - promote, support and recognize academic excellence

- provide structure for development of student leadership excellence
- promote, support and recognize leadership accomplishments
- provide structure for development of service and citizenship excellence
- promote, support and recognize service to school and community
- develop an environment for scholarly examination of cultural diversity at each Chapter
- provide positive role models for students and expose them to successful leaders
- develop support programs and be a source of support for college bound students
- expand student involvement in issues and activities that enhance individual and group esteem

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

Membership in Scholars Club shall be restricted to five categories: **New, Regular, Associate, Provisional, and Scholars Cub**. To be eligible for regular membership, students must be:

- Elementary school: 4th and 5th grades
- Middle school: All grades
- High school: All grades
- College/University Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior

A. New Members

1. New membership in the Scholars Club is open to academically qualified upper class students who have displayed good character and leadership ability and/or have transferred from another chapter of Scholars Club. Any upper class student who is academically qualified (cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 based on the 4 point system), and meets the Scholars Club profile is eligible to apply for new membership. ***New members*** will have full rights of membership, including ability to vote and to hold elected office within the Club.

2. To be eligible for New membership, students must be:

- Elementary school: Grades 4 and 5
- Middle school: Grades 6, 7 and 8
- High school: Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12
- College/University Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior

3. The procedures for applying for an New membership include:

- Obtaining and maintaining a Grade Point Average of 2.5 or higher.
- Demonstrating good character and behavior by not obtaining any Deficiency Notices.
- Completing and submitting a Membership Application Form
- Completing and submitting an Excellence Contract
- Approval by the Scholars Club membership Committee made up of student members of the Chapter

4. **Transfer students**, who are sixth or ninth grades in the public school system, or freshman at a college or university, who were members in good standing at their previous school shall be added to the roster of regular members at the new school, and shall have full rights of membership, including ability to vote and to hold elected office within the Club.

B. Regular Members

1. Regular membership in the Scholars Club is open to academically qualified upper class students who have displayed good character and leadership ability and/or have transferred from another chapter of Scholars Club. Any upper class student who is academically qualified (cumulative grade point average (GPA) of at least 2.5 based on the 4 point system), and meets the Scholars Club profile is eligible to apply for new membership. **Regular members** will have full rights of membership, including ability to vote and to hold elected office within the Club.

2. To be eligible for Regular membership, students must be:

- Elementary school: Grades 4 and 5

- Middle school: Grades 6, 7 and 8
 - High school: Grades 9, 10, 11 and 12
 - College/University Freshman, Sophomore, Junior and Senior
3. The procedures for applying for an Regular membership include:
- Obtaining and maintaining a Grade Point Average of 2.5 or higher.
 - Demonstrating good character and behavior by not obtaining any Deficiency Notices.
 - Completing an Excellence Contract.
 - Approval by the Scholars Club membership Committee made up of student members of the Chapter
4. **Transfer students**, who are sixth or ninth grades in the public school system, or freshman at a college or university, who were members in good standing at their previous school shall be added to the roster of regular members at the new school, and shall have full rights of membership, including ability to vote and to hold elected office within the Club.

C. Provisional Members

1. **Provisional members** are incoming students from any non-Scholars Club schools. Provisional members may be inducted into Scholars Club with and using the same procedures as New Members.

D. Scholars Cub Members

1. **Scholars Cub** are pre-Scholars Club -- students who:
- meet the Scholars Club profile
 - **are third grade or earlier**
 - have been identified as a “Situational at-risk” student

- Have not yet been accepted for regular membership due to grade level.
2. **Scholars Cub** membership provides access to the special instruction and programs available to Scholars Club members, inculcates the Scholars Club ideals of Academic Excellence, Leadership, Service and Citizenship and expose **Scholars Cubs** to a supportive peer culture of achievement, accomplishment, and peer mentoring.
 3. **Scholars Cubs** are identified and selected by the chapter Sponsor-Advisor and allowed to selectively participate in Club activities along with regular Scholars Club members.
 4. **Scholars Cubs** are non-voting members of Scholars Club, and are ineligible for elected office.
 5. Scholars Cubs membership can be converted into regular membership by:
 - attaining a minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 based on a 4.0 system
 - demonstrating good character and behavior
 - completing and submitting a Membership Application Form
 - Completing an Excellence Contract
 - Obtaining the approval of the Advisor or school Principal.

Note: Scholars Cubs are not formally inducted until they reach the fourth grade or higher, meeting all of the other membership criteria. Once they are able to officially join Scholars Club, they are to be inducted with and using the same procedures as a New Member.

E. Associate members (discretionary to each chapter)

1. This category of members is reserved for Scholars Club profile students who are ineligible by virtue of academic performance (GPA less than 2.5), or poor character and behavior, to be Club members of Scholars Club.
2. Exceptional students who fail to meet the GPA criterion but who are strongly recommended by at least two (2) teachers, counselors, community leaders such as a pastor or a (1) Principal, and satisfy other membership criteria

outlined in the by-laws shall be deemed eligible for Associate status.

3. Associate members may be inducted into Scholars Club with and using the same procedures as New members. However, they will be ineligible to participate as committee chairs and to hold elected office within the Club.
4. Associate members whose GPA increases to 2.5 or above, will automatically become Regular Members of the Club and shall be eligible to participate as committee chairs and to hold elected office within the Club.

F. Miscellaneous

1. New members should be inducted into the Club early in the school year. The induction date shall be decided by the Chapter and communicated to the office of Public Schools Enrichment Partnership who may chose to participate in the ***Induction Ceremony***.
2. Following the ***Induction Ceremony***, but no later than November 1st of each year, Chapters must forward to the office of the Public Schools Enrichment Partnership for recording in it's data files:
 - a roster of all members, showing names, current address, telephone number and G.P.A.'s
 - signed Excellence Contracts for all members
 - list of all Officers stating the offices to which they were elected
 - completed applications for all new, associate, and provisional students
3. The membership fee for the Scholars Club should be \$10 per year or such other amount decided upon by the Officers, and approved by the chapter members.
4. The recommended membership fee for the Associate member is \$10 per quarter, not to exceed \$40 per year. This fee is designed to further motivate Associate Members to improve their GPA and/or behavior as soon as possible. Officers should consider improvements and waive fees if notable improvements are obtained. This fee and decisions regarding the fee rest upon the Officers and approved by the chapter members.

ARTICLE IV – PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

1. Within one month after commencement of the school year, each member of Scholars Club must complete, sign and submit an Excellence Contract stating their academic goals for the year. Excellence Awards are accepted as final after being signed by the Principal or his/her designee.
2. The academic performance (current year and cumulative GPA) of each member will be evaluated in April of each year. Comparisons between expected and actual performance will be used to determine eligibility for rewards for academic excellence.
3. **Continuing membership in Scholars Club is contingent upon maintenance of a cumulative GPA of 2.5 and refraining from earning a deficiency notice.** The membership status of members who fail to meet this criterion shall be classified Associate. Associate members who fail to display academic improvement after one quarter will need to provide a recommendation letter and must pay an additional \$10 membership fee for each additional quarter that they remain an Associate Member.
4. Notwithstanding the above, **elected Officers must maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.5 or better to retain office.** Any Officer who fails to maintain this minimum GPA must immediately resign from the elective office, though not the Club.

ARTICLE V -- ELECTIONS

1. Except for new Chapters, nominations for new Officers shall be held in early April and elections two weeks thereafter.
2. Election of Officers shall be by secret ballot of the membership and shall take place in April of each year. A simple majority vote is necessary for election.
3. Regular Scholars Club officers are President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer. Each Chapter may elect additional officers as dictated by chapter governance.
4. New Officers will be installed into office immediately after announcement of the election results.
5. Except where resignations intervene, elected Officers shall serve until successors are duly elected and qualified the following year.
6. For new Chapters, nominations, elections shall occur within two months after

the decision to establish the chapter. Election procedures are the same as for established chapters.

ARTICLE VI – ADMINISTRATION OF THE CLUB

1. The general conduct of the affairs of the Club shall be the responsibility of elected officers. The responsibilities of the Officers shall include: administration of the Club as prescribed in the by-laws; conducting annual election of officers; calling and presiding at meetings of the Club; ensuring that organizational objectives are achieved; and formulating program ideas and communicating them to the membership for approval.
2. The Officers of the Club shall be advised by an external Board of Advisors, **or in its absence, the PSEP Board of Advisors**, and at least one Faculty Sponsor-Advisor.
3. The President shall call and preside over regular and special meetings of the membership and prepare agenda for such meetings; sign with the Secretary and/or Treasurer any official papers or documents of the Club; preside over the day-to-day administration of the business of the Club; act as a liaison between the Club and school officials; advise the Principal of accomplishments of students that warrant special recognition; appoint Chairs and members of such committees as are necessary for the functioning of the Club (except as set forth herein); and perform all other duties incidental to the position and office.
4. The President in cooperation with the Chair of the Board of Advisors and the Faculty Sponsor - Advisor shall schedule meetings of the Board of Advisors, and shall be responsible for preparing an agenda for such meetings.
5. The President in cooperation with the Chair of the Board of Advisors shall recommend new members of the Board of Advisors to the Principal.
6. The Vice President shall preside in the absence and inability of the President to render and perform his/her duties or exercise the powers set forth in these by-laws.
7. The Secretary shall prepare minutes of all regular and special meetings, and shall be responsible for all correspondence of the Club.
8. The Treasurer shall have the care and custody of all funds and securities of the Club; prepare the Club's budget; disburse funds as directed by the Officers and approved by the Principal; maintain funds and securities in such bank or banks as the Officers may designate; and render a statement of the finances of the Club at each regular meetings or as requested by the

President (or the Principal). The Principal shall have final authority over all budgetary matters.

9. Club records (meeting minutes, financial records, Excellence Contracts, application forms and other official documents) shall be maintained centrally by the Sponsor-Advisor and provided to PSEP as requested.

ARTICLE VII – FACULTY SPONSOR

1. At least one teacher who is interested in and committed to the objectives of the Club shall be invited to be a Faculty Sponsor - Advisor. Specific responsibilities include: liaison between the Club and the school administration; advising and providing support in the development and outreach programs of the Club.
2. Monitor academic performance to ensure that the minimum GPA standards stipulated in these by-laws are met and reporting student accomplishments that warrant special recognition to both the Principal and PSEP.

ARTICLE VIII - COMMITTEES

1. The Scholars Club shall have four standing committees: Planning and Activities, Academic Support, Membership and Fund Raising.
2. The objective of the committee structure is to distribute the work of the Club among a large number of members and to provide more visible recognition for contribution.
3. The President shall name members of each standing committee as well as the Chairpersons. Each committee shall have at least one Officer of the Club as a member. Other members shall be drawn from among the membership at large.
4. Prior to each meeting, the Chairperson of each committee shall meet in executive session with the Officers to review the activities of the various committees and to develop a meeting agenda.
5. The **Planning and Activities Committee** shall consist of at least five (5) members, including the President. It shall assist Officers in planning and developing new programs consistent with the objectives of the chapter. The Planning and Activities Committee is also responsible for implementation of all social and scholastic activities involving the general membership.
6. The **Academic support Committee** shall consist of at least three (3) members. It shall be responsible for implementing support and outreach programs for academically eligible students; developing and maintaining a

library of minority literature and accomplishments; and any other academic enhancement activities assigned by the President.

7. The **Membership Committee** shall consist of at least three (3) persons (not necessarily members) appointed by the President. Responsibilities shall include; administering membership induction consistent with the application and membership criteria outlined in these by-laws; developing and coordinating a continuing program of membership development; reporting student accomplishments that warrant special recognition to the Principal; ensuring that appropriate action is taken with respect to members not in compliance with the standards outlined in these by-laws; and other membership related activities assigned by the President.
8. The **Fund Raising Committee** shall be made up of at least three (3) persons appointed by the President. It shall initiate and coordinate all fund raising activities. The Treasurer of the Club shall be a member of this committee.

ARTICLE IX - MEETINGS

1. The Club shall hold meetings at least once per month.(for example, first Friday, third Thursday, etc.)
2. Members shall be advised at least one day in advance of any canceled or rescheduled meeting. The Principal or his/her representative shall approve the time and place of all meetings.
3. Subject to the approval of the Faculty Sponsor, the President shall call a special meeting whenever he/she deems it necessary.
4. The meetings of the Club shall not be considered official unless two-thirds of the Planning and Activities Committee are present.
5. A meeting of the Officers of the Club, the Executive Committee, shall be held prior to every general and special meeting to plan and develop a meeting agenda.

ARTICLE X -- REPLACEMENT OF OFFICERS

1. During the term of office, offices may become vacant because of removals from office for non-performance of duties, resignations, failure to meet academic or behavioral standards as specified in these by-laws, and other unforeseen circumstances.
2. An official can only be removed from office for nonperformance of duties if there is agreement by the majority of Officers, the Faculty Sponsor and the

Principal.

3. The vice-president shall fill the vacated office of President.
4. The President is empowered by these by-laws to appoint a member to any other vacated office for the remainder of the unexpired term. Such appointments need not be from among existing officers.

ARTICLE XI -- PUBLIC SCHOOLS ENRICHMENT PARTNERSHIP

1. Public Schools Enrichment Partnership (PSEP) is a community organization administered by Florida Gulf Coast University. It administers Scholars Club.
2. PSEP's responsibilities include: development of new chapters; central development and procurement of resources for Club and Chapter activities; maintenance of membership database; monitoring performance and tracking students; assisting in developing strong inter-chapter relationships; and sponsorship and coordination of inter-chapter activities.

ARTICLE XI -- BOARD OF ADVISORS

1. Scholars Club is administered by Public Schools Enrichment Partnership at Florida Gulf Coast University. A Board of Advisors composed of community leaders develops policy.

ARTICLE XI -- BOARD OF ADVISORS (cont'd)

2. Each chapter of Scholars Club may elect to establish a separate chapter Board of Advisors (CBOA) consisting of between seven (7) and eleven (11) members. Each CBOA member shall be appointed for a two-year term.
3. The Principal upon the recommendation of the President shall appoint members of the CBOA. The Board so formed shall elect a chair that shall preside over meetings of the Board and assist in identification and recruitment of new members.
4. The responsibilities of the CBOA shall include: assisting with the development of programs by serving as a sounding board for prospective chapter program ideas; serving as a source of external resources; serving as a source of guest speakers; and being positive role models for members of the Club.
5. The CBOA shall meet at least once each quarter. The chairperson in consultation with the President and Faculty Sponsor shall schedule special meeting dates.

6. Every effort shall be made to ensure parental as well as broad minority representation on each CBOA.

ARTICLE XII -- AMENDMENTS

1. These by-laws may only be amended by the Public Schools Enrichment Partnership at Florida Gulf Coast University.
2. Notwithstanding the above, any chapter may submit recommendations in writing, to amend any part of these by-laws to the Public Schools Enrichment Partnership at Florida Gulf Coast University.

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