

Bylaws of the Florida Scholastic Chess League

Article 1 Name and Location

1.1 NAME

1.1.1 This League shall be known as the Florida Scholastic Chess League, Inc., a non profit corporation, and shall be a voluntary league.

1.2 LOCATION

1.2.1 The principle place of business shall be as designated in the annual corporate report filed with the Florida Division of Corporations.

Article 2 Aim

2.1 AIM

2.1.1 The aim of this League shall be to promote the instruction and/or training of students in chess, thereby improving or developing their capabilities. The League will pursue this purpose by directing, supervising and regulating scholastic chess activities for students. The League will conduct public discussion groups, forums, panels, lectures and other forms of public education in schools. The League will promote the spirit of good sportsmanship and fair play in all interscholastic chess contests; and safeguard the physical, mental, and moral welfare of all students and protect them from exploitation.

2.2 MEMBERSHIP IN NATIONAL FEDERATION

2.2.1 This League shall maintain its status as an affiliate of the United States Chess Federation, and shall be governed by the rules and regulations thereof as far as practicable, except when these Bylaws take precedent.

Article 3 Membership

3.1 ELIGIBLE SCHOOLS

3.1.1 All schools with grades K through 12, or any combination thereof, both public and private, which are located in and serve students of the State of Florida, and which are recognizable by the Florida Department of Education as schools, whether accredited or not, are eligible for membership in this League.

3.1.2 A cooperative of Home Education Programs may become a member of this League provided:

- a) The cooperative is recognized by the Florida Parent Educators Association;
- b) The cooperative establishes a governing board which appoints an individual who will serve as the cooperative's designated representative to the League;
- c) The cooperative pays such membership dues and other such fees as established by the Board of Directors under the authority of these Bylaws.

3.2 ORGANIZATION OF MEMBER SCHOOLS

3.2.1 Member schools shall be categorized as high schools, junior high schools, middle schools or elementary schools. A school's categorization as such shall be determined by its last report to the Florida Department of Education. Schools which have independent physical plants and/or separate principals must hold separate memberships in this League.

3.3 APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

- 3.3.1 The Commissioner shall mail to each school an application for membership. Each Principal, on his/her school's annual application for membership, shall name the school's official representative to the League. This representative must be either the principal or his/her official designee.

3.4 OBLIGATIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

- 3.4.1 By signing the membership application, each principal shall bind himself/herself and the members of his/her school to familiarize themselves with the Bylaws and regulations of this League, and to instruct the students in them, especially those who are candidates for interscholastic chess activities; to keep on file detailed academic and attendance records of all students; to forward promptly to the Commissioner all eligibility reports and records required; to enforce the provisions of the Bylaws and regulations of this League within his/her school; to abide by the administrative decisions of the Board of Directors and the Commissioner in the enforcement of the provisions of the Bylaws and regulations of this League.
- 3.4.2 The administrative decisions of the Board of Directors and Commissioner shall be accepted in good faith by all member schools. The principal of any member school who, by any act or attitude, shall refuse to accept any such decision, or shall hold in contempt or derision any such decision, or shall permit or acquiesce in such contempt or derision on the part of any group or individual associated with his/her school, shall subject his/her school to expulsion from this League. These provisions are not to be construed as preventing the principal or a member school from exercising their right to due process by appealing decisions of the Commissioner to the Board of Directors.

3.5 ADMINISTRATIVE REGIONS

- 3.5.1 The Board of Directors shall divide the League's membership along existing county lines into four administrative regions, to ensure equitable representation on the League's Board of Directors. Initially, these are defined as follows:
- a) North Region member schools in Marion, Baker, Nassau, Duval, Clay, St. Johns, Putnam, Flagler, Gadsden, Leon, Wakulla, Jefferson, Madison, Taylor, Hamilton, Suwannee, Lafayette, Dixie, Columbia, Union, Bradford, Gilchrist, Alachua, Levy, Escambia, Santa Rosa, Okaloosa, Walton, Holmes, Washington, Bay, Jackson, Calhoun, Liberty, Gulf and Franklin counties.
 - b) West Region member schools in Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, Hillsborough, Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto, Sumter, Polk, Hardee, and Highlands counties.
 - c) East Region member schools in Volusia, Brevard, Indian River, Okeechobee, St. Lucie, Lake, Seminole, Orange and Osceola counties.
 - d) South Region member schools in Martin, Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Charlotte, Glades, Lee, Hendry and Collier counties.

Article 4 Board of Directors

4.1 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- 4.1.1 The executive authority of this League shall be vested in the Board of Directors, which shall be composed of 9 persons as follows:
- a) Four persons constituting the executive officers of the League, those positions being: President, Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer.

- b) Four persons constituting the Representatives of the League, one representative from each of the four regions listed above, elected by the member schools in each region.
 - c) The ninth person shall be the League Commissioner who is also a League officer.
- 4.1.2 A quorum of the Board of Directors shall consist of five members. A meeting may be called by either the President or the Commissioner, and may take place either in a physical meeting room, or in an on-line chat room. All 9 Board members must be notified at least 2 weeks in advance of any Board meeting, either by US mail or electronic mail, except that such notice requirement may be waived in writing by the directors then acting. In the event that a Board member does not have electronic mail or meeting capability, such member may designate a surrogate address for his/her electronic communications, but may not vote by proxy or designate an alternative representative. When a vote is taken on any matter pending before the Board of Directors, a quorum being present, a majority of the votes of the members of the Board voting on the matter shall determine the outcome thereof. The Commissioner do not have a vote unless the matter is unresolved because of a tie vote. In that circumstance, the Commissioner may vote to break a tie vote.
- 4.1.3 The President shall preside over all meetings of this League and of the Board of Directors, and perform other duties pertaining to the office. The Vice-president shall act as President in case of his/her absence or incapacity to perform his/her duty. The Secretary shall work with the Commissioner to help transcribe the minutes of all meetings by the Board, help compile the membership list, and help with dissemination of bulletins and other correspondence. The Treasurer shall work with the Commissioner in all matters financial.
- 4.1.4 The Representatives of the League will consist of one Representative from each of the four regions outlined in section 3.5.1 of these Bylaws. Each Representative shall be elected by member schools within his/her region.
- 4.1.5 The authority and duties of the Board of Directors, acting as a body and in accordance with the League's Bylaws, are as follows:
- a) To act as the incorporated League's Board of Directors and to fulfill the obligations of such as required by the Articles of Incorporation;
 - b) To establish such guidelines, regulations, policies and procedures as are authorized by the Bylaws;
 - c) To provide a Commissioner for the League;
 - d) To levy annual dues and other fees and to set the percentage of tournament receipts which is to be collected by this League;
 - e) To approve the budget of the League;
 - f) To organize and conduct statewide interscholastic chess competitions and to establish the terms and conditions for these competitions; and
 - g) To act as an administration Board in the interpretation of, and final decision on, all questions and appeals arising from the directing of interscholastic chess contests of member schools.
- 4.1.6 Members of the Board of Directors shall serve terms of two years and may succeed themselves. In order to establish a rotation of terms, the Vice-president, Treasurer, Region 1 and Region 3 Representatives shall be elected in odd years, and the President, Secretary, Region 2 and Region 4 Representatives elected in even years.

- 4.1.7 Each Director or Representative shall take office directly following his/her election or appointment and shall serve for a two-year term, except as otherwise provided for in these Bylaws, or until a successor has been elected or appointed.
- 4.1.8 Board of directors shall serve actively by responding to email, phone, performing said duties and attending all meetings. Failure to comply with responsibilities and attendance could result in removal of office by serving only one term or by majority of vote on any two consecutive meetings or during the annual meeting.

4.2 COMMISSIONER

4.2.1 The Commissioner, the League's executive officer, shall be appointed by the Board of Directors. The person chosen shall be employed under written contract for a stated period of time. The contract is to be renewed under conditions mutually satisfactory to the Commissioner and the Board of Directors.

4.2.2 The duties of the Commissioner shall be to:

- a) Manage and direct the affairs of the League.
- b) Interpret the Bylaws, guidelines, regulations, policies and procedures of the League and issue rulings pertaining to such interpretations. The Commissioner shall have the authority to waive the Bylaws of the League in order to comply with statutory changes.
- c) Prepare and submit to the Board a proposed budget for the following fiscal year. The Board during its first meeting of the new fiscal year shall make final approval of a budget.
- d) Receive all funds of the League; disburse all funds within the budget fixed by the Board; Keep accurate records of all funds received and disbursed; and to make such reports as may be required by the Board.
- e) Publish annually a calendar of events, including interscholastic chess activities sponsored by this League.
- f) Issue a membership list each year, and keep the member schools informed of any changes in that list.
- g) Prepare and issue to member schools necessary forms and other supplies.
- h) Receive and check all reports from member schools.
- i) Pass upon the eligibility of all students who participate in those activities which are under the authority of the League.
- j) Investigate all alleged violations of the rules of the League that are documented in writing and assess penalties for such violations.
- k) Call upon members of the Board to perform such duties as may be necessary and expedient.
- l) Call upon the Board for advice or assistance.
- m) Keep a record of all meetings and correspondence of the League.
- n) Review all controversies between member schools and render decisions thereon.
- o) Approve all tournament schedules of the League and have general supervision over such tournaments under the rules and regulations of the League.
- p) Raise money for the League and/or appoint a fund-raiser.
- q) Act as liaison between other vested groups such as the US Chess Federation and Florida Board of Education.
- r) Perform such duties as may be assigned by the Board.

- 4.2.3 A Deputy Commissioner shall be appointed by the Board upon the absence or incapacity of the Commissioner and serve as Acting Commissioner and be responsible for the discharge of the duties of the Commissioner as set forth in the Bylaws of the League.
- 4.2.4 Upon the request of the Commissioner, A Deputy Commissioner may also be appointed upon signing a contract and must be approved by a quorum of the board. The deputy commissioner shall have equal responsibilities as the Commissioner and his/her role is solely to assist the commissioner.

4.3 ANNUAL MEETING

- 4.3.1 The date and place of the annual meeting of this League shall be set by the Board and will coincide with the League Championship. The Commissioner shall notify all member schools as to the exact time and place of the meeting and issue a bulletin immediately preceding the date set. Representation at the annual meeting shall be by the school's representative to the League as designated by the principal on the application for membership or by some member of the school accredited by him or her in writing prior to the meeting. The representative of each member school shall be entitled to one vote.
- 4.3.2 Official representatives may only represent/vote for one school. There shall be no voting by proxy at this or any other meeting of the League.

4.4 COMPLIANCE WITH SUNSHINE LAW

- 4.4.1 All meetings of the League in which business is conducted shall be operated in compliance with the Florida Sunshine Law.

Article 5 Elections and Vacancies

5.1 ELECTIONS

- 5.1.1 All elections of officers for this League will take place at the annual meeting as designated by the Commissioner. Each member school will have one vote. Nominations will be taken from the floor. Nominations for the offices of President, Vice-president, Secretary and Treasurer can come from any member school. Nominations for the 4 Regional Representatives must be made by a member school from that region. The candidate receiving a majority of the votes cast shall be declared by the Commissioner to have been elected. If no nominee receives a majority of the votes cast on the first vote, and second vote shall be taken between the two nominees receiving the most votes. In the event of a tie vote on the second ballot, the Board of Directors, by majority vote, shall determine the winner.

5.2 VACANCIES ON THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- 5.2.1 If a member of the Board withdraws from active duty or becomes incapacitated for any reason, the Board shall elect a successor to serve the remainder of the unexpired term. Sectional equity shall be taken into account whenever possible.

Article 6 Financial Structure

6.1 DUES

- 6.1.1 The amount of annual dues shall be determined by the Board of Directors. Dues for all member schools are payable at the time of joining.

- 6.1.2 The representative of any member school which fails to pay its annual dues shall be dropped from membership in the League, but the school may be permitted to reactivate its membership at any time during the remainder of that same school year upon application with payment of the dues for that year as well as a reactivation fee. Reactivation of membership, however, shall not be permitted without additional penalty if the school has violated any of the Bylaws during the school's lapse in membership. Any school that has been dropped from membership for failure to pay its annual dues and does not reactivate its membership by the end of the school year shall be considered withdrawn from the League.

6.2 BUDGET

- 6.2.1 An annual budget shall be prepared by the Commissioner for approval as submitted or as amended by the Board. All moneys disbursed by the Commissioner shall be according to the budget, and for the purpose of promoting the aims of the League.

Article 7 Authority and Responsibility of Principal

7.1 DEFINITION AND RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PRINCIPAL

- 7.1.1 The term "principal" as used in these Bylaws refers to the supervising principal or representative of the member school, whoever signs the membership application. He/she is held responsible by this League for the enforcement of its rules and regulations in his/her school. If a principal designates his/her responsibilities as official representative of this League to another member of his/her school, that does not relieve him/her as principal, of the obligation to ensure that these Bylaws, and rules and regulations established by the Board of Directors pursuant to these Bylaws, are adhered to in his/her school.
- 7.1.2 All phases of interscholastic chess activities within a member school, including the activities of clubs, parent groups, etc., shall be under the principal's supervision.

7.2 CERTIFICATION OF STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

- 7.2.1 The principal shall sign all eligibility reports and correspondence concerning eligibility and be responsible for their accuracy regardless of who compiles the information. The principal shall certify that the information is absolutely correct and the students whose names appear on reports are eligible in accordance with the provisions of these Bylaws.
- 7.2.2 The assistant principal or the school's designated representative to the League, if other than the principal, may sign eligibility reports or eligibility correspondence if directed by the principal of that member school. The principal of that member school is still responsible for any information sent to this League.

7.3 MAINTENANCE OF RECORDS

- 7.3.1 The principal of his/her designated representative school shall keep file copies of all records to be forwarded to this League.

7.4 RECRUITMENT OF STUDENTS

- 7.4.1 Recruitment of students or attempted recruitment of students for chess competitions, regardless of their residence, is a gross violation of the spirit and philosophy of this League and is expressly forbidden. Recruiting is the use of undue influence and/or special inducement by someone associated with a school in any attempt to encourage a prospective student to attend or remain at that school for the purpose of participation or competition in competitive chess contests. A school is responsible for any such action committed by any person associated with the school, including staff members, coaches, students, parents and any organization, such as a chess club, having connection to the school. A school is also responsible for any violation committed by any person acting at the direction of the school or anyone associated with the school.

Article 8 Sportsmanship

8.1 UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT

- 8.1.1 The removal of a team or individual competitor from a chess competition by a coach or administrator because of his/her dissatisfaction with tournament officials or other conditions of the tournament shall be an act of gross unsportsmanlike conduct.
- 8.1.2 In the event of a gross misbehavior or unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of a team or individual officially representing a member school at an interscholastic chess tournament the Commissioner shall have the authority to deny further participation to such team or individual.
- 8.1.3 All individuals and institutions involved in League sanctioned competitions shall adhere to the principals of good sportsmanship and the aim of ethical behavior as outlined in these Bylaws. These individuals include organizers, tournament directors, tournament staff, students, parents, coaches, school staff and bystanders. The Board of Directors shall establish penalties for any violations of these principles and ethics.
- 8.1.4 Any person(s) who falsifies information so a student can gain eligibility status shall be declared ineligible to participate in any interscholastic chess endeavor for a period of one year from the date of the discovery of any violation. These individuals include organizers, tournament directors, tournament staff, students, parents, coaches, and school staff.

8.2 CROWD CONTROL

- 8.2.1 Any member school which is found guilty of gross unsportsmanlike conduct or who fails to control the conduct of it's student body, faculty, and/or followers within reasonable bounds shall be subject to a penalty.

Article 9 Interscholastic Contests

9.1 DEFINITION OF INTERSCHOLASTIC CONTESTS

- 9.1.1 Any competition between organized teams or individuals of different schools in a chess event sanctioned by this League is an interscholastic contest and shall be subject to all regulations pertaining to such contests.
- 9.1.2 Protests of interscholastic chess contests shall not be allowed. The decision of the officials shall be final.

9.2 RULES OF COMPETITION

9.2.1 The rules published by the United States Chess Federation in conjunction with the rules established by this League shall be the official rules for interscholastic chess competitions sanctioned by this League, unless waived by at least a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors.

9.3 USE OF REGISTERED OFFICIALS

9.3.1 All officials for interscholastic chess tournaments sanctioned by this League must be registered. The Board of Directors shall established policies and procedures for registration of officials. The responsibility for using registered officials shall rest with the organizer of any sanctioned tournaments of this League.

Article 10 Eligibility

10.1 ELIGIBILITY

10.0.1 A student in grades kindergarten through twelfth is eligible to participate as an individual or team member in interscholastic chess contests sanctioned by this League provided:

10.1 ATTENDANCE

10.1.1 In order to represent a school in any interscholastic chess competitions, a student must be a bona fide student of that school - bona fide meaning one who is regularly enrolled and in regular attendance - who meets in addition, the requirements set forth in other sections of this Article.

10.2 ACADEMIC STANDING

10.2.1 The student shall not have graduated from any high school or its equivalent.

10.2.2 A kindergarten through twelfth grade student must meet the following academic requirements to be eligible for any interscholastic chess competition sanctioned by this League:

- a) He/she must be in regular attendance;
- b) He/she must be carrying a normal class load and doing satisfactory classroom work, with a satisfactory conduct record as determined by the principal and the standards of this League;
- c) He/she must meet all academic standards as mandated by Florida Statutes.

10.3 RESIDENCE

10.3.1 A student shall be eligible in the school in which he/she first enrolls each school year. The student shall be eligible in that school as long as he/she remains enrolled at that school and meets all eligibility requirements.

10.3.2 A student who, after initially enrolling in school, moves into a school community with his/her parents or another individual with whom he/she has lived continuously for a full calendar year and subsequently transfers to a new school as a result of that move, shall be eligible immediately as far as residence is concerned.

10.3.3 The fact that guardianship papers have been issued placing a student under the control of a person(s) other than his/her parents does not establish eligibility. Residence with and support by any individual(s) for a period of one year does establish residence of that individual(s) as the residence of a student.

- 10.3.4 A student who transfers his/her attendance from one school to another following his/her initial enrollment is a school for that year shall be ineligible to represent the new school as a team member. That student may compete as an individual and his/her school status would be unattached. This rule shall not apply if the change of attendance is accompanied by a corresponding change in residence. (See section 10.3.2)
- 10.3.5 The Commissioner shall be contacted in writing concerning the status of any student(s) with dual residences. The Commissioner shall determine the status of any student(s) with dual residences on a case-by-case basis.

10.4 TRANSFERS

- 10.4.1 A student who transfers from one school to another following his/her initial enrollment for that school year shall be ineligible to represent the new school he/she is attending for the duration of that school year. That student could participate as an individual and his/her status would be unattached. This rule shall not apply if the change of attendance from one school to another is accompanied by a corresponding change in residence on the part of the student's parent(s) or other individual(s) whom the student lived with continuously for a full year, which makes it necessary for him/her to attend a different school, (see 10.3.2)
- 10.4.2 The Commissioner shall be contacted in writing concerning the status of any student(s) who transfer because of unusual or unavoidable circumstances. The Commissioner shall determine the transfer status of any student(s) on a case-by-case basis.

10.5 LENGTH OF ELIGIBILITY

- 10.5.1 High school students are expected to be regularly promoted from the previous grade the immediate preceding year and are therefore entitled to four years of eligibility for this League's sanctioned competitions. Furthermore:
- a) Any student participating as a tenth grader shall have two years of eligibility remaining
 - b) Any student participating as an eleventh grader shall have one year of eligibility remaining
 - c) Any student participating as a twelfth grader shall not be eligible for any further League sanctioned competitions.

10.6 DUAL ENROLLMENT

- 10.6.1 The Commissioner shall be contacted in writing concerning any student(s) who are participating in dual enrollment programs. Students will play for schools first enrolled at or zoned for. Exceptions will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the Commissioner.

10.7 AGE

- 10.7.1 A student may participate in interscholastic chess competitions until reaching the age of 19 years 9 months, so far as age is concerned. Upon reaching the age of 19 years 9 months the student shall be ineligible for further participation in interscholastic chess competitions sanctioned by this League.
- 10.7.2 A principal or his/her designated representative may be requested by the Commissioner to certify the age of a student(s) by proof in the form of birth certificate or its equivalent.

Article 11 Penalties

11.1 PENALTIES

- 11.1.1 Any violation of this League's Bylaws, regulations, guidelines, or procedures shall be reported in writing to the Commissioner who then shall have the full authority of the Board of Directors to invoke one or more of the following penalties against any member school(s) or person(s) found to have committed violations:
- a) Reprimand
 - b) Fine
 - c) Forfeit
 - d) Probation
 - e) Expulsion

Article 12 Due Process

12.1 DUE PROCESS

- 12.1.1 Any school(s) or person(s) subject to penalties shall be entitled to due process. Those involved can first appeal to the Commissioner. If unsatisfied, those involved may further appeal to the Board of Directors. All decisions by the Board of Directors shall be final.

Article 13 Amendments

13.1 SUBMISSION OF AMENDMENTS

- 13.1.1 Each member school representative, the Board of Directors acting as a whole or as members acting individually, and the League's Commissioner are empowered to propose amendments to the Bylaws. Any other individual may propose an amendment by securing sponsorship of any of the aforementioned individuals of bodies. Proposed amendments to the Bylaws, must be submitted to the Commissioner for consideration by the Board of Directors.
- 13.1.2 A two-thirds majority of the votes cast by Board Members is required for passage of any amendment. The vote on the final passage of any amendment shall be a roll call vote with the vote of each Board Member reported to member schools.
- 13.1.3 An amendment shall become effective immediately unless otherwise specified.
- 13.1.4 The Board of Directors and Commissioner are allowed to make necessary adjustments to these Bylaws to be consistent with Florida Statutes.