

# CONSTITUTION OF THE LONG ISLAND FORENSIC ASSOCIATION

## ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Long Island Forensic Association, hereafter called the league.

## ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

- A. The purpose of the League shall be the development of articulate young people through whose skill truth may be spread. In this way, they may become a healthy influence in their community. The League sponsors speech and debate tournaments throughout the school year as well as an elimination Tournament for the New York State Forensic League.
- B. The League is organized exclusively for educational purposes under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
- C. Fiscal Responsibility of a Tax Exempt Organization

No part of the net earnings of the organization shall inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, trustees, officers or private persons, except as the League shall be authorized and empowered to pay reasonable compensation for services rendered and to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the purposes set forth in the purpose clause above. No substantial part of the activities of the League shall be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the League shall not participate in, or intervene in (including the publishing or distribution of statements) any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provisions in this Constitution, the League shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by an organization exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future tax code, or (b) by an organization, contributions to which are deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

- D. Dissolution of the League

Upon dissolution of the League, assets shall be distributed for one of more exempt purposes within the meaning of section 501 (3) (c) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code, or shall be distributed to the federal government, or to a state or local government, for a public purpose. Any such assets not disposed of shall be disposed of by the Courts of Common Pleas of the county in which the principal office of the organization is then located, exclusively for such purposes or to such organization or organizations, as said Court shall determine, which are organized and operated exclusively for such purpose.

## ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

### A. Eligibility

Any high school or junior high school in the geographical boundaries of Nassau and Suffolk Counties shall be eligible for membership in the League with the approval of the League's Executive Council. Students of member schools of this organization whose coaches deem them qualified for membership shall be entitled to membership in the League.

### B. Certification

Application for membership shall be made to the president of the League. School membership shall become effective upon approval of the application by the Executive Council and payment of the membership fee to the treasurer of the League.

## ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

The Executive Board shall consist of an Executive Council and an Executive Committee.

### A. Executive Council

1. The Executive Council shall consist of the League officers. They shall be a president, a vice president, and a secretary-treasurer. The Executive Council shall have the authority to make all decisions regarding the actual running of tournaments as well as the implementation of this CONSTITUTION and its By-laws

### 2. Election of Officers

All officers shall be chosen by a majority vote of the member schools present at the first general meeting of the school year. Each member school shall have one vote.

### 3. Term of Office

The term for all officers shall be one academic year. Officers may be re-elected for any number of years.

### 4. Duties of Officers

#### a. President

i. shall be responsible for the enforcement of all provisions of this CONSTITUTION and its By-laws.

- ii. shall preside at all League tournaments and meetings.
  - iii. shall serve as a liaison to the New York State Forensic League.
  - iv. and shall oversee all communications within the League.
- b. Vice President
  - i. shall act in the place of the president when necessary.
  - ii. shall assist in the registration at all tournaments.
- c. Secretary-Treasurer
  - i. shall publish minutes of all meetings.
  - ii. shall handle all regular communication within the League.
  - iii. shall have responsibility for the finances of the League.
  - iv. shall account for the League's expenses and receipts for the previous year, at the opening meeting of the new year.
  - v. shall recommend changes in dues and registration payments for the upcoming school year.
  - vi. and shall purchase the trophies for the League.

B. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of the moderators of forensics of all member schools. The Executive Committee shall have authority to make all necessary legislation for the good order of the League. A two-thirds majority is needed for changes in the CONSTITUTION, and a simple majority is needed for changes in the By-Laws. Each member school has one vote. Votes may be taken either at meetings or by mail.

**BY-LAWS OF THE  
LONG ISLAND FORENSIC ASSOCIATION**

**ARTICLE I – DUES AND FEES**

**A. Dues and Fees**

The annual dues and the fees for each contest will be determined at the general meeting at the beginning of each academic year. Schools may choose either of two methods of payment:

1. Plan “A”: Single Payment: A school may choose to pay a single sum for its annual dues and unlimited entrants to all League tournaments. The sum will be determined at the general meeting at the beginning of each academic year.
2. Plan “B”: A single dues payment plus a registration fee for each student at each contest. Any school which opts for Plan B must present a check at the beginning of each tournament.

**B. Tardy Payment**

Schools which fail to pay their dues by the announced date will be ineligible to compete in future tournaments.

**C. Fines**

Upon determination of the Executive Council, fines may be imposed upon a school for non-conformance to the Constitution and By-laws. Fines must be paid in full for participation in future tournaments.

**ARTICLE II – TOURNAMENTS**

**A. Events**

**1. Debate**

- a.. Team Debate (two-person, switch-side)
  - i. The resolution shall be the one selected by the NFL for that year.
  - ii. Procedures and time limits are the same as those of the NFL. Prep time is 5 minutes/team.
  - iii. Critiques: should always be made in writing on the ballot. Oral criticisms are given only after the results have been announced.

- iv. Debaters may use a computer to store information and retrieve information from the internet. They may not; however, communicate with anyone outside of the debate round. Any debater who communicates with someone outside the round will be disqualified from the tournament. There is no guarantee of power outlets in a round.
- b. Lincoln-Douglas Debate (one-person, switch-side)
- i. The topic will be chosen by the League officers.
  - ii. The topic will be communicated to coaches and debaters in a timely manner.
  - iii. Time limits and procedures are the same as NSDA rules.
  - iv. Critiques: should always be made in writing on the ballot. Oral criticisms are given only after the results have been announced.
  - v. Debaters may use a computer to store information and retrieve information from the internet. They may not; however, communicate with anyone outside of the debate round. Any debater who communicates with someone outside the round will be disqualified from the tournament. There is no guarantee of power outlets in a round.
- c. Public Forum (two-person, switch-side)
- i. The topic will be chosen by the League officers.
  - ii. The topic will be communicated to coaches and debaters in a timely manner.
  - iii. Time limits and procedures are the same as NYSFL rules.
  - iv. Public Forum is a two-person debate format. Single debaters (mavericks) are not permitted.
  - v. Critiques: should always be made in writing on the ballot. Oral criticisms are given only after the results have been announced.
  - vi. Debaters may use a computer to store information and retrieve information from the internet. They may not; however, communicate with anyone outside of the debate round. Any debater who communicates with someone outside the round will be

disqualified from the tournament. There is no guarantee of power outlets in a round.

## 2. Speech

### a. Original Oratory

- i. The speech must be written by the contestant.
- ii. A persona may be assumed for not more than one minute.
- iii. Quoted material may not exceed 150 words.
- iv. The speech must be entirely memorized, no notes may be used when speaking.
- v. Time limit is ten minutes maximum plus one-half minute grace, no minimum time.
- vi. The speech may not be used if it has been delivered prior to September of the current academic year.

### b. Extemporaneous Speaking

- i. At certain tournaments extemp shall be split into two levels, Junior Varsity and Varsity Extemp. Only ninth and tenth graders may participate in Junior Varsity Extemp.
- ii. The speech should be an original synthesis of current events material which answers a question that the contestant has chosen from three possibilities.
- iii. The topics should deal with current events within the past three months.
- iv. The speaker has thirty minutes prep time.
- v. In Junior Varsity Extemp the speaker may consult a card of no more than 50 words. Varsity Extemp Speakers may not use a card.
- vi. Speakers may use a computer to store information and to access the internet during prep time. They may not communicate with anyone outside the prep room. Any speaker who communicates with someone outside the prep room will be disqualified from the tournament. Speakers may not use power outlets in the prep room.

- vii. The speaker may not give the same speech twice in a contest.
- viii. The speaker may consult reference material but may not use prepared speeches or summaries.
- ix. Time limit is seven minutes maximum time, plus one-half minute grace; no minimum time.

c. Oratorical Declamation

- i. Only 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders are eligible.
- ii. The selection must have originally been delivered as a real-life speech and may not have been written by the contestant.
- iii. The speech must be memorized; contestants may not refer to the speech as they are speaking.
- iv. Time limit is ten minutes maximum plus one-half minute grace, no minimum time.
- v. Contestants may not use a speech they have delivered in competition prior to September of the current year.

d. Oral Interpretation of Literature

- i. Each speaker must select two readings, one prose and one poetry,
- ii. Rounds alternate between prose and poetry; the first round is determined by coin toss at the beginning of the contest.
- iii. All scripts and speeches are prohibited; all material must be published.
- iv. Students may not add their own material to the selections but may write introductions.
- v. There should be a balance between manuscript and audience contact.
- vi. The speaker should hold the manuscript in hand.
- vii. The speaker may assume personae.

- viii. Gestures are permissible, but they should not be mimetic; local motion is not permissible.
- ix. Time limit is ten minutes maximum plus one-half minute grace, no minimum time.
- x. Contestants may not use selections which they have delivered in competition prior to the September of the current school year,

e. Dramatic and Humorous Interpretations

- i. The selection must come from a published script.
- ii. It may be serious or humorous, of one character or several.
- iii. Short stories, poems, novels, or scripts may be used. (Movies and television shows are acceptable as long as they have been published).
- iv. Contestants may not add their own material to the selection but may compose their own introduction.
- v. Gestures and bodily movements are permissible.
- vi. No props or costumes may be used.
- vii. The entire selection must be memorized; students may not consult scripts once they have begun their performance.
- viii. Time limit is ten minutes maximum plus one-half minute grace, no minimum time.
- ix. Contestants may not use selections which have been delivered in competition prior to the September of the current school year.

f. Duo Interpretation

- i. The selection must be from a single published play, fictional or non-fictional work or a poem. It may be humorous or serious or combine both.
- ii. Except during the Introduction and transition, eye contact is aimed only in the audience's direction. The Introduction must begin from the center stage area. Focal points are to be employed during dialogue.



- iii. The two interpreters must effectively use pitch, volume, speed, phrasing, vocal quality, tone articulation, enunciation, and fluency to create the characterizations desired.
- iv. The dialogue between characters should reflect a genuine sense of interaction, not a mechanical exchange of lines.
- v. No props or costumes may be used.
- vi. The entire selection must be memorized; students may not consult scripts once they have begun their performance.
- vii. Contestants may not add their own material to the selection but may compose their own introduction.
- viii. Time limit is ten minutes maximum plus one-half minute grace, no minimum time.
- ix. Contestants may not use selections which they have performed in competition prior to the September of the current academic year.

g. Program Oral Interpretation

- i. Speakers will assemble literature from prose, poetry and drama. Speakers must use at least 2 of the 3 genres.
- ii. Speakers shall create a program of this literature. This program should develop a theme.
- iii. Speakers will give an introduction. During that introduction, they will give the titles and authors of all the works in their program. They will not mention those titles and authors during the program.
- iv. Each speaker must read from a binder. The binder may be used as a prop. No other props or costumes may be used.
- v. Time limit is ten minutes maximum plus one-half minute grace, no minimum time.
- vi. Contestants may not use any portion of a speech they have delivered in competition prior to September of the current year.

### 3. Student Congress

- a. Before a contest, schools will submit bills for consideration. The bills will be published on the website.
- b. All legislation must be typed, be limited to one page, and follow NSDA format. In addition, all legislation must deal with National topics
- c. Contestants will be divided into rooms based on the number of students and judge placement.
- d. Debaters may use a computer to store information and retrieve information from the internet. They may not; however, communicate with anyone outside of the debate round. Any debater who communicates with someone outside the round will be disqualified from the tournament. They may not plug into a power outlet.

#### B. Disqualification

A student who uses a prohibited type of speech or who uses previously written speeches in Extemporaneous shall receive no rank in that round. Judges should report all alleged infractions to the League officers for final judgment.

#### C. Exclusion

The Executive Council may exclude a student from participation in any or all future tournaments if that student's behavior is judged to be outside or the boundaries of acceptable behavior and/or a detriment to the administration of a tournament.

#### D. Tournament Regulations

##### 1. Quotas for and judges

- a. Regular tournaments: the Executive Council determines the events and number of speakers and debaters for each tournament and publishes this information at the beginning of each school year.
  - i. A school must provide one adult judge for every five speakers or part thereof.
  - ii. A school must provide one judge for the first debater and one for every two debaters or part thereof. A judge may not count for both Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum debates.

iii. For Student Congress, schools must bring one judge for the first eight (8) contestants and one more for more than 8.

iv. High school seniors may judge only in specially predetermined tournaments in specific categories.

b. State eliminations: Judging quotas are the same as in regular tournaments.

## 2. Quotas for Contestants

As long as the school brings the requisite number of judges, a school may bring an unlimited number of contestants. The league may limit a school for size constraints.

## E. Contest Procedures

### 1. Speech Contests

a. Regular tournaments

#### i. Preliminary Rounds

All speakers will compete in three preliminary rounds of a prearranged schedule. Finalists, who will speak in an additional round, will be determined as follows:

- a) 8 contestants in an event with the lowest 3 round cumulative ranks are finalists.
- b) In case of a tie, the speaker with the most "1's" wins.
- c) If a tie persists, the speaker with the most "2's" wins.
- d) If a tie persists, the speaker with the most "3's" wins.
- e) If those tied have identical ranks, the speaker with the highest total percent points wins.
- f) The Tab Room may increase or decrease the number of contestant in the final round depending upon the number of contestants in that category.

#### ii. Final Rounds:

Placement in the final round shall be based upon:

- a) The speaker with the lowest total of the three judges' ranks is 1<sup>st</sup>, etc.
- b) In case of a tie for a position, the winner is determined by judge preference.
- c) If a tie persists, reciprocals determine the winner.

iii. Placement for the Day

Placement for the day will be determined as follows:

- a) The speaker with the lowest total of the three preliminary round ranks plus the three final round ranks is 1<sup>st</sup>, etc.
- b) In case of a tie, the winner is determined by place in the final round.
- c) Individual trophies: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> place trophies are awarded to the top finalists; all others receive finalist trophies.

iv. Sweepstakes Awards

- a) Trophies are given to the top three teams. They are determined as follows: the sum of the points earned by the two best speakers in each event in the tournament. Points are earned according to the following formula:

**RANK IN ROUND    TROPHY POINTS**

1	5
2	4
3	3
4	2
5 ETC.	1

- b) In case of a tie, the number of points scored in the final round by the point scorers determines the winner. If a tie persists, the total number of "1's" throughout the tournament by the point scorers determines the winner, then number of "2's" etc.

- b. State eliminations: All rules for regular tournaments are in effect, except that there is no sweepstakes trophy.

## 2. Debate Contests

- a. Regular Tournaments:
  - i. All teams debate a predetermined number of times. The top debaters compete in a final round to determine winners. The first 2 rounds are random draw. All succeeding rounds are power paired within bracket. Winners are determined by record, then points, then high-low points, then O'Connor points.
  - ii. Sweepstakes: add the points scored by the top 2 debaters in each level competing (win = 5; loss = 2).
- b. State Eliminations: All rules for regular tournaments are in effect, except that there is no sweepstakes trophy.

## 3. Student Congress

- a. Regular Tournaments
  - i. The league will determine the number of houses depending upon the registration.
  - ii. If there is more than one house, the delegates from each school will be divided between the houses to utilize judges for the tournament.
  - iii. All students will compete in a preset number of preliminary sessions.
  - iv. If there is no final round, placement will be determined in the same method as determining final placement in speech.
  - v. . If there is to be a Final Congress, the top number from each house will be advanced.
  - vi. If there is a Final Congress, each student must speak three times and will be scored by three judges. The judges will base their decision on the three speeches. The student with the lowest total ranks in the Final Congress will be 1<sup>st</sup>, the second lowest 2<sup>nd</sup>, etc.
  - vii. All legislation on the agenda must be finally disposed of before new bills may be discussed.

- viii. Sweepstakes: To calculate sweepstakes, the number of points is correlated with a speech category with a similar number of contestants. The first place congressperson will receive the same number of points as the first place speaker in that category. The second place congressperson will receive the same number of points as the second place speaker in that category, etc.
- b. State Eliminations: All rules for regular tournaments are in effect, except that there is no sweepstakes trophy.

### ARTICLE III – SCHOOL RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. A schedule is drawn up for each academic year. All member schools are expected to host at least one tournament per year.
- B. Schools are compensated for hosting tournaments according to a payment plan agreed to by the Executive Committee.
- C. Schools who do not host tournaments are subject to fines, as determined by the Executive Council.

### ARTICLE IV – EVIDENTIARY RULES

The Catholic Forensic League of Rockville Centre follows the NSDA rules of evidence for all debate events.

### ARTICLE V – INTERPRETATION

The interpretation and application of all By-laws are determined by a majority decision of the Executive Council. There is no appeal beyond the Executive Council.