



YLA Constitution and By-Laws

Constitution and By-laws generally state the purpose of the organization, establish the officers and committees, and list the procedures for the organization to continue. The Constitution is the document that gives the authority and responsibility to officers, outlines the obligations and responsibilities of members, and protects the rights of its members. It is a permanent document that extends beyond any set of officers and endures for the life of the organization.

The Constitution and By-Laws keep your YLA on target and work to prevent the adoption of spur-of-the-moment legislation that is not in keeping with the purpose and objectives of YLA.

Every YLA is to have a constitution. A committee can be appointed to draft one.

Once drafted by the committee, it is to be thoroughly discussed by the total membership. All need to understand it and the group needs to support it. The discussion is not for the sake of parliamentary maneuvering or technical bickering . . . the goal is to create a document that helps your YLA succeed.

If your YLA is in a school, the Constitution may need to have the approval of the school administration and often the student council. One copy is to be filed with the school, one copy filed with the YLA Leadership Center, and copies kept with your YLA's records. Every member is to have a copy.

By-laws are those minor rules and regulations governing the inner practices and workings of the group. Do not include these within the framework of the Constitution.

The sample Constitution that follows is only a guide. Develop your own to meet the needs of your situation.

<p>Ohio-West Virginia Youth Leadership Association</p> <p>YLA Groups, Youth in Government, Model United Nations, 8th Grade Youth & Government Seminars, Horseshoe, Cave Lake www.yla-youthleadership.org</p>		
<p>Youth Leadership Association 498 Sandhill Road Pt. Pleasant, WV 25550 P: 304.675.5899 F: 304.675.5977</p>	<p>Cave Lake Leadership Center 1132 Bell Hollow Road Latham, OH 45646 P: 937.588.3252 F: 937.588.3252</p>	<p>Horseshoe Leadership Center 3309 Horseshoe Run Road Parsons, WV 26287 P: 304.478.2481 F: 304.478.4446</p>



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Sample YLA Constitution

Article I - Name

The name of this organization shall be the _____ (school or town) YLA. This YLA and its members annually affiliate with the YLA Leadership Center.

Article II - Purpose

To involve members in developing Leadership, Character, and Service while increasing an awareness of oneself and the world.

Article III - Membership

Section 1. Active Membership includes men and women in the (name of school, community, or area you cover) who accept the purpose of YLA and who are willing to give of their time, work, effort, and money to make this YLA purposeful, and are eligible to active membership.

Section 2. Transfers of membership of an active YLA member in good standing from another school or community will be recognized and accepted by this YLA upon application for membership.

Section 3. Equal Opportunity is the basis of this YLA's membership policy. This YLA welcomes into membership students who are interested, who support and are willing to work to carry out the YLA purpose and program. This YLA does not discriminate in our membership on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, national origin, disability, gender or gender identity, or economic status.

Section 4. Advisory or Sponsoring Committee is selected in consultation with the YLA Leadership Center and our local sponsor (i.e. school). The Advisory Committee includes local leaders in business, government, education, and civic affairs.

Section 5. Advisor of this YLA is a mature person who believes in the YLA purpose, who will work with the YLA organization, who will work to help develop this YLA into a valuable experience for all, and who will regularly meet with the group.

Section 6. Membership Dues, including the annual YLA Affiliation paid to the YLA Leadership Center, are set in the By-Laws. The annual Leadership Center Affiliation fee is forwarded to the Center by October 20 each year.

Article IV - Officers

The officers shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, Chaplain, and any other necessary for the operation of this YLA. They are elected in the spring and enter into office either before school ends or at the beginning of the new school year (state when). Officers are expected to attend the YLA Leadership Camp at Horseshoe.

The officers perform the duties usual to their position in YLA.

The officers, advisor, and chair of standing committees are the Executive Committee. This committee is responsible for the general direction of the organization.



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Article V - Election and Meetings

Section 1. The president shall appoint a Nominating Committee of three active members, who after consultation with the Advisor and the Advisory Committee Chair, shall make and announce nomination of all officers no later than one week before the election.

Those nominated must have committed to do the work required of their position if elected.

Section 2. The election shall be by ballot at an annual business meeting.

Section 3. Each meeting shall open and close with the YLA Ceremony.

Section 4. Special meetings may be called by the president or by the written request of three active members.

Section 5. One-third of the active members shall constitute a quorum.

Section 6. No regular or special meeting shall be held without the advisor or their representative.

Article VI - Committees

Committees are only appointed because there is a need for their service.

Section 1. The president, upon entering office and after consulting with the Executive Committee and Advisor shall appoint the necessary committees. They may include:

Membership (Secretary is the Chair) - Responsible to implement the YLA Membership Policy to recruit, orient, induct, and develop a quality membership.

Purpose (Chaplain is Chair) - Responsible to create and develop Induction of new members, Officer Installation, Rededication of Current Members, and Visions for each meeting. The committee is, in the course of a year, to involve every member in creating and presenting Visions at YLA meetings.

Program (Vice President is Chair) - Responsible to have a program for each YLA meeting.

Publicity (Publicity Chair) - Responsible to have the YLA before the public with news, articles, displays, bulletin boards, etc.



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Social (appoint as needed) - Responsible to arrange appropriate social activities that help members achieve YLA's purpose. Social includes remembering persons who are ill or need special help.

Finance (Treasurer is Chair) - Responsible to develop a budget, collect dues, raise money, see that all funds are properly deposited and accounted for, keep membership fully informed and involved.

Service (Co Chairs are the School and Community Service Chairpersons) - Responsible to involve members in the identification, selection, planning, and implementation of meaningful service that makes a difference for good for others.

Missions (appoint chair) - Responsible to inform members of YLA Missions (Project Horseshoe, YLA Extension, World Service) and to cause this YLA to participate in each.

Article VII - Amendments

At least two week's notice of proposed amendments to this Constitution shall be given all members and written notice given to each Advisory Committee member. An amendment must be approved by two-thirds majority of affiliated members to pass.

Examples of By-Laws That May Be Included

(These are only examples. Develop your own for your situation).

Our annual YLA dues will be \$_____. They include the annual YLA Leadership Center Affiliation Fee.

Members with three unexcused absences will be dropped from membership provided:

The Secretary or an appointed member of the Membership Committee interviews the absent member after each absence.

After the second unexcused absence, the member is again interviewed and reminded of their responsibility to attend.

After the third unexcused absence the President or appointed member of the Executive Committee shall interview the person, remind them of their responsibility and commitment, and decide if they are dropped from membership.

If they want to continue membership and participate, those dropped may re-apply for new membership.

This YLA shall participate in the YLA Mission Program of YLA Extension, Project Horseshoe, and World Service.

Officers must meet any school requirements for holding office.



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A member who does not carry out the purpose of YLA shall be interviewed by the President or other person appointed by the President to:

- Discuss the commitment they made when becoming a member,
- The expectations of members,
- The need to reflect the YLA purpose.

The interview is to provide an opportunity for the person to reaffirm their interest in YLA or to resign. If the person resigns, they may re-apply for membership later when they are in a position to carry out the member responsibilities.

Once a year current members are asked to renew their membership commitment as part of the New Member Induction/Officer Installation Ceremony.

New members are inducted into membership and officers installed in a special ceremony.

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