

# South West Suburban Conference

## Constitution and By-Laws



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Approved March 22, 2005

# **Constitution of the SouthWest Suburban Conference**

## **PART I – PREAMBLE**

### **Article I - Purpose**

The purpose of this Constitution and By-Laws are to provide a governing body for the SouthWest Suburban Conference and to provide for the member schools of this Conference a code of principles and a set of operational procedures.

Provisions are made in this Constitution and accompanying By-Laws to include all co-curricular activities that may be carried on in this Conference.

### **Article II - The Place of Co-Curricular Activities in the Educational Program**

Co-curricular activities are offered by schools of the Conference in the belief that they can make valuable contributions toward the achievement of educational goals.

Because of the nature of these activities, exceptional opportunities are present for guidance in the development of sound, ethical standards. However, these values do not result automatically from co-curricular programs. Their realization depends on the purposes for which the program is operated and to the extent to which those in direct charge of activities believe to be worthwhile. Leadership from the Boards of Education, Superintendents, Principals, Athletic Directors, Activity Directors, coaches and sponsors is critical to the appropriate emphasis on the co-curricular program.

### **Article III – Principles of the Co-Curricular Program**

Section 1. The co-curricular program is designed to challenge the student whose capacities, abilities and interests extend beyond the regular academic program.

Section 2. The amount of time required for co-curricular participation should not be so great that it interferes with a student's success in the academic program. Likewise, an academic program that permits no time for the pursuit of co-curricular activities and interests fails to recognize the needs of students.

Section 3. The amount of specialization or time required for participation in any one high school activity should not be so great as to limit a student's participation in other activities. Therefore, the use of undue influence by a sponsor/coach to take the student away from another activity infringes upon that student's freedom of choice.

Section 4. Co-curricular activities in the schools should be conducted in such a manner that they provide a quality experience for both participants and spectators.

## **PART II - ORGANIZATION OF THE SOUTHWEST SUBURBAN CONFERENCE**

### **Article I - Name**

This association of schools shall be known as the SouthWest Suburban Conference.

### **Article II – Membership, Dues and Assessments**

Section 1. Membership of the SouthWest Suburban Conference shall include the following high schools: Victor J. Andrew, Bradley-Bourbonnais, Bolingbrook, Homewood-Flossmoor, Lincoln-Way Central, Lincoln-Way East, Lincoln Way West, Lockport Township, Carl Sandburg, Amos A. Stagg, Thornton, Thornridge, and Thornwood.

Section 2. Annual dues to cover the regular and customary costs and expenses of the SWSC operations shall be determined and assessed annually to each member school. Annual dues shall be of an equal amount for each school payable by October 1 and after July 1.

Section 3. Whenever the SWSC has incurred or suffered any extraordinary expense or financial obligation of any kind whatsoever and such an expense or obligation has been approved by the Superintendents' by a two-thirds vote, the schools shall pay a proportional sum sufficient to cover the expense. Any school that fails to pay annual dues or assessments may be expelled from the SWSC by a two-thirds vote of the Superintendents.

### **Article III – Legislative Bodies and Officers**

Section 1. The legislative authority of the SouthWest Suburban Conference shall be vested in and shared between the Superintendents and Principals.

Section 2. The Superintendents shall be composed of the chief administrators of the member school districts or their delegated representatives. In any official action, each member district shall be entitled to one vote. The Superintendents shall choose a president, president-elect and secretary by their own methods.

Section 3. Each member school shall be represented by the principal or delegated representative at meetings. The presidents of the Athletic Directors and Activity Directors shall also attend these meetings to give reports and answer questions. In any official action, each high school shall be entitled to one vote. *The officers of the legislative body are a central element in the success of the Southwest Suburban Conference. Therefore, ensuring that the functions of the officers are well understood and shared among all members is important for safeguarding the Southwest Suburban Conference against unplanned and unexpected change. The positions of President, Vice-President, and Secretary within the Southwest Suburban Conference shall be considered three-year term positions. Within each three-year term, the elected officer will serve a one-year role beginning as Secretary serving as Vice-President in the second year, and culminate in the third year as President. If for any reason a member elected to one of the positions cannot or will not complete the term, a majority vote by the Principals shall elect a replacement. The Treasurer is an elected position each year without term length.*

Section 4. The Athletic Directors shall select a president, vice-president and a secretary by their own methods. Each athletic director shall have one vote. The Athletic Directors shall act as an advisory capacity to the Principals and carry out such activities as delegated by the Principals. Minutes of their meeting should be forwarded to all Principals.

Section 5. The Activity Directors shall select a president, vice-president, business manager and secretary by their own methods. Each activity director shall have one vote. The Activity Directors shall act as an advisory capacity to the Principals and carry out such activities as delegated by the Principals. Minutes of their meeting should be forwarded to all Principals.

#### **Article IV – Meetings**

Section 1. The Superintendents shall meet monthly and shall meet at such additional times as it is deemed appropriate to carry on the work of the SWSC. The presidents of the Principals, Athletic Directors and Activity Directors shall attend the annual meeting to give a report.

Section 2. The Principals shall meet monthly from September through May one week after the Athletic Directors meeting. A June meeting may be used if necessary.

Section 3. The Athletic Directors shall meet monthly August through May. A June meeting may be used if necessary. These meetings should precede the Principals' monthly meeting.

Section 4. The Activity Directors shall meet monthly August through May. A June meeting may be used if necessary. These meetings should precede the Principals' monthly meeting.

Section 5. All meetings should be conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order.

#### **Article V – Powers and Responsibilities of the Superintendents**

Section 1. The expressed powers of the Superintendents are:

- A. To admit or expel a school by a two-thirds vote of eligible votes cast.
- B. To realign member schools in the SWSC by a two-thirds vote of eligible votes cast.
- C. To control all matters relating to significant financial commitments of the SWSC.
- D. To review and approve any action taken by the Principals if requested by a two-thirds vote of eligible votes cast.
- E. To approve dues, assessments and budgets.
- F. To amend the constitution by a two-thirds vote of eligible votes cast.

Section 2. On powers reserved for the Superintendents, the Principals shall submit recommendations to the Superintendents provided the recommendations pass by a two-thirds vote of eligible votes cast.

Section 3. The Superintendents shall be the final authority on interpreting the constitution.

Section 4. *Any temporary suspension or change of a by-law shall be considered temporary and set for a specific time length. All permanent changes to the by-laws shall follow the official process for said changes(s) to become permanently incorporated into the SWSC by-laws. An*

*affirmative vote by a simple majority of the members of the SWSC Superintendents group representing quorum and voting shall be required for the temporary suspension of any by-law to take effect as designated by the superintendents. The results of any vote to suspend or change a by-law shall be shared with the President of the SWSC Principals.*

## **Article VI – Powers and Responsibilities of the Principals**

Section 1. On powers reserved for the Principals, the Athletic Directors shall submit recommendations to the Principals provided the recommendations pass by a two-thirds vote of eligible votes cast.

Section 2. The Principals shall be the final authority on interpreting the ~~b~~By-~~L~~Laws.

## **PART III - OPERATION OF THE SOUTHWEST SUBURBAN CONFERENCE**

### **Article I - Appeals**

Section 1. The Principals shall rule on contests, appeals, and/or protests providing that first an attempt shall have been made by the schools officially involved in the disagreement to arrive at an amicable settlement.

Section 2. Protests may be filed by the principal or designee of any member school in the conference under the following provisions:

- A. The protest shall first be filed with the conference by the athletic director or activity director by the time of their next regular meeting. If the protest is not resolved satisfactorily by Athletic Directors or Activity Directors, the protest shall then be filed in writing with the Principals within ten days following that meeting.
- B. The protest shall state the exact nature of the violation, together with the evidence available in support of the protest.

Section 3. Procedure for considering protests:

- A. The Principals shall consider evidence submitted by the schools involved at its next regularly scheduled meeting.
- B. Action of the Principals shall be final with respect to any protest. Copies of the full proceedings shall be filed in the secretary's records.

### **Article II – Guidelines for admission to the SWSC**

Section 1. Only secondary schools that share the common beliefs stated in the purpose and principles in this document will be considered for admission into the SWSC.

Section 2. Any school applying for admission and presently in a conference, must be in good standing in that conference and be applying voluntarily for admission.

Section 3. Any school applying for admission must have athletic and activity programs that are comparable in breadth and scope to those offered by the member schools of the SWSC. This includes, but is not limited to, designation in the same IHSA division, approval by the IHSA in the case of cooperative programs (as described in Articles VII and VIII of the SWSC By-Laws), and substantially similar number of students trying out for and participating in the programs. A list of these appears in the appendix.

Section 4. Any school applying for admission must offer sanctioned activities that are comparable in breadth and scope to those offered by the member schools of the SWSC. This includes, but is not limited to, substantially similar numbers of students trying out for and participating in the programs.

Section 5. Any school seeking admission must send a written request for consideration to the Superintendents no later than one calendar year prior to the proposed admission taking effect. (For example, if a school seeks admission into the SWSC beginning August 25, 2008, that school would have to submit its written request for admission by August 25, 2007). The written request must include the following:

- a. A statement indicating that the school shares the common beliefs stated in the purpose and principles of the SWSC's Constitution, and specifically listing such beliefs;
- b. A statement affirming that the school is currently in good standing in any conference in which it is currently a member, and that it is applying voluntarily for admission to the SWSC;
- c. A listing of current athletic and sanctioned activities offered by the school, including all information showing that these activities are substantially similar in breadth and scope to those offered by SWSC member schools; and
- d. A statement indicating the date by which the school seeks to join the SWSC.

Section 6. Any school leaving the conference must submit a written request for withdrawal to the Superintendents prior to January 1 of the school year in which it is presently a member. Such a withdrawal will be considered to be in good standing, and shall be effective at the start of the following year, unless the withdrawing school and the Superintendents mutually agree upon another date.

### **Article III – Guidelines for expulsion from the SWSC**

Section 1. Failure of a member school to maintain athletic and activity programs that are comparable in breadth and scope to those offered by the other member schools of the SWSC may lead to expulsion from the Conference. This includes, but is not limited to, the failure of a member school to retain a designation in the same IHSA division, retain approval by the IHSA in the case of cooperative programs, maintain the same level of teams as currently exists within the SWSC, and have substantially similar numbers of students trying out for and participating in the programs. A list of the athletic and activity programs appears in the appendix.

Section 2. If a member school fails to maintain athletic and activity programs that are comparable in breadth and scope to those offered by the other member schools of the SWSC,

that member school has one calendar year from the date of its failure to maintain to comply with the requirements for admission to the SWSC.

Section 3. If a member school fails to comply with the requirements for admission to the SWSC within one calendar year from the date of its failure to maintain, that school shall be expelled from the SWSC upon a two-thirds vote of the Superintendents pursuant to Part II, Article V, Section 1.

Section 4. Within 30 days following its expulsion, the school may appeal its expulsion by requesting, in writing, that the Superintendents re-consider their decision at the next monthly meeting. At this meeting, the expelled school may make a statement and present evidence to show why the Superintendents should overturn the expulsion. After reviewing any evidence presented, the Superintendents shall vote as to whether the expulsion shall be overturned. The expulsion shall be overturned and the expelled school shall be readmitted to the SWSC upon a two-thirds vote of the Superintendents pursuant to Part II, Article V, Section 1.

Section 5. Any school expelled from the SWSC may apply for readmission to the Conference pursuant to the admission guidelines as stated in Part III, Article II no earlier than one calendar year following its initial expulsion. (For example, if a school were expelled from the SWSC in March 2008, that school would have to wait until March 2009 to submit a written request for consideration of readmission to the SWSC effective March 2010.)

# **BY-LAWS OF THE SOUTHWEST SUBURBAN CONFERENCE**

## **PART I - ORGANIZATION**

All members of the SWSC shall belong to the Illinois High School Association (IHSA) and conform to the rules of that organization.

## **PART II - CODE OF RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Article I - Basic Responsibilities of Administrators**

It is the responsibility of the Principal, Administrators, Athletic Director and Student Activities Director to do the following:

Section 1. See that the co-curricular programs are closely articulated with and operated on the same basis as other departments of the school.

Section 2. See that there is sufficient adult and/or police supervision at all games and activities to properly handle the spectators.

Section 3. See that rules governing coaching practices as stated in these By-Laws and as provided in the rules and regulations of the IHSA are obeyed.

## **PART III - OPERATIONAL PROCEDURES**

### **Article I – Addition of Conference Programs (Athletic or Activity)**

Any proposed new interscholastic program should be presented in writing to the Athletic Directors or Activities Directors and if approved, will then go to the Principals for final action. Proposals must be submitted within one month following the conclusion of season that the new program would be played. The Athletic or Activity Directors and Principals must ratify said recommendation by a two-thirds majority of eligible votes cast.

### **Article II - Championships**

A division team championship will be determined for both divisions (Red and Blue) unless in the interest of improving competitive opportunities and the overall development of the sport or activity, it is determined that the two divisions should be combined for a single conference championship.

### **Article III - Conduct of Contests**

General regulations regarding SouthWest Suburban Conference contests shall be in accordance with the IHSA Rules and Regulations unless otherwise stated in the Athletic or Activity Handbooks.

### **Article IV - Tickets, Passes and Admissions**

Section 1. Conference passes will permit admission to any conference contest and conference tournament. It is valid for the person to whom it is issued and two guests.

- A. SouthWest Suburban passes are not honored at IHSA Regional, Sectional, Super Sectional and/or State Tournaments.
- B. SWSC high schools may also conduct some special tournaments where the Conference Passes would not be honored.

Section 2. The president of the athletic directors shall issue conference passes in August 1<sup>st</sup> of each year for the following people:

- A. Twelve (12) passes to the district administrative center (sent to the Superintendents) for board of education members and district administrators.
- B. Fifteen (15) passes to each graduation center (sent to the principal) for school administrators.
- C. Ten (10) passes to each graduation center (sent to the principal) for scouting purposes.

Section 3. All employees of member SWSC schools shall be permitted complimentary admission with proof of employment when their school is playing. Each employee may bring two guests.

Section 4. Lifetime passes may be issued in May by the Superintendents upon the recommendation of the Principals based upon the following criteria:

- A. An employee of member school who has made significant contributions towards the enhancement of inter-scholastics athletics or activities.
- B. An individual must be retired or within four months of retirement to be eligible.

Section 5. All SICA lifetime passes will be honored by the SWSC.

Section 6. Other complimentary admissions are limited to:

- A. Cheerleaders in uniform
- B. One (1) student photographer.
- C. One (1) student reporter.
- D. Trainer and staff
- E. Managers, filmers and statisticians traveling with the team.
- F. Bus driver(s) for visiting team

Section 7. Admission charges for contests are as follows:

- A. Football and boys' basketball games – Adults: \$5.00; Students with ID's: \$2.00; Senior citizens over 60: Free.
- B. All other contests - Adults: \$3.00; Students with ID's: \$2.00; Senior citizens over 60: Free
- C. Schools reserve the right to charge for contests at the discretion of their district.

**Article V – Assignment chairs & Officials**

The Principals will contract with suitable individuals to perform the responsibilities of Assignment Chairpersons for the selection and scheduling of officials or will engage other entities to provide such services. The Principals retain final authority to review the selection of officials and to deny hire to any individual who is deemed in its sole discretion to be inappropriate for the positions.

Assignment Chairpersons are authorized by the Principals to enter into written agreements with officials. Each agreement shall extend for no more than a single sport and season. The Principals shall have no obligation to rehire any official after a specific contract is fulfilled. Assignment Chairpersons and officials are independent contractors.

As a condition of hire, officials agree to conduct themselves at all times in the best interests of the Conference and of the students and schools involved in the athletic events at which they officiate. Officials acknowledge that the safety and the integrity of interscholastic sports is their primary responsibility. Grounds for immediate termination by the Conference of a contract with an official shall include but not be limited to:

- A. Failure to competently and properly officiate at assigned athletic events.
- B. Dangerous, rude or otherwise improper conduct toward students, coaches or spectators in connection with assigned athletic events.
- C. Failure to disclose on a timely basis to the Assignment Chairperson or Principals a relationship with a school, coach or student involved in an athletic event that would create or give the appearance of a conflict of interest.
- D. Any illegal or unethical conduct that reasonably casts doubt on the individual's character.

If any allegations are made that an official or assignments chair has engaged in conduct that would warrant termination of his or her contract, the Assignment Chairperson or the principal may suspend without pay the individual pending investigation of the allegations. The individual will be informed of the allegations and given an opportunity to respond before the Principals take final action. If allegations are determined to be unfounded, the individual will be paid for any assignments missed while on suspension or at the discretion of the Assignment Chairperson and the Principals, an equivalent number of additional assignments will be provided. If allegations are determined to be founded, the contract will be terminated without any additional pay.

**Article VI - Finances**

At the April Principals' meeting, the Treasurer will submit a preliminary budget for the next school year. At the May Principals' meeting, the Treasurer will review all expenses from the

past year and make a recommendation for an annual budget and recommend assessment for each school in the SouthWest Suburban Conference. This assessment for the upcoming year will be reviewed and voted on by the Principals and recommended to the Superintendents.

The Treasurer will be responsible for maintaining the financial records of the SouthWest Suburban Conference. This responsibility includes maintaining the checkbook and paying the bills. Conference moneys will be placed in an account approved by the Principals.

Each year by June 30, an internal audit committee will meet to review the treasurer's books for the year. The committee will consist of the current: president, treasurer, and secretary. At the September SouthWest Suburban Conference meeting, the committee will present the audit report to the Principals for approval. This procedure will ensure an accurate set of books for the president-elect and the treasurer.

## **Article VII - Forming a Cooperative Program**

The following are the recommended steps for schools wishing to form a Cooperative Program in any SouthWest Suburban Conference Sport and/or activity program:

- A. The two or more schools that are member district in the SWSC will need to use the SWSC Guidelines for Cooperative Program Sponsorship to establish a written agreement that would be approved by their local School Boards. Items to be considered are:
  - a. Where will the cooperative team practice and play their games.
  - b. Financial agreement (budget for the activity/ sport) signed by each school entering into the Co-op.
  - c. Develop a set of written rules to be followed by the Co-op Team concerning the areas listed below:
    - i. Academic standards for eligibility.
    - ii. Discipline standards.
    - iii. Athletic/activity code (training rules, parent permission slips, physical forms, etc.).
    - iv. Transportation policy.
    - v. Sportsmanship enforcement.
    - vi. Athletic awards criteria.
    - vii. Which one of the two schools' administration will handle problems, concerns, and conflicts?
- B. After securing this agreement between the two or more schools, the Athletic Director responsible for the Cooperative program will submit the following information to the SouthWest Suburban Conference (SWSC) Athletic Directors:
  - a. Provide a written rationale indicating the need for a cooperative program.
  - b. Submit a history of participation for the past three years, if there has been an existing interscholastic, club and/or intramural program at one or more of the schools and the number of students from each of the cooperative schools expected to participate.
  - c. Provide the written agreement for the newly formed co-op.
  - d. Provide written assurance that the cooperative team will not limit participation opportunities for students in any of the cooperating schools

- e. Provide additional information that will be helpful in determine the schools need to form a cooperative team/activity.
- C. The SWSC Athletic Directors will make a recommendation on the cooperative agreement to the Principals, who will vote on the proposed formation and the acceptance of the newly formed cooperative team/activity team into the SWSC.
- D. Upon approval of the SWSC Principals, the cooperating schools will file their formal application to the Illinois High School Association (IHSA).
- E. Upon approval by the IHSA the cooperative team/activity may begin participation within the SWSC Guidelines.

### **Article VIII - Guidelines for cooperative program sponsorship**

Section 1. - Philosophy Statement: The SouthWest Suburban Conference schools should provide interscholastic activities and sports programs in as many areas as possible. Increased opportunities for individual students should be the primary driving force, when a Conference school explores the formation of a cooperative agreement with another school to maintain their existing program and/or to add a new program for their students. The SWSC Conference will consider cooperative agreements between IHSA member schools that will foster increased opportunities for students.

Section 2 – Rationale: Reasons for a school to consider a cooperative agreement may consist of, but are not limited to the following:

- A. Establishing a new program that would provide increased opportunities for students.
- B. Expanding opportunities for students within an existing program.
- C. Maintaining a program that is experiencing a decline in student participation.
- D. Continuing a program when faced with a loss of a coach/sponsor and/or facility.

Section 3 – Scheduling: For scheduling purposes, schools entering into a cooperative agreement adding a new sport may begin play upon receiving approval of the IHSA. Application for co-op agreement must be approved no later than the last principals meeting of the year. A school that is unable to meet the above stated timeline will be able to compete as a coop team with other SWSC schools on a non-Conference basis.

## **Article IX – Extracurricular Philosophy Statement**

The SouthWest Suburban Conference Principals recognizes the value to the school, community and individual of participating in extracurricular activities. The student who becomes actively involved in school-sponsored activities and/or athletics under the supervision of qualified sponsors and coaches is able to extend the learning process beyond the regular classroom program of studies and receive greater value from his or her education.

The activities and athletic programs offer a means for each student to gain an awareness of himself or herself and an appreciation of others, regardless of differences. SouthWest Suburban Conference students are offered opportunities to develop and broaden their special interests and skills, make new friends, compete, develop leadership skills, serve other, and, in general, have fun through participation in any of the extensive number of activities.

The value of these programs is extenuated by the wholesome atmosphere in which the activities and contests are held, as well as the supervision and structure that are also prevalent. The Conference is committed to providing students with alternative activities that are drug-, alcohol-, tobacco-, and gang-free and to teaching the harm of drug, alcohol, and tobacco usage and gang affiliation.

All participating schools must adhere to the letter and spirit of the SouthWest Suburban Conference's and the Illinois High School Association's rules and regulations.

# **Appendix to the Constitution of the SouthWest Suburban Conference**

Part III – Article II – Section III: Any school applying for admission must offer comparable sports and activities presently offered in the SWSC.

**Comparable sports** are defined as minimum sports and levels for the following sport seasons:

## **Fall Sports:**

- Boys Cross Country – 2 levels (Var., F/S)
- Girls Cross Country – 2 levels (Var., F/S)
- Football – 4 levels (Var., So., Fr. A, Fr. B)
- Boys Golf – 2 levels (Var., F/S)
- Boys Soccer – 3 level (Var., So., Fr.)
- Girls Tennis – 2 levels (Var., F/S)
- Girls Volleyball – 4 levels (Var., So., Fr. A, Fr. B)

## **Winter Sports:**

- Boys Basketball – 4 levels (Var., So., Fr. A, Fr. B)
- Girls Basketball – 4 levels (Var., So., Fr. A, Fr. B)
- Wrestling – 3 levels (Var., JV, Fr)

## **Spring Sports:**

- Baseball – 3 levels (Var., So., Fr.)
- Girls Soccer – 3 level (Var., So., Fr.)
- Softball – 3 levels (Var., So., Fr.)
- Boys Tennis – 2 levels (Var., F/S)
- Boys Track – 2 levels (Var., F/S)
- Girls Track – 2 levels (Var., F/S)

The following sports are recommended with a minimum of 2 levels each:

- Girls Swimming
- Girls Bowling
- Girls Golf
- Competitive Cheerleading
- Boys Swimming
- Boys Volleyball

**Comparable activities** are defined as minimum participation for the following activities:

- Mathletes
- Scholastic Bowl
- Science
- Speech
- Band
- Choir
- National Honor Society
- Newspaper
- Student Council
- Visual Arts
- Yearbook

The following activities are recommended:

- Chess
- Debate
- Contest Play
- Group Interpretation
- Literary Magazine