

BYLAWS OF THE LEATHERSTOCKING FORENSIC LEAGUE



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Article I. Name:

Section 1.01 The name of this organization shall be the Leatherstocking Forensic League (LFL).

Article II. Purpose and Responsibility:

Section 2.01 It shall be the purpose of this league to prepare students of secondary schools to become articulate and concerned Americans, through participation in interscholastic contests in debate, student congress, and public speaking.

Section 2.02 The League is organized exclusively for educational purposes under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

- 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.
- 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. Organization:

Section 3.01 Executive Board:

The LFL Executive Board shall be comprised of the following members

- 1) *President*
- 2) *Vice President*
- 3) *Tournament Director*
- 4) *Treasurer*
- 5) *Members at Large: The following support positions on the board are available. The powers and responsibilities are described below, Any additional responsibilities may be designated by the other members of the Executive Board. Each position may be filled by one or more individuals. Multiple positions may be held by the same individual. Some positions may remain unfilled. The responsibility for any unfilled position falls to the members of the Executive Board. Each individual selected shall have one vote on the board. The positions are as follows:*
 - a) *Speech Rep*
 - i) *Responsible for assisting coaches and judges with training by way of disseminating training materials, including any updates or changes following the annual NCFL meeting. Will work with the Tournament Director and officials to address any issues or concerns that may arise in competition. All final tournament decisions will be addressed by the Executive Board as outlined in Section 3.05.*
 - b) *Debate Rep*
 - i) *Responsible for assisting coaches and judges with training by way of disseminating training materials, including any updates or changes following the annual NCFL meeting. Will work with the Tournament Director and officials to address any issues or concerns that may arise in competition. All final tournament decisions will be addressed by the Executive Board as outlined in Section 3.05.*
 - c) *Student Congress Rep*
 - i) *Responsible for the management of each tournament's docket. Including adherence to deadlines, collecting legislation submissions, and managing the student discussion in the shared google docs. All final tournament decisions will be addressed by the Executive Board as outlined in Section 3.05.*
 - d) *Extemp Coordinator*
 - i) *Responsible for extemp questions for each LFL designated tournament. Questions can either be gathered from contributions by league members or created by the coordinator. All prep room staffing is also the extemp coordinator's responsibility. All final tournament decisions will be addressed by the Executive Board as outlined in Section 3.05.*

Section 3.02 Expenses: The Executive Board members shall be entitled to reimbursement for expenses incurred in the discharge of their duties.

Section 3.03 Election: All members of the Executive Board shall be elected by a majority vote of the member schools present at the first general meeting of the school year. Each school represented at the meeting shall have one vote.

Section 3.04 Term of Office: The term for all officers shall be for the duration of the school year. .

Section 3.05 Duties of Officers:

- 1) It shall be the responsibility of the Executive Board to ensure that all LFL tournaments run smoothly and efficiently. This includes, but is not limited to providing ballots, schematics, and awards. Any issue arising at a tournament requiring interpretation of a rule or application of a rule can be resolved by a majority vote of the Executive Board members present at a tournament. In the event of a tie, the final resolution rests with the President.
 - i) The President shall be responsible for the enforcement of all the provisions of the LFL Bylaws. He or she shall preside at LFL meetings, and shall represent the LFL at national meetings or select a designee to represent the league.
 - ii) The Vice-President shall act as President in times of the temporary vacancy of that office, or for the unexpired term, if that office becomes vacant. He/she shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings at League meetings.
 - iii) The Tournament Director shall be responsible for providing invitations and a registration mechanism for all LFL Tournaments and to maintain the League website.
 - iv) The Treasurer shall control the finances of the League. He/she shall receive the annual membership dues, school fees, and the tournament entry fees. The Treasurer shall receive and pay all bills charged to the League after they have been approved by the President. The Treasurer will provide an annual report of income and expenses for the fall meeting.
 - v) Members at Large main responsibility is to act as an advocate for their area of responsibility and to help other Board Members whenever and wherever necessary.

Article IV. Communication:

Section 4.01 The Executive Board shall maintain a website for the posting of league communications. This includes, but is not limited to; deadlines, forms, invitations, tournament results, tournament schedule, and congress legislation. [The website is linked here.](#)

Article V. Membership:

Section 5.01 Eligibility:

- 1) Any secondary school located in the Archdiocese of Albany shall be eligible for membership in the LFL.
- 2) Secondary schools that are not within the Albany Archdiocese may be eligible for membership if:
 - a) Application is made to the League President.
 - b) Said school is not a member of another NCFL League.

Section 5.02 Certification:

- 1) Two items are required for school membership
 - a) A completed NCFL Membership
 - b) Payment of annual dues. The amount of the annual dues shall be decided by a 2/3rd majority vote of the membership present at the annual fall meeting and the amount shall be indicated on the LFL Membership billing.
- 2) Deadlines
 - a) The deadline for school membership is December 5th of each year.

Article VI. Supervision:

Section 6.01 No student will be allowed to compete at an LFL tournament unless the school provides an adult who can assume legal responsibility for the student.

Section 6.02 In addition, each school must take full responsibility for the adult supervision it provides. This is a student-based activity, all adults (coaches, judges, observers) must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with a secondary school environment.

Section 6.03 Those adults, in return, must ensure that their students also adhere to all-tournament rules of conduct as well as the rules and regulations communicated by the host school.

Section 6.04 The Executive Board shall have no choice but to remove from the tournament any individual who fails to comply with these rules. In addition, they may be asked by a representative of the host school to leave the premises.

Article VII. Judging:

Section 7.01 Each school is required to meet all judge obligations as defined in the Bylaws or Tournament invitation. Failure to provide adequate judging will mean that uncovered entries from that school will not be allowed to compete. Exceptions may be made by the Executive Board on a case-by-case basis.

ARTICLE VIII: League Tournaments:

Section 8.01 General Information

1. League Tournaments are those held by the Leatherstocking Forensics League itself and any hosted by its member schools. Memberships must be paid as outlined in Article V.
2. Official tournaments shall be designed for the purpose of pre-qualifying students while best meeting the needs of all students regardless of the level of experience. Therefore, divisions may be subdivided and/or combined as necessary at the discretion of the Tournament Chair.
3. The following events may be offered at LFL Tournaments:
 - a. Lincoln-Douglas Debate, which may at the discretion of the LFL consist of the following subdivisions:
 - i. Varsity: a student in any grade level of high school, prepared to debate both sides of the announced resolution.
 - ii. Intermediate: a student in any grade level of high school who has had no more than two years experience at the intermediate level, prepared to debate both sides of the announced resolution.
 - iii. Novice: a student in the ninth or tenth grade who has had no interscholastic experience in any form of high school interscholastic debate prior to September 1 of the present year of competition, prepared to debate both sides of the announced resolution. Students who, in middle school, competed in high school debate tournaments, may not compete on the novice level.
 - b. Public Forum Debate which shall consist of the following divisions:
 - i. Varsity: two-person teams composed of students from any grade level prepared to debate both sides of the announced resolution. Single persons (mavericks) may not compete.
 - ii. Intermediate: two-person teams consisting of students in any grade level of high school who has had no more than two years experience at the intermediate level, prepared to debate both sides of the announced resolution. Single persons (mavericks) may not compete.
 - iii. Novice: two-person teams consisting of students in the ninth or tenth grade who has had no high school interscholastic experience in any form of debate prior to September 1 of the present year of competition, prepared to debate both sides of the announced resolution. Students who, in middle school, competed in high school debate tournaments, may not compete on the novice level.
 - c. Speech shall consist of all categories designated on the tournament invite.
 - i. For purposes of qualifying for the NCFL Grand National Tournament, events will include the following;

1. Oral Interpretation (which may be divided into junior varsity for 9th and 10th-grade students and varsity for 11th and 12th graders)
2. Extemporaneous Speaking (which may be divided into junior varsity for 9th and 10th-grade students and varsity for 11th and 12th-graders)
3. Declamation (only for 9th and 10th-grade students)
4. Original Oratory
5. Duo Interpretation
6. Dramatic Performance (which may be separated into Humorous and Dramatic Interpretation)

For purposes of encouraging additional participation and the development of programs and opportunities. The league will also offer some or all of the following events. Offerings will be based on the sole decision of the host team coach in conjunction with the LFL Tournament Director

- ii. *Poetry Sight Reading: A performance of poetic material is provided by the tournament. Competitors shall be given one minute to review the literature, and then create an interpretation-based performance of that literature. This is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc., are to be used. While the preparation time is limited to one minute, the duration of the performance should be dictated by the length of the literature provided (i.e. there is no time limit to the performance, only the prep time. Tournaments should keep this in mind when selecting literature). The tournament will provide the same piece of literature to all competitors in each round.*
- iii. *Children's Storytelling - A memorized performance of a single published, printed story, anecdote, tale, myth, or legend. The story may be delivered standing or seated, thus one chair is permitted, however, this is not an acting event; thus, no costumes, props, lighting, etc., are to be used. Maximum time is 5 minutes including introduction. This event is designed to create a storytelling scenario that uses the competitor's commitment to bringing a narrative to life for a child of approximately ages 3-7.*
- iv. *Sports Extemp - Similar to extemporaneous but all topics will be drawn from the last six weeks of Sports Headlines.*
- v. *Sales Pitch - Competitors will have 30 minutes to prepare both a 30-second elevator pitch along with a subsequent 3 minute sales pitch. Topics will generally be new inventions, technological breakthroughs, or*

identified community or societal needs. All rounds will be run similarly to extemporaneous.

- d. Student Congress shall consist of a legislative body prepared to debate agenda items suited to the Congress of the United States. Students in grades nine through twelve are eligible to participate.

Article IX. NCFL Grand National Tournament:

Section 9.01 NCFL Grand National Tournament Eligibility

1. Participation in the NCFL Grand National tournament is limited by our league quota based on the number of paid memberships each year as outlined by NCFL.
 - a. For the 2024-25 competition year, the Albany Diocese Quota is Three (3)
 - b. Students may compete at the NCFL Qualifying Tournament in a maximum of one event.

Section 9.02 NCFL Grand National Tournament Pre-Qualifying Procedure

2. Students may prequalify for the NCFL Grand National Tournament by receiving 2 half-qualifications at any recognized Leatherstocking Forensics League tournament.
 - a. If a tournament includes students younger than the 9th grade, they may not be counted in determining the number of half qualifications to be given.
 - b. Half qualifications may not be dropped down.
 - c. The number of debate or speech entries for half qualifications to be awarded is the following:

Teams or Contestants Competing	Pre-Qualifying Half-Bids
3-5	1
6-10	2
11-15	3
16-20	4
21-25	5
26-30	6
every 10 thereafter	+1 with no upper limit

Section 9.03 NCFL Qualifying Tournament

3. Students from member schools with two 1/2 bids for NCFL are "pre-qualified" for the NCFL Grand National tournament providing the league membership has been paid.
 - a. The following scenarios serve to clarify the qualifying process using both the half-bid system and the NCFL Qualifying Tournament.

- i. Three students/teams have 2 1/2 bids going into the qualifying tournament. That event runs as a practice for those qualified and to formulate a “drop-down” list of other competitors who would like to be considered as alternates. It is not required to run the event. This will be determined by the Executive Board. Any students from those qualified who cannot attend the tournament will be required to submit a relinquishment form signed by the competitor, their coach, and their parent/guardians.
- ii. Less than three students/teams have 2 half bids. Those with the bids are qualified and the event runs at the tournament to fill the remaining spots. Qualified students should plan to attend for the practice available, but is not required.
- iii. More than three students/teams have two 1/2 bids. The event runs at the qualifying tournament with those "pre-qualified" students competing against each other to determine the top three spots with an alternate list.

Article X. Fees:

Section 10.01 The league will collect fees to cover the costs of operation. These fees may take the form of annual dues, entry fees, and school fees.

Section 10.02 Annual dues, entry fees, and school fees shall be set at the Fall Meeting. The amount of the annual dues will be documented in the Bylaws. The entry fees shall be included on each tournament invitation. Unless otherwise specified, all checks should be made out to the ‘Leatherstocking Forensic League’ (LFL).

Article XI. Host School Responsibilities:

Section 11.01 The school at which an LFL tournament is held should provide the rooms necessary for the running of the tournament and a designated area for tabulation, access to a copy machine, paper, staplers, etc. If possible, it should provide a modest lunch for the tournament staff and judges.

Article XII. Annual Fall Meeting:

Section 12.01 The Executive Board shall designate and publish on the league website the time, date, and location of the fall meeting. Unless the Executive Board decides otherwise, the meeting shall be held on the first Monday of October.

Section 12.02 The purpose of the meeting shall be:

- (a) Review the current financial report
- (b) Elect officers

- (c) Create the calendar for the school year and select host schools for LFL tournaments
- (d) Discuss and/or approve Bylaw changes as recommended by the LFL membership
- (e) Address any other issues and changes that affect the operation of the league