

Ratification Date: _____

**Thomas A. Edison High School
Student Government Association
CONSTITUTION**

Preamble.

We the students of Thomas A. Edison High School, in order to ensure the rights and representation of all Edison students; to promote effectiveness and efficiency of a student government; to encourage a cooperative relationship through communication among the students, the student government, the faculty and staff, and the school administrators; and under the authority of the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS), do hereby establish this constitution of the Thomas A. Edison High School Student Government Association. The constitution was prepared under the auspices of the FCPS regulation 2601, Student Responsibilities and Rights; the FCPS regulation 1703, Student Advisory Council to the Superintendent; FCPS regulation 2612, Freedom of Expression by Students.

Article I. Name by Scope.

This organization shall be known as the Thomas A. Edison High School (EHS) Student government Association, referred to hereafter as the SGA. This constitution delineates responsibilities and authority of the elected SGA Officers, the elected Class Officers, the elected Representatives to the FCPS Superintendent's Student Advisory Council (SAC) and the Student Leadership Team (SLT).

Article II. Membership, Representation, and Voting Privileges.

Section 1. All students enrolled in good standing at Edison High School (EHS) shall be members of the SGA, either directly or through representation.

Section 2. Every student shall be guaranteed the privilege to attend all SGA meetings and all of their class officers meetings. Every student shall be guaranteed the privilege to express his or her opinion in any matter affecting the welfare of the student body or the school at appropriate time during all SGA meetings during their own class meetings. The appropriate time to express these opinions or comments will be determined by the presiding officer of the meeting to ensure the orderly conduct of the meeting and provide the opportunity for all students present to participate.

Section 3. Membership includes the privilege to vote in the appropriate SGA elections. Only members of the specific class will have the privilege to vote in that class election. No grade point or other academic requirement shall be placed upon this privilege. However, disciplinary actions and/ or sanctions, like suspension from classes or inappropriate conduct, could result in the loss of this privilege as determined by the Edison High School Principle.

Section 4. Membership also includes the privilege to seek election to an SGA office, a class office, or as an SAC representative, through the election process authorized by Article VII of this constitution.

Section 5. Membership within the SLT is automatically granted to elected SGA officers, Class Officers and SAC members. Any student of good standing at EHS may join the SLT as long as they abide by the requirements set forth in Article VII.

Article III. Organization.

The SLT shall be a division of the SGA and shall be organized into four separate branches: Executive Council, Legislative Council, Student Advisory Council and student leaders.

Article IV. Executive Council

Section 1. The executive council of the SGA shall consist of the SGA President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Historian. All official meetings of the SGA Executive Council shall be conducted in accordance with the latest edition of Robert's Rules of Order, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or its By-laws.

Section 2. The President shall be the official representative of the Edison High School student body. He or she will be responsible for coordinating all SGA activities, promoting school spirit and unity, developing effective communication between students and the school administration and, finally, implementing and enforcing SGA rules and By-laws. The SGA President shall have the right to appoint Committee Chairpersons from the student body when the President deems it necessary to accomplish specific projects or tasks. The majority of the executive council (50% +1) must approve such appointments. Committee Chairpersons are nonvoting members of the Executive Council.

Section 3. The Vice-President shall perform all duties assigned to him or her by the SGA President. The Vice-President shall assume the duties of the President in the event of the President's absence at official functions or the President's departure from office.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping accurate records of all SGA finances. He or she shall coordinate all fundraising activities of the SGA. The Treasurer must work closely with the school financial officer and shall perform all other duties assigned by SGA President.

Section 5. The Secretary shall maintain all correspondence of the SGA and shall keep accurate, detailed records of all meetings and official proceedings. The meeting minutes, at a minimum, will be typed (word processed), record members present (including visitors) and all resolutions and/or decisions made at the meeting or proceeding. The Secretary shall perform all other duties assigned by the SGA President.

Section 6. The historian shall maintain a record of all events sponsored by the SGA and shall maintain a scrapbook of the yearly events and activities. The scrapbook shall contain

records of all events through documents used (e. g. flyers, posters, tickets, programs, favors, commentary, photos) and other memorabilia. The Historian shall coordinate all SGA activities with the school newspaper and the Year book team, and perform other duties assigned by the SGA President.

Article V. Legislative Council

Section 1. The legislative council of the SGA shall consist of the Class Officers representing the 9th, 10th, 11th and 12th grades of Edison High School. Each class shall elect Officers to hold the offices of President, Vice President, Treasure, Secretary, and Historian. All official meetings of the individual class officers shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of order they establish, unless otherwise specified in this Constitution or its By-laws. The Legislative Council will meet periodically with the SGA Executive Council to address and to decide the business before the entire SGA. The SGA President will schedule and preside at these meetings at least twice during the school year.

Section 2. The Class President shall be the official representative of the EHS class that elected him or her to office. The Class President will be responsible for coordinating all class sponsored activities, promoting class participation in school spirit and unity, developing effective communication between students in the class and the school administration and, fully, implementing and enforcing SGA rules and By-laws. The Class President shall have the right to appoint Committee Chairpersons from their class student body when the President deems it necessary to accomplish specific projects or task. The majority of the Class Officers must approve such appointments. Committee Chairpersons are nonvoting members of their Class Officer meetings.

Section 3. The Vice-President shall perform all duties assigned to him or her by the Class President. The Vice-President shall assume the duties of the President in the event of the President's absence at official functions or President's departure from office.

Section 4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for keeping accurate records of all class finances. He or she shall coordinate all fundraising activities of the Class. The treasurer must work closely with the school coordinate all fundraising activities of the class. The Treasurer must work closely with the school financial officer and shall perform all other duties assigned by Class President.

Section 5. The Secretary shall maintain all correspondence of the class and shall keep accurate, detailed records of all meetings and official proceedings. The meeting minutes, at a minimum, will be typed (word processed), record members present (including visitors) and all resolutions and/or decisions made at the meeting or proceeding. The Secretary shall perform all other duties assigned by the Class President.

Section 6. The Historian shall maintain a record of all events sponsored by the class and shall maintain a scrapbook of the yearly events and activities. The scrapbook should contain records of all events through documents used (e.g. flyers, posters, tickets, programs, favors, commentary, photos) and other memorabilia. The Historian shall coordinate all class activities

with the school newspaper and the Yearbook team, and perform other duties assigned by the Class President.

Article VI. Student Advisory Council

Section 1. The role of the Student Advisory Council (SAC) is to providing an opportunity for student participation in the Decision-making process in the School Division of Fairfax County and to aid in the communication among students, the school administration and the community. The SAC is established under the authority of FCPS regulation 1703.

Section 2. The Student Advisory Council, referred to hereafter as SAC, shall consist of five members elected by the entire EHS student body. The top five candidates who obtain the most votes (pluralities) shall be represent Edison High School at all SAC meetings.

Section 3. These four SAC Representatives shall elect a Chairperson from among themselves. The SAC Chairperson will represent EHS at SAC meetings that require only one representative to attend (usually a county level meeting.) The Chairperson will be responsible for assuring one or more EHS SAC representatives attend all other county and cluster meetings. The Chairperson will be responsible for assuring that a written and oral report on SAC meetings and issues are presented to the next SGA Officers Executive Council meeting immediately following the SAC event/meeting.

Section 4. Important and urgent issues to Edison High School will be immediately reported to the SGA Sponsor and SGA President, by the attending SAC Representative, using the most expeditious means of communication available.

Article VII. Student Leaders

Any student in good standing at EHS may join the SLT if they fulfill the requirements for eligibility as decreed by the SGA Executive Council and SGA sponsor. Furthermore, any student part of the SLT may be removed from the organization if they have any of the issues as stated in Article XI Section 2.

Article VIII. Election Process

Section 1. The election of the SGA officers, the Class Officers and the SAC Representative shall be held in the second semester of the academic year, but no later that one month before the last day of school.

Section 2. All members of the EHS student body is good standing, i.e. not suspended or awaiting discipline actions/sanctions, are eligible to be placed on the election ballot and to run for the time frame established by the SGA Officers conduction the election. Details specific to the offices being contested are contained in Articles IV, V and VI of this constitution.

- A. Class officer candidates must obtain twenty-five (25) signatures from students supporting the candidate;

- B. SGA officer and SAC representative candidates must obtain fifteen (15) from students in each of the freshman sophomore and junior classes supporting the candidate (a total of 45 signatures)
- C. Obtain the recommendation of four teachers and one administrator;
- D. Provide a statement of why the students should elect the candidate;
- E. Maintain a grade point average of at least 2.0 (see student handbook);
- F. Have all the aforementioned requirements verified by the SGA Constitution and sign a statement to indicate they understand their responsibilities if elected and pledge to fulfill their duties to the best of their abilities.

Section 3. All students shall elect all candidates meeting the requirements, in a general election, with the winner receiving the most votes (a plurality) among the field of candidates for the specific office. In the event no clear plurality exists, (i.e. the election results in a tie between two, or more, of the candidates obtaining the most votes) then a run-off election will be held between the top, tied candidates.

Article IX. Succession and Impeachment Processes

Section 1. In the event of a SGA or Class Officer's resignation, impeachment, or vacating of an office, the SGA president or the Class President shall nominate a successor for approval by a majority of the Executive Council or of the Class Officers. In the event a President resigns, is impeached, or vacates office, the Vice-President shall become President and nominate a successor to Vice-President.

Section 2. The SGA members shall have the power to impeach for cause all SGA Officers, Class Officers, and SAC Representatives. Cause for impeachment shall be one or more of the following reasons:

- A. Failure to attend the required 75% of meetings, SGA activities, or SGA events. Attendance is only reached when a member has stayed for a majority (50% + 1) of the meeting and/or event; at the end of each semester the number of meetings and/or events each member has attended will be counted and evaluated;
- B. Conduct unbecoming of a member of the SGA, including continual disruption of SGA meetings, activities or events;
- C. Failure to comply with the duties outlined in this constitution or to follow through on commitments made to the SGA and/or Class activities and events;
- D. Conduct detrimental to the carrying out of SGA policy, procedures, functions, or goals.
- E. The loss of eligibility to hold office as a result of administrative disciplinary actions, sanctions and/or failure to uphold the academic requirements.

Section 3. Procedure for impeachment includes the following: the filing of charges; the judging by peers to recommend removal from office or not; and the impeachment decision by the Principal or his Faculty representative.

- A. Any SGA or Class Officer in good standing, any member of the EHS Faculty, and any EHS Administrator may bring charges against an SGA officer, and SAC representative, or his/her Class Officer. (A student may not bring charges against a class officer not in his/her class.) Such charges must be presented to the SGA Executive Council in the form of a petition. The petition must include evidence of cause for impeachment in accordance with Article VIII, Section 2. The petition must also be presented to the accused officer before or at the time of (but not later than) presentation to the SGA.
- B. Upon receipt of an impeachment petition, and within five school days, the SGA Executive Council will meet with the SGA Sponsor, and other EHS Administrators as needed, to determine if the petition has merit and warrants a hearing to determine the facts.
- C. If a hearing is warranted, then the SGA President will appoint, within five days, a panel of five students, considered peers of the accused officer, to evaluate the merits of the petition. The SGA President will also notify the accused within the same five days that a panel to hear the cause is being established and the accused has the right to present evidence on his/her behalf at the hearing.
- D. This panel has ten school days after formation to hold hearings to gather evidence about the petition, and to hear the arguments and evidence in defense of the officer. After hearing all the evidence presented by both sides of the petition, the panel will make a decision, based on majority vote of the panel, about the merits of the petition and to either recommend removal from office for cause, or to make no recommendation.
- E. The findings of the panel will be documented by the panel and submitted to the SGA Executive Council and to the EHS Principal or his Representative for action. Only the Principal or his representative can remove an elected officer of SAC representative from office.

Article X. Constitution and By-laws Ratification:

Section 1. Ratification of this constitution, and any changes thereto, shall be by two-thirds ($\frac{2}{3}$ or 66.7%) favorable vote of the SGA Officers, Class Officer and SAC representatives present at the meeting called for this purpose.

Section 2. Approval of the By-laws associated with this constitution, (By-laws are detailed procedures governing the implementation of the constitution articles.) and any changes thereto, shall be by majority (50% +1) favorable vote of the SGA Officers, Class Officers and SAC representatives present at the meeting called for this purpose. A listing of the current By-laws, and the dates enacted or changed, shall be attached to each copy of the current constitution.

Section 3. All ratification under the preceding Sections 1 & 2 is subject to approval by the EHS Principal. The enactment date of these ratifications will be the date of the Principal's approval.

Article XI. Acknowledgement of FCPS Authority

Section 1. The Principal, or his designee, shall appoint one or more faculty sponsors who will be responsible to provide leadership and coordination of the SGA operations. The SGA and Class Sponsors are responsible to the Director of Athletics and Student Activities for compliance with FCPS Policies and Regulations.

Section 2. All actions of the SGA may be subject to administrative review by the Principal who has the authority to override or to submit amendments to all SGA proposals, resolutions, or recommendations.

Approved

Signed Greg Croghan

11/4/08

_____, date _____

[Principal name here]

Principal, Thomas A. Edison High School