

CONSTITUTION OF THE LOUISIANA SPORTS WRITERS ASSOCIATION

REVISED JUNE 2021

To foster and promote the finest athletes and the dissemination of information on athletics and sports activities and to encourage the highest standards of sports journalism, we do ordain and establish this constitution of, for and by the Louisiana Sports Writers Association.

ARTICLE I – GOALS AND PURPOSES

- A. The name of the organization shall be the Louisiana Sports Writers Association.
- B. The purpose of this organization shall be to foster and promote the dissemination of information on athletics and sports activities and to encourage the highest standards of sports journalism in the communications media, and to promote better working conditions for state sports writers and sportscasters.
- C. This organization shall be solely non-profit.

ARTICLE II – ORGANIZATION

- A. This organization shall have four classes of membership as follows:

1. Regular

Any person who regularly writes, reports or edits sports news for any wire service or website based in Louisiana or any newspaper or magazine regularly circulated in Louisiana shall be eligible for regular membership.

Any person primarily engaged in disseminating sports information or publicity in Louisiana including but not limited to sports information directors at Louisiana schools, publicists of professional organizations or race tracks, or publicists of non-profit organizations sponsoring or governing sports events in Louisiana shall be eligible for regular membership.

Any person primarily engaged in dissemination information or describing, commenting or reporting on sports regularly on licensed Louisiana radio and television stations shall be eligible for regular membership.

2. Life

This organization may confer upon any regular members it deems a Life membership. This is not to be conferred indiscriminately but is intended for regular members who have taken an active role in the work and functions of the organization and who have retired, left the state or are no longer engaged in a function which would qualify them for regular membership. Any person who at a later date again becomes eligible for regular membership after having been conferred Life membership may hold dual membership.

3. Allied

Any person engaged in the field of athletics or having a special interest in athletics and the function and operations of the organization shall be eligible for Allied membership.

4. Honorary

The organization may confer as a special award of merit an Honorary membership upon those whom it feels have made an outstanding contribution to sports and athletics in general and/or to the organization.

- B. The business of the organization shall be conducted by regular and life members only.
- C. Applications for membership in the organization shall be referred to the president, who shall confirm the qualifications of the applicant, determine eligibility and notify said applicant of the acceptance or rejection of the application.

ARTICLE III – CHAPTERS AND DIVISIONS

- A. The organization shall be divided into geographic chapters plus two chapters for administrative and operational purposes. The chapters shall be based on geographic considerations and mutual interest.
 1. In even-numbered years, following the reclassification meetings of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association, the president with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee shall

realign the chapter structure to make it compatible with LHSAA reclassification for the selection of all-district and all-state teams.

2. The president, with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, may abolish or consolidate chapters following the LHSAA reclassification.
- B. An administrative chapter shall be known as the Sports Information Directors Division, an at-large divisions for all members involved in those endeavors.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS

- A. The organization shall choose officers from the regular membership to serve on the Executive Committee for governing and conducting business as follows: President, Executive Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice President for Sports Information Directors, High School Relations Officer and Chapter Chairmen.
- B. The duties of the officers shall be as follows:
1. President – The president shall be the chief executive officer of the organization. The president shall call and preside at all general meetings of the organization and shall serve as a voting member of all committees. The president shall name all committees and select chairmen with the exception of those committees whose membership is specifically outlined herein. The president shall be empowered to appoint persons to fill vacancies in any other elective office in this organization with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee, and shall assume all other duties of the office as prescribed in Robert’s Rules of Order. The president, in cooperation with the secretary, shall issue a periodic newsletter which shall include a calendar of news, future meetings and activities.
 2. Executive Vice President – The executive vice president shall assist the president in all duties, and in the absence or disability of the president shall assume those duties. The executive vice president shall serve as chairman of the Executive Committee. The executive vice president will oversee all organizational publications and will work with the chapter chairmen to determine complete working sports staffs for all member entities. After completion of his term, the executive vice president shall become president of the association for the following two years, unless he/she declines.
 3. Secretary – The secretary shall keep the minutes of all meetings of the organization and handle the general correspondence. The secretary shall with the assistance of the treasurer keep a membership list of the organization and oversee the distribution of all-state stories. The secretary in cooperation with the president shall issue the periodic newsletter. The secretary shall issue certificates to athletes chosen to all-state teams.
 4. Treasurer – The treasurer shall be the bookkeeper of the organization and shall issue membership cards upon receipt of dues. The treasurer shall with the assistance of the secretary keep a membership list of the organization, and will issue an annual financial report at the convention. The treasurer is appointed by the president.
 5. Vice President for Sports Information Directors – The vice president for sports information directors shall administer the functions of the at-large sports information directors division and coordinate and promote activities which pertain to sports information. The vice president for sports information shall also be the president of the Louisiana Sports Information Directors Association and shall coordinate the selection and distribution of all-Louisiana teams.
 6. High School Relations Officer – The high school relations officer will be the LSWA’s liaison with the staff of the Louisiana High School Athletic Association. The high school relations officer will coordinate the organization of All-State meetings and release of All-State teams to the membership and will release information as needed from statewide high school events. This person will not make official decisions affecting either the organization or the LHSAA without prior approval of the president or the Executive Committee. The high school relations officer is appointed by the president for a two-year term and will be paid a stipend to be determined by the Executive Committee.
 7. Chapter Chairmen – The chapter chairmen shall have the responsibility of governing the activities of the organization within their geographic areas and are specifically charged with duties of calling their chapters into session for the purpose of selecting and distributing all-district teams, and selection of all-state teams.

- C. The appointed chairman of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame Committee shall serve as a voting member of the Executive Committee. The President and CEO of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame Foundation will be a part of the Executive Committee as a non-voting member.
- D. The organization may also have a chief counsel, who shall be appointed by the president with the advice and consent of the Executive Committee. He shall serve as legal adviser to the organization.
- E. The terms of officers shall be for two years including the appointed treasurer. The chairman of the Hall of Fame committee and committee makeup will be appointed in odd-numbered years in which there is no LSWA presidential change. Chapter chairmen are appointed by the executive vice president, and the vice presidents for sportscasters and sports information directors shall be elected by their respective divisions. All other officers shall be chosen by the membership at large.
- F. The Executive Committee shall meet at times designated by the president, with notice given to all members.

ARTICLE V – DUES

- A. The annual dues for membership in the organization shall be determined at the organization's annual summer meeting, with an agreed-on portion going to the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame Foundation. Payment of dues is a prerequisite for membership in good standing. There shall be no dues for Life or Honorary members. Honorary members are not eligible to vote on organization business or hold office unless also holding regular membership.
- B. The annual dues shall be payable at the start of the fiscal year, which shall be July 1, and any member whose dues are not paid on or before Nov. 1 may not participate or vote at any meetings or receive the organization's newsletters or releases or participate in the writing contest until paid.

ARTICLE VI – LOUISIANA SPORTS HALL OF FAME

- A. This organization shall sponsor a Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame, located in Natchitoches, and shall be the sole governing authority for the admission thereto and coordination of Hall of Fame activities.
- B. The purpose of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame is to honor and pay tribute to persons who have made outstanding contributions and accomplishments in the field of athletics.
- C. A non-profit foundation, known as the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame Foundation, will direct the affairs of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame. The Foundation exists to conduct the business of the Hall of Fame. The LSWA, through the Hall of Fame committee chairman, will have ultimate authority over all induction activities and policies. The Foundation provides marketing and outreach for the Hall of Fame Museum and conducts activities beneficial to the image of the Hall of Fame and the LSWA.
- D. At least one-third of the membership of the Board of Directors of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame Foundation will consist of LSWA members or their designates, as approved by the Hall of Fame chairman and the LSWA president. The Hall of Fame chairman will serve as one of those board members.
- E. The Foundation shall be represented by a President/Chief Executive Officer, a salaried position funded by the Foundation, recommended by the chairman and ratified by the board of directors. Employment terms will be negotiated by the chairman in consultation with and approved by the board of directors. The President/Chief Executive Officer manages and conducts routine Foundation business and may formulate boards or committees specific to Foundation functions.
- F. The chairman and the President/Chief Executive Officer will annually report to the LSWA membership its strategic plan for the accomplishment of the Foundation's goals and objectives.
 - 1. The mission of the Foundation Board of Directors is to support the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame by preserving and maintaining the names and accomplishments of outstanding Louisiana athletes and sports personalities, to honor individuals inducted into the Hall of Fame and maintain a permanent archive for the collection and display of memorabilia related to the lives and careers of inductees.
 - 2. The Foundation and its President/Chief Executive Officer are empowered to take all necessary action to meet this mission including but not limited to establishing a full-time office, hiring key staff, actively working to secure funding for the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame, conducting

fundraising and grant-writing activities, conducting branding and marketing efforts statewide and nationally, entering into cooperative endeavor agreements with the Louisiana State Museum and fully complying with Act 1205 of the 2005 Louisiana Legislature in meeting its financial obligation in operating the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame.

3. The Foundation President/Chief Executive Officer will annually report to the LSWA membership its strategic plan for the accomplishment of the Foundation's goals and objectives.
- G. The Hall of Fame Selection Committee will have sole responsibility for nominating and electing the members of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame. Selections shall be made by a 35-member committee, 30 of whom shall be elected by the general membership in staggered five-year terms at the organization's annual summer convention, and five of whom shall be appointed by the president. To be eligible for the selection committee, a member must have at least five years involvement with journalism in Louisiana or two years of membership in the LSWA. Committee members who miss three meetings during their term will be removed from the committee, and their position filled by presidential appointment.
- H. To be eligible for membership in the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame, prospective inductees must have been retired for their specific field of endeavor at least three years prior to his election. Any person who has achieved greatness as a participating athlete or coach may become eligible for selection three years after the end of his active career even though he may later have continued a career in an allied field of athletics. Athletes and coaches shall also be eligible for selection upon reaching the following ages:
1. Age 35 or "masters" level in their particular sport as defined by that sport's national federation where such levels exist;
 2. Age 50 in "lifetime sports";
 3. Age 60 for any coach or administrator even though he may still be active in his field.
- I. To be eligible for induction into the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame, the person must have pursued a distinguished career in athletics within the boundaries of the state of Louisiana. Athlete nominees must have competed for two years at the varsity level in high school or college in Louisiana. Coach nominees with no other ties to the state must have spent at least five years with a Louisiana team. Athletes from other states who play in Louisiana at the professional level at least five years are eligible for induction.
- J. Selections for the Hall of Fame shall take place as follows:
1. The Hall of Fame Selection Committee, through the Hall of Fame committee chairman, shall prepare and present a list of nominees eligible for induction to the committee members. The committee shall meet annually at a site and time to be determined by the Hall of Fame chairman, and three-fourths of the committee members must be present to conduct elections.
 2. Nominees may appear on the ballot for a 10-year period. If a nominee has not been elected by the end of that period, he will be dropped from the ballot and will not be eligible for Hall of Fame membership until he reaches qualifications for the "Old Timers" category. The selection committee will vote on nominees on a weighted-vote basis, assigning five points to a first-place choice, four to second, three to third, two to fourth and one to fifth. To be elected, a nominee must have points that would equal at least 50 percent of the possible total points.
 3. The results shall be tabulated and certified by the Hall of Fame committee chairman. Those voted into the Hall of Fame shall be inducted at any such time and place as the organization may determine.
 4. No less than three and no more than six persons shall be elected to membership in the Hall of Fame in any year, exclusive of the "Old Timers" category. No more than two persons from any one category will be selected with the exception of one "wild card" selection, which may be from any category.
 5. The committee shall nominate for induction into the Hall of Fame any athletic great who meets eligibility requirements and who has been retired or inactive from his specific field or endeavor for at least 25 years, or is over age 70, or who has been deceased 10 years. There shall be no more than two persons selected annually in this "Old Timers" category. The "Old Timers" nominees shall be reviewed by a subcommittee appointed by the Hall of Fame committee chairman. After reviewing nominees prior to the selection meeting, the subcommittee shall recommend up to one-third of the eligible nominees for voting consideration by the entire

selection committee. Voting by the selection committee on “Old Timers” will occur following selection of the regular inductees.

6. The committee shall name annually two state media members as recipients of the Distinguished Service Award in Sports Journalism. Those eligible are current and former members of the Louisiana Sports Writers Association who have 30 years of service in the profession or have reached age 60 and who have distinguished themselves in the field of sports journalism. The award is designed to recognize excellence in the profession and/or service to the LSWA. In considering nominees, voters should place highest priority for what the candidates have done for the LSWA. This is an award for contributions to the LSWA as well as for excellence in sports journalism, and is not for recognition of longevity in the profession. A member of the Hall of Fame selection committee shall be appointed by the Hall of Fame committee chairman to serve as the coordinator of the Distinguished Service Award nomination process, and shall be responsible for verifying credentials and submitting biographical materials for all candidates and distributing those to voters. Committee members may vote for three candidates on a weighted-vote scale. The top two vote-getters among the candidates, as certified by the coordinator, will receive the award. The executive director and the Executive Committee beginning in 2020 are authorized to certify up to two winners if vote totals reflect a consensus of support for more than one recipient. The Distinguished Service Award recipients will be honored during the annual induction activities. Winners of the award will be considered as Hall of Famers and be displayed in the Hall of Fame along with their journalistic contributions to enhance visitors’ understanding and appreciation for the best and most noteworthy Louisiana sports journalism.
7. The committee shall name annually at least one and not more than two state sports figures as recipients of the Dave Dixon Louisiana Sports Leadership Award. The award goes to an individual who has played a decisive role as a sports leader/administrator benefiting Louisiana and/or bringing credit to Louisiana on a national and international level. A member of the Hall of Fame selection committee shall be appointed by the Hall of Fame committee chairman to serve as the coordinator of the award nomination process, and shall be responsible for verifying credentials and submitting biographical materials for all candidates and distributing those to voters. Committee members may vote for three candidates on a weighted-vote scale. The top vote-getter among the candidates, as certified by the coordinator, will receive the award. The executive director and the Executive Committee are authorized to certify up to two winners if vote totals reflect a consensus of support for more than one recipient. The Dave Dixon Louisiana Sports Leadership Award recipients will be honored during the annual induction activities. Winners of the award will be considered as Hall of Famers and be displayed in the Hall of Fame along with their contributions to enhance visitors’ understanding and appreciation for the best and most noteworthy Louisiana sports figures.

ARTICLE VII – ALL-DISTRICT / ALL-STATE / ALL-LOUISIANA

- A. To recognize outstanding merit and achievement in athletic competition at all levels, this organization shall annually choose all-district, all-state and all-Louisiana teams in various sports.
- B. All-state and all-district teams on the high school level shall be chosen as follows:
 1. For the purpose of selecting all-state teams, a committee made up of chapter chairmen or their designees, the high school relations liaison and up to six other appointees will meet either in person or by teleconference to select teams.
 2. The chairman of each chapter shall poll the members of his chapter for the selection of all-district teams in football, boys and girls basketball, baseball and softball. Such poll is to be conducted before the start of bi-district playoffs in all sports. To be eligible for all-district teams, a player must have participated in at least 60 percent of his district games. Any first-team all-district selection is automatically eligible for selection to all-state teams. The chairman of each chapter shall set all-district release dates, assign writing of stories and oversee distribution within the chapter. If a coaches’ team is used by a district, it must be sanctioned by the chapter chairman before publication

and all ties must be broken. A coaches' team will not be honored for all-state nomination without the chapter chairman's sanction.

3. The high school relations officer shall serve as presiding officer for all-state meetings or shall appoint one chapter chairman on an annual basis. The presiding officer shall set dates and sites for selection meetings, shall conduct the meetings and set release dates and assign writing of stories.
4. At least three-fourths percent of the chapter chairmen or designated representatives must be present at all-state meetings in order to conduct business, except that if there is no school within a chapter participating in a sport it is not necessary for that division to have representatives present for purposes of a quorum.
5. Voting for all-state teams shall be by secret ballot and each chapter shall have one vote, except that chapters having three or more districts in any one classification shall have two votes within that classification if and only if two separate voters are present. In the event of a tie, the presiding officer shall cast the tie-breaking vote, but his vote may be reversed by a four-fifths vote of those present provided a motion for reversal be made prior to the start of selection of another class. Previous class selections may not be contested or voted upon unless there is four-fifths consent of all present for a suspension of the rules.
6. The president shall assign chapters responsible for all-district selection where there is overlapping between chapters.
7. All-state and all-district teams in football will include (offense) one tight end, two wide receivers, one quarterback, three running backs, two tackles, two guards, one center, (defense) four down linemen, four linebackers, four defensive backs. (specialists) one punter, one placekicker and one return specialist. An outstanding offensive player, outstanding defensive player and coach of the year will be selected following selection of each team.
8. All-state and all-district teams in boys and girls basketball will consist of five-player first and second teams without regard to position. An outstanding player and coach of the year will be selected following selection of each team.
9. All-state and all-district teams in baseball and softball for Classes 5A, 4A, 3A and 2A will include a first baseman, a second baseman, a third baseman, a shortstop, a catcher, three outfielders, three pitchers and five utility players who can be from any position. All-state and all-district teams in baseball and softball for Classes A, B and C will be selected by committees appointed by the presiding officer for all-state teams and the chapter chairmen for all-district teams, and will consist of 17 players regardless of position. An outstanding player and coach of the year will be selected following selection of each team.
10. All-state track and field teams will be limited to three athletes in each LHSAA-sanctioned event. The team will be selected by a committee appointed by the presiding officer and will be selected after the state championship meet. An outstanding trackman, outstanding fieldman and coach of the year will be selected.
11. In soccer, where the LSWA does not select an all-state team, all-district teams should consist of no more than seven offensive and seven defensive players with goalies included in the seven defensive players. An outstanding offensive player, outstanding defensive player and coach of the year may be selected following selection of each team from the players voted to the team.
12. In volleyball, where the LSWA does not select an all-state team, all-district teams should consist of no more than 10 players. An outstanding player and coach of the year may be selected following selection of each team from the players voted to the team.
13. In bowling, where the LSWA does not select an all-state team, all-district teams should consist of no more than 12 players, six on the first team and six on the second team. An outstanding player and coach of the year may be selected following selection of each team from the players voted to the team.
14. The all-state selection committee shall recognize the outstanding prep athlete in each sport in which teams are selected except for track and field regardless of classification, and shall honor those selections as "Mr. Football," "Mr. Basketball," "Miss Basketball," "Mr. Baseball" and "Miss Softball" for that year. Winners must receive at least 60 percent of committee votes for each award.

15. Honorable mention will be included in all all-state teams except for track and field. Requirements for honorable mention will be a minimum of two votes from the selection committee, earning of Most Valuable Player honors at the all-district level or special consideration from the chapter chairman at the selection meeting.
- C. All-Louisiana teams on the collegiate level shall be chosen in football, men's basketball, women's basketball, baseball, softball, men's and women's cross country, women's volleyball, women's soccer, men's and women's track and field, men's and women's tennis and men's and women's golf, in which all two- and four-year colleges in the state will be eligible. Selection of these teams shall be coordinated by the vice president for sports information directors and shall be chosen by the SID's and a committee selected by the SID's involved. Guidelines shall be set by the SID's at their annual meeting. All teams will be selected based on completion of regular-season play or conference tournament play, whichever is later. No postseason play counts toward nomination with the exception of track and field.
 - D. All-Top 28 Boys and Girls Tournament teams shall be selected by this organization immediately upon conclusion of those tournaments. Selection shall be done by a vote of all members covering each tournament. The president shall appoint a chairman of this selection.
 - E. All members of the organization covering the LHSCA All-Star games shall vote in the selection of a Most Outstanding Player in the boys and girls basketball games and the girls volleyball games and the Most Outstanding Player on both teams in the softball doubleheader. It will be the responsibility of the individual coaches association to make contact with the secretary of the LSWA at least three weeks in advance to set up receipt of the award for the contest.

ARTICLE VIII – GENERAL BUSINESS

- A. The general business of this organization, except for the selection of all-state teams and the Hall of Fame selections, shall be conducted at the regular summer meeting which must be held between June 1 and September 1 of each year on call of the president or Executive Committee. The president may call a special general meeting for conduction of general business upon 10 days notice to the membership.
- B. This organization is specifically prohibited from conducting general business at its all-state selection meetings or Hall of Fame selections, other than business solely relating to those selections, unless said meeting has been designated as an Executive Committee meeting by the president. Members of the all-state selection committee and the Hall of Fame selection committee shall have the power to change rules within their meeting, but those rules must be approved at the following general meeting.
- C. All voting at regular meetings except as otherwise prescribed shall be done by the general membership and requires a majority vote of members present, except for matters requiring constitutional change which require a two-thirds vote of members present.
- D. The Executive Committee shall have the power to act in the name of the association when the association is not meeting, within the limits of the Constitution.
- E. Robert's Rules of Order shall apply to all meetings of this organization except wherein this constitution sets specific rules of conduct. Only regular members shall be allowed to conduct business.

ARTICLE IX – COMMITTEES

- A. Executive Committee
 1. The Executive Committee shall be composed of all elected officers, the treasurer, the chapter chairmen and the chairman of the Hall of Fame committee. The chief counsel and President/Executive Director of the Louisiana Sports Hall of Fame Foundation shall be ex-officio members.
 2. It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to assist and advise the president in the administration and governing of the organization as outlined in this constitution. The Executive Committee shall also serve as the nominating committee for officers.
 3. Upon request of the president, the Executive Committee chairman shall poll the committee members or assemble them for a meeting to advise and consent to such matters as may be brought before them. In the event that the Executive Committee chairman does not poll or assemble the members

within 10 days after requested to do so, the president may himself call an Executive Committee meeting.

4. A simple majority of the Executive Committee must consent to presidential action. When the Executive Committee has overruled the president, the president may appeal to the general membership to reverse the Executive Committee at the annual meeting.

B. Other Standing Committees

1. The Awards/Contest committee shall conduct the association's annual awards program designed to foster and encourage better sports journalism of all types. The chairman of the committee shall be appointed by the president and oversee all aspects of the program.
2. The Hall of Fame selection committee shall consist of individuals who have been members of the organization for at least five years. Eligible members may volunteer as nominees for the committee or may be nominated from the floor at the organization's annual summer meeting. Members of the committee are elected to five-year staggered terms along with one presidential appointee annually. Vacancies on the committee created by resignations shall be filled by presidential appointment. An induction committee steering committee, formed from within the Hall of Fame selection committee and chaired by the executive director, will conduct the annual induction program at a time and place to be determined by the steering committee.
3. The Press Box committee shall receive, evaluate and disseminate reports on press facilities in the state, make recommendations for the improvement of same and once yearly shall designate the state's best and worst press facilities and write a story to be circulated to the regular membership. Press facilities for all sports should be evaluated.
4. The Top 10 Polls committee shall be appointed by the president to conduct top 10 polls in selected high school sports.
5. The Ace Higgins Award committee shall be made up of members of the sports information directors division. It shall receive and evaluate nominations and select a recipient of the Ace Higgins Award annually.
6. The president, at his discretion, may appoint an Advisory Committee made up of past presidents to assist in leadership of the association.

ARTICLE X – SANCTIONS

It shall be the duty of each and every member of the organization to see that the organization's releases are not prematurely used. If a publication or broadcast station breaks a release, then all members employed by the guilty organization shall be put on probation for one calendar year from the date of infraction. Should another infraction occur during that period, then all members employed by the guilty organization shall be suspended from membership for one calendar year. All such violations shall be reported to the president, who has sole authority over probations and suspensions.

ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended only at the organization's summer business meeting by the adoption of any proposed amendment by a two-thirds majority vote of regular members present and voting at the business session.