

# **CONSTITUTION**

of the

## **BERGEN COUNTY ACADEMIES STUDENT COUNCIL**

### **Drafted by 2004-2005 Student Council Members:**

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### **Revised by 2019-2021 Student Council Members:**

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### **Revised by 2022-2023 Student Council Members:**

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Arnav P. Patel, Class of 2025 Representative

Under the supervision of Student Council Advisor:

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### **Revised by 2023-2024 Student Council Members:**

Samantha Seneres, President

Gyumin Kwon, Class of 2026 Representative

Under the supervision of Student Council Advisor:

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### **PREAMBLE**

The student body of schools all across the United States depends on the Elected and Appointed Officials of their Student Council in order to ensure a better academic and recreational experience. We, as the executives of various school-related functions, find it crucial to fulfill such responsibilities and live up to all the duties we undertake. It is with these thoughts in mind that

the 2021 Bergen County Academies Student Council hereby adopt this Constitution.

## **ARTICLE I – ADOPTION OF THE CONSTITUTION**

1. The Constitution shall be the governing laws of the Student Council.
2. All members, both Elected and Appointed, must sign the Constitution upon its ratification in order to qualify for official membership.
  - a. Upon proper election or appointment, signature of the Constitution:
    - i. accepts the student as an official Student Council member.
    - ii. obliges the student to follow all Constitution components in their ratified form, as well as all amendments to the Constitution passed in the current school year.
    - iii. No student is an official Council member without the signature of the Constitution.
3. The Constitution shall take effect in its given form upon ratification by a supermajority of 2/3 of Council members for that year and approval of the Teacher Advisor.
  - a. If a supermajority cannot be attained, Elected Officials or members of Congress may propose an amendment to the Constitution of the Student Council; however, the foundation of this document, as drafted by the 2004-2005 Student Council, is only subject to major revisions in accordance to equally drastic circumstances.
  - b. The Bill of By-Laws must be reviewed annually, and if need be, revised, as per the discretion and approval of the President of the Student Council at the beginning of their term.
4. The terms of all elected officials will span from January 1st to December 31st.

## **ARTICLE II – STUDENT COUNCIL OFFICIALS**

1. The Student Council shall be composed of a Teacher Advisor, four Executive Board Officers, elected members of Congress and Appointed Officials.
  - a. Teacher Advisor
    - i. The Administration of the Bergen County Academies may appoint an advisor to the Council.
    - ii. If the Student Council does not receive an appointed advisor, it is the responsibility of the Council-elect to find an advisor for the school year as soon as possible.
    - iii. In the event the Student Council does not obtain a Teacher Advisor, there shall be no Student Council for that school year.
  - b. Elected Officials
    - i. Executive Board Officers
      1. *President* – The President shall preside over all Council meetings and advise the Council on school functions. It is also the President's responsibility to set the agenda for all Council functions and guide the direction in which Council proceeds; this includes the Bill of By Laws, in accordance with the procedures outlined in Article II, Section 4a. In order to act and make decisions on behalf of the Student Council (i.e. sending mass emails, etc.), all Council members must inform the President and obtain the approval of the President before doing so.
        - a. In order for a student to be eligible to pursue the presidency,

they must be a senior during the term of service with at least one year of Student Council or two years of Class Council experience.

2. *Vice-President* – The Vice-President shall preside over all Council meetings in the absence of the President; they shall be responsible for reporting to the President on all current and necessary issues and aid the President in the finalizations of all Council decisions.
  - a. In order for a student to be eligible to pursue the vice presidency, they must be a junior or senior during the term of service with at least one year of Student Council or Class Council experience.
3. *Secretary* – The Secretary is responsible for internal communications, such as recording and reporting the minutes of meetings to all members and taking attendance at every Council function.
  - a. There are no prerequisites for a student to be eligible to run for the position of Secretary.
4. *Treasurer* – The Treasurer is the executive of all Council financial affairs. They will be responsible for duties such as collecting money for school functions, as well as directing fundraising initiatives and balancing the Student Council account. With the assistance of the Teacher Advisor, they will conduct cost analyses of Council endeavors.
  - a. There are no prerequisites for a student to be eligible to run for the position of Treasurer.

c. Congress

- i. *Class Representatives* – Voters shall have the opportunity to elect representatives to facilitate their respective class's needs. It is the job of the Class Representative to communicate concerns specific to their class before the Student Council and report back to their class accordingly.
  1. The ratio of Class Representatives per class shall vary as the Teacher Advisor and Executive Board Officers see fit; generally, with the probability of an upperclassmen dominated Executive Board, Class Representatives shall comprise mainly of underclassmen.
- ii. *Class Council Liaisons* – The Vice-Presidents of all four Class Councils are given the duty of liaison for their respective grades by default; it shall be their responsibility to report to their Class Council on the decisions and events of the Student Council, and vice versa.

d. Appointed Officials

- i. The following Appointed Positions have been established in order to regulate and facilitate the flow of communications within the Student Council, with the student body, and with the Administration.
- ii. They shall earn their positions on the Student Council through an application process, for which the details are to be determined by the Teacher Advisor and Executive Board. Each application shall be reviewed and either accepted or denied through the collective decision of the Teacher Advisor and elected officers.
- iii. Upon appointment into the Student Council, the Webmaster and Director of Communications will have obligations and privileges akin to all Elected

Officials.

1. *Webmaster* – The Webmaster shall manage the Student Council website and work with the President and Secretary to update and promote the website accordingly. If need be, they will also work with the Treasurer to maintain the site. Furthermore, the Student Council Webmaster will collaborate with the Webmasters of the four Class Councils, with the purpose of integrating all the student government websites.
  - a. Students who wish to apply for the post of Webmaster must demonstrate proficiency in programming and web design by presenting their original prototype of the potential Student Council website, in addition to an application.
2. *Promotions Director* - The Promotions Director shall manage the Student Council email and Instagram accounts; in collaboration with the President and Secretary, they are responsible for external communications, such as contacting the student body when necessary. Furthermore, in the event that students send emails to the Student Council account, it is the duty of the Promotions Director to respond to each student in a diplomatic manner, based on the decisions and values of the Student Council.
3. *National Student Council Director* - The NSC Director will serve as the liaison between NSC and our Student Council. The NSC Director will lead the application process for National Councils of Excellence.
4. *Artistic Director* - The Artistic Director will be in charge of all artistic responsibilities including making posters, maintaining the Student Council bulletin board, designing tickets, etc.
  - a. Appointed based on artistic capabilities and overall qualifications

### **ARTICLE III – ELECTIONS**

1. In order to elect students onto the Executive Board and Congress of the Student Council, all freshman, sophomores, juniors, and seniors of Bergen County Academies are entitled to one vote for each position on the ballot.
  - a. All votes will be cast on Google Forms or another platform that disables non-BCA BCTS accounts from voting.
  - b. Write-ins on ballots are not to be regarded in the tallying of the votes; as specified in Article II, positions on the Student Council will have varying prerequisites that will determine a student's eligibility to pursue candidacy.
  - c. Senior votes are only to be counted if the percentage of the senior class that casts a ballot is over 50%.
2. Candidacy for elections shall be granted or denied based on the discretion of the Teacher Advisor, who shall organize the logistics of elections honestly and impartially.
  - a. In order to be considered for candidacy, students must meet aforementioned prerequisites accordingly and submit an application by the deadline set by the

Teacher Advisor.

- b. Candidates may be disqualified based on the discretion of the Teacher Advisor
3. Applications for potential candidates shall comprise of: a brief essay explaining the student's desire to serve on the Student Council and indicating the position for which they are applying; a résumé, for which past leadership experience is preferable, though not required.
4. Once elected onto the student council, the executive officers are to be appointed based on a teacher council decided by the student council advisor.
4. Candidates must follow election guidelines agreed upon by the Council of the previous school year as well as the standards set by the Student Code of Conduct.
5. Elections shall be held towards the end of the calendar year.

#### **ARTICLE IV – OFFICIAL IMPEACHMENTS**

1. All elected and non-elected Council members are subject to impeachment if:
  - a. The accused fails to meet all by-laws agreed upon.
  - b. The accused is found to interfere with the progress and operation of the Council and its activities due to a conviction in a court of law or a suspension/expulsion from the Bergen County Academies.
2. Any Council member may motion to impeach any other Council member:
  - a. At that point, the accused has been officially impeached.
  - b. Debate may proceed until the highest-ranking, non-accused Council member calls for a vote-to-convict.
  - c. Every individual must be impeached and convicted individually.
  - d. A  $\frac{3}{4}$  supermajority of Council members other than the accused must cast their votes in favor of conviction in order for the accused to be officially removed from the Student Council.
  - e. If a  $\frac{3}{4}$  supermajority is not reached, the individual accused may not be impeached until the next Council meeting's proceedings.

**BILL OF BY-LAWS**  
**of the**  
**BERGEN COUNTY ACADEMIES**  
**STUDENT COUNCIL**  
**2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR**

1. All members of the Student Council, both Elected and Appointed, are obligated to be present at every Council function, including but not limited to meetings and events, punctually and eagerly.
  - a. All Elected Officials of the Student Council shall convene every Monday morning at 7:30 am for meetings. If need be and based on the discretion of the President, meetings may be held earlier or later in the day; regardless of the time, all officials are expected to arrive promptly at or before the scheduled meeting time.
  - b. Excused absences to Student Council functions are permitted but discouraged; based on the discretion of the Executive Board Officers and the Teacher Advisor, absences to Student Council functions can be categorized as “excused” or “unexcused”
  - c. For an absence to a Student Council function to be considered “excused,” notification through email (at least 24 hours in advance) or text (at least 30 minutes in advance, 15 minutes for emergencies) to the President and Vice-President is necessary.
  - d. Unexcused tardiness is equivalent to unexcused absence.
    - i. Tardiness can be evaded if members of the Student Council were to arrive 5 minutes early to every Council function.
    - ii. Members with two or more unexcused absences are subject to suspension from Council; the period of suspension can be temporary or permanent, for it shall be determined by the Executive Board Officers and the Teacher Advisor.
  - e. Having “too much schoolwork” cannot account for an excused absence; all Student Council members are expected to manage their time wisely and be mindful of scheduling events and appointments around Council.
2. The actions taken by members of the Student Council are not limited to that of their job descriptions; each member is encouraged to take initiative, regardless of title. i. Conversely, members are also expected to be courteous and act with sensitivity to the roles of other Council members as well as with the full cognizance and approval of the President and Vice-President.
  - a. All members of Student Council are expected to follow through with promises made and assigned duties.
3. Members of the Student Council are expected to heed the school’s needs over their own; they are to abstain from self-promotion and go out of their comfort zones to help those in need.

- a. Student Council Officials are expected to be professional and courteous, not only to those with authority but also to the peers whose voices they are facilitating.
  - b. If asked for help, members of the Student Council cannot immediately redirect that student to someone else. Council Officials are expected to stop what they are doing, and see what can be done for that particular student and for the greater good of the student body.
4. Members of the Student Council are expected to be honest and encouraged to speak their minds in a respectful manner; it is highly recommended for Officials to consider the consequences that may follow their words.
  - a. There is a difference between calling people out and shooting ideas down; in the event that Officials must resort to the latter, they must be equipped with a better idea or suggestion.
  - b. Members of Student Council must use their discretion when sharing Council matters with the public—especially matters that are not set in stone.
  - c. Members of Student Council shall be especially prudent with the use of the Internet and other permanent media; as ambassadors, Officials are representing over 1000 people and must behave as such that the Bergen County Academies is represented in the most positive light.
  - d. If Members of the Student Council, both Elected and Appointed, must send a mass email, they are to report to the President and Vice President before doing so. This shall apply to any instance during which the name of the Student Council is utilized.
5. It is in the best interest of not only the student body but also the community that all Student Council members take pride in their school, in their actions, words, and general attitude.