Gay-Straight Alliance Constitution

**Organization Name**
This organization shall be known as the Gay-Straight Alliance or GSA.

**Purpose**
The goals and purposes of this organization are as follows:

1. To provide a supportive, safe social setting for gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender persons and their friends and supporters, as well as any other interested parties recognizing sexual diversity our high school campus.
2. To provide educational resources to our school and community regarding issues of sexual diversity.
3. To provide a vehicle of social and political action in regards to issues of sexual diversity on a local, state, national and international level.
4. To act as an ally to other organizations dealing with issues pertinent to our own membership body.

**Membership**
Membership in the GSA shall be open to all individuals regardless of gender, national origin, age, ethnicity, religious affiliation, disability and sexual orientation. Membership shall be classified as "active" or "inactive." The principle difference between these statuses is the right and ability to vote. Only those who fulfill the requirements for membership shall be granted voting privileges.

**Requirements for Active Membership**

1. Identify with and uphold the purposes and goals of the GSA as set forth by this document.
2. Register attendance with attendance officer at the beginning of each semester.
3. Attend at least one general meeting per month or maintain involvement in other GSA-sanctioned activities.

**Inactive Membership**
Inactive membership status shall be given to all attendees who have at some time been considered active members, but who have failed to re-register attendance per new semester. In addition, alumni of the GSA and other honorary members named by the council will be given inactive membership.

**Termination of Membership**
Membership in the GSA may be terminated if the implied or expressed actions of a member are deemed harmful or detrimental to the goals and purposes of the GSA. Such a vote may be called to the floor by any two concurring active members and must be called at least seven days in advance. Such a vote may only occur at a regularly scheduled meeting. The decision to remove a member from active membership status can only be passed with a two-thirds majority vote of all present active members. Membership may also be terminated by a council vote with four of the five council members in favor of the removal.

**Organization of Government**
The organization of the GSA's government shall reflect an understanding of the necessity for governmental adaptability and flexibility. Therefore, there shall be no officials elected to fulfill specific duties or responsibilities, such as president, secretary, treasurer, etc., but rather an elected council that shall delegate those same duties and responsibilities as they see fit to best benefit the current membership of the organization. These council members shall have equal executive voting authority and shall have the power to delegate all governmental duties and functions amongst themselves, or to bestow any of those responsibilities on an appointee of their choosing. There shall be elected by the active membership body, one chairperson of the executive council to serve as the spokesperson for the executive council and for the entirety of the membership of the GSA. The term of office for a council member is the duration of the academic year.

**Legislative Structure**
The principle legislative document for the government of the GSA shall be this constitution. Secondary to the constitution shall be the bylaw system herein discussed.

**Bylaws**
The bylaws shall serve to govern all provisions and affairs not specifically mentioned in this constitution. Bylaws may be proposed at any time by any member of the executive council and must be ratified by a simple majority vote of the council. Jurisdiction of bylaws may include but is not limited to the establishment and collection of dues, maintenance of GSA list serve and e-mail accounts, meeting schedules, group activities, monetary accounts, etc. The code of bylaws shall be examined yearly, one month after the beginning of each scholastic fall semester, and the executive council shall decide on any necessary additions, deletions, or revisions to the code.

**Amendment Procedure**
This constitution is written with hopes to facilitate expansion and growth of the GSA. It is understood, however, that needs may arise that mandate amendments to this document. In such cases as an amendment is proposed, it shall be voted upon by the entirety of all active members. A two-thirds majority is needed among these active members to propose a bill, and it must then be ratified by a simple majority vote of the executive council. This vote shall be called fourteen days in advance and must be held at a regularly scheduled meeting. All changes should be clearly visible. Copies of the original and of the proposed piece of legislation shall be provided to all voters upon request.

**Executive Council**
In the executive council of the GSA is vested the whole of the executive, judicial, and legislative powers. As such, all decisions, all representations, all alliances, etc. pertaining to the GSA and not specifically provided for in this constitution shall be within the realm of control and responsibility of the executive council.

**Qualifications of Council Members**
Any student of \_\_\_\_\_\_High School in good standing who has been an active member of the GSA for at least two months is eligible to accept the office of an executive council member. He or she should have a reasonable understanding of the purposes, structure, and government of the GSA as well as a reasonable understanding of the organization's constitution and bylaws.

**Executive Council Chairperson**
The office of executive council chairperson shall be filled by one of the members of the executive council, and shall be selected by a majority vote of the executive council. This officer's duties shall be no more than those of any other executive council member, except that this officer shall be the spokesperson of the organization to outside parties, and the mouthpiece of the council to voice their will to the active membership. As this position will require that the chairperson be a visible representative, the power to make some decisions without the expressed consent of the council is given to the chairperson. This power shall only be used in times of GSA representation where the council cannot be contacted by any reasonable means. It is preferable that the chairperson gain the approval of at least one other executive council member. The chairperson shall inform the entirety of the executive council about the decisions made on their behalf as soon as possible. Misuse of this power will lead to the recall of the executive council chairperson.

**Election of Council Members**
Election of the members of the executive council for a term beginning in August shall be in April of the previous term and should take place at the first meeting of that month unless for due cause it is otherwise ordained by the executive council. An election for offices of the executive council shall be called no less than fourteen days before the date and time of that election. Nominations will be accepted beginning at the time of election announcement. Voting will be by secret ballot. A simple majority of voting members determines those elected to the council. In case of a tie, a run-off election must be held. Only members who have voted in the primary election may vote in the secondary. This secondary election is not bound by the fourteen-day announcement period. The executive council char shall determine the time for this run-off election. Tabulation of all votes in these elections shall be by the faculty adviser or some other nonbiased and nonvoting person who shall be decided upon by the executive council and shall be carried out immediately after the casting of votes whenever possible.

**Officer Recall**
Officers of the executive council of the GSA are fully entrusted with all powers of the organization. As such, any abuse of power or any action committed by an executive officer that runs afoul of the goals of the GSA must be treated seriously and handled in a just and expedited manner. Any two active members within or outside the council, with due cause, may present a motion in writing to recall an officer from the executive council at any regularly scheduled meeting. This vote shall be held no less than two weeks following the motion of recall and must be performed at a regularly scheduled meeting. Any active member present at the meeting may vote, with a simple majority needed to determine the outcome of the motion. Tabulation of all votes shall be done by the faculty adviser or some other nonbiased and nonvoting person who shall be selected by the executive council and shall be carried out immediately after the casting of votes whenever possible. If the recall vote is affirmed, the officer will immediately relinquish all powers and titles granted by their membership in the executive council and the remaining executive officers will proceed with the replacement of the vacancy of office. The removed officer will receive an inactive membership status for two months at which time he or she may apply for active membership into the GSA although they may no longer run for place in the executive council.

**Vacancy of Executive Office**
In the event of a vacancy of office in the executive council, it will be the duty of the remaining members of the council to quickly and effectively fill the empty seat. The replacement officer shall be an active member in good standing with the group, fulfilling all before stated qualifications for office of the executive council. The council members must consider, nominate, and vote in a replacement officer. This shall be a unanimous executive vote. In no case shall the replacement of an executive officer be accomplished through a popular vote. In the case of a stand still, the chairperson shall have the deciding vote.

**Ties in Executive Council**
If a tie occurs during any vote of the executive council during the absence of one of the members, the tie-breaking vote shall be given to the chairperson. If the chairperson is absent, this vote will be taken to the faculty adviser(s).

**Advisers**
Any adviser to the GSA shall possess limited power within the organization. The main duties of an adviser are the tabulation of electoral and recall votes, assuring that the organization of the group has a clear and manageable focus in its adherence to the purposes of the GSA, ensure the supremacy of this constitution and the strict interpretation of all its clauses, act as a liaison to the university when necessary, and provide any other advisement necessary. The classification of an adviser shall be as an inactive member with certain delegated powers as authorized by the executive council and this document.

**Qualifications**
Any member(s) of the faculty of \_\_\_\_\_\_High School may be eligible to be an adviser for the GSA regardless of gender, ethnicity, nationality, age, disability, religious affiliation or sexual orientation, provided that the proposed faculty member agrees with and adheres to the goals and purposes of the GSA.

**Selection of Adviser**
Advisers of the GSA shall be chosen by simple majority vote of the executive council. The organization holds the right to have multiple advisers simultaneously, and these shall be represented by one senior adviser at times of vote, consensus, or other executive responsibility. Unless otherwise decided by the panel of advisers, the position of the senior adviser shall be given to the adviser who has served the GSA for the longest period of time. If there is only one adviser, then this person becomes the senior adviser by default. If there is a question about who should have the roll of senior adviser, this decision goes to the executive council.

**Removal of Adviser**
Should an adviser of the GSA not fulfill the requirements of his or her role or if an adviser runs afoul of the purposes and goals of this organization, then removal of the adviser must be carried out as quickly and justly as possible. If there is cause to remove an adviser, then such action may be carried out by a majority decision of the executive council. The active membership does not have the power to select or remove an adviser, but they are free to submit nominations for both selection and removal in writing to the executive council for review and consideration.

**Meetings**
Meetings, general and executive council, are a vital component to this organization, as they are the place to learn about goings on within the organization and stay up to date on information pertinent to our membership.

**General Meetings**
General meetings of the GSA are to be scheduled by decree of the executive council. These meetings should be scheduled at the beginning of each academic semester, but are subject to change as needed. If a meeting time must be changed, members should be notified by any reasonable means at least one week in advance. If this is not possible, attendance is optional. General meetings are the primary social gatherings, but shall also be used for GSA business discussions, political forums, educational discussions, etc. Under normal circumstances, the GSA should meet once per week on the same day of each week. Additional meetings may be scheduled for purposes of holding specific events or under great need.

**Executive Council Meetings**
The executive council of the GSA shall be required to meet at least twice per month outside of the general membership assemblies, unless, by unanimous vote of the council it is decided that fewer meetings better suit the membership of the organization. These meetings should serve as the planning times for issues such as meetings, alliances, funds, membership, etc.

**Record Keeping**
It is necessary to keep records of all business-related matters concerning the GSA. The executive council shall select one of its own members to serve as the official record keeper. This person may delegate the responsibilities as needed.

**Meeting Records**
Records shall be kept of all business meetings held during times of general membership assembly. The executive council shall appoint one person, either a council member or an active member appointee, to serve as the record keeper. Records of these meetings shall include all proposals, dismissals, decisions, attendance, and any other pertinent information. Also, in meetings where votes are cast and collected, names of voters must be recorded.

**Executive Council Meeting Records**
Records shall be kept of all executive council meetings where decisions are made affecting the membership of the GSA. Records shall include all proposals, dismissals, decisions, attendance, and any other pertinent information. Bylaws shall be recorded and made accessible to the membership and filed for review at the beginning of each term. These records shall be accessible to any active member of the GSA who requests a copy, or to any other individual granted access by the executive council.

**Financial Transactions Records**
Records of all financial transactions involving GSA funds shall be recorded by the initiator of said transaction, and shall be submitted to the appointed keeper of records for filing. These records shall be accessible to any active member of the GSA who requests a copy, or to any other individual granted access by the executive council.

**Accounts and Property**
Should any funds be held by the GSA, a need will arise for a financial account. This may be held through \_\_\_High School or through any other financial institution chosen by the executive council. At times of withdrawal of funds from these accounts, the signature must be present of the senior adviser and of the council member charged with treasury. Any property of the GSA shall be maintained by appointment of the executive council.

**Temporary Governmental Allowances**
In such time as a member or members of the executive council shall be absent for an extended period of time, it shall be permissible to make necessary structural allowances to suit the needs of the active membership. Also, at times when active membership falls to a number not suited well by the primary form of government outlined in this constitution, then upon a council vote, structural allowances may be made by the decision of the executive council or by a unanimous vote of the active members. In either situation, the consent of the adviser shall be required.

**Extended Absences of Council Members (non-summer terms)**
During the course of a fall or spring semester, should a council member be absent for more than forty-five consecutive days or three executive council meetings successively without due notice to the council and their subsequent approval, the absent member may be replaced. This replacement falls under the vacancy of Executive Office" clause.