

# The Constitution

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*A Proposed Rewrite of the Garfield ASB Constitution*

WORKING DRAFT · PULLED MAY 9, 2026

This is a working draft, in active development through ratification on June 1, 2026. Some sections remain unfinished and will be refined with input from students, the current Executive Board, and school administration. We are sharing it now so the work is visible.

# **GARFIELD HIGH SCHOOL**

## **Associated Student Body**

# **CONSTITUTION**

*Drafted for ratification spring 2026*

## **PREAMBLE**

We, the students of Garfield High School, establish this Constitution to govern our Associated Student Body. Our student government exists to represent every student, to serve the school community with integrity, and to model thoughtful self-governance. We commit to deciding democratically, listening broadly, spending public funds responsibly, and welcoming all students into civic life at Garfield. We adopt this Constitution recognizing that the authority to govern ourselves is granted by the student body and exercised in service of it.

## ARTICLE I — Name

This organization shall be known as the Garfield High School (GHS) Associated Student Body (ASB).

## ARTICLE II — Membership and Purpose

### Section 1. Membership.

All currently enrolled students of Garfield High School are members of the Associated Student Body.

### Section 2. Nondiscrimination.

No student shall be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or otherwise subjected to discrimination under any ASB program or activity on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, immigration status, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or district law.

### Section 3. Purpose.

The purpose of the ASB is to:

- (a) represent the student body of Garfield High School;
- (b) provide and govern programs, events, and activities for the benefit of students;
- (c) administer the funds of the ASB consistent with district, state, and federal law;
- (d) cultivate student leadership and civic participation;
- (e) communicate with administration, staff, and the broader community on behalf of students.

## ARTICLE III — Authority

### Section 1. Legislative authority.

All legislative authority of the Associated Student Body shall be vested in the Executive Board.

### Section 2. Executive authority.

Executive authority — the day-to-day execution of the ASB's programs and activities — shall reside in the Leadership class under the direction of the ASB President.

### Section 3. Veto and appeals.

The Activity Coordinator may veto any decision of the Executive Board that they believe negatively impacts students or the school climate. The Executive Board may override the veto by a two-thirds supermajority of votes cast. If overridden, the Activity Coordinator may escalate the matter to the Principal, whose decision is final at the school level. The Executive Board may appeal a Principal-level veto to district administration in accordance with applicable Seattle Public Schools procedures.

**Section 4. Quorum.**

A quorum of the Executive Board shall be a majority of its voting parties. No major decisions or financial actions may be taken without quorum.

**ARTICLE IV — Officers and Voting Structure****Section 1. ASB Officers.**

The Officers of the ASB are the President, the Vice President, and the Executive Secretary.

**Section 2. Class Officers.**

Each class shall be represented by a Class Council consisting of a Class President, a Class Vice President, and a Class Secretary.

**Section 3. Executive Board voting structure.**

The Executive Board has seven voting parties:

- (a) ASB President — one vote;
- (b) ASB Vice President — one vote;
- (c) ASB Executive Secretary — one vote;
- (d) 9th grade — one vote, decided by the 9th grade Class Council;
- (e) 10th grade — one vote, decided by the 10th grade Class Council;
- (f) 11th grade — one vote, decided by the 11th grade Class Council;
- (g) 12th grade — one vote, decided by the 12th grade Class Council.

**Section 4. Class voting procedure.**

At least one Class officer must be present at the meeting for that class to vote. If multiple officers from a class are present, they shall determine the class's vote by majority among them. If they cannot reach a majority, the Class President shall decide. If the Class President is not present, the most senior officer present (Vice President first, then Secretary) shall decide. If no Class officer is present, the class forfeits its vote for that meeting.

**Section 5. 9th grade representation.**

The 9th grade class shall not be represented on the Executive Board until the fall election of 9th grade Class officers. Until then, the Executive Board has six voting parties.

**Section 6. Selection of the Executive Secretary.**

The Executive Secretary shall be selected by the unelected members of the Leadership class and confirmed by the Executive Board. The Executive Secretary represents the unelected members of the Leadership class on the Executive Board and holds the financial responsibilities described in the Bylaws.

## ARTICLE V — Definitions

The following terms have the following meanings throughout this Constitution, the Bylaws, and the Standing Rules:

### **Activity Coordinator.**

The staff member designated by the Principal as primary advisor to the ASB. The designation shall be presented to the Executive Board, which shall vote to express confidence by simple majority. If confidence is not granted, the Executive Board may communicate its concerns to the Principal in writing and request reconsideration. The Principal retains final authority over the designation in accordance with SPS policy.

### **ASB or Associated Student Body.**

The student body organization of Garfield High School and its activity components, including but not limited to clubs, classes, and athletic groups.

### **CARS.**

Cultural, Athletic, Recreational, and Social — the categories of activity for which ASB funds may be expended under Washington state law and SPS policy.

### **Components.**

Chartered groups operating under the umbrella of the ASB, including clubs, athletic teams, and class accounts.

### **Executive Board.**

The legislative body of the ASB, composed of seven voting parties as described in Article IV.

### **Fiscal Specialist.**

The SPS staff member responsible for the day-to-day financial recordkeeping of the ASB.

### **Leadership class.**

The credit-bearing course at Garfield High School that serves as the executive arm of the Associated Student Body. The Leadership class is the body within which the day-to-day operational work of the ASB is carried out.

### **Simple majority.**

More than half of votes cast on a matter.

### **Supermajority or two-thirds.**

Two-thirds or more of votes cast on a matter.

### **Voting party.**

Each of the seven entities entitled to one vote on the Executive Board: the President, the Vice President, the Executive Secretary, and each of the four classes.

## ARTICLE VI — Student Complaints

### Section 1. Right to file a complaint.

Any student of Garfield High School, including but not limited to members of ASB-chartered components, shall have the right to file a written complaint when they believe that an employee of Seattle Public Schools has acted in a manner that:

- (a) violates the Associated Student Body's ability to govern itself in accordance with this Constitution and Bylaws;
- (b) interferes with a student's ability to perform their duties as an elected or appointed officer, or as a representative on a building-level decision-making body; or
- (c) constitutes retaliation against a student for participation in ASB governance, advocacy, or for filing a complaint under this Article.

### Section 2. Informal resolution preferred.

Before filing a formal complaint, the complainant should attempt to resolve the matter informally with the employee involved, with the assistance of the Activity Coordinator or another adult mediator if appropriate. A formal complaint should be filed only when informal resolution has been attempted unsuccessfully or when informal resolution is not appropriate given the nature of the complaint.

### Section 3. Filing.

Formal complaints shall be made in writing to the Principal. Complaints alleging conduct by the Principal shall be made in writing to the Principal's immediate supervisor at Seattle Public Schools. Complaints alleging conduct by the Activity Coordinator may be made directly to the Principal without first attempting informal resolution.

### Section 4. Investigation and response.

The Principal or supervisor receiving the complaint shall determine whether the complaint is warranted within fifteen school days of receipt. The investigator shall compile a written report of the findings. No later than fifteen school days following completion of the report, the Superintendent or designee shall respond to the complainant in writing, stating either:

- (a) that Seattle Public Schools denies the allegations and the basis for the denial; or
- (b) that Seattle Public Schools confirms the allegations, and the corrective measures that SPS and Garfield High School intend to take.

### Section 5. Protection against retaliation.

No student shall be subject to retaliation for filing a complaint under this Article in good faith, for participating as a witness in an investigation, or for assisting another student in filing a complaint. Retaliation by an employee shall itself be grounds for a complaint under this Article.

### Section 6. Confidentiality.

The identity of the complainant and any witnesses shall be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law and consistent with the requirements of a fair investigation. The complainant may request in writing that their identity be withheld; the Principal or investigating supervisor shall honor such requests where doing so does not prevent meaningful investigation of the complaint.

**Section 7. Records.**

A copy of every complaint filed under this Article and the response to that complaint shall be maintained by the Activity Coordinator in a confidential file accessible only to the Activity Coordinator, the Principal, the Vice President in their capacity as parliamentarian, and authorized district personnel. Records shall be retained in accordance with applicable district records retention policies.

## **ARTICLE VII — Student Representation on Building-Level Decision-Making Bodies**

**Section 1. Right to representation.**

Students of Garfield High School shall have the right to serve as full members of building-level decision-making bodies, including but not limited to the Building Leadership Team (BLT) and hiring committees. Student representatives are members of these bodies, not advisors or observers. Student representatives shall have voice and vote on matters before the body to the same extent as other members, except where limited by collective bargaining agreements or other binding policy.

**Section 2. Number of representatives.****(a) General rule.**

The number of student representatives on each building-level decision-making body shall equal the number of parent or guardian representatives on that body. If a body has no parent or guardian representative position, it shall have no student representative position.

**(b) Building Leadership Team.**

The number of student voting representatives on the Building Leadership Team shall be either two or equal to the number of parent or guardian voting representatives on the Building Leadership Team, whichever is greater.

**Section 3. Eligibility.**

To serve as a student representative on a building-level decision-making body, a student must:

- (a) maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0, excluding non-academic classes such as teaching assistantships;
- (b) be on track for graduation as measured by credit accumulation;
- (c) be enrolled at Garfield High School. Students enrolled in Running Start may serve as representatives provided they remain affiliated with Garfield as their home school and are able to attend the body's meetings.

**Section 4. Selection process.**

The selection of student representatives shall proceed as follows:

- (a) The ASB Officers shall solicit candidates from the student body and from building staff, providing reasonable public notice of available positions.

(b) The Activity Coordinator shall review the list of candidates and confirm which candidates meet the eligibility requirements in Section 3. Candidates who do not meet eligibility shall be removed from consideration.

(c) The ASB Officers shall contact each eligible candidate to confirm their interest and availability to commit to the responsibilities of the position. Candidates who decline or cannot commit shall be removed from consideration.

(d) The Executive Board shall provide input on the remaining candidates.

(e) The ASB Officers shall make the final selection by majority vote among the President, Vice President, and Executive Secretary. Where multiple positions are available on the same body, ASB Officers should consider whether the selected representatives collectively reflect the diversity of the student body.

### **Section 5. Concurrent service.**

A student who holds an ASB or Class office is not, by virtue of holding that office, prohibited from serving as a representative on a building-level decision-making body. The Activity Coordinator may decline to confirm eligibility where concurrent service would create a clear conflict of interest or unmanageable time commitment.

### **Section 6. Hiring committees.**

Student representatives may serve on building-level hiring committees except where prohibited by the collective bargaining agreement between Seattle Public Schools and its employees. Students serving on hiring committees shall:

- (a) maintain strict confidentiality regarding all matters discussed and all candidates considered;
- (b) participate in good faith and be prepared to fulfill the responsibilities of the role;
- (c) abide by all confidentiality and procedural requirements established by SPS.

A student who breaches confidentiality on a hiring committee shall be removed from the committee and shall be ineligible to serve on any building-level decision-making body for the remainder of the school year. Reinstatement in subsequent school years is at the discretion of the Executive Board.

### **Section 7. Removal.**

A student representative may be removed from a building-level decision-making body for cause, including:

- (a) repeated failure to attend meetings;
- (b) repeated lack of preparation or failure to participate constructively;
- (c) breach of confidentiality;
- (d) loss of eligibility under Section 3;
- (e) conduct that brings the body or the ASB into disrepute.

Removal shall be initiated by the Executive Board, by the body itself, or at the request of the student's classmates, building staff, or the Activity Coordinator. The student representative shall be given written notice of the proposed removal, the grounds for removal, and the opportunity to respond before the Executive Board. Removal requires majority vote of the Executive Board.

**Section 8. Removal by school administration.**

In exceptional circumstances — including but not limited to instances where a student representative has committed an offense of exceptional misconduct under the District's Code of Prohibited Conduct, or where the student is no longer a full-time student at Garfield High School — the Principal or designee may remove a student representative from a building-level decision-making body. Such removals shall be communicated in writing to the Executive Board.

**Section 9. Vacancies.**

When a position becomes vacant, the selection process in Section 4 shall be initiated to fill the vacancy as soon as reasonably practicable.

**ARTICLE VIII — Amendments****Section 1. Standing Rules.**

Standing Rules may be adopted, amended, or repealed by simple majority of the Executive Board with one meeting's notice. The proposed change shall be included in the agenda for one regular Executive Board meeting prior to the meeting at which the vote is held. In emergencies requiring immediate action, the Executive Board may adopt or amend a Standing Rule by simple majority at the same meeting without prior notice; such emergency adoptions shall be reviewed at the following regular meeting.

**Section 2. Bylaws.**

Bylaws may be amended by two-thirds vote of the Executive Board's voting parties. Proposed amendments shall be included in the agenda for one regular Executive Board meeting prior to the meeting at which the vote is held. The meeting at which the vote is held shall include a public comment opportunity on the proposed amendment.

Two members of any voting parties on the Executive Board may propose a Bylaws amendment. Any member of the student body may submit a proposed amendment to a member of their Class Council or to any whole-school ASB officer, who shall bring the proposal to the Executive Board for consideration if they choose to sponsor it. The Executive Board may decline to sponsor any proposal but shall not unreasonably reject substantive amendments without considering them on the merits.

**Section 3. Constitutional amendments — proposal.**

The Constitutional Amendments Committee, chaired by the Vice President, shall convene each year to review proposed amendments to this Constitution. Proposals may be submitted to the Committee by:

- (a) Any member of the Executive Board;
- (b) Any member of the student body, with signatures of support from at least 5% of the student body.

The Committee shall review all submitted proposals and recommend a slate of amendments to the Executive Board. The Executive Board may approve the slate by two-thirds vote, after which the slate shall be presented to the student body for ratification. The Executive Board may reject the slate or send specific amendments back to the Committee for revision.

The Executive Board may, by simple majority, convene the Constitutional Amendments Committee outside its regular yearly schedule to consider urgent amendments.

**Section 4. Constitutional amendments — ratification.**

Constitutional amendments approved by the Executive Board shall be presented to the student body for ratification. An amendment is ratified if it receives a simple majority of votes cast, provided that votes cast represent at least 25% of currently enrolled students.

The ratification vote shall be held on a date determined by the Constitutional Amendments Committee. The Committee should ordinarily schedule the vote in conjunction with the annual ASB elections to maximize participation.

**Section 5. Constitutional amendments — public notice.**

Proposed amendments approved by the Executive Board shall be posted publicly at least ten school days before the ratification vote, in a manner accessible to all students. The Constitutional Amendments Committee shall hold at least one public meeting before the ratification vote at which the proposed amendments are presented and discussed, and at which student input is invited. The Committee shall make reasonable efforts to gather input from students unable to attend, including by accepting written input by email and by sharing meeting materials with absent students upon request.

**Section 6. Substantive vs. non-substantive amendments.**

Constitutional amendments are presumed to require student body ratification. The Executive Board may, by two-thirds vote with the written approval of the Activity Coordinator, designate an amendment as non-substantive and adopt it without student body ratification. Non-substantive amendments are limited to:

- (a) Correction of typographical or grammatical errors;
- (b) Updates to external references where the underlying entity has been renamed or restructured;
- (c) Formatting and stylistic changes that do not alter meaning;
- (d) Renumbering or cross-reference updates necessitated by other amendments.

Any amendment affecting officer duties, voting procedures, eligibility requirements, financial provisions, or amendment procedures shall be considered substantive and shall require student body ratification.

**Section 7. Emergency amendments.**

In the event of an extraordinary disruption to school operations — including but not limited to extended school closure, district policy changes requiring immediate compliance, or other emergencies that prevent the Constitution from being followed as written — the Executive Board may adopt a temporary emergency amendment to this Constitution, subject to all of the following:

- (a) The amendment is approved by three-fourths of the Executive Board's voting parties;
- (b) The amendment is co-signed in writing by the Activity Coordinator;
- (c) The amendment is co-signed in writing by the Principal;
- (d) The amendment is publicly announced to the student body within three school days of adoption, with the text of the amendment, the emergency justifying it, and the expiration date;

(e) The amendment expires no later than the end of the school year in which it is adopted, unless an extension is reasonable due to the continuation of the underlying emergency. Any extension shall be approved under the same conditions as the original adoption;

(f) The amendment shall not modify the removal procedures, the amendment procedures, or this article. The amendment shall not modify the voting structure or eligibility requirements unless the Principal provides written approval specifically authorizing such modification, with stated emergency justification.

Following expiration, the original constitutional provisions resume effect. If the underlying issue persists beyond the school year, a permanent amendment shall be proposed through the regular constitutional amendment process.

**Section 8. Amendments to this Article.**

Any amendment to this Article shall require, in addition to the regular constitutional amendment process: (a) approval by three-fourths of the Executive Board's voting parties (rather than two-thirds), (b) written approval of the Activity Coordinator, and (c) ratification by the student body under the standards in this Article.

## ARTICLE IX — Enablement

**Section 1. Effective date.**

This Constitution shall take effect on the first day of the 2026–2027 school year, upon ratification by the student body and signature by the persons named in Section 4.

**Section 2. Spring 2026 elections.**

The annual ASB and Class elections held in spring 2026 were conducted using the structure of offices and the eligibility rules established by this Constitution. Officers elected shall take office on the first day of the 2026–2027 school year and shall serve under the terms of this Constitution.

**Section 3. Ratification.**

This Constitution is ratified upon affirmative vote of two-thirds of votes cast by the student body, provided that votes cast represent at least 25% of currently enrolled students. The ratification vote shall be held on the same ballot as the spring 2026 elections.

**Section 4. Signatures.**

Upon ratification, this Constitution is signed into effect by the persons named below.

- \_\_\_\_\_ ASB President
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12th Grade Class President
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11th Grade Class President
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10th Grade Class President
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9th Grade Class President

\_\_\_\_\_ Activity Coordinator

\_\_\_\_\_ Principal

Ratified by the student body on \_\_\_\_\_ [date].

**Section 5. Invalidation of prior documents.**

Upon taking effect on the first day of the 2026–2027 school year, this Constitution invalidates all previous Constitutional documents and Bylaws of the Garfield High School Associated Student Body.