

# **Articles of Organization**

**for**

**The Alumni Association of the Rensselaer NY School District**

## **I. CONSTITUTION**

## **II. BY-LAWS**

Adopted May 1, 2012

# **I. CONSTITUTION of The Alumni Association of the Rensselaer NY School District**

## **Article I: Identifying Information**

Section 1: Name: The name of the organization shall be The Alumni Association of the Rensselaer NY School District hereafter referred to as the “Association”.

Section 2: Location: The Association shall maintain its official location for purposes of the United States Postal Service as the same address of the Rensselaer City School District (RCSD).

Section 3: Logo and Colors: The Association shall adopt a logo and the same colors as the RCSD.

## **Article II: Purposes**

Section 1: Organization Type: ~~The Association shall be a member organization whose purposes are charitable, educational and fraternal.~~ The Association is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.<sup>1</sup> To those ends it shall:

a) Bestow the “Centennial Award” annually to one or more graduating seniors, as defined in the By-Laws;

b) Enhance the educational experiences of students of all grades through various methods as outlined in the By-Laws;

c) Preserve the history of the RCSD;

d) ~~Foster fraternal connections through sustaining~~ Sustain the continuation of the Association and<sup>1</sup>

e) Fund-raise for the above purposes.

## **Article III: Affiliations**

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<sup>1</sup> AMENDMENT III, Adopted February 14, 2018; Article II: Purposes, Section 1: Organization Type is hereby amended to delete the wording “The Association shall be a member organization whose purposes are charitable, educational and fraternal” and be replaced with the following: The Association is organized exclusively for charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes, including, for such purposes, the making of distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under section 501 (C) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

Item d) “Foster fraternal connections through sustaining” shall be omitted and replaced with “Sustain the continuation of the Association and”.

Section 1: RCSD: The Association is by definition comprised of members as defined in Article IV of the RCSD and is therefore affiliated to that entity and all of its affiliates, such as, but not limited to, the Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA), the RAMS Athletic Association, etc.

#### **Article IV: Membership**

Section 1. Qualifications: Association members shall have met one or more of the following criteria:

- a) Attended the RCSD;
- b) Worked in the RCSD, and/or
- c) Donated time or financially to the support of the Association.

Section 2: Duties: Members shall agree with and support the Association's Constitution and By-Laws.

Section 3: Types: There shall be two types of members: 1) active and 2) inactive. Active members, as defined in the By-Laws shall have voting privileges, while inactive members shall not.

Section 4: Dues: Dues shall be voluntary and accepted, but not required, as outlined in the By-Laws. If accepted, dues shall be payable to, and recorded by, the Treasurer.

Section 5: Term: The term of membership shall commence with meeting the qualifications and be for life, unless disqualified.

Section 6: Disqualification: A member shall be disqualified in accordance with the By-Laws and if the member causes harm to the Association.

Section 7: Non-Discrimination: The Association and its members shall not discriminate against any individual for reasons of race, national origin, color, religion gender, age, veteran status, sexual orientation or ability.

#### **Article V: Officers**

Section 1: Titles: The following officers shall govern the Association:

- a) President
- b) Vice President
- c) Secretary

d) Treasurer

e) Ex-Officio Advisor(s)/Past President(s)

f) Telecommunication Advisor/Webmaster

Section 2: Duties: The duties of the officers shall be to govern the Association as outlined in the By-Laws.

Section 3: Elections: The Officers shall be elected by a slate selected by the Nominating Committee and vote of the majority of the active membership that voted in accordance with the By-Laws.

Section 4: Term of Office: ~~The Officers shall serve for a term of one (1) year and not for more than five (5) consecutive terms in one (1) office, in accordance with the By-Laws.~~ The Officers shall serve for a term of one (1) year and not for more than five (5) consecutive terms in one (1) office, in accordance with the By-Laws, unless there is/are no other person(s) accepting the nomination for a particular office(s), who can serve. Under these circumstances, the incumbent(s) may continue serving in that office beyond the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) term, until such time as a new person is willing to accept the nomination, and is voted-in. Every effort to find a new candidate for the slate of officers shall be made, so that the 5-year term limit will not have to be extended.<sup>2</sup>

## **Article VI: Meetings**

Section 1. General Meeting Schedule: General Meetings of the Association shall be held on a regular basis, as needed, but not less than, quarterly. General Meetings shall be open to all members and others as necessary.

Section 2. Quorum: A General Meeting quorum shall be a least six (6) members, two (2) of whom are officers.

Section 3: Format: Meetings shall have agendas and consist of a report by each of the officers, whether present or not, followed by committee reports.

Section 4: Minutes: Minutes of each General Meeting shall be recorded and approved by members.

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<sup>2</sup> AMENDMENT I, Adopted October 4, 2016; Article V: Officers, Section 4: Term of Office: The Officers shall serve for a term of one (1) year and not for more than five (5) consecutive terms in one (1) office, in accordance with the By-Laws, unless there is/are no other person(s) accepting the nomination for a particular office(s), who can serve. Under these circumstances, the incumbent(s) may continue serving in that office beyond the fifth (5<sup>th</sup>) term, until such time as a new person is willing to accept the nomination, and is voted-in. Every effort to find a new candidate for the slate of officers shall be made, so that the 5-year term limit will not have to be extended. This amendment is intended to keep the organization running, without disruption if no other candidate(s) is willing to run for office.

Section 5: Annual Meeting: There shall be an Annual Meeting for the purpose of officer elections and accounting of the previous year's business.

Section 6: Attendance: The Annual Meeting shall be open to all members and attended by all current officers or if unable to attend, their designees.

Section 7: Committee Meetings: Committee Meetings shall be held as necessary and as determined by the Committee Chairperson, appointed by the President; members; or the President.

Section 8: Virtual Meetings: When a decision on a subject is necessary and cannot wait until the next scheduled face to face meeting, or members cannot logistically come together, the President shall request a 'virtual' meeting be held via email, phone or other virtual means.

## **Article VII: Committees**

Section 1: Standing Committee: Committees shall be established as necessary as outlined in the By-Laws. The following Standing Committees shall include, but not be limited to a/n:

- a) Executive Committee,
- b) Nominating/Election Committee,
- c) Membership Committee,
- d) Fund-raising Committee, and
- e) Finance Committee.

Section 2: Duties: Committees shall carry out the business of the Association to serve the purposes of the organization. Committees shall report to the Executive Committee in accordance with the By-Laws.

## **Article VIII: Calendar**

Section 1. Fiscal Year (FY): The FY of the Association shall be the same as a calendar year, i.e. January 1 through December 31.

Section 2: Annual Meeting: ~~The Annual Meeting will coincide with the FY, and be held within the first two weeks of the year.~~ The Annual Meeting will coincide with the school's calendar, and be held within the first two weeks of September.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> AMENDMENT II, Adopted October 4, 2016; Article VIII: Calendar, Section 2: Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting will coincide with the school's calendar, and be held within the first two weeks of September.

## **Article IX: Amendments**

Section 1. The Constitution shall be amended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the majority of active members who voted.

Section 2. All amendments shall become part of the Articles of Organization.

## **Article X: Dissolution**

Section 1: Should the Association become inactive of its purposes for five (5) years or more, it shall be considered dissolved and its remaining assets shall be used exclusively for charitable and/or educational purposes.

## **II. BY-LAWS of the Alumni Association of the Rensselaer NY School District**

### **Article I: Identifying Information**

Section 1: Name: The name of the organization shall be The Alumni Association of the Rensselaer NY School District. This is to differentiate it from other organizations with similar names operated by schools in Rensselaer, Indiana and in Rensselaer County, NY e.g. the Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI).

Section 2: History: There is evidence that an Alumni Association existed since the 1920's but no other charter has been found. From documents, it is known that the Association at that point was fraternal and met to continue school bonds with classmates and to hold reunions. The Association appears to have had long periods of inactivity and there are no formal documents of their activities. In 1998, upon the anniversary of their 50<sup>th</sup> class reunion, the Van Rensselaer School Class of 1948 decided to take the donations received from that reunion and purpose those monies toward a charitable gift to a graduating senior. Since 1898 was believed to have been the founding year of the high school, it was decided to call the gift the "Centennial Award". One \$500 award had been given annually from 1998-2005 to a graduating senior meeting the criteria listed in Article II. In 2005 the alumni of the class of 1948 decided that there were sufficient funds to increase the awards to two \$500 gifts and to include a specially designed medallion with the words "Centennial Award". Traditionally a member of the Class of 1948 has awarded the medallions at the graduation ceremony. In 2011, the class of 1948 began meeting to elicit new, younger members to ensure the future continuation of its award program through establishment of a broader, more organized Alumni Association. The Articles of Organization (Constitution and By-Laws) were created and ratified by membership vote in 2012.

### **Article II: Purposes**

Section 1: Charitable: While the “Centennial Award” has traditionally been monetary and given annually to one or more graduating seniors, and expanded to include a medallion, it may be whatever the membership votes it to be. If monetary, the amount of the award shall be established yearly by the Executive Committee. Selection of the award winners shall be by a committee established by the Rensselaer High School administration and the Alumni Association, according to specific criteria as documented by the committee. The award is given without discrimination to race, color, religion, age, gender or physical ability.

Section 2: Educational: The Association may fund or volunteer time to enhance the educational experiences of students of all grades. This may include such things as funding ancillary supplies not covered in the school budget, chaperoning events, mentoring, advising, etc. The Association shall preserve the history of the RCSD through the collection and maintenance of memorabilia, yearbooks, photographs and documents, as space allows.

Section 3: ~~Fraternal~~<sup>4</sup> The Association shall be sustained by, but not be limited to, the following activities:

- a) Membership drives;
- b) Conducting two (2) fund-raising activities a year, one of which is for sustaining the Centennial Award;
- c) Establishing an alumni data base, consisting of class lists and contact information of all students past, present and future;
- d) Assisting with class reunions.

### **Article III: Affiliations**

Section 1: The Association shall work in harmony with and support its affiliates.

### **Article IV: Membership**

Section 1: Eligibility: Membership shall be automatic if the member has attended or worked for the RCSD or if the member has donated time or financially to the Association. Membership is for life unless the member is disqualified by the Executive Committee.

Section 2: Types of Membership: Membership types shall include, but not be limited to, ‘active’ and ‘inactive’ status. An ‘active’ member is one who participates in meetings or otherwise supports the Association through time or financially, but must have a sense of the purposes of the Association and what its current activities are. ‘Active’ members

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<sup>4</sup> AMENDMENT IV, Adopted February 14, 2018; ARTICLE II: Purposes, Section 3: Fraternal, is hereby amended in concert with Amendment III of the Constitution as follows: Delete the word “Fraternal”.

shall have voting privileges. 'Inactive' members are members who have not participated in supporting the Association through meeting attendance, volunteering time or through monetary donations. 'Inactive' members shall not have voting rights.

Section 3: Duties: Members shall agree with and support the Association's Constitution and By-Laws. Members are encouraged to do this by attending meetings, giving of time or financially and volunteering to help with committee projects.

Section 4: Disqualification. Members shall be disqualified if they cause harm to the organization, for any reason, or for unethical conduct. Disqualification will be the responsibility of the Officers of the Association and automatic if criminality is involved. A disqualified member may be reinstated for just cause, if deemed appropriate by the Executive Committee.

Section 5: Dues. Dues shall be voluntary and a suggested amount established at the Annual Meeting each year for the following year. Dues shall be made payable to the Association and collected by the Treasurer. By voluntary, it is meant that payment of dues is not required for membership or voting privileges.

## **Article V: Officers**

Section 1. Duties: Once elected, officers shall assume their duties immediately for the term of one year. If for some reason an officer cannot complete their term, the President may appoint someone in their place after consultation with the Nominating and Executive Committees. Should an officer misuse their office, not fulfill their duties or need to be removed for just cause, they shall have their duties and office taken away by the President in consultation with the Executive Committee. Should the President be in question, it shall be the duty of the Vice President to take action, in concert with the other Officers, to relieve him/her of their duties. The Vice President shall then take over as President until the next election. The duties of each officer shall be as follows:

a) President: The President shall:

- 1) Preside at meetings;
- 2) Represent the Association to the public, and at meetings, fund-raising events, etc.;
- 3) Sign official documents and correspondence;
- 4) Appoint committees, chairpersons, and temporary designees for absentee officers;
- 5) Carry-out the purposes and practices of the Association in accordance with the Constitution and By- Laws;
- 6) Prepare the annual report;
- 7) Be one of two or more signors on all financial documents;
- 8) Chair the Executive Committee; and
- 9) Be a member of the Finance Committee.

b) Vice President: The Vice President shall:



- 1) Assume the duties of the President in his/her absence, and
- 2) Be a member of the Executive Committee.

c) Secretary: The Secretary shall:

- 1) Record minutes of all General and Executive Meetings;
- 2) Maintain official records;
- 3) Take attendance at meetings; and
- 4) Be a member of the Executive Committee.

d) Treasurer: The Treasurer shall:

- 1) Maintain financial records;
- 2) Collect and deposit funds;
- 3) Submit an annual report to the membership;
- 4) Receive bank statements, checks and other official financial records;
- 5) Be one of two signors on all financial documents;
- 6) Chair the Finance Committee; and
- 7) Be a member of the Executive Committee.

e) Ex-officio advisor(s): The ex-officio advisor(s) shall preferably, but not necessarily, be a past President or officer of the Association and/or a faculty member or staff of the RCSD. S/He shall:

- 1) Advise in the business of the Association;
- 2) Provide continuity from one administration to the next; and
- 3) Be a member of the Executive Committee.

f) The Telecommunications Officer/Webmaster: The Telecommunications Officer/Webmaster shall:

- 1) Develop technical resources to maintain the Association's database of members' contact information and ensure appropriate people have rights to view it and a limited number to add/update/delete thru remote access;
- 2) Manage mass imports/exports or changes to the database;
- 3) Ensure back-up of data;
- 4) Research and migrate platforms to keep pace or improve with technology;
- 5) Develop and maintain the ability to create targeted E-mail with complementary copies on the web;
- 6) Provide a way for individuals to add or update information online, and
- 7) Develop the capability to record donations online.

## **Article VI: Meetings**

Section 1: Meeting Structure: All meetings shall be orderly and timely.

a) General and Executive Meetings shall be chaired by the President or his/her

designee.

b) The Annual Meeting, General and Executive Meetings shall include a report by each of the Officers and any Standing Committees. They shall also include an acceptance of the previous meeting's minutes.

c) Attendance shall be taken at each General Meeting through a sign-in sheet which includes the attendee's name and contact information.

d) Minutes shall be taken at all meetings.

e) Committee Meetings shall be chaired by a committee member who has volunteered to be chairperson, or is appointed by the President.

## Section 2: Annual Meeting.

a) There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Association at which the Officers are installed.

b) The Annual Meeting shall coincide with the calendar year and take place within the first two (2) weeks of January.

c) The Annual Meeting will be a General Meeting open to all members at which each Officer will give a report of the year's activities.

## **Article VII: Committees**

Section 1. Establishment. The President shall establish committees as necessary.

Section 2: Duties: Each committee shall have a stated purpose and tasks to carry out those purposes. Each committee shall be responsible for reporting its activities to the Executive Committee as frequently as necessary and at the Annual Meeting. Committees shall not act independently and decisions shall require the approval of the Executive Committee.

Section 3. Standing Committees. The following committees shall exist for the stated purposes:

a) Executive Committee: The committee shall be comprised of the Association's Officers.

Additional members may be added as needed. The purpose of the Executive Committee shall be to manage the affairs of the Association on behalf of its members.

b) Nominating/Election Committee: ~~The committee shall be established at the end of the calendar year and select the slate of Officers for the following year to present at the Annual Meeting.~~ The committee shall be established at the end of the school's calendar

year in June and select the slate of Officers for the following year to present at the Annual Meeting in September.<sup>5</sup> The committee shall organize the membership voting process for electing the Officers. Each active member of the Association shall have one (1) vote for or against the slate. The committee shall tally the votes and report the decision at the Annual Meeting. Election shall be by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the active members who voted. In the event of a tie, a re-vote shall be taken.

c) Membership Committee: The purpose of the committee is to recruit and manage the membership. The committee shall be comprised of class representatives or other active members. The class representatives or other membership committee members shall be responsible for collecting and maintaining class lists. Class lists shall include the name of all classmates by graduating year and contact information e.g. address, phone number, email address, etc. When appropriate, married names for women shall be included.

d) Fund-Raising Committee: The committee shall be established for the purpose of organizing events to raise money for the Centennial Award fund and other Association business. There may be one committee or several subcommittees as necessary for each event. There shall be a minimum of one main activity and one other activity a year. The Fund-Raising Committee shall strive to always make a profit for the Association. The committee shall report all financial transactions to the Treasurer.

e) Finance Committee: The purpose of the committee is to account for all money coming in and going out of the Association including all monies raised, awarded, donated or received as donations. The Treasurer will chair the committee and the President shall also be a member. The committee shall be comprised of at least two (2) other active members. Financial reports shall be made as often as necessary, but no less frequently than annually. The Finance Committee shall be responsible for reviewing or auditing the annual Treasurer's report and for holding the Treasurer accountable for filing any necessary external reports as well, e.g. to the IRS for tax exempt status, if applicable.

## **Article VIII: Calendar**

Section 1: Fiscal Year (FY): The FY of the Association shall be the same as the calendar year which is January 1-December 31.

Section 2: Annual Meeting: ~~The Annual Meeting shall coincide with the beginning of the calendar year and be held within the first two (2) weeks of January.~~ The Annual Meeting shall coincide with the beginning of the school's calendar year and be held within the first two (2) weeks of September.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> AMENDMENT II, Adopted October 4, 2016; Article VII: Committees, Section 3. Standing Committees b) Nominating/Election Committee: The committee shall be established at the end of the school's calendar year in June and select the slate of Officers for the following year to present at the Annual Meeting in September. This amendment is needed to support the changes in Amendment I of the Constitution.

<sup>6</sup> AMENDMENT III, Adopted October 4, 2016; Article VIII: Calendar, Section 2: Annual Meeting: The Annual Meeting shall coincide with the beginning of the school's calendar year and be held within the first two (2) weeks of September. This amendment is needed to be consistent with Amendment I.

## **Article IX: Amendments**

Section 1: The Articles of Organization (Constitution and By-Laws) shall be amended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the majority of active members who voted.

Section 2: All amendments shall become part of the Articles of Organization.

## **Article X: Dissolution**

Section 1: Should the Association become inactive of its purposes for five (5) years or more, it shall be considered dissolved and its remaining assets shall be used exclusively for charitable and/or educational purposes

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