

**Rio Grande Valley Technology Student Association  
POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL**

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**Adopted November 2019  
Amended January 2020**

## 1. Purpose

- 1.1. The success of Rio Grande Valley Technology Student Association, herein after referred to as RGV TSA, conferences, programs, and activities hinges on the support of all teachers, administrators, student officers, community members and state staff.
- 1.2. The Police and Procedure Manual is an interpretation and application of the Constitution and By-Laws.
- 1.3. The Policy and Procedure Manual is updated periodically as the organization approves action items as part of a regular or special meeting.

## 2. Executive Board

- 2.1. The Executive Board, herein after referred to as EB shall consist all elected officers of the organization. It shall include, but is not limited to the President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer.
- 2.2. The EB shall prepare the agenda for a regular or special meeting. The agenda should be sent to the members one week prior to the meeting.
- 2.3. A Regional Liaison shall be appointed by the President. This member may not be an officer on the EB but may attend EB meetings.
- 2.4. The EB can be called into session by the President, or their designee, as needed. A quorum of 2/3 of the EB must be present to discuss or act upon relevant matters of the organization for any meeting; regular or special.
- 2.5. The EB may convene executive organizational meetings required for event planning, setting agenda items, or facilitate the overall operation of the organization.
  - 2.5.1. Members of the organization may attend EB meetings but may only participate in the discussion or deliberations at the request of the EB.
  - 2.5.2. The EB may not make decisions for the organization unless that power is granted by the membership for a line item issue.
  - 2.5.3. The EB may gather documentation to promote discussion for items on behalf of the organization.
  - 2.5.4. Information gathered in the evidence of a member grievance shall be confidential and not available to the membership.
- 2.6. Members may make proposals to the EB for consideration by the membership.

## 3. Chapter Membership Guidelines

- 3.1. A chapter must be affiliated with the National TSA organization by the deadline established by the national organization.
- 3.2. A chapter affiliating after the deadline must secure the accepted by the membership at a regular or special meeting.
- 3.3. A chapter must have representation in at least 50% of all regular meetings.
- 3.4. Members delinquent in making payments for services, goods, or competition fees shall be reported to the EB and may be subject to *Section 6 Member Disciplinary Action*.
- 3.5. Failure to meet the minimum attendance rule may result in a chapter being disciplined. (*See Section 6 Member Disciplinary Action*)
- 3.6. Members are required to attend a regular or special meeting before the regional competition to finalize entries, participate in decision making and review contest procedures.
  - 3.6.1. Members not attending may not challenge contest procedural updates.

#### 4. General Contest Procedures

- 4.1. Any chapter who is affiliated with the National TSA, Texas TSA and is a member of RGV TSA is a member in good standing prior to the start of the contest is eligible to participate.
- 4.2. Chapters registering teams must comply with registration deadlines and contest fees. The treasurer must certify a chapter does not have an outstanding balance. Disciplinary and grievance procedures shall be followed before removing a chapter or team from competition. *(See Section 6 Member Disciplinary Action)*
  - 4.2.1. Proof of payment or payment must be made to the treasurer before a chapter is allowed to compete.
- 4.3. The organization has set the following limits;
  - 4.3.1. A student may only participate in 3 events at the TSA Regional competition.
  - 4.3.2. A VEX Robotics team is limited to 6 members.
  - 4.3.3. Any change to this limitation must be approved by the membership and recorded in the minutes of a meeting.
- 4.4. Contest entry deadlines shall be established by the EB for all contests. Members not in compliance or failing to meet deadlines will be subject to disciplinary action. *(See Section 6 Member Disciplinary Action)*
- 4.5. Contest fee structure and registration will be determined by the EB prior to the contest. Any fees collected for competition will be the responsibility of the treasurer, or designee. The treasurer shall report the financial status of the competition at the next meeting.
- 4.6. The host site may be a member school in RGV TSA. The EB shall determine if a host site meets the required criteria to sponsor the contest. The membership shall vote on a host site in the event there are more than 2 choices.
- 4.7. The TSA chapter of the host site may receive compensation in the form a donation. This amount is limited to a maximum of \$500.
- 4.8. The organization may enter into an agreement with a host site outside of its membership. The EB shall determine if a host site meets the required criteria to sponsor the contest and negotiate in behalf of the membership to secure the facility. The EB must seek the approval of the membership before entering into a binding agreement. The treasurer will be responsible for all financial negotiations with the vendor.
- 4.9. RGV TSA may purchase assets used in the process of conducting the contest. These assets become the sole property of the organization. Assets may be utilized by members within the organization providing the EB certifies its purpose is compliant with its goals and guidelines. *(See Section 7 Asset and Fiduciary Responsibilities)*
- 4.10. A Contest Planning Committee (CPC) for the TSA Regional Competition or TSA Vex Regional Competition. The CPC is limited to duties and responsibilities of managing the contest. Members of the committee are not limited to the EB, but the chair of the committee must be a member of the EB.
  - 4.10.1. The CPC must secure permission of the EB before making any contest related purchases or entering into any agreements with an individual or vendor.
  - 4.10.2. Members serving on the CPC may be compensated a maximum on \$500 depending on duties assigned.
  - 4.10.3. Additional contest personnel may be compensated for their services. This compensation is limited to a maximum of \$150 for a complete day.
  - 4.10.4. The chair of the CPC confirms the role or services of any contest personnel receiving compensation.
  - 4.10.5. Facilitators and judges involved in the planning and execution of the contest may receive compensation for their services. This amount is limited to a maximum of \$150 for a complete day, or \$50 per time block.
- 4.11. The EB shall periodically review compensation amounts and recommend changes to the membership. The membership may approve new compensation before the event takes place.
- 4.12. RGV TSA may purchase assets used in the process of conducting the contest. These assets become the sole property of the organization. Assets may be utilized by members within the organization providing the EB certifies its purpose is compliant with its goals and guidelines. *(See Section 7 Asset and Fiduciary Responsibilities)*

## 5. General Contest Rules

- 5.1. The contest will follow the current TSA State Rulebook, National Competitive Events guide and applicable updates from TSA will be used when running the contest.
- 5.2. A Competition Regulation Committee (CRC) must have a minimum of 3 members. The chair of the CRC must be a member of the EB. The CRC is limited to interpreting contest rules and procedures during the TSA Regional Competition or TSA VEX Regional Competition.
  - 5.2.1. The CRC does not have statutory authority to handle a contest appeal or administer discipline for contest violations.
  - 5.2.2. The CRC may serve on the *Rules Interpretation Panel (RIP)* at the request of the EB.
- 5.3. Advancement to State Contest will be determined by contest placement and State entry limits established by the state organization.
- 5.4. The EB (2/3 quorum) or its designees shall serve as the Rules Interpretation Panel (RIP).
  - 5.4.1. Only chapter sponsors may file a contest appeal with the RIP.
  - 5.4.2. A RIP shall only be convened when the CRC and chapter sponsor cannot reach a solution.
  - 5.4.3. The decision of the RIP is final and may not be appealed.
  - 5.4.4. All contest appeals must be made in writing using the approved RIP form.
  - 5.4.5. Contest appeals must occur within an hour of a posted semi-finals round.
- 5.5. Chapter sponsors not following appeal procedures may be subjected to *Section 6 Member Disciplinary Action*.

## 6. Member Disciplinary Action

- 6.1. An officer or member within RGV TSA may receive disciplinary action when failing to adhere to policies, procedures, and other organizational requirements.
- 6.2. Disciplinary actions may result in a private reprimand by the EB when applicable.
  - 6.2.1. Private reprimands are maintained in the organizational documentation by the Secretary, are considered confidential and unavailable to the membership.
  - 6.2.2. Private reprimand notifications are sent to the individual and the administration of the school they represent.
  - 6.2.3. A private reprimand may be used as documentation in pending disciplinary hearings of a member or officer.
- 6.3. Disciplinary actions may result in a public reprimand by the EB when applicable.
  - 6.3.1. Public reprimands are reported and recorded in the minutes of the organization special meeting.
  - 6.3.2. Public reprimands are voted on by the members.
  - 6.3.3. A public reprimand may not result in the removal of a member or officer.
- 6.4. Officers, members or chapters may be removed from the organization for violations deemed detrimental to its students, members, goals, purpose or legal framework.
- 6.5. The EB, or its designee, must investigate, interview, and research any claim involving a disciplinary action.
  - 6.5.1. The defendant may secure an advocate to represent its interests with no obligation to the organization.
- 6.6. A quorum of the membership may vote to remove an officer, member or chapter in a special meeting of the membership as required by the RGV TSA *Constitution and By-Laws*.
  - 6.6.1. The decision of the special meeting in any disciplinary matter is final.
  - 6.6.2. The minutes of a special meeting may report the name of the member and the action taken.

6.6.2.1. The special meeting may convene into an executive session to discuss the disciplinary issue.

6.6.2.2. Minutes of the special executive meeting are private and not part of the public record.

## 7. Fiduciary and Asset Procedures

- 7.1. The treasurer is responsible for ensuring funding sources, identifying and mitigating against financial risks and encouraging sound financial practices.
- 7.2. All financial records and transactions are public record for the organization.
- 7.3. All collections and billing for the organization must be documented and recorded.
  - 7.3.1. The treasurer must prepare billing documents for any goods, services or fees requested from the members.
  - 7.3.2. Members delinquent in making payments for services, goods, or competition fees shall be reported to the EB. RGV TSA members not making payment may be subject to *Section 6 Member Disciplinary Action*.
  - 7.3.3. The treasurer is responsible for reporting to the EB any member delinquent paying for goods, services or fees.
- 7.4. The treasurer is the sole signer for all financial transactions. All transactions must include accompanying documentation such as an invoice or order form.
- 7.5. Estimated and Actual expenditures for TSA contests must be reported to the members.
  - 7.5.1. Any expenditure deemed an asset by the EB must be reported to the membership.
  - 7.5.2. Expenditures over \$250 must be approved at a regular board meeting.
  - 7.5.3. Actual expenditures for a TSA contest must be reported at the regular meeting following the contest.
- 7.6. A record of all items deemed an asset to the organization must be kept on file with the treasurer. The value, location, and person responsible for the item.
  - 7.6.1. Assets purchased by the organization may not be used for personal financial gain by any officer, chapter or member.
  - 7.6.2. Assets may be used by a member chapter with permission of the EB providing the funds from the activity are for the sole support of the chapter and its members.
- 7.7. If the organization does not have a physical location, inventory items may be stored in off-site locations. Individuals responsible for items must report immediately any damage or lost items.
- 7.8. The organization may enter into agreement with member schools for the purpose of purchasing items for competition.
  - 7.8.1. Member school must agree to the terms set by the EB or risk forfeiture of the asset.
  - 7.8.2. All agreements for special purchases are recorded in the minutes of the organization.
  - 7.8.3. Items purchased under special agreement with member schools are not assets of the organization after their use has ended.
- 7.9. Credit / Debit cards of the organization are for sole use of the organization. Only EB members may purchase items for the organization.
- 7.10. An EB officer may be reimbursed for services or good purchased for use of the organization. The officer must submit all receipts to the treasurer for reimbursement.

## 8. Conflict of Interest

8.1. The purpose of the conflict of interest policy is to protect this tax-exempt organization's (RGVTSA) interest when it is contemplating entering into a transaction or arrangement that might benefit the private interest of an officer or director of the Organization or might result in a possible excess benefit transaction. This policy is intended to supplement but not replace any applicable state and federal laws governing conflict of interest applicable to nonprofit and charitable organizations.

### 8.2. Definitions

8.2.1. **Interested Person** - Any director, principal officer, or member of a committee with governing board delegated powers, who has a direct or indirect financial interest, as defined below, is an interested person.

8.2.2. **Financial Interest** A person has a financial interest if the person has, directly or indirectly, through business, investment, or family:

8.2.2.1. An ownership or investment interest in any entity with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement,

8.2.2.2. A compensation arrangement with the Organization or with any entity or individual with which the Organization has a transaction or arrangement, or

8.2.2.3. A potential ownership or investment interest in, or compensation arrangement with, any entity or individual with which the Organization is negotiating a transaction or arrangement.

8.2.3. **Compensation** includes direct and indirect remuneration as well as gifts or favors that aren't insubstantial. A financial interest isn't necessarily a conflict of interest. Under Article III, Section 2, a person who has a financial interest may have a conflict of interest only if the appropriate governing board or committee decides that a conflict of interest exists.

### 8.3. Procedures

8.3.1. **Duty to Disclose** In connection with any actual or possible conflict of interest, an interested person must disclose the existence of the financial interest and be given the opportunity to disclose all material facts to the directors and members of committees with governing board delegated powers considering the proposed transaction or arrangement.

8.3.2. **Determining Whether a Conflict of Interest Exists** After disclosure of the financial interest and all material facts, and after any discussion with the interested person, he/she shall leave the governing board or committee meeting while the determination of a conflict of interest is discussed and voted upon. The remaining board or committee members shall decide if a conflict of interest exists.

8.3.3. **Procedures for Addressing the Conflict of Interest**

An interested person may make a presentation at the governing board or committee meeting, but after the presentation, he/ she shall leave the meeting during the discussion of, and the vote on, the transaction or arrangement involving the possible conflict of interest.

The chairperson of the governing board or committee shall, if appropriate, appoint a disinterested person or committee to investigate alternatives to the proposed transaction or arrangement.

After exercising due diligence, the governing board or committee shall determine whether the Organization can obtain with reasonable efforts a more advantageous transaction or arrangement from a person or entity that would not give rise to a conflict of interest.

If a more advantageous transaction or arrangement isn't reasonably possible under circumstances not producing a conflict of interest, the governing board or committee shall determine by a majority vote of the disinterested directors whether the transaction or arrangement is in the Organization's best interest, for its own benefit, and whether it is fair and reasonable. In conformity with the above determination it shall make its decision as to whether to enter into the transaction or arrangement.

### 8.4. Violations of the Conflicts of Interest Policy

If the governing board or committee has reasonable cause to believe a member has failed to disclose actual or possible conflicts of interest, it shall inform the member of the basis for such belief and afford the member an opportunity to explain

the alleged failure to disclose.

If, after hearing the member's response and after making further investigation as warranted by the circumstances, the governing board or committee determines the member has failed to disclose an actual or possible conflict of interest, it shall take appropriate disciplinary and corrective action.

8.5. Periodic Reviews

To ensure the Organization operates in a manner consistent with charitable purposes and doesn't engage in activities that could jeopardize its tax-exempt status, periodic reviews shall be conducted. The periodic reviews shall, at a minimum, include the following subjects:

- 8.5.1. Whether compensation arrangements and benefits are reasonable, based on competent survey information, and the result of arm's length bargaining.
- 8.5.2. Whether partnerships, joint ventures, and arrangements with management organizations conform to the Organization's written policies, are properly recorded, reflect reasonable investment or payments for goods and services, further charitable purposes and don't result in inurement, impermissible private benefit, or in an excess benefit transaction.

8.6. Use of Outside Experts

When conducting the periodic reviews as provided for in Section 8.5, the Organization may, but need not, use outside advisors. If outside experts are used, their use shall not relieve the governing board of its responsibility for ensuring periodic reviews are conducted.

## 9. Financial Awards to Students / Chapters

### 9.1. Scholarships – High School

The current amount of each student scholarship is \$500. It is currently limited to a maximum of 6 students.

#### 9.1.1. Criteria

Students must be a graduating senior from an affiliated chapter. Proof of acceptance at an accredited university or branch of military service must be submitted before financial award is delivered to the student.

The completed application must include, but is not limited to a resume no longer than 2 single-sided pages; a letter of support from the chapter adviser or designee; documentation of acceptance into a post-secondary institution of higher learning or military service.

Students must complete an application developed by the organization. The chapter adviser assumes responsibility to ensure the student meets any deadlines, completes the application and provides supporting documentation for the application. The chapter adviser must review the application packet and deliver it to the designee of the organization in the acceptable format.

#### 9.1.2. The organization shall appoint a designee to serve on the scholarship review committee to review submitted applications.

The organization prohibits discrimination against any applicant because of race, color, national or ethnic origin, disability, appearance or sexual orientation.

All scholarship recipients are reported to the executive board or designee.

#### 9.1.3. All scholarship recipients should be reported to the membership at the next available regular meeting. The chapter adviser, upon request, should report the status of a recipient.

### 9.2. Scholarships – Middle School

The current amount of each student scholarship is \$100. It is currently limited any middle school chapter registered with the organization.

A chapter is awarded \$100 to be divided among qualified students identified by the chapter adviser. Criteria for disbursement is at the discretion of the adviser and must not discriminate against any student because of race, color, national or ethnic origin, disability, appearance or sexual orientation.

The adviser or designee, upon request, should report how the student(s) were selected.

The name of recipients should be reported to the membership at the next available regular meeting. The chapter adviser, upon request, should report the status of a recipient.

### 9.3. Grants for student state officer candidates

A grant in the amount of \$100 is available to any student from a registered chapter who is eligible for candidacy for a state office.

The adviser must confirm the student has completed all documentation and is eligible according to state and any applicable school district policies.

The organization reserves the right to limit such grants.

### 9.4. Other

The organization reserves the right to amend the compensation amount and number of recipients at a regular board meeting and approval of the membership.

A member of the board, or its designee, shall serve as chair for the scholarship review committee. The chair, if possible, should not have students who are being considered for a scholarship. The chair should appoint at least 1 adviser to assist in the review.



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This committee recommends to the board, the names of individuals who meet the organization criteria for a scholarship.

In the event a scholarship review cannot be convened, the board must call a special meeting of the organization to review and select the recipients.