

THE SAINT JOHN XXIII HOUSE SYSTEM CONSTITUTION

Revised and amended 01 June 2017

I. THE NATURE OF THE HOUSE SYSTEM

A. Preamble

1. We the St. John XXIII College Preparatory students will pursue our core mission of preparing students to serve God and others through the establishment of a House System, namely, to provide a vibrant student led community, commendation, and censure that will tend toward the maintenance of a common orderliness. Upon this foundation, with God helping us, we will pursue more fully and serenely the formation of each student's mind, body, spirit, and imagination.

B. Mission Statement

2. The house system assists each student in becoming an active member of the St. John XXIII family as it promotes excellence in school spirit, fellowship, spirituality, and academic achievement. The mission of the House System at St. John XXIII College Preparatory is threefold:
 - i. To provide for the pastoral care and promote active participation in the school's charism and mission;
 - ii. To encourage students to build strong relationships founded upon cooperation and mutual respect; and
 - iii. To provide a forum in which each student can develop as a virtuous leader.

C. The Four Pillars

3. Education is a partnership, not a mere service. Although St. John's House System and student discipline procedures carry various punitive measures for those who fall short of our community's standards, each student must ultimately pursue self-discipline. He or she must actively seek to know and do the good. As a general guide for the execution of this mandate, we hereby establish the Four Pillars by which the St. John student should live. In this we are guided by the life and character of our patron, St. John XXIII. Thus, every student is expected to aspire to the following:
 - i. **Excellence** – Discern what needs to be done and do it with your whole might and wit and skill. Seek to know God's special calling for your life and to employ the gifts He has bestowed for the benefit of others.
 - ii. **Obedience** – We are all called to obedience; it is the nature of the human order. It is also the price of admission into our community. Respect for faculty and staff, and adherence to school policies should be undertaken cheerfully.
 - iii. **Peace** – In as much as it depends on you, be at peace with all people. Build relationships founded on love and high aspiration, not envy or bitterness. Be quick to hear, slow to anger.
 - iv. **Renewal** – Truth must be rediscovered and uttered anew in every generation. Dedicate yourself to this quest. Search for truth, act on it, and, by your life, teach it to a darkened world. Begin where you are, in family, school, and community.
4. Each of the Four Pillars implies duties specific to life in our community as well as a trajectory for noble and virtuous living in the wider world. It is the code that marks every true Lion.

II. HOUSE SYSTEM STRUCTURE

A. House System

1. The House System is an organizational structure that offers each student the opportunity to grow spiritually, academically, and socially within a smaller community of students and faculty.

2. Each of St. John's Houses is named for a saint that figured prominently in the spiritual life of our patron, St. John XXIII. Students are placed in a House when they first arrive at St. John and remain in the same House throughout their years at the school. Because we believe in the importance of the family relationship and in establishing a sense of legacy, siblings will be assigned to the same House.
3. The House System is inaugurated with a complement of five Houses. They include: *Aquinas House*, *Borromeo House*, *Lisieux House*, *Loreto House*, and *Neri House*.
4. **Creation of future Houses...**

B. House Leadership (Dean of Houses)

5. The *Dean of Houses* is an administrator appointed by the Principal who coordinates Student Activities. The *Dean of Houses* is charged with the following responsibilities:
 - i. Oversees the House System and its structure including:
 - a. Final approval regarding the award of points
 - b. Prompt and accurate communication of current House standings
 - c. Determining the frequency of House Master meetings
 - d. Sorting new students into houses before the school year begins
 - e. Coordination and the execution of inter house competitions
 - f. Communication with the faculty regarding House System events, schedules, and amendments
 - g. Introduction of the House System to new and prospective students
 - h. Coordinates the training of student leadership and house faculty
 - i. Evaluates performance of the House Captains
 - j. Makes decisions regarding eligibility of the House Captains
 - ii. Faculty Advisor to Student Council
 - iii. Acts as the liaison between all student leadership and the Associate Principal, Dean of Students, and Principal
 - iv. Works in concert with administrators and the pep rally committee to put on pep rallies
 - v. Proposes a house system budget to the Principal and approves use of House System funds.

C. House Leadership (Faculty)

6. Each House will be facilitated by a *House Master* and an *Assistant House Master* selected from among the St. John faculty. The House Master is a faculty member appointed by the Dean of Houses, with approval of the Principal, to fulfill the following responsibilities:
 - i. Fosters a culture of adherence to school policy
 - ii. Attends *House Master* meetings as deemed necessary by the Dean of Houses
 - iii. Meets weekly with House Captains for the purpose of guidance and formation
 - iv. Meets with both the previous year's House Captains and the upcoming year's House Captains at a mutually agreed upon date to teach the House Constitution and to train House leadership for the next year
7. Although fulfillment of these duties is primarily the responsibility of the *House Master*, he or she is assisted in their execution by the *Assistant House Master*. The House Master, in consultation with the Dean of Houses, and with the approval of the Principal, appoints a House's Assistant House Master.

8. Term limits...

D. House Leadership (Student)

9. Two *House Captains*, a senior boy and girl, will lead each House with guidance from the House Master. House Captains are selected within the houses and approved by the Principal. They should be rising seniors who have exhibited leadership ability and a commitment to service throughout their academic career. A student must have completed at least one academic year at St. John to be considered for the position of *Captain*. *House Captains* take office on House Day, the final Mass in April, and serve a one-year term during good standing.
 - i. A student is considered to be in good standing by maintaining no grades lower than a C on their academic record by the end of first semester junior year. Likewise, a student should have no pattern of disciplinary infractions on record with the Dean of Students. *House Captains* who fail to maintain this definition of good standing will be referred to the Dean of Houses. Removal and/or replacement of a *House Captain* is a decision made in collaboration between the House Master, Dean of Houses, Dean of Students, and Principal.
 - ii. The *House Captain* is invested with the following responsibilities:
 - a. Leads House meetings
 - b. Coordinates planning and implementation of weekly House meetings
 - c. Works as necessary to arrange quarterly competitions and other St. John events
 - d. One *Captain* sits as a member of St. John's Student Council
 - e. The other *Captain* sits as President of their House's Congress
 - f. Provides motivation and leadership
10. The *House Council* will be the organization responsible for planning house meetings and gathering student input. It will consist of 2 Freshmen, 2 Sophomores, 3 Juniors, and 3 Senior representatives, as well as both House Captains. The House Council will appoint 1 Senior and 1 Junior representative to the House Senate.
 - i. The House Council may, at the discretion of the House Master & Captains and in accordance with the traditions of the particular House, choose to fill any of a number of specific officer positions within the Council. These positions include, but are not limited to the following:
 - a. *Secretary* – charged with keeping meeting notes; maintaining forms, records, and calendar reminders for Captains
 - b. *Historian* – charged with taking and disseminating photographs of House events; maintaining House's social media presence
 - c. *Treasurer* – charged with maintaining the House's financial records; requesting regular copies of the House budget from the Financial Office; filling out and filing Requests for Purchase with the House Master for requested items
 - d. *Sergeant-at-Arms* – charged with maintaining House spirit and pride; keeping up with the House's tradition; maintaining the House's property
 - e. *Athletic/Academic Coordinator* – charged with forming the House's teams for Athletic or Academic Competitions; recruiting student coaches/tutors
 - f. *Social Coordinator* – charged with planning and executing the House's social events – feast days, parties, tailgates, etc.
 - ii. The Officer may form a committee, of which he is the Chair and the Captains are *ex officio* members, in order to accomplish their appointed tasks.
11. The *House Senate* will consist of 5 Senior House Senators, and 5 Junior House Senators, 1 each from each House to be determined within their respective Houses. This general committee will act as the governing body of the school and will meet regularly with the Dean of Houses to provide updates on competitions and other school wide events.

- i. The *House Senate* will be presided over by two School Prefects, a Head Boy and a Head Girl, elected by the student body, and vetted by the Dean of Houses and the Principal. Additionally, they shall elect from among themselves a *Secretary*, *Historian*, and *Treasurer* with the following duties:
 - a. *School Prefects* – prepare meeting agendas with the Dean of Houses, lead meetings of the House Senate, form committees, liaison with the House Captains as needed, represent the Student Body to the Administration, and address the Student Body as necessary.
 - b. *Secretary* – charged with keeping meeting notes; maintaining forms, records, and calendar reminders for Prefects
 - c. *Historian* – charged with taking and disseminating photographs of Senate-sponsored events; maintaining the Senate’s social media presence
 - d. *Treasurer* – charged with maintaining the Senate’s financial records; requesting regular copies of the Senate budget from the Financial Office; filling out and filing Requests for Purchase with the Dean of Houses for requested items
- iii. Additionally, the Senate may form committees, of which the Prefects are ex officio members, in order to fulfill its mission. The Prefects will appoint a Committee Chair to these committees. Such committees include the following standing committees:
 - a. *Logistics Committee* – charged with requesting and securing facilities, tables, chairs, etc. such as are determined necessary for Senate-sponsored events.
 - b. *Pep Rally Committee* – charged with planning and executing, with Administration approval, Pep Rallies throughout the year.
 - c. *Homecoming Committee* – charged with planning and executing, with Administration approval, the school’s Homecoming festivities – Homecoming week; Homecoming Court elections, Homecoming Dance
 - d. *Prom Committee* – charged with planning and executing, with Administration approval, the school’s Junior/Senior Prom
 - e. *Election Committee* – charged with planning and executing, with Administration approval, the school’s House elections – in collaboration with the individual Houses’ election committees.

G. Advisory Groups

12. To facilitate the smooth operation of weekly House meetings and to promote the participation of all, each House is sub-divided into *Advisory Groups*. A House Faculty member will be assigned to each *Advisory Group*. Advisory Groups will each have an equitable number of students from each classification level, and will include an equitable number of House leaders in each.
13. The student leaders and the House Faculty member will be responsible for providing pastoral care, academic support, spiritual formation, the articulation of school policy, and the promotion of campus life within the Advisory Group.
14. Each Advisory Group may be further sub-divided into small groups to better facilitate competition, discussion, and other goals of the House System.

H. Placement of New Students

15. Incoming freshmen are randomly assigned to a House. Transfer students are assigned randomly, except in a case of significant numerical, gender, or aptitude disparity between Houses.

I. Grievances

16. In the event that it becomes necessary for a student to voice a concern, the chain of command will progress as follows:

- 1st - House Captain
- 2nd - House Master
- 3rd - Dean of Houses
- 4th - Principal

17. All grievances will be handled in a timely manner and in the best interest of those involved. In the unlikely event that no agreement can be reached, the final word will come from the Principal.

J. Performance Review & Removal from Office

18. In order to mark growth in the pursuit of our Four Pillars, and to preserve good order in the administration of our House System, each officer will undergo a regular performance review. This review should involve competency levels pertaining to job descriptions as found in this Constitution; life according to the Four Pillars; Communication; and general Preparation and Planning. In the rare case that an officer shows true and habitual incompetence, dereliction, or maleficence that person may be removed from office. The process for review and removal are as follows.

- i. *House Captains* are to undergo a Performance Review by their respective House Masters on a quarterly basis, or at any point upon the recommendation of any member of the Faculty or Administration. This review should involve the competencies (specific to the particular office) listed above. A record of this review should be made, retained by the House Master, and a copy given to the Dean of Houses.
- ii. *House Council members* are to undergo a Performance Review by their respective House Masters at any point upon the recommendation of the House Captains or any member of the Faculty or Administration. This review should involve the competencies (specific to the particular office) listed above. A record of this review should be made, retained by the House Master, and a copy given to the Dean of Houses.
- iii. *House Masters* are to undergo an annual Performance Review at the end of the first semester by the Dean of Houses. This review should involve the competencies (specific to the particular office) listed above. A record of this review should be made and retained by the Dean of Houses.
- iv. The Dean of Houses is to undergo an annual Performance Review at the end of the second semester by the Assistant Principal of Student Affairs. This review should involve the competencies (specific to the particular office) listed above. A record of this review should be made and retained by the Assistant Principal.

III. HOUSE LIFE

- 1. Life in the House should be marked by joy and conviviality, and fostered by participation in traditions that mark the House year and by friendly competition both within and among the Houses.

A. The Roncalli Cup

- 2. House point totals are updated after every point bearing opportunity. The Dean of Houses maintains and communicates the House point standings to the community.
- 3. The House with the highest point total after the final House Competition on House Day will win the Roncalli Cup. The winning house receives the distinction of having the cup displayed in its honor, as well as other incentives and distinctions as deemed appropriate by the Administration.

B. Actions That Will Gain Points

- 4. Points are awarded for actions that develop the Four Pillars on campus. These include quarterly House Competitions and certain "Dean's Discretion" points throughout the year.

5. *Excellence:*

Students have the opportunity to earn House Points for Academic and Athletic Excellence.

- i. Each quarter the Dean of Houses hosts both an All-House Academic Competition and an All-House Athletic Competition designed to test the collective mettle of each House's mind, body, spirit, and imagination. Points are awarded based on each Houses' performance in these events as follows:
 - 1st Place – 50pts
 - 2nd Place – 40pts
 - 3rd Place – 30pts
 - 4th Place – 20pts
 - 5th Place – 10pts
- ii. Each quarter, students who earn a 90 (A) or higher [in the subjects of English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, or Theology will have their number tallied against the total number of possible A's for the House

(number of received A's / number of possible A's = percentage of A's).

Points are awarded based on each Houses' performance as follows:

- 1st Place – 50pts
- 2nd Place – 40pts
- 3rd Place – 30pts
- 4th Place – 20pts
- 5th Place – 10pts

6. *Obedience:*

Students who follow school rules set a positive example for their peers and are rewarded at each quarter. Points will be awarded each quarter for [clean] discipline records as follows: students who incur infractions will have their number, up to 6 in order to be equal to the number of possible A's, tallied against the total number of possible infractions for the House (again, based on 6/student)

(number of received infractions [up to 6/student] / number of possible infractions = percentage of infractions)

First through fifth place will be determined from lowest percentage to highest, and will be awarded points according to the allotment in III.B.5.ii.

7. *Peace:*

Community building is an integral component to our House System. It is very important that our students support one another in all aspects of campus life, not merely in the classroom. To this end, the Dean of Houses may, at his discretion, award points for participation in various activities throughout the year that contribute to our community and the Life of the Pillars. These may include, but are not limited to:

- iii. House Night at an extracurricular activity (home sporting event, drama department event, band performance, or other school sponsored event.) Event turn out is gauged by a coin drop and the House with the most attendees will be awarded points.
- iv. Donation Drives – the House with the most donations will be awarded points

Points awarded will be either 10 or 20, as determined upon Dean's conferral with the House Masters.

8. *Renewal*:

The Houses are committed to the revitalization, development, and growth of school spirit. It is our belief that healthy competition fosters and grows spirit. Each House is charged with creating chants & cheers, decorating bulletin boards, and developing other such traditions as to rally enthusiasm for the House in all its endeavors. At the Dean's discretion, therefore, points may be awarded for activities that lend to the constant growth and renewal of House and overall School spirit. These may include, but are not limited to:

- v. House Spirit Competition at each school pep rally - The House that demonstrates the most spirit at the rally, as determined by non-partisan Office staff, is awarded points and the St. John XXIII Spirit Stick.
- vi. Bulletin Board Decorating Competition – The House judged to have the most beautiful, and most on-theme bulletin board, as determined by non-partisan Office staff, is awarded points. This may be done at a regular interval, or as a singular event.

C. Responsibilities to Community

9. At St. John, whether as individuals or as Houses, we live not just for ourselves, but to serve one another and the community in which God has placed us.

- i. **Citizenship:** Living out St. John's Four Pillars will rarely result in the direct award of points. Yet students are nonetheless expected to live out the virtuous life the Pillars call for as they attend class, eat lunch, pass in the halls, participate at Mass, and live out their lives beyond the walls of the school into the wider world. Seniors, particularly, are called upon to lead their school community by example and encouragement toward perfection.
- ii. **Freshman Orientation:** All student leadership is expected to participate in Freshman Orientation. Participation includes training prior to Orientation as well as serving in a capacity determined by the Dean of Houses.
- iii. **House Meetings:** Houses will meet weekly at a time and place designated by the Dean of Houses. All House members arrive promptly and contribute to the proceedings. Additionally, student leadership will meet regularly, at a time and place designated by the Dean of Houses or House Master, to plan and prepare for the various activities of the House and School.

IV. AMENDMENT

- 1. Amendments or Revisions to the House Constitution (from whatever quarter they may arise) may be advanced by House Captains or Prefects, and in conjunction with the Dean of Houses.
- 2. For the purpose of this Constitution, *amendment* is defined as a change to the text that brings with it a change to the activity of the House System. *Revision* is defined as a change to the text in order to clarify, but not to change, the existing activity of the House System, or to bring the document into conformity with proper grammatical and literary rules and style.
- 3. Amendments and revisions must be voted upon by all voting members of the House System leadership. Voting members include the House Captains, the House Prefects, the House Masters, and in the case of a tie-vote, the Dean of Houses.
- 4. Robert's Rules of Order are to be followed at meetings in general, but most especially when the House Leadership considers Constitutional amendments and revisions.
- 5. Amendments must receive a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote in order to pass. Revisions must receive a simple majority vote in order to pass. Amendments are then ratified upon approval of the Principal and Associate Principal of Student Affairs.

V. DOXOLOGY

1. We therefore dedicate ourselves to the Four Pillars—to Excellence, Obedience, Peace, and Renewal—and to the exemplary community life that they envision. Sensible of our weakness in the face of such a high calling, we pray in the words of St. Jude’s Epistle: — “Now to him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you without blemish before the presence of his glory with rejoicing, to the only God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and for ever. Amen.” St. John XXIII, pray for us!
2. *We, the undersigned House Captains of 2015, present this document with our full support of its mission and vision for the future of our school, St. John XXIII College Preparatory.*