# **Florida Association of Blind Students Constitution**

## ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be the Florida Association of Blind Students of the National Federation of the Blind

## Article II - CHARTER

This organization shall be chartered as a division of the Florida Affiliate of the National Federation of the Blind and a chapter of the National Association of Blind Students.

## ARTICLE III – PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization is to serve as a division of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida; to be a vehicle for collective action by the blind of the nation; to function as a mechanism through which the blind and interested sighted persons can come together to plan and carry out programs to improve the quality of life for the blind; to promote the vocational, cultural, and social advancement of the blind; to achieve the integration of the blind into society on a basis of equality with the sighted; to focus attention upon the problems faced by blind people in the Florida Student Division of the National Federation of the Blind; and to take any other action which will improve the overall condition and standard of living of the blind.

## ARTICLE IV – MEMBERSHIP

### Section One – Membership Rights

The members of this organization shall be blind or visually impaired students of Florida, and others interested in promoting the purposes of this organization. The members of this organization are members of the National Federation of the Blind and shall have the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as other members of the National Federation of the Blind.

**Amendment**: The members of this organization shall be blind or low vision students of Florida, and others interested in promoting the purposes of this organization. The members of this organization are members of the National Federation of the Blind and shall have the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as other members of the National Federation of the Blind.

* **End of Amendment**

### Section Two – Minimum Requirements

This organization shall be made up primarily of blind or visually impaired people, and it shall be controlled by the blind. A majority of its voting members must be blind or visually impaired. We are open to all people currently exploring, attending or who have recently graduated from any form of educational institution (high school, trade school, university, or other type of educational institution.)

**Amendment**: This organization shall be made up primarily of blind or low vision people, and it shall be controlled by the blind. A majority of its voting members must be blind or low vision. We are open to all people currently exploring, attending or who have recently graduated from any form of educational institution (high school, trade school, university, or other type of educational institution.)

* **End of Amendment**

### Section Three – Expulsion

Any member may be expelled for violation of this Constitution, for violation of the policies of the National Federation of the Blind, or for conduct unbecoming to a member of the Federation, by a majority vote of the active members present and voting at any regular business session of this organization, or by two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors. The state Convention of this organization may reinstate any person who has been expelled. Any person who feels that he/she has been unjustly expelled from this organization may appeal to the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida, which may (at its discretion) consider the matter and make a binding decision. Unless the decision to suspend or expel is reversed by the state Convention or by the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida, the ruling of suspension or expulsion shall continue in effect.

### Section Four – Property Rights

The name National Federation of the Blind, Federation of the Blind, or any variant thereof, is the property of the National Federation of the Blind; and if this organization ceases to be a part of the National Federation of the Blind (for whatever reason) it shall forfeit the right to use the name National Federation of the Blind, Federation of the Blind, or any variant thereof.

## Article V - OFFICERS AND DUTIES

### Section One - Officers and Elections

The Florida Association of Blind Students (FABS), a proud division of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida, aims to create leadership, efficacy, and continued progression of Florida’s blind student population through a medley of programs, advocacy events, and fundraising efforts. In order to lead such a group of talented and focused individuals, elected officers are selected annually through a democratic vote of plurality at the state convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida. These elected officers and board members constitute the board of directors for this division. The following elected offices shall be voted in by their peers.

* President
* Vice President
* Treasurer
* Secretary
* Board Member 1

The President and treasurer will be elected biennially, and the Vice President, secretary, and board member 1 shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the members of this organization present and voting at our regular business meeting at state convention. There shall be no proxy voting.

**Amendment**: The Florida Association of Blind Students (FABS), a proud division of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida, aims to create leadership, efficacy, and continued progression of Florida’s blind student population through a medley of programs, advocacy events, and fundraising efforts. In order to lead such a group of talented and focused individuals, elected officers are selected annually through a democratic vote of plurality at the state convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida. These elected officers and board members constitute the board of directors for this division. The following elected offices shall be voted in by their peers.

* President
* Vice President
* Treasurer
* Secretary
* Board Member 1

The President and treasurer shall be elected biennially, in even numbered years, and the Vice President, Secretary, and Board member 1 shall be elected biennially, in odd numbered years, by a majority vote of the members of this organization present and voting at our regular business meeting at state convention. There shall be no proxy voting.

* **End of Amendment**

### Section Two - Duties

The duties of each elected officer are both general and specific. All officers shall uphold the code of conduct of the National Federation of the Blind. The specific duties of each officer shall be upheld throughout the duration of the term they are elected.

1. President: It is the duty of the President to convey the needs and actions of the organization to the state affiliate board, the National Association of Blind Students, and the public. As the top representative of the organization, the President has the final decision on any expenses made by the organization and any public action taken by the division.

2. Vice President: It is the duty of the Vice President to serve as the Parliamentarian of the organization, being the keeper of the governing documents (Constitution, Code of Conduct, or any document pertaining to division policy). The Vice President is acting President and makes executive decisions for the organization in place of the President in their absence.

3. Treasurer: It is the duty of the treasurer to follow the budgetary actions of the organization. This includes the reporting of the deposits, withdrawals, and drafts of the organization’s bank account. All funds collected by the organization are ultimately given to the Treasurer for a deposit. All funding requests, once approved by the President, are executed by the Treasurer.

4. Secretary: It is the duty of the secretary to record the minutes of each general membership conference call or meeting. The secretary is also charged with the acquisition of any necessitated clerical items for the organization to complete in the event of a trip, event, or registration priority. The secretary acts as a liaison between the elected officers and the general membership of the organization, using various messaging platforms to inform members about meetings, opportunities, or advocacy efforts taking place.

5. Board members: The board members shall ~~consist of a single elected member, Board member 1, who~~ shall serve as the bridge between the four officers and the membership. Their primary duties consist of chairing committees, assisting with programs and events put on by the division, voting in board-only meetings and assisting officers when necessary. Additionally, they shall assume the responsibility of other officers, at the discretion of the president, when circumstances require.

\* **Amendment:** The duties of each elected officer are both general and specific. All officers shall uphold the code of conduct of the National Federation of the Blind. The specific duties of each officer shall be upheld throughout the duration of the term they are elected. Each elected office has a term of two years.

1. President: It is the duty of the President to convey the needs and actions of the organization to the state affiliate board, the National Association of Blind Students, and the public. As the top representative of the organization, the President has the final decision on any expenses made by the organization and any public action taken by the division.

2. Vice President: It is the duty of the Vice President to serve as the Parliamentarian of the organization, being the keeper of the governing documents (Constitution, Code of Conduct, or any document pertaining to division policy). The Vice President is acting President and makes executive decisions for the organization in place of the President in their absence.

3. Treasurer: It is the duty of the treasurer to follow the budgetary actions of the organization. This includes the reporting of the deposits, withdrawals, and drafts of the organization’s bank account. All funds collected by the organization are ultimately given to the Treasurer for a deposit. All funding requests, once approved by the President, are executed by the Treasurer.

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5. Board member: The board member shall consist of a single elected member, Board member 1, who shall serve as the bridge between the four officers and the membership. Their primary duties consist of chairing committees, assisting with programs and events put on by the division, and assisting officers when necessary. Additionally, they shall assume the responsibility of other officers, at the discretion of the president, when circumstances require.

\* **End of Amendment**

## Article VI - MEETINGS

## Section One - Business Meetings

This organization will meet on a monthly basis. Each meeting shall be held via online conferencing software. Within these meetings, members shall assess the business of the organization. Monthly meetings will be held in conjunction with the annual meetings at the state convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida.

### Section Two – Special Meetings

The President of this organization may call a special meeting of the body at any time he/she, or a majority of the Board of Directors, deems such action to be necessary. At such special meeting at least 50% (1/2) members must be present to constitute a quorum to transact business, and written notice must have been sent to each member and to the members of the Board of Directors at least ten (10) days prior to the date of the meeting. Special meetings may be called by the members of the Board of Directors to conduct business.

**Amendment**: The President of this organization may call a special meeting of the body at any time ~~the President~~ or a majority of the Board of Directors, deems such action to be necessary. At such special meeting at least 50% (1/2) members must be present to constitute a quorum to transact business, and written notice must have been sent to each member and to the members of the Board of Directors at least seventy-two (72) hours prior to the date of the meeting. Special meetings may also be called by a majority of the members of the Board of Directors to conduct business.

* **End of Amendment**

## ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES

The President may appoint such committees as he/she or the organization deems necessary.

**Amendment**: The President may appoint such committees as the President, or the organization deems necessary.

* **End of Amendment**

## ARTICLE VIII – DUES

The dues for members of this organization shall be ten dollars ($10.00 USD) per year, payable in advance at the annual state convention during the division business meeting. New members who remit their dues at any point during the calendar year, but not during the state convention, shall be granted membership privileges effective from the date of payment until the date of the upcoming state convention. No person may vote who is delinquent in the payment of his/her dues.

**Amendment** The dues for members of this organization shall be ten dollars ($10.00 USD) per year, payable in advance at the annual state convention during the division business meeting. New members who remit their dues at any point during the calendar year, but not during the state convention, shall be granted membership privileges effective from the date of payment until the date of the upcoming state convention. No person may vote who is delinquent in the payment of their dues.

* **End of Amendment**

## ARTICLE IX– FUNDS AND FINANCING

The funds of this organization shall be deposited to the bank account that is to be selected by the treasurer and approved by the president. All financial obligations of this organization shall be discharged by check or via the digital banking application that has been selected for managing funds by the president and treasurer, (e.g., PayPal, or Zell), issued on order of the President, and signed by the Treasurer. If funds are distributed digitally, the treasurer is responsible for managing and completing such transactions.

## ARTICLE X – DISSOLUTION

In the event of the dissolution of this organization, (for whatever reason) or it ceases to be a part of the National Federation of the Blind, its assets shall be transferred to the treasury of the National Federation of the Blind.

**Amendment**: In the event of the dissolution of this organization, (for whatever reason) it ceases to be a part of the National Federation of the Blind, its assets shall be transferred to the treasury of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida.

* **End of Amendment**

## ARTICLE XI – AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended by two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at any meeting of this organization; but the amendments shall not become effective until they have been presented to the President of the National Federation of the Blind for review and approval.

**Amendment**: This constitution may be amended by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the members present and voting at any business meeting of this organization; but the amendments shall not become effective until they have been presented to the President of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida for review and approval.

Amendments to this constitution are also not valid unless they are additionally approved by the President of the National Federation of the Blind.

* **End of Amendment**

PLEDGE OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND

I pledge to participate actively in the effort of the National Federation of the Blind to achieve equality, opportunity, and security for the blind;

to support the policies and programs of the

Federation; and to abide by its constitution.

Revised: October 7th, 2023