

LIFT Constitution

Article 1. Name

Our legal operating name is Leaders Inspiring Families Together New Commonwealth School or LIFT Commonwealth and hereafter LIFT.

Article 2. Mission Statement

LIFT is a community of homeschooling families that exists to support and strengthen, not replace, the home as the center of learning. We promote a lifelong love of learning and the principles of personal freedom through our community and classes for entire families. We follow the philosophy of Leadership Education as outlined in *A Thomas Jefferson Education* by Oliver DeMille (this is further outlined in the Policies and Procedures), and our focus is to facilitate a quality scholar program for students ages 12 and up. We advance the cause of homeschooling in our community by providing a legitimate alternative to public school.

Article 3. Vision Statement

Our quality classes, culture of continuous improvement, and field experience produce leaders who love learning, value freedom, and aim to find and fulfill their life's mission. LIFT will maintain its longevity through shared vision and responsible governance. As a community school, LIFT also aims to solidify relationships with our sister schools.

Article 4. Financial Structure

Section 1: Non-profit Status

LIFT Commonwealth is a 501-c3 non-profit organization, existing for community impact not for profit. Because of this, all members are expected to volunteer and contribute to the success of the school; no member or participant will be paid for their time, skills, or service.

Section 2. Dues and Tuition

Dues are based on building use, training fees and insurance, and other organizational fees. Tuition is based on the cost of supplies for individual classes. A yearly budget will be proposed to and approved by the membership. A majority vote is required to adopt the yearly budget.

Article 5. Membership

Section 1. Membership Types:

1. Participant
2. Voting Member (hereafter “member”)
3. Inactive Member

Section 2. Participant

A participant of LIFT has met participant qualifications but has not yet completed voting member qualifications. The following are the qualifications and privileges of a Participant:

Participant Qualifications

- Read *A Thomas Jefferson Education* by Oliver DeMille
- Be at least 20 years of age
- Be recommended for participation by the Parent Representative
- Submit a completed LIFT membership packet online
- Submit a certificate of completion for one of the approved youth protection training trainings (see Policies and Procedures for a current list)
- Attend New Parent Orientation

Participant Privileges

- Participants are eligible to join LIFT on a temporary basis
- Participants and their families may enroll in LIFT classes and attend activities for no more than one academic school year while completing requirements for Voting Membership status. (See Policies and Procedures for additional information regarding membership requirements not completed in one school year)
- Participants may NOT vote in meetings
- Participants may NOT hold elected office positions but may be eligible for appointed positions and committees

Section 3. Voting Membership/ Voting Member

A voting member is a full-fledged member of LIFT, who is eligible to vote for and hold elected office positions. The following are the qualifications and privileges of a Voting Member, which must be renewed yearly:

Voting Member Qualifications

- Fulfilled Participant Qualifications (membership needs to be renewed yearly and is valid from the day before the spring meeting to the day before the next spring meeting)
- Participate in LIFT for at least 2 consecutive semesters
- Serve as a lead mentor as outlined in the LIFT Policies and Procedures
- Attend mandatory Spring & Fall meetings as outlined in LIFT Policies and Procedures

- Attend four required parent trainings as outlined in Policies and Procedures

Voting Member Privileges

- Members and their families may enroll in LIFT classes and attend activities
- Members may participate and vote in member business meetings
- Members may hold elected or appointed positions

Section 4. Inactive Membership

Inactive membership is a member that has put their membership on hold for up to one academic school year. This request must be approved by the Executive Committee.

Inactive Member Qualifications:

- Members have requested that their membership be put on hold by submitting an “Inactive Member Request Form” (see Policies and Procedures)
- Members must keep LIFT informed of changes to the date of return to full membership in LIFT

Inactive Member Privileges:

- Inactive members will return with prior membership status

Article 6. Officers of the Administrative Board

Section 1. Elected and Appointed Officers

- A. The LIFT elected officers shall consist of President, Vice President, and Junior School Director. (see Article 7, section 3)
- B. The appointed positions shall be Parent Representative, Principal Mentor, Secretary, Treasurer
- C. Newly elected officers take office effective June 1.
- D. All appointments for appointed officers will be made by the President and voted on by the elected officers to be in place by June 1.

Section 2. Election process

All elected positions are up for election each year. Regular elections shall take place at the Annual Spring Meeting. In the event that an election must be held outside of this schedule, voting will occur at the next Member Business Meeting (or a Special Member Business Meeting may be called). The elections process is dictated by the terms in the Policies and Procedures. Anything not covered in the Policies and Procedures is dictated by *Robert’s Rules of Order* (definitions in Appendix).

Section 3. Term of Office and Term Limits for Elected Officers

The President, Vice President, and Junior School Director will have a one year term. Terms are limited to two terms which can be served consecutively or non consecutively. A petition for a third term, by the sitting officer, must be approved by a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote from the membership and a unanimous vote by the Administrative Board.

Section 4. Term of Office and Term Limits for Appointed Officers

Parent Representative, Principal Mentor, Secretary and Treasurer are appointed positions. Appointments are made yearly by the President with a majority approval from the elected officers of the Administrative Board (see Article 8, Section 1, subsection C.) Appointed positions will serve for the term of one year. There are no term limits for appointed officers.

Section 5. Appointment and Term of Office for Principal Mentor

The Principal Mentor appointment will be recommended by the President and approved by the elected officers of the Administrative Board. The Principal Mentor's term cannot exceed the recommending President's term. The President has the right to switch Principal Mentors during the President's term. The Principal Mentor may be reappointed.

Section 6. Qualifications, Duties, and Responsibilities of President

President Qualifications:

- A member of LIFT (or another New Commonwealth School) for three years
- Trained in Leadership Education Philosophy as outlined in the Policies and Procedures.
- New Commonwealth School trained as outlined in the LIFT Policies and Procedures.
- Served in any appointed or elected Administrative Board position for at least one year prior to running for President.
- Has mentored a scholar class

President Duties:

- Act as the Standard Bearer of the mission and vision of LIFT
- Commit to and exemplify the principles of LIFT's Educational Philosophy
- Ensure adherence to the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures

President Responsibilities:

- Fulfill Executive/Administrative Board responsibilities
- Train and direct the function of the Administrative Board

Section 7. Qualifications, Duties, and Responsibilities of Vice President

Vice President Qualifications:

- Member of LIFT (or another New Commonwealth School) for at least 2 years
- Served in LIFT a board position or standing committee for at least 1 year
- Trained in Leadership Education Philosophy (as outlined in the Policies and Procedures)
- New Commonwealth School trained

Vice President Duties:

- Follow and uphold the Mission and Vision of LIFT
- Commit to and exemplify the principles of LIFT's Educational Philosophy
- Adhere to the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures

Vice President Responsibilities:

- Oversee Business Systems¹
- Fulfill Executive/Administrative Board responsibilities

Section 8. Qualifications, Duties, and Responsibilities of Parent Representative

Parent Representative Qualifications:

- Member of LIFT (or another New Commonwealth School) for at least 2 years
- Served in a lift board position or standing committee for at least 1 year
- Trained in Leadership Education Philosophy (as outlined in the Policies and Procedures)
- New Commonwealth School trained

Parent Representative Duties:

- Follow and uphold the Mission and Vision of LIFT
- Commit to and exemplify the principles of LIFT's Educational Philosophy
- Adhere to the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures

Parent Representative Responsibilities:

- Fulfill Executive/Administrative Board responsibilities
- Oversee Relationship Systems²

Section 9. Qualifications, Duties, and Responsibilities of Principal Mentor

Principal Mentor Qualifications:

- Member of LIFT (or another New Commonwealth School) for three years
- Served as a New Commonwealth School President (except in years when one is not available)
- Trained in Leadership Education Philosophy (as outlined in the Policies and Procedures)
- New Commonwealth School trained
- Mentored multiple scholar classes (preferably both a practice and apprentice scholar class)

¹ See definition in appendix

² See definition in appendix

- Appointed by a unanimous Executive Committee vote

Principal Mentor Duties:

- Follow and uphold the Mission and Vision of LIFT
- Commit to and exemplify the principles of LIFT's Educational Philosophy (including modeling an understanding of Leadership Education Phases of Learning)
- Adhere to the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures

Principal Mentor Responsibilities:

- Oversee the function of the Scholar Program
- Fulfill Administrative Board responsibilities

Section 10. Qualifications and Duties of Junior School Director

Junior School Director Qualifications:

- Member of LIFT (or another New Commonwealth School) for one full school year
- Served in a LIFT board position or standing committee for at least 1 year
- Read Phases of Learning by Oliver DeMille
- New Commonwealth School trained
- Mentored a Junior School class

Junior School Director Duties:

- Follow and uphold the Mission and Vision of LIFT
- Commit to and exemplify the principles of LIFT's Educational Philosophy (including modeling an understanding of Leadership Education Phases of Learning)
- Adhere to the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures

Junior School Director Responsibilities:

- Oversees the administration of the Junior School
- Fulfill Administrative Board Responsibilities

Section 11. Qualifications, Duties, and Responsibilities of Secretary

Secretary Qualifications:

- Voting member by the time of appointment
- Trained in Leadership Education Philosophy (as outlined in the Policies and Procedures)
- New Commonwealth School trained
- Efficient, task oriented, and quick to complete tasks
- Proficient in basic computer skills
- Self-motivated and driven with strong organizational skills
- Confident and competent in creating and sending out email and other communications

Secretary Duties:

- Follow and uphold the Mission and Vision of LIFT
- Commit to and exemplify the principles of LIFT's Educational Philosophy
- Adhere to the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures

Secretary Responsibilities:

- Fulfill Secretarial Responsibilities
- Fulfill Administrative Board Responsibilities

Section 12. Qualifications, Duties, and Responsibilities of Treasurer

Treasurer Qualifications:

- Voting member by the time of appointment
- Trained in Leadership Education Philosophy (as outlined in the Policies and Procedures)
- New Commonwealth School trained
- Basic understanding of budgeting and best financial practices
- Able to manage the technological responsibilities of maintaining the finances

Treasurer Duties:

- Follow and uphold the Mission and Vision of LIFT
- Commit to and exemplify the principles of LIFT's Educational Philosophy
- Adhere to the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures

Treasurer Responsibilities:

- Fulfill Treasurer Responsibilities
- Fulfill Administrative Board Responsibilities

Section 13. Removal from Office

Misappropriation of funds, willfully disregarding the LIFT Constitution and/or Policies and Procedures, and/or engaging in unethical, immoral, or illegal behavior are grounds for removal from elected or appointed positions. Removal requires a unanimous vote of all the other officers (elected and appointed) presently serving on the Administrative Board or 2/3 of the Voting Membership. The Judicial Review Committee (see Article 10, section 1) may be convened by affected individuals to review disciplinary decisions.

Section 14. Filling Officer Vacancies

If a vacancy arises for any reason (prolonged illness, death, moving, removal from office), the Executive Committee will appoint someone to fill an appointed position. An elected position vacancy will be voted on by membership at a special member business meeting (Article 7, Section 4).

Article 7. Member Meetings

Section 1. Parent Trainings (Inservice Meetings)

Meeting and voting dates are included in the annual calendar provided at the Fall Meeting.

Section 2. Mandatory Fall Orientation Meeting

The mandatory Fall Orientation Meeting will be held on or before the first day of fall classes and is mandatory for all LIFT Participants and Members. This orientation meeting is an opportunity for parents to review Policies and Procedures for the upcoming year.

Section 3. Mandatory Annual Spring Meeting

The mandatory Annual Spring Meeting will consist of a member business meeting and the election of officers. This meeting will be held within two weeks following the last day of classes for the school year.

Section 4. Special Member Business Meetings

Administrative Board members or voting members may call for a special member business or emergency meeting as needed for emergency elections with at least one week's notice. The time, place, and purpose of the meeting must be sent to all members in advance of the meeting. Only stated business can be conducted at a Special Member Business Meeting.

Section 5. Quorum of Voting Members

A quorum is the minimum number of voting members needed to be present in order for voting business to be conducted. Forty percent of Voting Membership must be in attendance for voting to occur.

Article 8. Administrative Board

Section 1. Definition

- A. The Administrative Board contains seven members consisting of the elected and appointed officers.
- B. The LIFT elected officers consist of President, Vice President, and Junior School Director.
- C. The appointed officers consist of Parent Representative, Principal Mentor, Secretary, and Treasurer. All appointed officer appointments must be made by the President and voted on by the elected officers by June 1st.

D. The elected and appointed officers work together to make up the Administrative Board of LIFT. All members of the Administrative Board have a binding vote in board meetings.

E. All new officers will take their positions starting June 1 following their election at the Annual Spring Meeting. In the event of an emergency election or appointment, new officers will be installed immediately.

Section 2. Duties

The Administrative Board's purpose is to uphold the mission and vision of LIFT, commit to and exemplify the principles of LIFT's Educational Philosophy, and ensure adherence to the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures.

Section 3. Responsibilities

Their responsibility is to uphold and maintain the organization of LIFT. They do this by reviewing organizational systems, facilitating changes created by the membership, and solving problems as needed. The Administrative Board utilizes best practices in communication and board administration.

Section 4. Administrative Board Meetings

The Administrative Board will meet in person monthly to ensure the operational management of LIFT.

Section 5. Quorum of the Administrative Board

A quorum for conducting business will be two members of the Executive Committee and at least 50 percent of the officers that are not on the Executive Committee. In the event that a member of the Executive Committee is unavailable when voting is needed to conduct business, the Principal Mentor will step in and fill their place.

Section 6. Limitation of Power

The Administrative Board is subject to the guidelines within this LIFT Constitution and must abide by the Policies and Procedures manual. Failure to uphold and live within the constitution is grounds for removal from office.

Article 9. Committees

Section 1. Judicial Review Committee for Special Circumstances

The Judicial Review Committee (JRC) comprises five persons chosen by the nominating committee and elected by the membership. The five elected persons are three primary standing members and two alternates that can replace standing members if needed. The nominees must

not be members of the board, spouses, or otherwise related to members of the board. This committee must be in place by the first day of school.

Any disciplinary actions taken by the members or the board cannot be enforced if the JRC is not already in place. This standing committee is responsible for reviewing the Constitutional validity of administrative actions. They shall also oversee the appeal process.

If there is a dispute regarding a termination of position, termination of membership, or a confidential disciplinary action taken by the Administration Board or the Executive Committee, the Judicial Committee of three shall review the decision. Decisions of this committee require a two-thirds vote and are limited to the nullifying or upholding of the decision under review. Members of the JRC serve for a term of 3 years.

Section 2. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee is comprised of the President, Vice President, and Parent Representative. The Executive Committee is limited in their power and will only meet for confidential matters regarding discipline or participant/member payment issues or when time-sensitive emergency decisions are needed (see Policies and Procedures for examples). A quorum for conducting business will be the three members of the Executive Committee. A majority vote is needed when a vote is called for. In the event that a member of the Executive Committee is unavailable when voting is needed to conduct business, the Principal Mentor will step in and fill their place.

Section 3. Scholar Program Committee

The Scholar Program Committee shall consist of the Principal Mentor, President, and at least two other approved LIFT Members to be voted on at a Special Member Business Meeting. This committee will be responsible for planning the yearly Scholar program.

Section 4. Facilities Committee Chair

Facilities Committee Chair Qualifications:

- Voting member by the time of appointment
- Trained in Leadership Education Philosophy (as outlined in the Policies and Procedures)
- New Commonwealth School trained
- Excellent communication
- Respond to emails and phone calls promptly
- Punctual and reliable

Facilities Committee Chair Duties:

- Follow and uphold the Mission and Vision of LIFT

- Commit to and exemplify the principles of LIFT's Educational Philosophy
- Adhere to the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures

Facilities Committee Chair Responsibilities:

- Fulfill Facilities Committee Chair Responsibilities
- Fulfill Administrative Board Responsibilities

Section 5. Events Committee Chair

Events Committee Chair Qualifications:

- Voting member by the time of appointment
- Trained in Leadership Education Philosophy (as outlined in the Policies and Procedures)
- New Commonwealth School trained
- Reliable at event planning
- Proficient at delegating tasks
- Able to maintain a budget

Events Committee Chair Duties:

- Follow and uphold the Mission and Vision of LIFT
- Commit to and exemplify the principles of LIFT's Educational Philosophy
- Adhere to the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures

Events Committee Chair Responsibilities:

- Fulfill Events Committee Chair responsibilities
- Fulfill Administrative Board responsibilities

Section 6. Other Committees

Other committees, both standing and special, can be added as the President and Administrative Board deems necessary.

Article 10. Education Philosophy, Outline, and Class Approval

Section 1. Philosophy

LIFT provides classes to supplement the education of its members and reinforce the principles of Leadership Education (as found in *A Thomas Jefferson Education* by Oliver DeMille). We expect our members to have an understanding of the principles of Leadership Education.

1. Our junior school classes seek to inspire a love of learning through emphasizing the following: a loving *Environment*, *Exposure* to fun new things, *Engagement* of the mind, heart and hands, and *Experiencing* life in motion.

2. We use curricula for our scholar classes that lends itself to the Leadership Education style of thinking and educating.

Section 2. Educational Outline

Lift Commonwealth School follows the philosophy of Leadership Education as outlined in *The Leadership Education Library* published by Thomas Jefferson Education/TJEd.org. We use the Leadership Education principles as our shared language and culture of the school.

Section 3. Approved Scholar Classes: Foundational and Elective

Leadership Education based classes may be approved for scholar projects. Approval is also needed for non-Leadership Education based classes. See Policies and Procedures for an up to date list of pre-approved classes.

Our scholar phase is divided into the following age groups: 11+ Transition to Scholar, 12+ Practice Scholar, 14+ Apprentice Scholar, 16+ Self Directed. Each scholar of an age group is expected to attend foundational classes established for that age group. These classes are approved by the Administrative Board upon recommendation of the Scholar Program Committee.

Elective classes are also offered for each scholar phase student. These classes are approved by the Administrative Board upon recommendation of the Scholar Program Committee.

Section 4. Approval of Core, Love of Learning, and Transition to Scholar Classes

LIFT Junior School classes shall be offered according to the learning phases outlined in A *Thomas Jefferson Education*. All classes at LIFT must be in keeping with the mission of LIFT and approved by the Administrative Board upon recommendation of the Junior School Director. The Administrative Board reserves the right to accept or decline class proposals in order to maintain the vision and mission of LIFT.

Section 5. General Mentorship Requirement

Participants are eligible to mentor junior school classes. Members are eligible to mentor junior school and/or scholar classes. Participants who have prior experience teaching scholar classes at other commonwealth (or Leadership Education based) schools are eligible to teach scholar classes.

Non-members (also called Independent Mentors (see section 12) are eligible to teach on a semester-to-semester basis as an Independent Mentor with approval from the Administrative Board.

Scholar students may act as a co-mentor in junior or scholar classes after they receive training for that specific class and have completed four years of scholar classes.

Article 11. Mentors

Section 1. Scholar Mentors

A Scholar Mentor is an adult willing to train for and teach a scholar class to scholar phase students. Scholar classes are co-mentored by two mentors (see Policies and Procedures for more information). All Scholar Mentors must adhere to the Scholar Mentor Agreement (as found in Policies and Procedures), their class outlines, and they must uphold the Mission and Vision of LIFT.

Section 2. Junior School Mentors

A Junior School Mentor is any qualified member or participant willing to organize and mentor a Core or Love of Learning class. All Junior School classes must adhere to the Mission and Vision of LIFT.

Section 3. Independent Mentors

An Independent Mentor is an expert in their field of study. They are not LIFT Participants or Members and may be paid for their services. They must always have a Participant or Member as an assistant in their class. They will abide by the Policies and Procedures for the duration of their stay. All Independent Mentors must be approved by the Administrative Board upon recommendation of the Junior School Director or Principal Mentor.

Section 4. Student Mentors

Scholars are eligible to serve as a mentor with approval from the Administrative Board. Scholar students are able to act as a co-mentor in junior or scholar classes after they receive training for that specific class and have completed 4 years of scholar classes.

Article 12. Parliamentary Authority

LIFT board and business meetings follow the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order as the method of communication and etiquette in all cases to which they are applicable.

Article 13. Amendments

Amendments to the LIFT Constitution or Policies and Procedures can be proposed at member business meetings throughout the year with a petition from at least three members.

Amendments will be ratified with a 2/3rd membership vote at a voting business meeting. Amendments will be numbered and added to the bottom of the Constitution.

Article 14. Grandfather and Adoption

Section 1. Grandfather Clause

Current members may enter LIFT under this Constitution with full member status. To do so, they must have previously fulfilled all member qualifications listed in Article 6, Section 3 for voting rights to be enabled for the academic year 2023-2024. Current Participants at the time of this adoption will enter LIFT under this Constitution and remain a participant until member qualifications are complete.

Section 2. Adoption of the Constitution

All officers, elected or appointed after the adoption of this Constitution, will immediately be governed by this document and the terms and term limits contained herein.

Section 3. Exceptions

In the event that there are members who desire to serve in an elected or appointed position and do not meet all the qualifications prior to ratification, exceptions may be made by the Executive Committee for the 2023-2024 school year only.

Article 15. Miscellaneous

Section 1. Fiscal Year

The LIFT fiscal year runs from June 1- May 31

Section 2. School Year

The LIFT school year runs from September to May of the following year

Appendix

Definitions:

1. Business Systems

Business systems are overseen by the Vice President. This means that the VP is responsible for the standard operating procedures that are used to achieve the business and/or procedural goals of LIFT. They do this by ensuring that they are using documented procedures as EXACTLY outlined in the LIFT Constitution and Policies and Procedures.

2. Relationship Systems

Relationship systems are overseen by the Parent Representative. This means that the Parent Representative is responsible for the people and relationship side of LIFT. They work with their appointed board members to help ensure a common identity and purpose at LIFT. They also work to make sure that every member and participant has a voice by being a listener and an intelligent and creative problem solver.

3. Standing Committee - a permanent committee that meets regularly

4. Robert's Rules of Orders - a manual of parliamentary procedure that is the standard manual of codes and rules of ethics that govern discussions and decision-making in non-legislative organizations with boards of directors and committees. Robert's Rules, helps organizations have systematic, orderly, and goal-oriented meetings.