

Montgomery Blair High School Constitution of the Student Government Association

Preamble

We, the Student Government Association (SGA) of Montgomery Blair High School, in order to form a more perfect council, believe that:

- I. The SGA will strive to express the feelings and opinions of the student body through communication, organization, participation, and cooperation.
- II. The SGA will organize, coordinate and promote student programs and activities in order to generate and unify a school community upon which all can adapt and improve.
- III. The SGA will encourage school pride by promoting positive attitudes and strong school spirit.
- IV. The SGA will strive to promote the Montgomery Blair High School mission (Scholarship, Leadership, and Relationship) as well as school goals.

Article 1 – Name of the Organization

This organization shall be known as the Student Government Association of Montgomery Blair High School, which shall hereafter be referred to as the SGA.

Article 2 – Affiliations

The organization shall be affiliated with the Montgomery County Region (MCR), the Maryland Associations of Student Councils (MASC), and the National Associations of Student Councils (NASC). In addition, the SGA should maintain a strong affiliation with the Parent Teacher Student Association of Montgomery Blair High School (PTSA).

Article 3 – Organization and Membership

Section 1: Organization

Clause 1: Blair Congress will consist of a Senate which will include the 9th-12th grade President and Vice President, and a Delegate Assembly which will be open to the student body. Decisions will be made based on an electoral college format where Senators will be responsible for voting based on a simple majority vote of the Delegate Assembly or as necessary.

Clause 2: Meetings may be held the first available Wednesday of every month. These meetings will alternate times during lunch and after-school. Meetings may be cancelled based on a quorum vote of the Leadership Class. The SGA Vice President and Chief of Operations shall run the meetings. The class officers shall vote on activities, events, and issues presented by the Leadership Class. Only the officers will have the ability to vote on the issues presented. These officers, however, shall vote according to the views of their respective councils. The issues will be presented to the class officers beforehand (via email) giving them the opportunity to discuss the topics with their councils. All meetings shall be governed by the SGA Rules of Order.

Clause 3: If any member of the Senate or Leadership Class would like allotted time to suggest an item that he/she would like to have discussed at a meeting, they should submit the

Montgomery Blair High School Constitution of the Student Government Association

information to the Vice President and Chief of Operations so he/she can put it on the agenda. To guarantee a spot on the agenda, items must be submitted FORTY-EIGHT hours before the scheduled meeting. Anyone may bring up ideas at a meeting without submitting them ahead of time during Open Mic time, but the item may not be considered fully until officially submitted as a New Business item. Congressional discussion will occur only after written agenda has been approved by Executive Staff and the Leadership Class.

Clause 4: Meetings of Congress will be composed of the Senate and the Delegate Assembly. Congressional Meetings will be run according to the procedures outlined in Robert's Rules of Order (Appendix C).

Clause 5: Voting structure for the SGA is outlined in Appendix B.

Section 2: Congress Membership

Clause 1: The Senate will be composed of the 9th-12th grade President and Vice President and the appointed Directors/Deputies. Each class will be represented by their Class President and Class Vice President. The procedures for appointing these positions shall be delineated in the Bylaws.

Clause 2: Any student enrolled at Montgomery Blair High School may participate in the Delegate Assembly. All students are welcome to voice their opinion when they get floortime.

Section 3: Blair Staff and Administration

Clause 1: Staff members may attend any meeting and give their input; however they hold no decision making authority, with the exception of the approval of the Leadership Class Advisor and Administration. The Principal appoints an Advisor to the Student Government Association and reserves the right to approve or disapprove all actions of the SGA.

Section 4: Legislation

Clause 1: All students, teachers and school administrators may introduce or propose legislative resolutions and/or other ideas to the Congress General Assembly.

Clause 2: Any resolution or idea that is passed by the Congress Meeting must be reviewed by the the Executive Staff of the Leadership Class and approved by an Administrative member.

Article 4 – Senate

Section 1: Qualifications and Terms of Office

The Senators must meet grade standards set by the Board of Education (2.0 grade point average with no more than ONE E) and exhibit exemplary behavior. The following positions will be elected: President and Vice President for all grades, and the President and Vice President of the Leadership Class. They shall be elected to serve a one-year term and will meet as a unit as

Montgomery Blair High School Constitution of the Student Government Association

necessary. All meetings will be called to order by the Executive Staff of the Leadership Class and any new business items that need discussion must be submitted by the Class officers FORTY-EIGHT HOURS before the meeting. The Vice President of the Leadership Class and Chief of Operations must receive a simple majority vote by the class officers and Leadership Class. The Leadership Class will vote during the Leadership Class (5th period) after the class officers have voted during the meeting. The Vice President and Chief of Operations will appoint two secretaries at the beginning of each year. The election procedures shall be delineated in the Bylaws. Procedures and appointments of other appointed positions on the Senate shall also be delineated in the Bylaws.

Section 2: Duties of the Officers of the Student Government Association (All Branches)

The Leadership Class will:

- ❖ Represent the ideas and concerns of the Congress Meeting to the Administration
- ❖ Participate in SGA sponsored events
- ❖ Attend all required Congress Meetings
- ❖ Organize the judges for the Student Member of the Board of Education election, executed by the Parliamentarian under the supervision of the President of the SGA
- ❖ Work on the election/appointment packet, done by the President of the SGA with the appointed Parliamentarian
- ❖ Check in daily with the SGA Advisor

Section 3: Duties of the President

In addition to the duties listed above, the President will:

- ❖ Seek administrative approval on legislation/ideas that have been passed by the Congress
- ❖ Appoint Parliamentarian, Administrative Secretary, Press Secretary, Treasurer, and leaders of events with input from other officers with the approval of the rest of the Student Leadership class starting in the 2016-2017 school year.
- ❖ Represent Montgomery Blair High School at ALL MCR Executive meetings or designate a proxy
- ❖ Meet daily with the SGA Advisor
- ❖ Exhibit exemplary leadership
- ❖ Execute appropriate duties relevant and essential to the function of the SGA
- ❖ Manage attendance of Leadership Class

Section 4: Duties of the Vice President

In addition to the duties listed, the Vice President will:

- ❖ Assist in running the Leadership Class

Montgomery Blair High School

Constitution of the Student Government Association

- ❖ Officiate over Congress Meetings, including but not limited to creating agendas and enforcing rules of order
- ❖ Aid the President in appointing Directors/Deputy Directors with input from other officers
- ❖ Meet daily with the SGA Advisor and President
- ❖ Exhibit exemplary leadership

Section 5: Chief Of Staff

- ❖ Shall be appointed by the President and Vice President with approval of the SGA Advisor
- ❖ Aid the President and Vice President during the Leadership Class and other SGA events
- ❖ Assign Team Leaders of various events, committees, and task forces based on interest.
- ❖ Resolve staffing conflicts, oversee changes and designate back up leaders for events, committees, and task forces.
- ❖ Show exemplary leadership

Section 6: Chief of Operations

- ❖ Shall be appointed by the President and Vice President with approval of the SGA Advisor
- ❖ Shall Aid the Vice President in officiating the Congress Meetings
- ❖ Aid the President and Vice President during the Leadership Class and other SGA events
- ❖ Oversee the production and execution of Action Plans via the Central Task Allocation System
- ❖ Show exemplary leadership

Section 7: Duties of the 12th, 11th, 10th, and 9th Grade Presidents

In addition to the duties listed above, the President will:

- ❖ Facilitate communications between the SGA and their grade class officers
- ❖ Participate in Congress Meetings and cast votes on issues or send proxy if the President cannot attend. Votes must represent the views of his/her Class Council
- ❖ Convene and preside over Class Council Meetings under the supervision of the class sponsors. Class Council Meetings will be a forum for voicing student concerns, a tool for gathering student opinions, and a means for disseminating information relevant and essentials to SGA
- ❖ Evaluate the appropriate grade delegate representatives

Section 8: Duties of the 12th, 11th, 10th, and 9th Grade Vice Presidents

- ❖ Assist their Class President
- ❖ Meet regularly with assigned committee Directors/Deputies
- ❖ Lead and work specifically with officers and members of their class

Montgomery Blair High School
Constitution of the Student Government Association

- ❖ Facilitate communications between the class and President

Article 5 – Powers

All powers are accorded by the MCPS policies and regulations.

Section 1: Legislative Body

The Leadership Class has the power to:

- ❖ Make decisions based on the voting outcomes of the Congress Meetings, with the approval of Administration
- ❖ Organize and run all Homecoming activities
- ❖ Organize and run additional student events
- ❖ Reserve the power of suggestions to the Administration for the appointment of the SGA Advisor
- ❖ Have the opportunity to review school policies and guidelines before they are implemented
- ❖ Attend all administrative meetings regarding issues of student interest

Section 2: Advisor

The Student Government Advisor has the responsibility to:

- ❖ Provide the maximum level of autonomy for student leaders that student leaders prove they can handle
- ❖ Develop and foster Student Leadership capacity
- ❖ Support the Leadership Class members' communication with Administration and approve all meetings and messages between Leadership Class members and Administration before they occur
- ❖ Provide guidance and supervise in all SGA sponsored activities, which shall be student led and driven
- ❖ Order materials and otherwise distribute SGA funds for requested and/or necessary services
- ❖ Excuse the absences of student who miss class due to Student Government activities, TWENTY FOUR HOURS before planned events or TWENTY FOUR HOURS after unexpected events
- ❖ Oversee and execute the financial aspects of the SGA.

Article 6 – Rights and Responsibilities

All rights and responsibilities are accorded by law and MCPS policies and regulations.

Section 1: Rights and Responsibilities of all Student Government Members:

Clause 1: We the students of Montgomery Blair High School have the right to:

Montgomery Blair High School Constitution of the Student Government Association

- ❖ Express our opinions in mature and reasonable ways
- ❖ Make informed decisions for the student body as a whole, with input from the students
- ❖ Be treated with respect and dignity

Clause 2: We the students of Montgomery Blair High School have the responsibility to:

- ❖ Display respect for everyone
- ❖ Demonstrate responsible, honest, and safe behavior
- ❖ Follow the laws of Montgomery County, the state of Maryland and the United States Government
- ❖ Strive to be successful
- ❖ Celebrate diversity and foster unity among the student body
- ❖ Support positive learning outcomes for all

Article 7 – Qualifications and Terms of Office for the SGA’s Congress

Section 1: Senate Qualification

Clause 1: Each elected senator must:

- ❖ Meet the grade standards set by the Board of Education (2.0 grade point average with no more than one E)
- ❖ Exhibit exemplary behavior
- ❖ Report Congress Meeting information to his/her class sponsor and bring student ideas/suggestions to the SGA
- ❖ Regularly attend meetings

Section 2: Term of Office for a Delegate Assembly Individual

Each delegate’s term of service shall be self-determined, but shall not exceed a period of four years.

Article 8 – Impeachment and Succession

Section 1:

Any elected or appointed member of the SGA that is not fulfilling his/her student government duties and responsibilities, or qualifying standards, may have charges brought against him/her. Impeachment may lead to dismissal from office.

Montgomery Blair High School Constitution of the Student Government Association

Section 2:

Any member of the student body or staff or Administration may bring charges against an SGA member. A special committee, defined in the bylaws, will meet to discuss the impeachment charges brought against said individual. Both sides will have opportunity to submit evidence and testimony. Additional meetings will be held as necessary. The committee will have a secret ballot to determine the outcome of the charges. A two-thirds secret ballot vote is needed to recommend dismissal. Evidence must be provided to the Administration who must approve the retention or removal of said individual. Findings and actions will be announced at the next Congress meeting.

Section 3:

In the case that the President resigns or is impeached, the Vice President will become the new President. The Chief of Staff will replace the Vice President until a new Vice President is elected with input from the other officers.

Section 4:

Vacancies are to be filled within a two-week period. The vacancies will be filled by application. In the event of dismissal of an executive officer that is not a President or Vice President, the President will appoint, with input from the other officers, a new executive officer.

Article 9 – Finances

Section 1: Restrictions

Clause 1: The Congress cannot spend any of the Leadership Class' budget. The Leadership Class must approve all selling projects. The Congress can recommend expenditures which may be considered by the Leadership Class.

Section 2: Funds

Clause 1: Funds can come from the following:

1. Homecoming Dance Ticket Sales (for Leadership Class' budget only)
2. Fundraising for all of Congress
3. Administration-approved fundraisers held by the individual classes
4. Donations or grants
5. Additional events and initiatives as decided by the Leadership Class

Article 10 – Ratification and Amendments

Montgomery Blair High School
Constitution of the Student Government Association

Section 1: Ratification

Clause 1: Congress and the Student Leadership class must ratify the Constitution to their liking prior to submission to the advisor.

Clause 2: The Advisor must approve the Constitution

Clause 3: The Administration must approve the Constitution

Clause 4: Any Amendments can be discussed during meetings or with the Leadership Class. The Amendment in question will be discussed and voted on a later set date with a two-thirds majority vote

Section 2: Amendments

Clause 1: This Constitution may be amended with Advisor approval

Clause 2: This Constitution may be amended provided that two-thirds of the Congress and the Advisor approve the changes and additions suggested

Clause 3: The Administration must approve all Amendments

Ratified:

Amended:

Montgomery Blair High School
Constitution of the Student Government Association

By Laws

Article 1 – Elections, Appointments, Impeachment

Section 1: Election of the Executive Officers

Clause 1: Elections will be held on April 29th or the date that SMOB elections will be held, the year prior to their service year. The office is then held until the end of June in the year of service

Clause 2: Service year is defined as the first day of a new school year through the last day of that same school year. i.e. If a student is elected April 28th, their duties as an officer officially begin on the first day of school in August and terminate on the last day of school in June (with the exception of seniors, who graduate earlier than the rest of the student body)

Clause 3: All candidates must provide a written application a minimum of two (2) weeks in advance from the stated election/appointment

Clause 4: Each candidate must follow guidelines and timeline in the election/application packet

Clause 5: Election results will be announced, but the actual vote count will not

Clause 6: The Advisor will be the supervisory election judge of highest rank and convene a special committee which includes Administration to adjudicate any election irregularities

Clause 7: In order to be eligible to run for SGA President, students must have a TWO semester minimum time period of enrollment in the Leadership Class at the time of the election.

Clause 8: In order to be eligible to run for SGA Vice President, students must have TWO semester minimum time period of enrollment in the Leadership Class at the time of the election.

Clause 9: Any student who wishes to run for SGA President or Vice President, but who does not meet the requirements of Clause 7 & 8 may apply to the SGA Advisor for a special waiver to run for office. The SGA Advisor and Administration will hear all requests for requirement waivers on a case by case basis, and their decision whether or not to grant the waiver will be final.

Clause 10: Students are not eligible to run for either President or Vice President of the Leadership Class if they have been dismissed by the Advisor and Executive Officers at any time during their enrollment in the Leadership Class.

Section 2: Appointment of Directors/ Deputies and other positions

Clause 1: Directors and other positions will be appointed in June of the year prior to their service year. Deputies will be appointed in the fall

Clause 2: All applicants must submit a completed application packet

Clause 3: The President will formally appoint the position after input from the

Montgomery Blair High School

Constitution of the Student Government Association

other officers. The Advisor must approve all recommended appointments

Section 3: Impeachment

Clause 1: The impeachment committee shall be convened when needed

Clause 2: The committee shall include the SGA President (the SGA Vice President if the person in question is the SGA President), the appropriate grade-level president, one Director, two members from the appropriate grade level, one counselor, the SGA Advisor, and an Administrator

Clause 3: All parties shall have the opportunity to present evidence and testimony before a secret ballot is conducted to decide the outcome

Clause 4: All actions of the impeachment committee must be approved by the Principal.

Article 2 – Standing Positions/Committees

Section 1: Standing Positions

The standing positions shall include:

Clause 1: Executive Secretary

- Be responsible for taking minutes at all Congress and Executive Board Meetings
- Write and send appropriate notes, memos, etc.
- Distribute minutes in timely manner when requested by Executive
- Post meeting dates for Congress

Clause 2: Treasurer

- Be responsible for accounting for all SGA financial matters
- Meet with the SGA Advisor and Business Manager to be sure all auditing regulations are followed
- Work with the Fundraising and Charities committee
- Work with any committee or event involving money
- Work towards fundraising for selected charities and student leadership activities

Clause 3: MCR Liaison

- Attend all MCR meetings throughout the year, or finds a substitute in case of conflict or illness
- Prepare a brief report for the Congress and Leadership Class

Clause 4: Parliamentarian

- Organize all elections
- Make applications for all SGA related activities
- Supervise all elections
- Work with the Montgomery County SMOB Coordinator

Section 2: Standing Committees

Clause 1: Press Secretary

- Update the SGA webpage

Montgomery Blair High School
Constitution of the Student Government Association

- Manage the SGA social network sites
- Manage the mass communication alerts

Clause 2: Public Relations

- Coordinate all appreciation events

Article 3 – Amendments and Adoption

Section 1: These bylaws shall be ratified by two-thirds of the Executive Board with approval from the Advisor and Principal.

Section 2: These bylaws shall be appended to the Constitution for the duration of its authorization, but shall be superseded by the Constitution in any conflicts.

Section 3: These bylaws may be amended by two-thirds of the Executive Board with approval from the Advisor and Administration.

Ratified:

Amended:

Montgomery Blair High School
Constitution of the Student Government Association

Appendix A

Terminology of Montgomery Blair Constitution

Congress General Assembly - Meeting consisting of Senate and Delegate Assembly and facilitated by the Executive Staff.

Senate - Elected class President and Vice President for 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. These people will be referred to as Senators.

Delegate Assembly - Any Blair student who attends the Congress General Assembly. The meetings are open to students based on interest.

Leadership Class - Class held every fifth period that is led by the Executive Staff. All members must go through an application process facilitated by the parliamentarian.

Executive Staff - The elected President and Vice President of the Leadership Class. The President and Vice President appoint a Chief of Staff and a Chief of Operations. These four positions make up the Executive Staff.

Administration - Consists of Principal and Assistant Principal of each grade. Also includes the Business Manager, Resource Manager, and the Magnet Coordinator.

Parliamentarian - Member of the Leadership Class. The Parliamentarian runs all elections for officers.

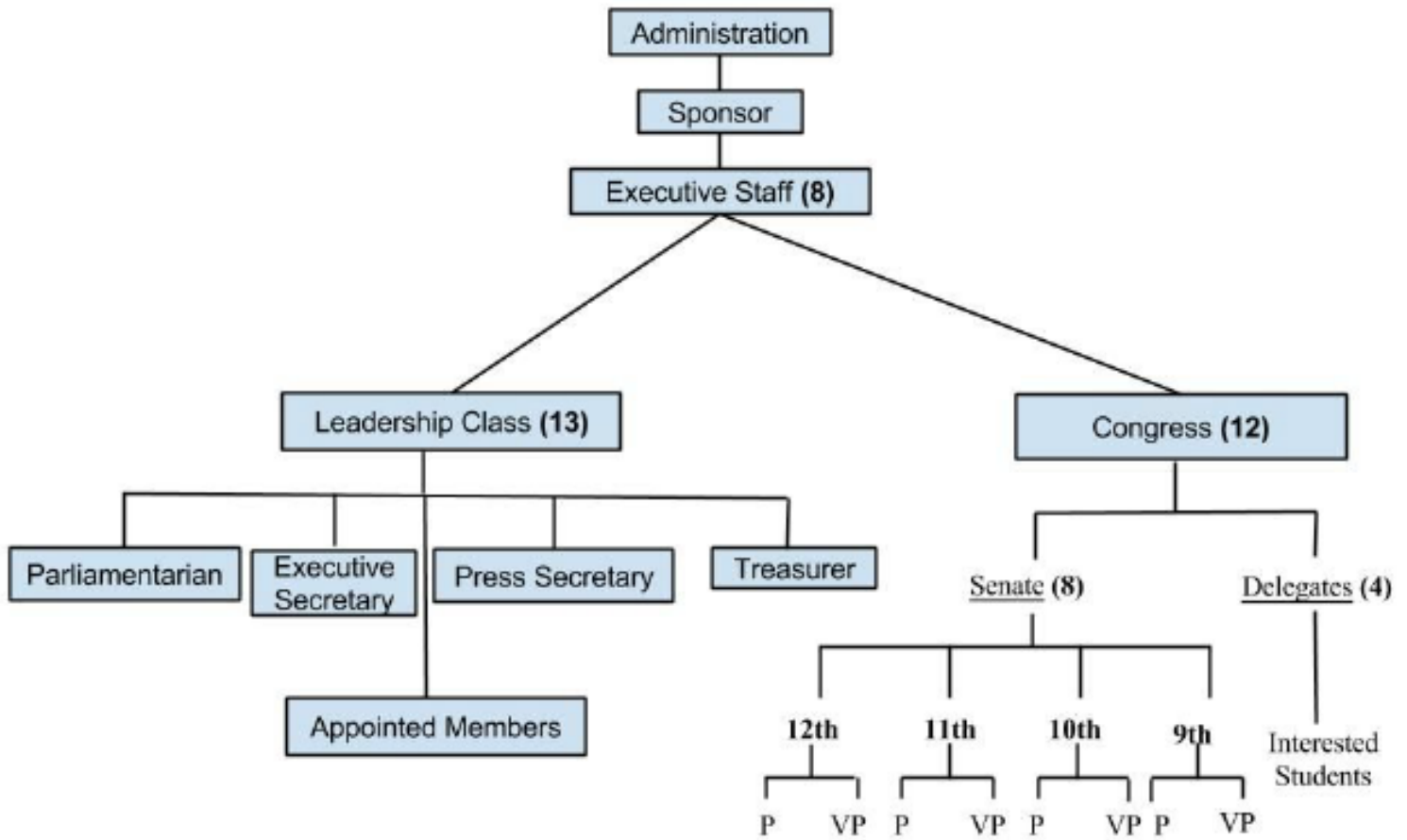
Executive Secretary - Takes notes during the Leadership Class. Compiles notes and agendas to minutes. Keeps the appointment calendar for the Advisor.

Press Secretary - Handles social media, announcements, and any communication with other organizations of MBHS Media. Oversees all advertisements as well.

Treasurer - Oversees both the Budget Committee and the Blair Wear Committee of the Leadership class.

Appendix B

SGA Voting Structure



33 votes; simple majority rules

Montgomery Blair High School
Constitution of the Student Government Association

Appendix C

Robert's Rules of Order is the standard for facilitating discussions and group decision-making. Copies of the rules are available at most bookstores. Although they may seem long and involved, having an agreed-upon set of rules makes meetings run easier. **Robert's Rules** will help your group have better meetings, not make them more difficult. Your group is free to modify them or find another suitable process that encourages fairness and participation, unless your bylaws state otherwise.

Here are the basic elements of **Robert's Rules**, used by most organizations:

1. **Motion:** To introduce a new piece of business or propose a decision or action, a motion must be made by a group member ("I move that.....") A second motion must then also be made (raise your hand and say, "I second it.") After limited discussion the group then votes on the motion. A majority vote is required for the motion to pass (or quorum as specified in your bylaws.)
2. **Postpone Indefinitely:** This tactic is used to kill a motion. When passed, the motion cannot be reintroduced at that meeting. It may be brought up again at a later date. This is made as a motion ("I move to postpone indefinitely..."). A second is required. A majority vote is required to postpone the motion under consideration.
3. **Amend:** This is the process used to change a motion under consideration. Perhaps you like the idea proposed but not exactly as offered. Raise your hand and make the following motion: "I move to amend the motion on the floor." This also requires a second. After the motion to amend is seconded, a majority vote is needed to decide whether the amendment is accepted. Then a vote is taken on the amended motion. In some organizations, a "friendly amendment" is made. If the person who made the original motion agrees with the suggested changes, the amended motion may be voted on without a separate vote to approve the amendment.
4. **Commit:** This is used to place a motion in committee. It requires a second. A majority vote must rule to carry it. At the next meeting the committee is required to prepare a report on the motion committed. If an appropriate committee exists, the motion goes to that committee. If not, a new committee is established.
5. **Question:** To end a debate immediately, the question is called (say "I call the question") and needs a second. A vote is held immediately (no further discussion is allowed). A two-thirds vote is required for passage. If it is passed, the motion on the floor is voted on immediately.
6. **Table:** To table a discussion is to lay aside the business at hand in such a manner that it will be considered later in the meeting or at another time ("I make a motion to table this discussion until the next meeting. In the meantime, we will get more information so we can better discuss the issue.") A second is needed and a majority vote required to table the item being discussed.
7. **Adjourn:** A motion is made to end the meeting. A second motion is required. A majority vote is then required for the meeting to be adjourned (ended).

Note: If more than one motion is proposed, the most recent takes precedence over the ones preceding it. For example if #6, a motion to table the discussion, is proposed, it must be voted on before #3, a motion to amend, can be decided.

In a smaller meeting, like a committee or board meeting, often only **four** motions are used:

- To introduce (motion.)
- To change a motion (amend.)
- To adopt (accept a report without discussion.)
- To adjourn (end the meeting.)

Montgomery Blair High School
Constitution of the Student Government Association

Tips in Parliamentary Procedure

The following summary will help you determine when to use the actions described in *Robert's Rules*.

A main motion must be moved, seconded, and stated by the chair before it can be discussed. If you want to move, second, or speak to a motion, stand and address the chair.

If you approve the motion as is, vote for it.

If you disapprove the motion, vote against it.

If you approve the idea of the motion but want to change it, amend it or submit a substitute for it.

If you want advice or information to help you make your decision, move to refer the motion to an appropriate quorum or committee with instructions to report back.

If you feel they can handle it better than the assembly, move to refer the motion to a quorum or committee with power to act.

If you feel that there the pending question(s) should be delayed so more urgent business can be considered, move to lay the motion on the table.

If you want time to think the motion over, move that consideration be deferred to a certain time.

If you think that further discussion is unnecessary, move the previous question.

If you think that the assembly should give further consideration to a motion referred to a quorum or committee, move the motion be recalled.

If you think that the assembly should give further consideration to a matter already voted upon, move that it be reconsidered.

If you do not agree with a decision rendered by the chair, appeal the decision to the assembly.

If you think that a matter introduced is not germane to the matter at hand, a point of order may be raised.

If you think that too much time is being consumed by speakers, you can move a time limit on such speeches.

If a motion has several parts, and you wish to vote differently on these parts, move to divide the motion.