

# 2. OFFICIAL NHS CONSTITUTION



## ARTICLE I: NAME AND PURPOSE

**Section 1**—The name of this organization shall be the National Honor Society of Secondary Schools (NHS).

**Section 2**—The purposes of this organization shall be to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in the students of secondary schools.

**Section 3**—NHS shall be under the sponsorship and supervision of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), 1904 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191-1537.

## ARTICLE II: NATIONAL COUNCIL

**Section 1**—The control of this organization shall be vested in the National Council.

**Section 2**—The National Council shall consist of 11 members appointed by the Board of Directors of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), one representative chosen from each of the NASSP administrative regions, two at-large principals or assistant principals (from any region), and the NJHS representative, from a middle level school. Regional representatives shall alternate terms between principals and advisers according to the schedule developed by the national office. The executive director of NASSP shall be an ex officio member of the

National Council and shall serve as treasurer of NHS. The Director of Student Activities at NASSP shall be an ex officio member and shall serve as secretary of the National Council.

**Section 3**—Members shall be appointed for a term of no more than three years.

**Section 4**—Six members shall constitute a quorum of the National Council.

(Structure amended December 2001.)

## ARTICLE III: STATE AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

**Section 1**—Local chapters may choose to organize state associations. The state principals' associations may form regional associations as defined by NASSP.

**Section 2**—Any state or regional association of NHS chapters shall conform to this constitution and shall work with the national office in furthering the purpose of this organization.

**Section 3**—All state and/or regional associations shall be affiliated with NHS.

**Section 4**—The state and/or regional affiliate shall not serve as an appeal board for local chapter nonselection or dismissal cases.

**Section 5**—Bylaws of the state or regional associations must be approved by the secretary of NHS (i.e., Director of Student Activities at NASSP) and must be consistent with this constitution.

# OFFICIAL NHS CONSTITUTION

## ARTICLE IV: LOCAL CHAPTERS

**Section 1**—Any secondary public school is eligible to apply for a charter for a local chapter. Nonpublic secondary schools accredited or approved by state departments of education or by accrediting agencies approved by the National Council are eligible to apply for a charter for a local chapter. Each school shall have its own chapter except in cases where a school's size precludes the formation of a full Faculty Council. In such cases, a chapter can be shared as long as all other constitutional requirements can be met. A middle level unit in the same building with a high school unit will be appropriate cause for two separate chapters (one each for NHS and NJHS).

**Section 2**—Each chapter shall pay a chartering fee determined by the National Council.

**Section 3**—Each school with a chapter shall pay an annual affiliation fee recommended by the National Council and approved by the NASSP Board of Directors.

**Section 4**—The annual individual member dues paid to a chapter or state affiliate, if any, shall not exceed \$10 inclusive-ly. The exact amount shall be determined by the executive committee of the chapter and shall be subject to the approval of the chapter membership.

**Section 5**—Duly chartered local chapters shall conform to this constitution as set forth by the National Council. Failure to do so may result in the loss of the charter.

## ARTICLE V: PRINCIPAL

**Section 1**—The principal shall reserve the right to approve all activities and decisions of the chapter.

**Section 2**—The principal shall annually appoint a member of the faculty as chapter adviser, who may serve consecutive terms.

**Section 3**—The principal shall annually appoint a Faculty Council composed of five members of the school's faculty who may serve consecutive terms.

**Section 4**—The principal shall receive appeals in cases of nonselection of candidates and the disciplining or dismissal of members.

## ARTICLE VI: CHAPTER ADVISER

**Section 1**—The chapter adviser shall be responsible for the direct, day-to-day supervision of the chapter and act as a liaison among faculty members, administration, students, and community.

**Section 2**—The chapter adviser shall maintain files on membership, chapter history, activities, and financial transactions. The chapter adviser shall send the annual report to the national office.

**Section 3**—The chapter adviser shall regularly review each member for compliance with Honor Society standards and obligations.

**Section 4**—The chapter adviser shall help the chapter officers understand and carry out their duties.

**Section 5**—The chapter adviser shall be an ex officio, nonvoting, sixth member of the Faculty Council.

**Section 6**—The chapter adviser shall be a member of the faculty, appointed annually by the principal, and may serve consecutive terms.

## ARTICLE VII: FACULTY COUNCIL

**Section 1**—The Faculty Council shall consist of five voting faculty members appointed annually by the principal. The chapter adviser shall be an ex officio, nonvoting, sixth member of the Faculty Council. No principal or assistant principal may be included on the Faculty Council.

**Section 2**—The term of the Faculty Council shall be one year. Members may be appointed to consecutive terms.

**Section 3**—The Faculty Council shall meet at least once a year to review the procedures of the chapter, select members, and to consider nonselection, dismissal, other disciplinary actions, and warning cases.

**Section 4**—The Faculty Council will develop and revise, when necessary, all chapter procedures for selection, disciplining, and dismissal of members, all of which must remain in compliance with the national guidelines.

## ARTICLE VIII: MEMBERSHIP

**Section 1**—Membership in local chapters is an honor bestowed upon a student. Selection for membership is by a Faculty Council and is based on outstanding scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities.

**Section 2**—Membership shall be known as active, honorary, and graduate. Active members shall become graduate members at graduation. Graduate members shall have no voice or vote in chapter affairs.

**Section 3**—The Faculty Council shall reserve the right to award honorary membership to school officials, principals, teachers, NHS advisers, adults, students with disabilities, or foreign exchange students in recognition of achievement and/or outstanding service rendered to the school in keeping with the purposes of NHS. Honorary members shall have no voice or vote in chapter affairs.

**Section 4**—Candidates become members when inducted at a special ceremony.

**Section 5**—Members who are seniors in good standing are

# OFFICIAL NHS CONSTITUTION

eligible to be nominated by their chapters to compete in the National Honor Society Scholarship Program.

**Section 6**—An NHS member who transfers to another school and brings a letter from the former principal or chapter adviser to the new school adviser shall be accepted automatically as a member in the new school’s chapter. Transfer members must meet the new chapter’s standards within one semester in order to retain membership.

**Section 7**—Members who resign or are dismissed are never again eligible for membership or its benefits.

## ARTICLE IX: SELECTION OF MEMBERS

**Section 1**—To be eligible for membership, the candidate must be a member of those classes designated as eligible in the chapter bylaws (sophomore, junior, senior). Freshmen (ninth graders) are not eligible. Candidates must have been in attendance at the school the equivalent of one semester. (Some candidates may be ineligible for induction because of the semester ruling. For example, students of military parents, among others, are required to move with parents or guardians that have transferred in their work. The present school principal should seek a recommendation from the previous school principal pursuant to the candidate’s selection. On the basis of the recommendation of the previous principal, the Faculty Council may waive the semester regulation.)

**Section 2**—The national minimum standard for scholarship shall be a cumulative scholastic average of at least 85%, B, 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale), or the equivalent standard of excellence. Candidates shall then be evaluated on the basis of service, leadership, and character.

**Section 3**—The selection of each member to the chapter shall be by a majority vote of the Faculty Council.

**Section 4**—A description of the selection procedure shall be published in an official school publication that is widely available in a timely fashion to all students and parents of the school. The selection procedure shall be determined by the Faculty Council and shall be consistent with the rules and regulations of NHS.

**Section 5**—The National Council and NASSP shall not review the judgment of the Faculty Council regarding selection of individual members to local chapters.

## ARTICLE X: DISCIPLINE AND DISMISSAL

**Section 1**—The Faculty Council, in compliance with the rules and regulations of NHS, shall determine the procedure for dismissal. A written description of the dismissal procedure shall be available to interested parties.

**Section 2**—Members who fall below the standards that were

the basis for their selection shall be promptly warned in writing by the chapter adviser and given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency. In the case of flagrant violation of school rules or the law, a member does not necessarily have to be warned.

**Section 3**—The Faculty Council shall determine when an individual has exceeded a reasonable number of warnings.

**Section 4**—In all cases of pending dismissal, a member shall have a right to a hearing before the Faculty Council. This is considered due process for all members.

**Section 5**—For purposes of dismissal, a majority vote by the Faculty Council is required.

**Section 6**—A member who has been dismissed may appeal the decision of the Faculty Council under the same rules for disciplinary appeals in the school district.

**Section 7**—The National Council and NASSP shall hear no appeals in dismissal cases.

## ARTICLE XI: CHAPTER OFFICERS

**Section 1**—The officers of the chapter, their duties, and the method of their election shall be determined by the members of the chapter, approved by the Faculty Council and the principal, and described in the chapter bylaws.

**Section 2**—New officers shall be installed at a special ceremony.

## ARTICLE XII: EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Section 1**—The executive committee shall consist of the officers of the chapter and the chapter adviser.

**Section 2**—The executive committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the chapter between its business meetings, make recommendations to the chapter, and determine and perform such other duties as are specified in the chapter bylaws. All actions and recommendations of the executive committee shall be subject to the review of the chapter membership.

**Section 3**—The executive committee shall have the responsibility for ensuring that chapter activities and procedures follow school policy and regulations. (Note: Selection, discipline, and dismissal procedures remain the sole domain of the Faculty Council, per Article VII, Section 3.)

## ARTICLE XIII: MEETINGS

**Section 1**—Each chapter shall have regular meetings during the school year on days designated by the executive committee and in accordance with school policy and regulations.

**Section 2**—The regularity of the meetings (i.e., weekly, monthly, bimonthly) shall be designated in the chapter bylaws.

# OFFICIAL NHS CONSTITUTION

**Section 3**—The chapter president or other designated student leader may call special meetings approved by the executive committee.

**Section 4**—Chapters shall conduct meetings according to *Robert's Rules of Order* (revised edition) in all points not expressly provided for in this constitution or the chapter bylaws.

## ARTICLE XIV: ACTIVITIES

**Section 1**—Each chapter shall determine one or more service projects for each year.

**Section 2**—All members shall regularly participate in these projects.

**Section 3**—These projects shall have the following characteristics: fulfill a need within the school or community; have the support of the administration and the faculty; be appropriate and educationally defensible; be well planned, organized, and executed.

**Section 4**—Each member shall have the responsibility for choosing and participating in a service project that reflects his or her particular talents and interests. This is in addition to the chapter projects to which all members contribute.

**Section 5**—Each chapter shall publicize its projects in a positive manner.

## ARTICLE XV: OFFICIAL INSIGNIA

**Section 1**—This organization shall have an official emblem selected by the National Council. The emblem shall be uniform.

**Section 2**—The distribution of the emblem and the rules for its use shall be under the exclusive control of the National Council.

**Section 3**—Each active, graduate, or honorary member in good standing with the chapter shall be entitled to wear this emblem.

**Section 4**—Any member who resigns or is dismissed shall return the emblem to the chapter adviser.

**Section 5**—All insignia must be procured from the national

secretary of the National Honor Society, 1904 Association Drive, Reston, VA, 20191. All insignia are registered with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and may not be copied by anyone.

**Section 6**—The motto of the National Honor Society shall be “Noblesse oblige.”

**Section 7**—The official colors of the National Honor Society shall be blue and gold.

**Section 8**—A graduate member may purchase a replacement for a lost emblem by verifying membership to the national office.

## ARTICLE XVI: LOCAL CHAPTER BYLAWS

**Section 1**—Each chapter shall write bylaws to amplify sections of this constitution and to clarify operating procedures of the chapter. Bylaws do not need the approval of the National Council but must be consistent with this constitution.

**Section 2**—The chapter bylaws shall contain information concerning the election, the duties of officers, the schedule of meetings, member obligations, dues, and the like.

## ARTICLE XVII: AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at any meeting of the National Council or by mail by an affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the National Council.

NHS National Constitution, 2005 edition. This version of the national constitution supersedes all previous editions. Notification of updates, based on amendments approved by the National Council, will appear in *Leadership for Student Activities* magazine and in the Adviser Zone on [www.nhs.us](http://www.nhs.us).

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