

WHS
National Honor Society



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2011

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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 purpose 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. The 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

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

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

Section 2. The National Council shall consist of nine members appointed by the Board of Directors of the National Association of Secondary School Principals, one representative chosen from each of the NASSP administrative regions, and the ninth, NJHS Representative, from a middle level school. 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 the NASSP Department of Student Activities shall be an ex-officio member and shall serve as secretary of the National Council. (see page 17)

Section 3. The nine members shall be appointed for a three-year term.

Section 4. Five members shall constitute a quorum of the National Council.

ARTICLE III

STATE/REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

Section 1. Local chapters may choose to organize state associations. The state principals association may form regional associations as defined by NASSP. (see Appendix 9)

Section 2. Any state or regional association of National Honor Society chapters shall conform to this Constitution and shall work with the NASSP Department of Student Activities in furthering the purpose of this organization.

Section 3. All state and/or regional associations shall be affiliated with the National Honor Society.

Section 4. The state or regional affiliation shall NOT serve as an appeal board for local chapter non-selection or dismissal cases.

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 for the National Junior Honor Society and one for the National Honor Society).
- Section 2. Each chapter shall pay a chartering fee determined by the National Council. (see page 44)
- 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 ten dollars inclusively. 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

THE PRINCIPAL

- Section 1. The principal shall reserve the right to approve all activities and decisions of the chapter. (see page 17)
- 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 non-selection of candidates, and the disciplining or dismissal of members.

ARTICLE VI

THE CHAPTER ADVISER

- Section 1. The chapter adviser shall be responsible for the direct, day-to-day supervision of the chapter and act as liaison between faculty, administration, students, and community. (see page 17)
- 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. (see page 17)

ARTICLE VI (cont.)

- Section 3. The chapter adviser shall regularly review each member for compliance with 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, non-voting, 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, non-voting, sixth member of the Faculty Council. No principal or assistant principal may be included on the Faculty Council. (see page 18)
- 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 non-selection, 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. (see pages 19–22)
- 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. (see page 20)
- 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 the National Honor Society. Honorary members shall have no voice or vote in chapter affairs. (See page 20–21)

ARTICLE VIII (cont.)

- Section 4. Candidates become members when inducted at a special ceremony. (see pages 36–43)
- Section 5. Members who are seniors in good standing are eligible to be nominated by their chapters to compete in the National Honor Society Scholarship Program.
- Section 6. A National Honor Society 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. (see page 20)
- 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 (sophomore, junior, senior) designated as eligible in the chapter bylaws. (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. Many students, including students of military parents, are required to move with parents or guardians who have transferred in their work. The present school principal should seek a recommendation from the previous school principal pursuant to the candidate's selection. Based on the recommendation of the previous principal, the Faculty Council may waive the semester regulation. (see page 20)
- Section 2. Candidates must have a cumulative scholastic average of at least 85 percent, B, or 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. (see pages 23–28)
- Section 3. The selection of each member to the chapter shall be by a majority vote of the Faculty Council. (see page 29)
- 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 the National Honor Society. (see page 23)
- Section 5. The National Council and the NASSP shall not review the judgment of the Faculty Council regarding selection of individual members to local chapters.

ARTICLE X

DISMISSAL

- Section 1. The procedure for dismissal shall be determined by the Faculty Council in compliance with the rules and regulations of the National Honor Society. A written description of the dismissal procedure shall be available to interested parties. (see pages 59-60)
- Section 2. Members who fall below the standards which 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, except that in the case of flagrant violation of school rules or civil laws 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 impending dismissal, a member shall have a right to a hearing before the Faculty Council.
- Section 5. For purposes of dismissal, a majority vote of 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 the 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.

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.

Section 3. Special meetings approved by the executive committee may be called by the chapter president or other designated student leader.

Section 4. Chapters shall conduct meetings according to *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* 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; and 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. (See pages 55)

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 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 in the United States Patent 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

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. (see pages 14–16)
- Section 2. The chapter bylaws shall contain information concerning the election and duties of officers, the schedule of meetings, member obligations, dues, and the like.
- Section 3. Bylaws of the state associations must be approved by the secretary of the National Honor Society (Director of the NASSP Department of Student Activities) and must be consistent with this Constitution.

ARTICLE XVII

AMENDMENTS

This Constitution may be amended at any meeting of the National Council or by mail by an affirmative vote of five members of the National Council.

1992 Edition (with administrative revisions)

Revised 1997 (based on amendments adopted 1992–1997)

Westborough High School
National Honor Society
By-Laws

I. Preface

The Westborough Chapter of the national Honor Society recognizes students who demonstrate outstanding scholarship, service, leadership and character. The Chapter is a pro-active group dedicated to community service, school involvement and academic excellence. National Honor Society members exemplify the highest ideals of service, citizenship and academic excellence at Westborough High School.

II. Faculty Council

- A. The Westborough Chapter of the National Honor Society is governed by a council consisting of five members of the Westborough High School faculty with each member having one vote.
- B. The National Honor Society advisor serves as moderator of the Faculty Council meetings but has no vote in the proceedings.
- C. A majority vote in the Faculty Council is binding in all matters.
- D. Decisions of the Faculty Council may be appealed in accordance with provisions established in the National Constitution.

III. Academic Eligibility

- A. Juniors and Seniors are eligible for membership in the National Honor Society.
 - 1. Sophomores are included as eligible for membership (05/2009)
- B. Academic eligibility requirements will be established by the Faculty Council and published in the student handbook.
- C. The academic eligibility requirement established by the Faculty council will be based on a student's cumulative academic record and be in accordance with Article IX of the student handbook.
- D. Prospective members will be held to the academic eligibility standard published in the Student Handbook for the year in which they entered Westborough High School as Freshmen.
- E. In accordance with Article VIII of the National Constitution, transfer students must be members of Westborough High School for one complete semester before becoming eligible for membership.
- F. Transfer students inducted into the National Honor Society at their previous school and holding membership in good standing prior to transfer to Westborough will automatically become members in the Westborough Chapter.

IV. Selection

- A. Upon meeting the academic requirement for initial consideration, students will be invited to complete a student information package detailing their activities and accomplishments in the areas of Service and Leadership.
- B. School disciplinary records will be examined as a reflection of character.
- C. A personal essay will be an integral part of the student portfolio. (removed 10/2007)
- D. The student portfolio will be evaluated in detail by each member of the Faculty Council in determining the final selection.

1. Student anonymity in the initial evaluation process is established by the assignment of a unique identification number to each portfolio.
 2. The initial portfolio evaluation by each member of the Faculty Council shall be done by identification number, not by student name.
 3. The NHS advisor will re-associate student names with identification numbers for the purpose of making the final selection of members.
- E. An invitation for membership will be extended to any student receiving a majority vote of the Faculty Council.
- F. Students acquire NHS membership at a formal induction ceremony held during the first semester.
- G. Once inducted, members will receive a copy of the National Constitution and Chapter By-Laws.

V. Officers

- A. The responsibilities of the elected officers of the Westborough Chapter of the National Honor Society are as follows:
1. The President shall conduct meetings, delegate authority, and provide active leadership in the organization.
 2. The Vice-President shall assist the President and act in the President's absence.
 3. The Secretary will be responsible for all notices and correspondences.
 4. The Treasurer shall be responsible for fundraising and managing the chapter's funds.
- B. Election of officers for the coming academic year shall be held before the end of the current academic year.
1. Graduating seniors shall not be eligible to vote in this election.
 2. Officers will be elected by a plurality of those eligible to vote.
 3. In case where no candidate receives the plurality, the top two candidates shall compete in a run-off election.
- C. The elected officers will comprise the National Honor Society Executive Committee with responsibility for general supervision of the organization between business meetings.
1. All actions of the executive committee are subject to review by the general membership.
 2. Any officer who consistently disregards the constitution and by-laws of this organization, or fails to adequately perform the duties of office, may be removed from office by a two-thirds vote of the general membership and the approval of the Faculty Council.

VI. Meetings

- A. Regularly scheduled meetings will be held once per month.
- B. Attendance at scheduled National Honor Society meetings is mandatory.
1. Meetings will be announced no less than 3 days in advance.
 2. Two-thirds of the membership shall constitute a quorum.
 3. Students unable to attend scheduled meetings should consult with the advisor in advance.
- C. Emergency meetings may be called at any time with the approval of the advisor.
- D. Members who miss three (3) meetings without consulting with the advisor are subject to suspension from the National Honor Society.

VII. Commitment to Service

- A. National Honor Society members are committed to service activities in the school and in the community.
- B. Members will maintain involvement in the school service projects established and organized by the executive committee.
- C. The executive committee will actively peruse the organization of community service projects for the membership.
- D. Members will complete community service projects each semester and present documented verification of community service to the advisor according to the annual calendar distributed at the beginning of each academic year.
- E. All members, with the exception of second semester seniors, are required to complete a minimum of twenty (20) hours of community service per semester exclusive of school activities. These hours must consist of at least two (2) different community service activities.
- F. Fourteen (14) hours of service will be required of second semester seniors.
- G. Commitment to service is a condition of admission and a standard for maintaining membership in good standing.

VIII. Maintenance of Membership

- A. National Honor Society members are expected to maintain the high standards of excellence in the areas of service, character and academics which they demonstrated in acquiring membership in the organization.
- B. Any student unable to maintain these standards will be subject to suspension and dismissal.

IX. Loss of Membership

A. Suspension:

- 1. Any member placed on suspension by the advisor should consider their membership in the Honor Society to be at risk.
- 2. In accordance with Article X of the National Constitution, suspended members will be given adequate time to correct the deficiency.
- 3. Cumulative academic averages will be examined by the advisor at the beginning of each semester as soon as the information becomes available from the guidance department.
- 4. Members whose cumulative average falls below the academic standards under which they were admitted to the National Honor Society will be placed on immediate academic suspension and allowed one semester in which to regain academic eligibility.
- 5. Senior members placed on academic suspension at the start of the second semester will have until the end of the third term to regain academic eligibility.
- 6. Members failing to present documented verification of service hours completion by the scheduled date will be placed on suspension and given an additional semester to ensure that their service commitment is current and valid.
- 7. Any member who has not regained full membership status by the end of the suspension period will be subject to dismissal proceedings.

B. Dismissal:

1. Dismissal from the Honor Society shall be determined by a majority vote of the Faculty Council and shall be in accordance with Article X of the National Constitution.
2. No member shall be subject to a dismissal vote without due process.
3. Prior to the dismissal vote being taken by the council, the advisor will present the student with the following three options in writing:
 - (i) The student may request to appear in person before the Faculty Council and submit evidence, documentation, endorsement and testimony to clarify his/her inability to regain membership in good standing.
 - (ii) The student may submit a letter of resignation from the National Honor Society, returning the NHS pin, membership certificate and membership card to the advisor.
 - (iii) The student may elect to do nothing and wait for the Faculty Council to vote without benefit of his/her input.
 - (iv) Suspended students must respond in writing to the Advisor indicating the option that they have chosen.

C. Immediate dismissal for violation of civil laws. In accordance with Article X of the National Constitution, the National Honor Society members are subject to dismissal without prior warning in cases involving the violation of civil laws.

D. Immediate dismissal for flagrant violation of school rules. In accordance with Article X of the National Constitution, National Honor Society members are subject to dismissal without prior warning in cases involving the flagrant violation of school rules. Such violations include but are not limited to suspension from school and the accumulation of ten (10) office detentions during one academic year.

E. A majority vote of the Faculty Council for dismissal obligates the student to return the National Honor Society pin, membership certificate and membership card to the advisor.

F. Students who are dismissed from the National Honor Society will not be considered for re-admission.

X. Revision

A. This chapter shall conform to all provisions of the National Constitution.

B. These by-laws may be amended by a majority vote. An amendment must be presented to the organization at least one month before the meeting at which it is to be voted upon.

Adopted April 26, 1996

Amended April 2004

SELECTION PROCEDURES

Selection

For many students, selection as a member of the National Honor Society is the pinnacle of their achievements in school. This honor, recognized throughout the nation, is both the public recognition of accomplishment and the private commitment to continued excellence on the part of the new member. Because of the importance placed upon this aspect of secondary school life, local chapters are charged with creating a selection process that conforms to the national guidelines, is applied fairly and consistently to all candidates, and provides a meaningful recognition of deserving students.

Selection to NHS is a privilege, not a right. Students do not apply for membership in the National Honor Society; instead, they provide information to be used by the local selection committee to support their candidacy for membership. Membership is granted only to those students selected by the Faculty Council in each school. This is not an election, nor is membership auto-

This honor, recognized throughout the nation, is both the public recognition of accomplishment and the private commitment to continued excellence on the part of the new member.

matically conveyed simply because a student has achieved a specified level of academic performance. NHS is more than just an honor roll and the extent to which the local chapter emphasizes the other components of the selection process (leadership, service, and character) should be carefully included in the selection process guidelines.

The selection process must be public information, available to parents, students, and faculty upon request. It should also be published in the student handbook, the school newspaper, in parent newsletters, or some other publication that is widely available to students and parents, and, in addition, is shared at orientation programs for new students. Proper dissemination of information about the chapter, particularly details concerning the

selection process used at the school, will help prevent problems with students or parents who may wish to question the process.

To ensure that your description of the selection process is fully understandable, it is recommended that the chapter form a committee of students, teachers, and/or parents to review the description for clarity.

All decisions concerning selection have a certain subjective element, but problems can be avoided if the Faculty Council develops and follows some objective criteria. The National Council urges chapters to follow the recommended procedure described in Appendix 4. However, whatever procedure is followed, it must be fair, non-discriminatory, consistently applied, and written for public dissemination.

Procedures

Prerequisite Conditions for Selection

1 According to the Constitution, only those students who have attended the school the equivalent of one semester may be considered for membership. This period is necessary for students to establish themselves and for the faculty to get to know them. Even after a semester, however, it may be necessary to contact a transfer student's former school for additional information.

Some candidates may be ineligible for induction because of the semester ruling. Many students, including students of military parents, are required to move with parents or guardians who have transferred in their work. The present school principal should seek a recommendation from the previous school principal pursuant to the candidate's selection. Based on the recommendation of the previous principal, the Faculty Council may waive the semester regulation.

2 Membership may be open to qualified sophomores, juniors, and seniors. The Faculty Council may decide to choose only one or a combination of these classes, according to local needs, conditions, or traditions.

3 Whatever classes are eligible in a given school, academic requirements must be the same for all candidates in all classes. For example, you may NOT have a different GPA requirement for sophomores than you have for juniors and seniors. The National Council considers different academic requirements for the various classes to be inappropriate.

4 Similarly, there can be no specific quota or percentage of members per class. Those students who meet the criteria should be inducted regardless of the number. If it is necessary to limit chapter size, the academic requirement for all candidates can be raised. (See "Changing the GPA Requirement" below.)

Regarding those classes that are eligible for membership, schools with a 9–12 grade structure may *not* include ninth graders as members of the NHS chapter. However, when considering candidates for selection, it is appropriate to use grades earned and activities undertaken during the ninth grade year. Also, schools with this 9–12 structure may not have a separate, ninth-grade-only chapter of NJHS on their high school campus (a restriction that has been in existence since September 1983).

The Criteria

The Faculty Council of the chapter selects students who demonstrate outstanding performance in all four criteria of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. According to the principles outlined in Article IX, Section 2, the Faculty Council should first identify students with the prerequisite GPA (as stated in the local selection guidelines), and then evaluate the candidates' performance in the areas of leadership, service, and character.

While the academic criterion is important and should be considered first, membership should never be considered on the basis of grades alone, even though a Faculty Council may consider scholarship as the most important of the four criteria. Schools that select members solely on the basis of scholarship are violating the Constitution and placing their charters in jeopardy.

Faculty Councils may wish to survey academically eligible students to determine interest in membership and to obtain information regarding service and leadership activities (see the sample "Student Activity Information Form" in Appendix 4). Students so surveyed should understand that such surveys are not applications for membership, and that review of information gathered does not guarantee selection.

In evaluating potential members for leadership, service, and character, the Faculty Council often begins with a review of the definitions of these criteria. These definitions should also appear in the public description of the selection process. A common understanding of the criteria for selection helps all involved to accept and understand the professional decisions made by the Faculty Council.

Scholarship

The scholarship requirement set by the National Council is based on a student's cumulative grade point average. The phrase "cumulative grade point average" refers to the total academic performance as demonstrated by the grades received by the student while in attendance at the school where the chapter is found. For example, in a high school containing grades nine through 12, even when students are selected during their junior year, grades from the ninth grade on should be used to compute the scholastic average. Obtaining grades from a student's middle school would be inappropriate and only complicate the selection process, as well as present a problem of verification for the Faculty Council. Wherever possible, chapters are encouraged to utilize the same standard for computing GPA that is currently used within the school, since that is the system most easily recognized and understood by the students and their parents. Utilizing a non-traditional cumulative GPA calculation or scholarship average requires both additional time for the adviser or Faculty Council to complete the calculations, and additional explanation to be added to the written description of the selection process.

- ◆ The minimum grade point average allowable is 85 percent, B, 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale), or the equivalent standard of excellence. The Faculty Council may raise the required cumulative grade point average. The Faculty Council may also specify a prerequisite number of academic courses or weight grades in recognition of the varying degrees of difficulty of courses of study. In such cases, the Faculty Council must provide to the administration, students, and parents of the school the professional rationale for these guidelines or procedures.
- ◆ If a Faculty Council decides to weight grades in recognition of the varying degrees of difficulty of courses of study, this weighting should be accomplished prior to the determination of the cumulative GPA in order, once again, to identify all students who have met the scholastic criteria prior to consideration of their leadership, service, and character.
- ◆ Rules such as "no grade below 'B'" are not acceptable.
- ◆ A failing grade is not an acceptable reason to automatically eliminate a student's candidacy.

Schools with innovative grading practices (individualized, non-graded, or pass-fail) share in the requirement to select the top students for membership. Faculty Councils in these schools have

the responsibility to determine ways to identify those students who meet the scholarship requirement. The Faculty Council must provide a rationale for this determination and include it in the written description of the selection process.

In all cases, only those students who have a cumulative grade point average of 85 percent, B, 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) or equivalent standard of excellence, or a higher cumulative average set by the Faculty Council meet the scholarship requirement for membership in the National Honor Society. These students are then eligible for consideration on the basis of service, leadership, and character.

“Revisiting” Scholarship

Once it has been determined that a student has met the scholarship criterion, that issue can be put aside and the remainder of the Faculty Council’s attention directed to the remaining three criteria. For the Faculty Council to bring up the “quality” of a student’s grades or evaluate the degree of difficulty of the courses after the GPA has been determined is inappropriate in that this would be considered a “revisiting” of the scholarship criterion. Similarly, teacher recommendation/evaluation forms (an optional concern for local chapters) that include a space for rating the student’s scholarship are inappropriate for the same reasons.

Schools which rate the level of the students’ GPAs for their point system (See subsection on “Point Systems” for further explanation of this process) in the selection process are similarly revisiting scholarship (e.g. 97–100 = 4 points; 94–96 = 3 points, etc.). In the case of a school using a point system, points should only be applied to those candidates who have already met the scholastic criteria and now need to be rated on the remaining three criteria. The possible consequence of this inappropriate use of points when revisiting scholarship is that the school may find itself first informing the student that he/she has the necessary GPA to be a member, and then, because the student’s GPA was not in the highest possible category (i.e., the student only got 3 points instead of 4), informing the student that he/she was not selected because “the GPA was not high enough to earn the required points for selection.” This contradiction would be both inappropriate and confusing to candidates and their parents and thus should be avoided.

Changing the GPA Requirement

In cases where a school wishes to change the GPA requirement (by raising or lowering the GPA, but not beneath the 3.0 national minimum) there are a few key points to keep in mind:

- 1** Changes in the selection procedure should be made by the Faculty Council. The origin of the changes may be the administration, the faculty adviser, or even from the body of current chapter members. In all cases, however, the Faculty Council must provide formal approval.
- 2** As with all aspects of the selection procedure, the change(s) and all information related to the change should be published “in a timely fashion” and be available for easy dissemination to the public.

3 When considering the timing for implementing proposed changes, it is strongly recommended that a local chapter consider announcing the change at least ONE YEAR prior to formally establishing the new criteria. This timeline allows students to set new goals for their scholastic performance (the higher GPA) and sufficient time to achieve them. In addition, it allows the chapter to publish the new guidelines and to update the faculty and parents of all prospective members.

Under all circumstances, advisers and members of the Faculty Council are reminded that continued membership in the chapter is based upon students maintaining the standards under which they were admitted as members. Consequently, a member admitted with a 3.0 GPA would be expected to maintain that average as a member, even if the new standard of 3.25 were approved for members selected for later induction. In cases involving new scholastic standards, this may mean that a given group of chapter members operate under different standards for a period of years while the new criteria are being installed.

Leadership

The leadership criterion is considered highly important for membership selection. Some Faculty Councils may wish to interpret leadership in terms of number of offices a student has held in school or community organizations, although it is important to recognize that leadership also exists outside elected positions including effective participation in other cocurricular activities offered on campus. Other Faculty Councils may define leadership in less objective terms. Leadership roles in both the school and community may be considered, provided they can be verified.

The student who exercises leadership:

- ◆ Is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles, and making suggestions
- ◆ Demonstrates initiative in promoting school activities
 - ◆ Exercises positive influence on peers in upholding school ideals
- ◆ Contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school
 - ◆ Is able to delegate responsibilities
 - ◆ Exemplifies positive attitudes
 - ◆ Inspires positive behavior in others
 - ◆ Demonstrates academic initiative
- ◆ Successfully holds school offices or positions of responsibility; conducts business effectively and efficiently; demonstrates reliability and dependability
 - ◆ Is a leader in the classroom, at work, and in other school or community activities
 - ◆ Is thoroughly dependable in any responsibility accepted
 - ◆ Is willing to uphold scholarship and maintain a loyal school attitude.

Service

Service is generally considered to be those actions undertaken by the student which are done with or on behalf of others without any direct financial or material compensation to the individual performing the service. In considering service, the contributions this candidate has made to school,

Character Guidelines

The National Council has approved the following recommendations for use when considering "character" of candidates:

A candidate will be able to demonstrate an outstanding record of conduct and behavior with regard to school and community rules, guidelines, and policies or be able to demonstrate sufficient growth and improvement to compensate for previous inadequacies. A Faculty Council is encouraged to document, for purposes of their own decision-making or if questioned by the principal, any sub-standard performance in the area of the character criterion. Such documentation might include such sources as:

- a. Administrative records of the school
- b. Counseling records from the guidance office
- c. Conduct/behavior grades or ratings (including comments) on report cards
- d. Professional records of individual faculty members (grade books, etc.)
- e. Comments, based on professional evaluation and action, of individual faculty members on candidate evaluation forms

(continued to page 29)

classmates, and community, as well as the student's attitude toward service can be reviewed.

The student who serves:

- ◆ Volunteers and provides dependable and well organized assistance, is gladly available, and is willing to sacrifice to offer assistance
- ◆ Works well with others and is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities
- ◆ Cheerfully and enthusiastically renders any requested service to the school
- ◆ Is willing to represent the class or school in inter-class and inter-scholastic competition
- ◆ Does committee and staff work without complaint
- ◆ Participates in some activity outside of school, for example, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, church groups, volunteer services for the elderly, poor, or disadvantaged
- ◆ Mentors persons in the community or students at other schools
- ◆ Shows courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers, and students.

Character

Character is probably the most difficult criterion to define. The Faculty Council should consider the positive as well as the negative aspects of character. All judgments in this and other selection criteria should be free of speculation and rumor. (See newly adopted guidelines on pages 28–29.)

National Honor Society is a member of the Character Counts!SM Coalition. Through this activity, the society supports and recommends the use of a multi-faceted definition of character known as the "Six Pillars of Character." A person of character demonstrates the following six qualities: respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Schools are encouraged to take this model, modify it to meet their local needs, and utilize it frequently in the work of their chapter.

In addition, it can also be said that the student of character:

- ◆ Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
- ◆ Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (cheerfulness, friendliness, poise, stability)
- ◆ Upholds principles of morality and ethics

- ◆ Cooperates by complying with school regulations concerning property, programs, office, halls, etc.
- ◆ Demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability
- ◆ Regularly shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others
- ◆ Observes instructions and rules, is punctual, and faithful both inside and outside the classroom
- ◆ Has powers of concentration, self-discipline, and sustained attention as shown by perseverance and application to studies
- ◆ Manifests truthfulness in acknowledging obedience to rules, avoiding cheating in written work, and showing unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others
- ◆ Actively helps rid the school of bad influences or environment.

☐ Student Activity Information Forms

In order to ascertain the degree to which a student candidate meets the selection criteria, it is recommended that local Faculty Councils utilize a Student Activity Information Form (a sample of which is found in Appendix 4). Such forms are generally used to obtain information directly from the student regarding leadership and service activities and to elaborate on the student's perspectives concerning the honor society and its values.

These forms should not be considered under any circumstances as "applications" for membership. The form exists to support the student's candidacy by providing relevant information for use by the Faculty Council.

It is recommended that local forms include a parental/guardian signature affirming that they have reviewed the data and verify its accuracy. Other adult signatures may also be requested to verify participation in leadership or service activities.

These forms are for use by the Faculty Council as working documents to be used during the selection process in support of the student's candidacy.

It is left to the discretion of the local principal, faculty adviser, and/or Faculty Council as to how much of this information is to be shared with the candidate not selected for membership (or his/her parents).

◆ Students who have been arrested and found guilty of civil offenses or who have a chronic record of breaking school rules should not be automatically excluded from consideration for membership. A proper regard for adolescent growth and behavior improvement is essential.

◆ It should be noted that, under provisions of federal law, pregnancy—whether within or without wedlock—cannot be the basis for automatic denial of the right to participate in any public school activity. It may properly be considered, however, like any other circumstance, as a factor to be assessed in determining character as it applies to the National Honor Society. But pregnancy may be taken into account in determining character only if evidence of paternity is similarly regarded. (See Appendix 7 for further information on the legal aspects of selection.)

National Honor Society Westborough High School

Discipline & Dismissal Process of Members

For members who fall below the standards that were the basis for selection: character, leadership, service and scholarship, the member will be promptly warned in writing by the chapter adviser and given a reasonable amount of time to address, present and correct the deficiency. Flagrant violation of school rules or civic laws will result in suspension and or dismissal from the Honor Society.

The Process

A letter will be sent to the member that informs them of the violation and invites them to conference with the chapter advisor and administrator to discuss the violation. Upon receiving the letter the student has 24 hours to meet with the advisor to select a date and time for their conference. All cases must be presented in writing 3 school days before the conference.

After the conference the advisor and administrator will present the findings to the Faculty Council. The Faculty Council will be consulted regarding the violation and will be asked to a vote that render a decision of suspension or dismissal along with providing the steps necessary for the member to take to regain their position as a member in good standing.

The Decision

Suspension

The student will have chapter privileges suspended for a defined period. The goal of this measure is to re-educate the student to more appropriate behavior. This may be achieved by a suspension period along with or followed by counseling or service, which ever direction would support the likelihood that the student will improve in the particular area in which there is a deficiency.

Dismissal

If the faculty council rules in favor of dismissal the member will then be allowed to present his or her case at a pre-dismissal hearing before the Faculty Council and a parent may be present. It should be noted that the primary focus of this hearing is to allow the member to present his or her case to the council.

Post Dismissal

If a member is dismissed, written notice of the decision should be sent to the member, his or her parents, and the principal. The member must then surrender the NHS emblem and membership card to the chapter adviser. If the member is unwilling to do this, the matter should be treated as a school disciplinary matter.

Appeals for Dismissal Cases

A member who has been dismissed may appeal the decision of the Faculty Council to the principal. The principal will then administer a fact finding process and the final decision will be implemented by the Faculty Council.

Resignation

Any member who resigns from National Honor Society will never again be eligible for membership or benefits. Resignation from the honor society is a serious decision and only accepted in written form that is dated and signed by both the member and his/her parents. No member can be forced to resign, for this situation would be interpreted as a dismissal.