

FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS	Reg. No. 400-25
Subject: NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY	Issued: 8/30/82
Preparing Office: OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT	Amended: 12/1/22

- I. Policy
- II. Procedures

The National Honor Society of Secondary Schools (NHS) is a program of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP). The control of this organization shall be vested in the NAASP Board of Directors.

The current version of the Constitution of the National Honor Society is located on the NAASP Web site located at: <https://www.nhs.us/about/constitution-governance/nhs-national-constitution/>

Each chapter shall write Bylaws to amplify sections of the Constitution and to clarify operating procedures of the chapter. Bylaws do not need the approval of the NAASP Board of Directors, but must be consistent with the Constitution.

BYLAWS

BYLAW 1 - HIGH SCHOOL MEMBERSHIP IN THE NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY

- Section 1. All Frederick County public high schools are encouraged to have a chapter of the National Honor Society, as sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAASP).
- Section 2. Any school wishing to begin a chapter of the National Honor Society should contact the coordinator of the National Honor Society chapters for Frederick County to obtain necessary application information.
- Section 3. The name of any new National Honor Society chapter will generally be the name of the sponsoring school. If a school wishes to name the chapter in any other fashion, the county coordinator must be consulted. After consultation with the Superintendent, the county coordinator will grant or deny permission.

BYLAW 2 - COORDINATION OF NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY CHAPTERS IN FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

- Section 1. The director of high schools for the Frederick County Public Schools serves as the coordinator of the National Honor Society chapters in the county's public high schools. Questions about operating procedure should be addressed to the coordinator, who will be available to provide assistance as requested by principals or advisers.

Section 2. The coordinator is not part of the appeals process but may be consulted by principals, advisers, students or parents for interpretations or to provide necessary information.

Section 3. The coordinator serves as a liaison between the Frederick County Public Schools and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), the governing body of the National Honor Society.

BYLAW 3 - ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP IN NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY CHAPTERS IN FREDERICK COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Section 1. A student enrolled in grades eleven or twelve in the Frederick County Public Schools must have earned a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.50 or higher in order to be eligible for consideration for membership.

Section 2. All students are required to maintain a 3.50 cumulative academic average after their induction into the National Honor Society to continue in membership.

Section 3. The GPA of 3.50 will be calculated using the grade weighting system as described in Frederick County Public Schools Regulation 400-13, II.B.

BYLAW 4 - FACULTY COUNCIL

Section 1. The faculty council will be appointed by the principal in accordance with Article VII of the Constitution.

Section 2. They will be trained by the principal and chapter adviser in their duties and the current operating procedures related to the selection of students, as well as dismissal, non-selection, and warning cases. Such training will be conducted annually, early in the school year, to ensure compliance with national and local regulations.

BYLAW 5 - SELECTION PROCEDURES

Section 1. Each school must hold one induction of selected students each school year. A school may opt to schedule one additional induction, particularly if large numbers of students are selected annually; this second induction would normally be scheduled in the winter, but only after the reporting of second marking term grades.

Section 2. The adviser will publish in all available school media (newsletters, school papers, home mailings, etc.) the guidelines for membership in the National Honor Society. Such notifications should outline academic qualifications, as well as the other expectations of potential chapter members.

Section 3. The adviser and principal are responsible for checking the permanent records of all students who are in the eligible grades (10,11,12) to determine those students whose cumulative academic average qualifies them for consideration for membership.

- Section 4. All academically eligible students must be notified in writing of their eligibility; they should be invited to an information session at which the adviser and principal will review the criteria for membership, as well as the several steps of the selection process, including the appeal process.
- Section 5. Advisers and principals should distribute to all academically eligible students a brief written summary of the selection procedures and criteria for their own information and for them to share with their parent(s) and/or guardian(s).
- Section 6. All academically eligible students must be given a copy of the activities/leadership summary sheet on which applicants must list their involvement in in-school and other activities. They should be encouraged to be as complete and detailed as possible.
- Section 7. The completed activities/leadership summary sheet and the acknowledgment sheet signed by parent(s)/guardian(s) and the student must be submitted to the adviser on or before the announced deadline. A student who does not wish his/her consideration to go further must inform the adviser, in writing, of that preference.
- Section 8. The adviser prepares rating sheets listing the names of all academically eligible students in order to obtain information about the opinion of the faculty in the areas of service, character and leadership. The sheets are circulated to all faculty members and returned, signed and dated by the individual faculty members, to the adviser on or before the announced deadline. The adviser compiles the gathered information as well as the academic averages in a format which is useful to the members of the faculty council.
- Section 9. The faculty council meets to consider all eligible students and reviews all available data as compiled by the adviser. The faculty council may, at its discretion, arrange for an individual conference with any eligible student to explore his/her qualifications and to clarify any questions about items listed on the activities/leadership summary sheet. Council members may consult with individual teachers to explore low ratings or comments which may affect the final selection decision.
- Section 10. The council makes final placement decisions about each student based upon the full range of information available.
- Section 11. All placement decisions are communicated to students in writing in a private manner. Such notification should be signed by the adviser and principal. Once all written notifications have been sent, the adviser may then publish the names of selected students in the usual school media.
- Section 12. The consideration/selection process must occur in sufficient time to allow all of the steps to occur smoothly and completely. In addition, the induction of new students should not be scheduled until all students have had the opportunity to discuss their non-selection with the adviser and/or principal and/or to pursue the appeal process as appropriate.

Section 13. All appeals must be considered first by the principal and adviser; the principal will reconvene the council at his/her discretion. All appeals are governed by the current Constitution and Bylaw 4.

BYLAW 6 - FACULTY INPUT INTO STUDENT SELECTION

Section 1. All faculty members of the school staff are invited to provide information and input to the faculty council by rating academically eligible students in the areas of character, service, and leadership.

Section 2. The principal and adviser should review with the entire faculty the function of faculty input into the selection process; they should also review the categories of rating, the ranking to be used, and the definitions of service, character, and leadership which faculty member should be using in rating students. This may be accomplished at a regular faculty meeting or at a separate meeting. This meeting should be conducted at least annually. Faculty members should then receive a rating sheet containing the names of all eligible students, as well as clear directions for completing the form.

Section 3. All completed rating forms must be signed and dated by the faculty member providing the rating information. Anonymous ratings cannot be accepted or considered. All ratings must be provided by individual teachers and not by groups or departments. Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of faculty rating information.

Section 4. Faculty members should be clearly directed to rate students on the basis of personal contact in the classroom, in extracurricular activities, and through general activities in and away from school. They should rate only those students they know, and only in those categories of consideration in which their knowledge of the student permits them to rate fairly and knowledgeably. They should be reminded that the information they provide is advisory in nature; the faculty council makes all final placement decisions. Individual faculty members are encouraged to provide any written, narrative comments or remarks about individual students, at their discretion if they have given a rating of 4 or 3; in the case of low ratings (2 or 1), a written explanation must be provided in order for the rating to be considered.

Section 5. The rating scale to be used is as follows:

- 4 points exceptional, creative, unusual
- 3 points receptive, constructive, and productive
- 2 points cooperative but passive
- 1 point negative, nonproductive

(Note: No other ratings may be used, e.g. a zero or half points.)

Section 6. The definitions below should be shared with faculty members to assist them in completing the rating sheets. They should be reminded that a given student may not exhibit all of these behaviors or may do so in varying degrees at different times; the actual rating given by the faculty member should reflect this knowledge. Students should be rated with some consideration to their "trend" in these areas of behavior.

Service

The student who serves:

- is willing to uphold scholarship and maintain a loyal school attitude.
- participates in some outside activity: e.g. Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts; church groups; volunteer services for the aged, poor, or disadvantaged; family duties, etc.
- volunteers 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 or interscholastic competition.
- does committee and staff work uncomplainingly.
- shows courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers, and other students.

Character

The student of character:

- takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously.
- consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (e.g. 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.
- shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others.
- observes instructions and rules, punctuality, and faithfulness both inside and outside the classroom.
- has powers of concentration 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 to rid the school of bad influences or environment.

Leadership

The student who exercises leadership:

- is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles, and making suggestions.
- demonstrates leadership in promoting school activities.
- exercises influence on peers in upholding school ideals.
- contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school.
- is able to delegate responsibilities.
- exemplifies a positive attitude.
- inspires positive behavior in others.
- demonstrates academic achievement.

- successfully holds school offices or positions of responsibility, conducting, business efficiently and effectively, and without prodding, demonstrates reliability and dependability.
- may also successfully hold offices or positions of responsibility in community, church, or social organizations or activities.
- demonstrates leadership in the classroom, at work, and in school or community activities.
- is thoroughly dependable in any responsibility accepted.

BYLAW 7 - NON-SELECTION OF STUDENTS

- Section 1. Students who disagree with their non-selection should discuss with the adviser the nature of their concern(s). The adviser should review the procedures and eligibility criteria with the student to be certain that all the necessary steps in the selection process were followed.
- Section 2. Students and parents should be reminded that, despite the obviously subjective nature of selection decisions, the decision of the faculty council is final, except in cases where technical mistakes may have occurred (e.g., the inadvertent omission of the student's name from the list of those qualified for selection, the inaccurate calculation of academic average, etc.).
- Section 3. In the absence of specific information to the contrary, it is presumed that the decisions of the faculty council are well-informed and as objective as possible and should not be reversed. Information considered by the council in making selection decisions (e.g., faculty input, interview notes, etc.) will not be shared with student or parents (Ivan Gluckman, NASSP Legal Counsel, April, 1987).
- Section 4. A student who wishes to appeal the non-selection decision, after consultation with the adviser, must do so in writing no later than five school days after the date of the written notification of non-selection. The letter of appeal, which must be directed to the principal, must detail exactly what technical error or problem has resulted in an inappropriate decision; no student should make reference to any other student who was or was not selected.
- Section 5. The principal will meet with the student appealing the decision to discuss the nature of the appeal; the principal will reconvene the council only in the most unusual circumstances. A written response to the appeal will be made by the principal as quickly as possible (and prior to the next induction ceremony). In general, the student and the student's parent(s) will not be permitted to discuss the non-selection with faculty council member; the principal serves as the student's advocate in those situations where a reconsideration is deemed appropriate.
- Section 6. The decision of the principal is final. Parents or students alleging a procedural error or discriminatory decision may appeal to the deputy superintendent. The appeal procedure concludes at this level. No further appeals are possible.

BYLAW 8 - DISMISSAL OF NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY MEMBERS

- Section 1. Dismissal procedures must be made available in writing to anyone who requests such information. All members of the school's chapter should receive a copy of this information as part of their initial acceptance into the chapter.
- Section 2. A member is never automatically dismissed for failing to maintain standards. Members, however, should be aware that they are liable for dismissal if they do not maintain the standards of scholarship, service, character and leadership that were used as a basis for their selection. They should also be aware that they are allowed limited warnings during their membership; however, in the case of a flagrant violation of school rules or civil laws, a warning is not necessarily required.
- Section 3. A student who has been dismissed from the National Honor Society or who resigns may never again become a member of this organization.
- Section 4. It is the responsibility of the chapter adviser to periodically review the standing of members for compliance with Society standards. The adviser should inform in writing the student who fails to meet those standards, detailing the nature of the violation, the time period given for improvement of the condition, and the possible consequence of non-improvement. The adviser should also consider scheduling a conference with the student in question to explore the issues which have resulted in the violation. If the student does not make the improvement in the specified time, the student is liable for whatever disciplinary measures are considered appropriate by the faculty council.
- Section 5. When the adviser has followed the steps outlined above, and a student remains in violation, the faculty council should be convened to consider the case and to determine the disciplinary action to be imposed.
- Section 6. If any type of disciplinary action against a member of the National Honor Society is being considered by the adviser or faculty council, the adviser communicates the information in writing to the student. The student has a right to exercise the option to present a case before the council, which considers all facts thoroughly and completely before arriving at a decision.
- Section 7. If the adviser or faculty council decides to impose any kind of disciplinary action short of dismissal from the chapter, the decision must be communicated to the student in writing. The letter should outline the nature of the disciplinary action and the time line(s) involved.
- Section 8. If the council decides to dismiss a student, the decision will be communicated in writing to the student, the student's parents, and the principal. The member must then surrender the National Honor Society insignia/emblem and membership card to the chapter adviser immediately. If the member refuses to comply with this requirement, it should be treated as regular school disciplinary matter by the administration.
- Section 9. The dismissed member may appeal the decision in writing to the principal no later than five days after the date of decision letter. The appeal must

specify the reasons for the inappropriateness of the dismissal decision, extenuating circumstances, etc. The principal will meet with the student and/or the student's parents, the members of the faculty council, or the adviser to gather information about the case or the decision.

Section 10. The principal, after making a decision on the appeal, delivers the decision in writing to the student, the faculty council, and the adviser.

Section 11. A student may appeal the principal's decision to the deputy superintendent¹ within five days of the date of principal's written decision. The written appeal must specify the reasons for the inappropriateness of the dismissal decision, extenuating circumstances, etc. The deputy superintendent has the option to meet with the student, the student's parents, the members of the faculty council, the adviser and/or the principal to gather information about the case or the decision.

Section 12. The deputy superintendent, after making a decision on the appeal, delivers the decision in writing to the student, the principal, the faculty council, and the adviser.

Section 13. The appeal procedure concludes at this level. No further appeals are possible.

Approved:

original signed by

Cheryl L. Dyson
Superintendent

¹ Upon review by the deputy superintendent, the deputy superintendent may elect to appoint a designee to review the appeal and render a decision.