

# SOUTHERN CAYUGA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

## SOUTHERN CAYUGA JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY BY-LAWS

THE CATEGORIES BELOW ARE SUMMARIES FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY, THEY ARE EXCERPTED FROM THE NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY HANDBOOK 16<sup>TH</sup> EDITION (2005) TO MEET THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE SOUTHERN CAYUGA NHS CHAPTER.

### **HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT**

Edward Rynearson founded the National Honor Society in 1921. His hope was to create an organization that would recognize and encourage academic achievement while developing other characteristics essential to citizens in a democracy. These ideas of scholarship, character, service, and leadership remain as relevant today as they were in 1921.

Southern Cayuga High School NHS chapter involves students in grades 10-12. The object of this chapter shall be to create an enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to encourage the development of the character on students of Southern Cayuga High School.

To be inducted in the NHS, one must be exemplary in each of the four following areas:

1. Scholarship – maintaining a minimum of 3.5 (90.5%) cumulative GPA
2. Character – possessing a strong moral and ethical character
3. Service – participating in school and/or community events and organizations
4. Leadership – taking on active leadership roles within community and school activities and organizations

Student Activity Information Forms are available to eligible students in the spring of the school year. Forms can be picked up from the NHS advisor.

The induction ceremony is usually held in May or June. Membership is both an honor and a privilege.

### **OFFICIAL COLORS, MOTTO, AND FLOWER**

The official colors of the national Honor Society are blue and gold, and the Society's motto is *Noblesse Oblige*, a French phrase literally meaning nobility obligates. In broader terms, it signifies that those of high rank (or birth, in its original context) have the obligation to behave honorably, generously, and responsibly to others. The official flower of the NHS is the yellow rose.

### **GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES FOR MEMBERSHIP**

Southern Cayuga High School recognizes and honors students for outstanding achievement. The highest recognition bestowed is through membership in the Southern Cayuga High School Chapter of the National Honor Society. This recognition is achieved through a selection process based upon exemplary scholarship, service, leadership, and character.

## SELECTION PROCESS

The membership selection process for the National Honor Society (NHS) is as follows:

- Student must be in grades 10-12.
- Student must achieve a cumulative grade point average of 3.5 (90.5%) or higher to be eligible for the National Honor Society.
- Selection is based on four criteria: Scholarship, Service, Leadership, and Character. Scholarship is the most important of the four criteria.
- To be considered for selection, a student who is eligible scholastically must submit a completed Student Activity Information Packet as well as three faculty recommendations and a personal essay.
- To be invited to be a member of the National Honor Society, a student must receive a majority vote of the five-member Faculty Council. A principal and the NHS Advisor are ex officio members of this selection committee but the principal does not have final approval of all accepted new members.

## SELECTION POLICY

In addition to the student's GPA a candidate is rated on leadership, service, and character. The following criteria are used in the NHS selection process.

### LEADERSHIP CRITERIA

The leadership criterion is considered highly important for membership selection. It is important to recognize that leadership also exists outside elected positions including effective participation in positions of responsibility in other activities offered on campus such as athletic team captains, section leaders in band and chorus, committee chairs in student groups, etc. Leadership roles in both the school and community may be considered, provided they can be verified.

The student who exercises leadership: *(This list is for consideration purposes only and should not be thought of as a checklist.)*

- 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 and spirit
- 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, or in other school or community activities
- Is dependable in any responsibility accepted

### SERVICE CRITERIA

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. In considering service, the contributions a candidate has made to school, classmates, and community as well as the student's attitude toward service can be reviewed.

The student who serves: *(This list is for consideration purposes only and should not be thought of as a checklist.)*

### **[SHCS chapter requires 30 hours of community service each year]**

- 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 interclass and interscholastic competition
- Does committee and staff work without complaint
- Participates in some activity outside of school (e.g., Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, religious 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 CRITERIA

Character is probably the most difficult criterion to define. The Faculty Council considers the positive as well as the negative aspects of character. All judgments in this and other selection criteria are free of speculation and rumor. The National Honor Society supports and recommends the use of a multifaceted definition of character known as the Six Pillars of Character. A person of character demonstrates the following six qualities: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

The student of character: *(This list is for consideration purposes only and should not be thought of as a checklist.)*

- 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
- 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 an unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others
- Actively helps rid the school of bad influences or environment

## **Selection procedures**

**Step I:** In the 4<sup>th</sup> marking period of each year, a list of academically eligible students is prepared.

**Step II:** All students eligible (GPA of 3.5 -- 90.5% or better) will be contacted via letter that they can obtain the NHS Information Packet.

**Step III:** NHS candidates will pick up the NHS Information Packet Form from the NHS advisor(s) and return the completed form by the announced deadline.

**Step IV:** Faculty Council will meet to review information materials and determine final NHS student selections.

**Step V:** Following the Faculty Council selection meeting, students will be informed of their status. Selected students will be called to a meeting to outline the process for induction in the National Honor Society. Non-selected students will have ten (10) school days of the postmark date of the notification letter to appeal the decision by the faculty council. (See SCHS NHS appeals document – appendix on page 7).

**Step VI:** New and present NHS members and their parent(s)/guardian(s) will be invited to a recognition function which will include student participation in a formal induction in May or June.

## MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

Some of the immediate benefits for students include the following:

- A private induction ceremony
- Each member is presented with a membership card and pin at the induction ceremony
- A hood from the NHS is worn at graduation
- Letters of recommendation from the National Honor Society

In addition there are several intrinsic reasons a student may desire membership in the National Honor Society. Membership in the NHS is the highest honor that Southern Cayuga High School can bestow upon a student, and is a prestigious public recognition of outstanding student achievement. Employers, government officials, and college officials recognize members of the National Honor Society as students who possess many of the qualities and characteristics that are indicators of future success.

## **MONITORING STANDARDS**

NHS members who fall below the 3.5 (90%) grade point average or who do not complete required community service will be notified in the form of a letter and will be warned and may be placed on a probationary status. A National Honor Society member can remain on probationary status for up to two semesters. Members who break Southern Cayuga High School code of conduct will be subject to the discipline procedures outlined elsewhere in this document. If a member has been dismissed, they cannot rejoin NHS. See Discipline Procedures below.

## **DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Membership in the National Honor Society is both an honor and a responsibility. Students selected for membership are expected to continue to demonstrate the qualities of scholarship, service, leadership, and character.

## **MEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES**

After the candidate has been selected and inducted, he/she shall:

- Attend regular Southern Cayuga High School NHS chapter meetings. The meeting of this chapter shall be held on days designated by the executive committee. Generally once a month.
- Maintain a GPA of 3.5 (90%) or above
- Follow all of the code of conduct rules at Southern Cayuga High School
- Respect the rights and beliefs of others and will treat others with courtesy and consideration
- Be fully responsible for my own actions and the consequences of my actions
- Respect the rights and property of others
- Respect and obey the rules of my school and the laws of my community, state and country
- Show respect to those who are responsible for enforcing the rules of my school and the laws of my community, state and country

## **OFFICERS**

The following officer positions shall be filled annually through democratic election procedures: president, vice president, and secretary/treasurer. The positions outlined below along with the chapter advisors will constitute the executive committee.

The duties of the president shall include, but not be limited to:

- Lead society meetings in orderly manner
- Work closely with advisor in planning activities and service projects
- Perform other duties as needed

The duties of the vice president shall include, but not be limited to:

- Serve as student council representative for the organization
- Help and support the president
- Perform other duties as needed

The duties of the secretary/treasurer shall include, but not be limited to:

- Take notes of each Honor Society Meeting
- Be responsible for advertisement of Society activities and service projects
- Help and support the president and vice president
- Perform other duties as needed

- A majority of votes cast shall be necessary to elect an officer
- It is the duty of the President to preside at the meetings
- The vice-president shall fill the chair of the president in her/his absence
- The chapter secretary/treasurer shall keep the minutes of the meetings, a record of all business, disburse funds with the help of the NHS advisor(s) and in accordance with school regulations, and an account of all receipts

## **ADVISOR**

The chapter advisor(s) shall be a member of the faculty of the school where the chapter is located. The chapter advisor(s) should be a faculty member who has faith in the abilities of young people and who is willing to spend time with them to develop their potential. The advisor shall promote chapter activities, stimulate positive actions by members, and provide information on local and national policies regulating chapter activities.

The adviser is an ex-officio, non-voting sixth member of the Faculty Council. Neither principals nor assistant principals may serve as chapter advisors. Therefore, the advisor takes on the responsibility of representing the administrative offices of the school. In this role, the adviser serves in two capacities: the supervisor who ensures that proper procedures are being followed, and as the advocate who protects the interests of the student(s).

## **PRINCIPAL**

The principal has the right to approve all activities and decisions of the chapter. This authority extends to selection and dismissal of members. The principal cannot serve as chapter adviser and is not a member of the voting Faculty Council, nor should the principal be included in the meetings of the Faculty Council, so as to not compromise his/her objectivity in hearing an appeal. The principal shall receive appeals in cases of non-selection of candidates, and the disciplining or dismissal of members.

The principal appoints and works closely with the chapter advisor and the Faculty Council to develop and follow fair selection and dismissal procedures consistent with the Constitution. In short, the principal must recognize the importance of the National Honor Society, be thoroughly familiar with the NHS *Handbook*, and remain aware of the activities and procedures of the Schools Chapter.

## **FACULTY COUNCIL**

The advisor works with the Faculty Council in selecting, disciplining, or dismissing members. The Faculty Council shall consist of five voting faculty members, appointed annually by the principal. The adviser and the Faculty Council cooperate in developing and periodically reviewing all local selection and dismissal procedures and guidelines.

It is important that all members of the Faculty Council recognize that they are working on behalf of the faculty of the school. All judgments reached by members of the Faculty Council should, therefore, be both sound and professional in nature. It is vital that Faculty Council members be fully knowledgeable of the guidelines for their chapter, and that they carefully follow all stated guidelines and procedures in all aspects of the chapter's activity.

## **DISCIPLINE POLICY**

When a member falls below the standards by which the member was selected, the adviser shall inform the errant member in writing of the nature of the violation, the time period given for improvement, and provide warning of the possible consequences of non-improvement. It is often helpful to both the student and the adviser to follow the letter with a conference. If the student does not make the improvement in the specified time, that student is subject to whatever disciplinary measures are considered appropriate by the adviser or the Faculty Council.

Disciplinary measures other than dismissal are acceptable for minor offenses. For example, the adviser may suspend certain chapter privileges of request that the student receive special counseling. The goal of disciplinary measures should be to reeducate the student to more appropriate behavior. If the discipline is constructive, there is a greater likelihood that the student will improve in the particular area in which there is a deficiency.

## **DISMISSAL**

A member is never automatically dismissed for failing to maintain standards. A written notification and pre-dismissal hearing is called for and must be conducted by the Faculty Council to dismiss a member.

Members should understand fully that they are subject to dismissal if they do not maintain the standards of scholarship, leadership, service, and/or character. They should also be aware that they are allowed limited warnings during their membership, but that in the case of a flagrant violation of school rules or civil laws whether during school or outside of school time, a warning is not required for dismissal but a hearing will still be conducted.

If the Faculty Council decides that dismissal may be warranted, the member is allowed to present his or her case at a pre-dismissal hearing before the Faculty Council. The Faculty Council should investigate thoroughly before any action is taken. If the council determines that the facts warrant consideration of dismissal, the member should be notified in writing of the violation, the possibility of dismissal, and the need for scheduling a hearing with the Faculty Council. A hearing should then be scheduled. The member should be allowed to appear before the Faculty Council and explain the situation. A parent/guardian may be present with the member, however it should be noted that the primary focus of the hearing is to allow the member to present his or her case.

All dismissals will be reported to the National Secretary of the NASSP who governs NHS guidelines.

## **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**

The dismissed member may appeal the decision of the Faculty Council, under the local school district's policies governing disciplinary appeals in the school district, following the normal channels for an appeals process.

## **RESIGNATION**

Those students who resign from the National Honor Society will never again be eligible for membership or its benefits.

Resignation from the honor society should involve the submission of a written statement by the resigning member that is dated and signed by both the student and his/her parent(s)/guardian(s). Verbal resignations are insufficient to end membership. Students contemplating resignation should be aware of the consequences of their resignation as stated at the beginning of this section.

Students cannot be "forced" to resign for this situation would be interpreted as a dismissal order for which the process, as outlined above, must be followed.

## **DUES**

The annual dues for each new member will be fifteen dollars (\$15.00). This amount will be used to defray the cost of Inductions. Any changes in dues must be ratified by the general membership.

## **AMENDMENTS**

This document may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the chapter, provided that the proposed amendment has been approved by the executive committee of the chapter and principal.

\*Information was referenced from the NHS handbook (2005) and Fisher HS -- [http://www.fisher.k12.mn.us/honor\\_society.htm](http://www.fisher.k12.mn.us/honor_society.htm)

## APPENDIX

### SOUTHERN CAYUGA JR/SR HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY APPEALS PROCESS

#### NON-SELECTED STUDENTS

Selection to National Honor Society is not guaranteed. It is very disappointing not to be selected. If a student believes that there has been a technical mistake in his or her decision, the student has **10 days** to submit a formal letter to the principal requesting that the decision be reviewed. The student is the only person who can appeal the decision. Parents cannot appeal the decision. In this letter the student must provide a concrete reason for the review. The appeal may or may not be considered. It is up to the discretion of the principal to reconvene the Faculty Council.

If the appeal is to be considered, the advisor will reconvene the council and advocate for the student. The principal will then render a final decision.

An appeal will be denied for the following reasons:

1. The student would like additional information to be considered that was not in the original "Candidate Form."
2. The student is not the person appealing the decision.
3. The appeal is based on another student's acceptance.
4. The appeal is presented in a disrespectful manner.

#### APPEALS PROCESS

\* Student will meet with the principal to discuss the appeals process and review why they were not selected. The students will write a letter to the faculty council supporting why their candidacy should be re-considered.

\* Faculty council/administration provides written documentation of success of appeal or reasons for denial.

\* Outcomes of an appeal can include, but are not limited to:

- Rejection of the appeal, sustaining the original judgment
- Request for the NHS Faculty Council to reconsider the case
- An overturning of the original NHS Faculty Council's decision, resulting in the selection of the student in question
- An overturning of the NHS Faculty Council's decision by administration

\* All students who are successful on appeal may be probationary members, subject to removal if necessary after two marking periods of probation.

\* Denial following an appeal will result in no further appeals before the next application period. (see below)

After the final decision of the appeal, in case of dissatisfaction with the outcome, it may be forwarded, upon written request of the student, within **10 days** school days for review by the Superintendent of Schools who may uphold or reverse the decision of the high school principal or Faculty Council. This decision is the final decision and is not subject to further appeals.

*All decisions concerning selection, non-selection, or dismissal shall be communicated to the student in a dated written form, including decisions concerning appeals, and may be limited to the decision to select or not select, to dismiss or not dismiss, and/or deny or grant the appeal without explanation. All appeals will remain on record for one school year.*