

Bellbrook High School National Honor Society

Chapter By-Laws

Updated February 1, 2018

What is the National Honor Society?

The National Honor Society (NHS) is the nation's premier organization established to recognize outstanding high school students. More than just an honor roll, NHS serves to honor those students who have demonstrated excellence in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, and character. These characteristics have been associated with membership in the organization since its beginning in 1921. It is important to understand that chapter membership not only recognizes students for their past accomplishments, but challenges them to develop further through active involvement in school activities and community service.

Membership is awarded by a vote of a faculty council, appointed by the principal, representing the faculty as a whole. Membership is "an honor bestowed upon a select group of students by the faculty council..." in accordance with the National Honor Society Constitution, and *is not* a right accorded the academically eligible student. Membership in the National Honor Society is an award from the Bellbrook High School faculty and, as any award, is a privilege and not a right of any student.

History of the National Honor Society

In 1921, the National Association of Secondary School Principals officially established the National Honor Society. Though many local and regional honor societies existed prior to 1921, no nationwide organization had been founded. Under the leadership of Dr. Edward Ryerson, principal of the Fifth Avenue High School, Pittsburgh, Pa., the organization grew from the original Alpha Chapter at the fifth avenue school to more than 1000 chapters by 1930. Equipped with a constitution, an emblem and motto, and a group of dedicated principals as coordinators, the new NHS organization quickly developed into one of the country's leading educational groups.

One principal of the National Honor Society has guided its existence since its inception, and continues as its mission today: "To create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in students of secondary schools." (from the NHS constitution) These purposes also translate in the criteria used for membership selection in each local chapter.

Bellbrook High School Selection Process

The Bellbrook High School chapter of the National Honor Society has developed its selection procedure to comply with national standards and guidelines. However, the selection procedure used at Bellbrook High School may vary slightly from that of other schools, as national guidelines allow each chapter to modify its selection process to meet local needs. NHS is more than just an honor roll. The Bellbrook National Honor Society chapter establishes rules for selection for membership that are based upon a student's outstanding performance in the areas of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. These criteria for selection form the foundation upon which the organization and its activities are built. "Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities"

Who is Eligible?

Juniors and seniors who are enrolled as full-time students at Bellbrook High School are eligible for consideration as members. In order to be academically eligible, a student must have an **unweighted**, cumulative grade point average of at **least 3.51**. Grade point averages are calculated based on the student's performance from the start of the freshman year through the end of the sophomore year for junior candidates and through the end of the junior year for senior candidates. Grade point averages are not rounded up. In order to be eligible, the student must have attended Bellbrook High School for a minimum of one semester.

Steps in the Selection Process

In the fall of each school year, the chapter adviser confirms grade point averages with the guidance office and compiles a list of those students who meet or exceed the grade point average requirement. The guidance office and administration confirm the eligibility list.

Academically eligible students in good standing will be given a letter which includes information for those students who wish to continue the selection process. The letter details the selection process and includes important dates and links. For further consideration in the selection process, eligible students must attend an information meeting and return *six copies* of the Student Activity Information Sheet, Essay, and signature page by the given deadline. Receiving the NHS Packet is in no way an indication or guarantee of future selection.

A faculty survey is conducted and each potential member is evaluated in the areas of leadership, service, and character. Faculty members will place the students into one of three categories: Recommend, Recommend with Reservations, Do not recommend. If the faculty member is unable to rate a student in a particular category, this will be indicated by N/A.

Candidates are compared with the entire student body, not with other candidates on the list.

A minimum of three different service projects, (preferably more), must be completed before being inducted and these must have been performed after entering high school. These must be projects for which the student did not earn “points” as part of another club or activity. For example, if a student worked at a Dayton Dragons game for the marching band, he or she may only consider this as community service if working this game helped the overall band’s fund, not his or her personal account. Community service must be verified; students are strongly encouraged to complete a variety of projects for different organizations.

According to national guidelines, students are selected for membership based on four criteria: scholarship, leadership, service, and character. Selection takes into account a candidate’s grade point average, involvement in school and community activities, leadership positions held, and evaluations from the entire high school faculty. Decisions and actions made during freshman and sophomore year will influence consideration for membership as a junior. Again, selection for membership in the National Honor Society is an award from the faculty and is similar to any other scholarship or award in that it is a privilege and not a right of any student.

Selection Criteria

Scholarship

Students must have a cumulative, **unweighted** academic average of at least 3.51 with no rounding.

Leadership: The student who exercises leadership:

1. Is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles, and asking questions
2. Demonstrates initiative in promoting activities
3. Exercises influence on peers in upholding school ideas
4. Contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school
5. Is able to delegate responsibilities
6. Exemplifies positive attitudes
7. Inspires positive behavior in others
8. Demonstrates academic initiative
9. Successfully holds offices or positions of responsibility, conducting business effectively and efficiently, and without prodding, demonstrates reliability and dependability
10. Is a forerunner in the classroom, at work, and in school or community activities
11. Is thoroughly dependable in any responsibility accepted.

Service: The student who serves:

1. Is willing to uphold scholarship and maintain a loyal school attitude

2. Participates in some outside activity: Girl Scouts; Boy Scouts; church groups; volunteer services for the aged, poor, or disadvantaged; family duties
3. Volunteers dependable and well-organized assistance, is gladly available, and is willing to sacrifice to offer assistance
4. Works well with others and is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities
5. Cheerfully and enthusiastically renders any requested service to the school
6. Is willing to represent the class or school in inter- class and interscholastic competition
7. Does committee and staff work without complaint
8. Shows courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers, and students.

Character: The student of character:

1. Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
2. Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (cheerfulness, friendliness, poise, stability)
3. Upholds principles of morality and ethics
4. Cooperates by complying with school regulations concerning property, programs, office, halls, etc.
5. Demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability
6. Shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others
7. Observes instructions and rules, punctuality, and faithfulness both inside and outside the classroom
8. Has powers of concentration and sustained attention as shown by perseverance and application to studies
9. Manifests truthfulness in acknowledging obedience to rules, avoiding cheating in written work, and showing unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others
10. Actively helps rid the school of bad influences or environment.

National guidelines prohibit any type of quota system for selection. There is no set number or percent of students who will be selected each year. Final decisions as to selection and non-selection are the determination of the NHS Faculty Council (with input from the information gathered from each candidate as well as input from the high school faculty). A majority vote of the Faculty Council is necessary for selection. The adviser and principal have no vote. Decisions of the Faculty Council are final, as per the National Constitution.

According to national guidelines, “Chapters are not legally or constitutionally obligated to share with parents and students information concerning specific students not selected for membership in the Society.” It is the practice of the Bellbrook High School chapter that all information used by the advisers and Faculty Council during the selection process will remain confidential. However, the advisor will give general information to the parents and student concerning the reason(s) for selection or non-selection.

Those students who are selected for membership will be “tapped” during the school day and parents are notified by mail of their selection with an invitation to the induction ceremony. Non-selected students are also notified. Those students who are selected for membership are required to attend an informational meeting that provides them with information about the induction ceremony and obligations that accompany membership. Attendance at the induction ceremony is required to become a member.

Bellbrook High School Faculty Council

The NHS Faculty Council shall consist of five voting faculty members appointed annually by the high school principal. Faculty Council members may serve more than one term. The chapter adviser(s) shall be ex-officio, non-voting member(s) of the Faculty Council, will provide information from the prospective members and faculty, and strive to keep the process fair and consistent. No principal or assistant principal shall serve as a member of the Faculty Council or attend the selection meeting as per the National Constitution. Decisions of the Faculty Council are final. The National Constitution has no appeal for non-selection.

The Faculty Council is charged with final decisions regarding selection and non-selection of students for membership into the National Honor Society. Additionally, the Faculty Council determines the grade point average needed for selection, and reviews the policies and procedures of the chapter each school year. The NHS Faculty Council will review, make changes as needed, and vote to accept the By-Laws of the Bellbrook Chapter each year.

The names of Faculty Council members will remain anonymous and will not be shared with any staff or faculty member, student, or parent.

The Chapter Advisers in the Selection Process

It is important for all prospective members, current members, and their parents to know that the chapter adviser does not determine membership in the chapter. Advisers do not have a vote in the meeting at which members are selected. The role of the advisers during the selection process is solely to collect and assemble information to be presented to the Faculty Council and to ensure a fair and consistent process. The chapter advisers can, however, participate in the process by completing Faculty Recommendation Forms and evaluating candidates with the remainder of the faculty. The adviser also acts as liaison between faculty, administration, members, and community. The chapter advisor shall regularly review each member for compliance with NHS standards and obligations.

Obligations of National Honor Society Members

One of the main purposes of the National Honor Society is to render service to the school and community. The society seeks students who are willing to give their time for the benefit of others as active members. National Honor Society is more than an academic honor roll; all four criteria for selection are considered equally. Members are carefully chosen because of their proven track record in all four membership criteria. Once selected, members are required to maintain the criteria that warranted their selection and, in fact, assume additional responsibilities in order to uphold the honor that comes with being a member. National Honor Society members are expected to be leaders in the school and community. Students who wish to be members of the National Honor Society simply because of the “title” that accompanies membership should seriously reconsider their intentions.

Bellbrook High School National Honor Society members are responsible for the following requirements in order to maintain good standing:

- **Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.51 or higher**
- Make good decisions in and out of school to support an outstanding character and leadership
- Take on leadership roles, when possible
- Regularly attend chapter meetings.
 - Members can miss no more than 3 meetings during a school year; the meeting to plan the ceremony is mandatory and cannot be missed for any reason other than documented and excused absence from school.
- Members selected as juniors must complete a minimum of **-fifteen** hours of community service prior to the end of their junior year. This does not include any service hours completed before induction.
- Prior to May 1 of a member’s senior year, he or she must complete an additional **twenty-five** hours of community service. Six of these hours must be “sponsored” by club activities.
- Members are responsible for documenting their service hours and submitting them to the advisor when required. The advisor is not responsible for maintaining individual members’ community service hours.
- Any member who does not meet the service hour requirement will be subject to disciplinary action and may not wear the sash at graduation.
- Members who are selected during their senior year must complete **fifteen** hours of community service prior to May 1 in order to wear the sash at graduation and to be considered in good standing.
- Community service hours must be divided over at least three different service projects, one of which must be NHS- or district-sponsored such as the Sugar Maple Festival, peer tutoring, and a Spirited Affair.
- Members must volunteer at the Sugar Maple Festival and either Halloween in the Park or Spirited Affair.

Members who do not maintain the standards by which they were selected face disciplinary action.

Academic Information & Probation

- The advisor will check the grades of all members at the end of every quarter.

- If a student earns a cumulative, unweighted GPA of 3.50 or lower on any semester, then he/she will be placed on academic probation for the duration of the school year.
- If a student ends the school year with a cumulative, unweighted GPA of 3.50 or lower, he/she will begin the following school year on academic probation and will remain on probation for the first semester.
- If a student who is on academic probation earns an unweighted, cumulative GPA of 3.50 or lower then he/she will be considered for dismissal-
 - The faculty council (FC) will consider whether or not the student has attended tutoring on a regular basis, has communicated with the teacher on a regular basis, has shown a vested interest in improving his/her grade, etc. The FC will also consider strength of schedule when making its decision. The FC reserves the right to extend the probationary period.
- If a student is on academic probation and violates any of the other NHS requirements, school rules, or civil laws, then he/she will be considered for dismissal.
- The Faculty Council desires to see students challenge themselves academically. The FC wants to see all members enrolled in core courses each year. They encourage all members to take a full load of appropriately rigorous courses; communication with teachers is critical. Before dropping a course (even if it is within the drop deadline), the member should talk to his/her teacher and attend tutoring. Dropping courses should only be an option in extremely severe cases (such as medical situations or family issues). Earning a low grade is not an acceptable reason to drop a course and will be considered a violation of the “good decision” clause. Dropping courses may result in the member being placed on academic probation.

Academic Probation

If a member is placed on academic probation, then (in addition to the other requirements of membership) he/she must do the following for the remainder of the semester:

- Show the advisor his/her grades every other week
- Maintain unweighted, cumulative GPA of 3.51 or higher
- Take an appropriately challenging curriculum
- Attend tutoring and/or meet with the teacher on a regular basis

It is not the advisor’s role to remind students to complete the above tasks. If a student who is on probation does not follow through with his or her duties, then he or she may be considered for dismissal.

NHS Member Resignation

A member who resigns from NHS 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 or her parent(s). Verbal resignations are generally insufficient to end membership. Students contemplating resignation should be informed of the ramifications of their resignation.

Transfer of Membership

Note: The NHS constitution states: “A National Honor Society member who transfers to another school and brings a letter from the principal or adviser shall automatically be accepted as a member of the new school’s chapter. Transfer members must meet the new chapter’s standards within one semester in order to retain membership.” (Article VIII, section 6) Junior members who transfer to Bellbrook High School and fail to meet the chapter’s standards by the end of one semester may be eligible to be considered for membership as a senior, but must complete the selection process as any student would have to.

Prospective Members : Planning Ahead

Students who anticipate being eligible for membership in the National Honor Society in their junior or senior years are encouraged to begin planning for the process early in their high school careers. It is recommended that students who think they might be eligible should begin keeping records and recording information at the start of their freshman year at Bellbrook High School.

Interested students should:

- Be careful to maintain good grades. A cumulative, **unweighted** grade point average of 3.51 is required in order to be considered for membership.
- Keep track of extra-curricular school-related activities and out-of-school activities in the community that they are involved in since the beginning of the freshman year.
- Document community service activities in which they participate in both the school and the community since the beginning of the freshman year. A minimum of three community service projects is required (more is better) to be considered for membership.
- Maintain good character in and out of the school, making prudent decisions that demonstrate the student's commitment to a responsible, outstanding character. Decisions and actions made during freshman and sophomore year will influence consideration for membership as a junior. Violations of school rules do not automatically disqualify a candidate from NHS membership, but the information is closely considered by the NHS Faculty Council in the selection process. If you have violated school rules, be prepared to address the circumstances in the required essay and include what you have learned from the experience.
- Assume leadership roles in extracurricular activities. Run for office in activities or clubs, become team captain and assume as many leadership roles as the student can successfully manage.
- Act and serve as a leader in the classroom and the school. Leadership not only includes leadership positions, but acting like a leader as well.
- Contact the chapter adviser at the high school with any questions or concerns.

Annual Chapter Activities

Throughout the school year, the National Honor Society participates in a number of activities in an effort to fulfill its primary mission of service and leadership in the school and community. Following is a list of the activities in which the society regularly participates. However, the list may change from year to year depending on the needs of the chapter, school, and community. Members are expected to assist with as many of these as possible.

Induction Ceremony Old and new members are **required** to participate. The ceremony is usually the end of November or beginning of December. Selected candidates cannot become members without being inducted.

Tutoring Members provide tutoring to peers and younger students.

Spirited Affair NHS members help with the children's activities during this fundraiser for the Bellbrook Sugarcreek Education Foundation.

Halloween in the Park NHS members help with the children's activities during this Park District activity

Secret Santa Shoppe NHS members help children shop for their family and friends

Sugar Maple Festival NHS members help with the children's activities and tree packing

Link Crew, Study Buddies, Lunch Buddies, Academic Progress are a few of the school groups NHS supports.

Officers

During the end of the Junior year, the members will nominate and vote for the President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer of the chapter. Nominees are members who must be in good standing. Officers are elected by a majority vote with at least two-thirds of the members present.

The following is a list of officer's duties. Duties may slightly change, as directed by the adviser.

President

- coordinate with other officers
- serve as community contact for service project requests
- coordinate induction/speech
- determine necessary meeting dates, activity dates
- meet with NHS adviser and administration on NHS projects

Vice President

- post and publish all meetings
- keep file of all service projects
- assist president in making community contacts
- assist with induction/speech
- head tutoring program and coordination

Secretary

- organize and type agenda for all meetings
- keep minutes for all meetings
- distribute materials to those who miss meetings
- assist with induction/speech
- type inductees biographies
- maintain member files

Treasurer

- collect dues
- keep receipts for all cash transactions, dues, etc.
- assist with induction/speech
- receive and count money for any fund raisers, etc.
- assist with tutoring program

Dismissal of Members

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, except that in the case of flagrant violation of school rules or the law, a member does not have to be warned. The Faculty Council shall determine when an individual has exceeded a reasonable number of warnings. In all cases of pending dismissal, a member shall have a right to a hearing before the Faculty Council.

In all cases of pending dismissal the following apply:

- a. The member will receive written notification from the adviser/Faculty Council indicating the reason for consideration of dismissal.
- b. The member will be given the opportunity to respond to the charges against him/her at a hearing before the Faculty Council prior to any vote on dismissal (in accordance with due process identified in Article X of the National Constitution). The member has the opportunity to present his/her defense either in person or via a written statement presented in lieu of the face-to-face hearing. Following the hearing, the Faculty Council will then vote on whether to dismiss. A majority vote of the Faculty Council is needed to dismiss any member.

- c. The results of the Faculty Council vote will be presented to the principal for review, and then stated in a letter sent to the student and parents. Dismissed members must surrender any membership emblems to the adviser.
- d. The Faculty Council's decision may be appealed to the building principal and afterwards according to provisions of the school district discipline policies.
- e. A member who is dismissed or resigns, may never again be considered for membership in the National Honor Society.