

Pre-Amble

In accordance with the National Honor Society Handbook, 18th Edition, chapter By-Laws were revised in December of 2016 and approved by Principal John Rickert. Niskayuna NHS by-laws written to correlate with the “Constitution of the National Honor Society” by the NASSP Board of Directors

Niskayuna High School National Honor Society By-Laws

Article I – Name and Purpose

- Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the National Honor Society (NHS) of Niskayuna High School.
- 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 Niskayuna High School.
- Section 4. NHS is a program of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

Article II – IV: The NASSP Student Leadership Advisory Committee, State Organizations, and Local Chapters Articles deal with organizational structure. (Information available at www.nhs.us/constitutions)

Article V – The Principal

- Section 1. The principal shall reserve the right to approve all activities and decisions of the chapter.
- Section 2. The principal shall annually appoint a member of the faculty as chapter advisor, who may serve consecutive terms. Co-advisors may be appointed where necessary.
- 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 Advisor

- Section 1. The chapter advisor(s) shall be responsible for the direct, day-to-day supervision of the chapter and act as liaison between faculty, administration, students, and community.
- Section 2. The chapter advisor(s) shall maintain files on membership, chapter history, activities, and financial transactions.
- Section 3. The chapter advisor(s) shall regularly review each member for compliance with society standards and obligations.
- Section 4. The chapter advisor(s) shall help the chapter officers understand and carry out their duties.
- Section 5. The chapter advisor(s) shall be an ex-officio, non-voting, sixth member of the Faculty Council and shall facilitate all meeting of the faculty council.
- Section 6. The chapter advisor(s) 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 advisor shall be an ex-officio, non-voting, sixth member(s) of the Faculty Council. No principal or assistant principal may be included on the Faculty Council.
- Section 2. The term of the Faculty Council shall be one year. Members may be appointed to consecutive terms.
- Section 3. The Faculty Council shall meet at least once a year to review the procedures of the chapter, select members and to consider 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 this Constitution and NHS policies.

Article VIII – Membership

- Section 1. Membership in local chapters is an honor bestowed upon a student. Selection for membership is by a Faculty Council and is based on outstanding scholarship, character, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility to continue to demonstrate these qualities.
- Section 2. Membership shall be known as active, honorary, and alumni. Active members shall become alumni members at graduation. Alumni members shall have no voice or vote in chapter affairs.
- Section 3. The Faculty Council shall reserve the right to award honorary membership to school officials, principals, teachers, NHS advisers, adults, students with disabilities, or foreign exchange students in recognition of achievement and/or outstanding service rendered to the school in keeping with the purposes of the National Honor Society. Honorary members shall have no voice or vote in chapter affairs.

- Section 4. Candidates become members when inducted at a special ceremony.
- Section 5. Members who are seniors in good standing are eligible to be nominated by their chapters to compete in the National Honor Society Scholarship program.
- Section 6. A NHS member who transfers to or from Niskayuna High School and brings a letter from the former principal or chapter advisor to the new school advisor shall be accepted automatically as a member in the new school's chapter. Transfer members must meet the new chapter's standards within one semester in order to retain membership.
- Section 7. Members who resign or are dismissed are never again eligible for membership or its benefits.

Article IX – Selection of Members

- Section 1. To be eligible for membership the candidate must be a 2nd semester junior or senior. Candidates must have been in attendance at the school the equivalent of one semester.
- Section 2. Candidates must have a cumulative scholarship average of at 90.0000 (out of a 100.0000 scale). Candidates shall then be evaluated on the basis of service, leadership, and character (See Appendix A and B).
- Section 3. The selection of each member to the chapter shall be by a majority vote of the Faculty Council. Prior to notification of any candidates, the chapter adviser shall review with the principal the results of the Faculty Council's deliberations.
- Section 4. A description of the selection procedure shall be published in an official school publication (Niskayuna High School Club web page) that is widely available in a timely fashion to all students and parents of the school. The selection procedure shall be determined by the Faculty Council and shall be consistent with the rules and regulations of NHS.
- Section 5. NASSP shall not review the judgment of the Faculty Council regarding selection of individual members to local chapters.

Article X – Discipline and Dismissal

- Section 1. The Faculty Council, in compliance with the rules and regulation of the National Honor Society, shall determine the procedure for dismissal. A written description of the dismissal procedure shall be available to interested parties.
- Section 2. Members who fall below the standards which were the basis for their selection shall be promptly warned in writing by the chapter advisor 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.
- 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. (Note: This hearing is required and is considered “due process” for all members)
- 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 to the principal and thereafter under the same rules for disciplinary appeals in the school district.
- Section 7. 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. (Appendix C)
- 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 advisers
- 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 action and recommendations of the executive committee shall be subject to the review of the chapter membership.
- Section 3. The executive committee shall have responsibility for ensuring that chapter activities and procedures follow school policy and regulation.

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. Meetings will be held once a month, at the discretion of the executive committee and attendance is strongly encouraged.
- Section 3. The chapter president or other designated student leader may call special meetings approved by the executive committee.

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. (See Appendix D)
- Section 3. These projects shall have the following characteristics: Fulfill a need within the school or community; have the support of the administration and the faculty; be appropriate and educationally defensible; be well planned, organized and executed.
- Section 4. Each member shall have the responsibility for choosing and participating in service project(s) that reflects his or her particular talents and interests. This is in addition to the chapter projects to which all members contribute. (See Appendix D)
- Section 5. Each chapter shall publicize its projects in a positive manner.

Article XV – Official Insignia (see Official NHS Constitution for details)

Article XVI – Chapter Bylaws

- Section 1. Each chapter shall write bylaws to amplify sections of this Constitution and to clarify operating procedures of this Constitution and to clarify operating procedures of the chapter. Bylaws do not need approval of NASSP but must be consistent with this Constitution.
- Section 2. The chapter bylaws shall contain information concerning the election and duties of officers, the schedule of meeting, member obligations, dues and the like.

Appendix A: Membership Criteria

- Section 1. The Faculty Council of the chapter selects students who demonstrate outstanding performance in all four criteria of scholarship, leadership, service, and character.
- Section 2. Scholarship: For the class of 2017 and Beyond:
The scholarship requirement is 90.0000 (out of a 100.0000 scale) based on a student's cumulative average after their 5th, 6th or 7th Semester.
- Section 3. Leadership:
The offices/positions a student has held in school or community organization, also including effective participation in other co-curricular activities.
- The student who exercises leadership may demonstrate the following:
- Exercises positive influence on peers in upholding school ideals
 - 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 actions
 - Is thoroughly dependable in any responsibility accepted
- Section 4. Service:
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.
- The student who serves may demonstrate the following:
- 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
 - Is willing to represent the class or school in inter-class and inter-scholastic competition
 - Shows courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers and students
- Section 5. Character:
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 person of character demonstrates the following six qualities: respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and citizenship.

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

- Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (cheerfulness, friendliness, poise, stability)
- Cooperates by complying with school regulations concerning property, programs, office, halls, etc.
- Demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability
- Manifests truthfulness in acknowledging obedience to rules, avoiding cheating in written work, and showing unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others

In accordance with the Niskayuna High School “Athletic Code of Conduct” the list below are nonexclusive examples of behavior which may serve as the basis of a finding of a violation of the National Honor Society character expectations:

1. Vandalism or property destruction;
2. Poor citizenship;
3. Unexcused absence from school or classes;
4. Acting as negative influence (in school or community)
5. Failure to exert a sincere academic effort or failure to comply with eligibility policies;
6. Stealing of any kind
7. Possession and/or use of drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, synthetic narcotics or non-prescribed medication;
8. Attendance and/or participation in any gathering, party, or other event where the following are present: (a) individuals using/possessing drugs, synthetic narcotics or non-prescribed medications, and/or (b) underage individuals consuming/possessing alcohol;
9. Distribution or otherwise making available for other students any drugs, drug paraphernalia, alcohol, synthetic narcotics or non-prescribed medication;
10. Possession and/or use of tobacco products or tobacco paraphernalia;
11. Possession and/or use of electronic cigarettes or vapor products;
12. Fighting;
13. Unlawful possession or use of any type of firearm or weapon;
14. Sexual harassment or sexual misconduct;
15. Community-related offenses;
16. Hazing of any kind;
17. Bullying (physical, emotional, or electronically) (examples of electronic bullying include, but are not limited to,

- bullying through social networking (such as Facebook, tweeting, or texting), web posts, emails, other internet use;
18. Violation of the Cyber Image Guideline – Any identifiable image, photo, or video that implies a student has been in the possession or presence of alcohol or drugs, or that portrays actual use or out of character behavior or criminal activity, may be considered a confirmed violation of the code of conduct, at the discretion of the building Principal;
 19. Sending or receiving sexually explicit message or images by electronic device, including but not limited to cell phone, iPad, tablet, or any other device capable of transmitting photos or data;
 20. Sexual exploitation (such as “voyeurism” or “upskirting”)
 21. Any act which constitutes a misdemeanor or crime.

Appendix B: Selection Process

- Section 1. Students will fill out a student information form which will be reviewed by the Faculty Council, along with any other verifiable information about each candidate and his or her activities which define the candidate's leadership, service, and character.
- Section 2. Students are responsible for providing complete information to the Faculty Council on their student information form.
- Section 3. Students are encouraged to attend the candidate information meeting or talk with the advisers with any questions prior to completing their student information form.
- Section 4. The advisers will collect faculty/staff member input on an input form that will be presented to the faculty council during the selection process.
- Section 5. Candidates will be notified of selection/non-selection by mail.

Appendix C: Executive Committee and Chapter Election Procedure

Section 1. Officer Descriptions;

President: Sets the NHS meeting calendar and helps secretary communicate to members

- Runs and plans meetings
- Implements at least one NHS service event per semester
- Helps secretary with service hour status and report to advisors

Vice-president: Must be an active member of ARC and work closely with Mrs. McAndrews to sustain and continue to improve the ARC program.

- Coordinates tutor requests with membership availability
- Maintains database of membership's tutoring availability
- Communicates tutoring issues with advisors and/or Mrs. McAndrews
- Implements at least one NHS service event per semester

Secretary: Must set up and maintain Facebook/e-mail/Remind to communicate with members

- Maintain and update webpage with service opportunities
- Coordinate service hour submissions and report to advisors on status of membership
- Communicate meeting dates and deadlines to membership via Facebook/e-mail/Remind and school announcements

Treasurer: Collect and submit funds from fundraising event(s).

- Communicate to membership on status of fundraising participation and communicate status to advisors of issues with member participation
- Collect and submit funds for the Spring Banquet.
- Communicate to advisors on status of banquet collections.

Section 2. Chapter Election Procedures:

A. After acceptance students shall nominate themselves for office of choice. Nominations deadline will be set by chapter advisers.

B. Preliminary elections will be held during the school day. Students are expected to vote once for each office position. Only newly accepted members are allowed to vote. The top two candidates from each officer position move on to the final election.

C. Final elections will be held at the induction banquet.

Appendix D: Service

- Section 1. Each member shall participate in at least one Niskayuna National Honor Society sponsored service event per semester.
- Section 2. Each member shall complete at least 10 hours of community service per semester. Members shall submit evidence of such community service to the executive committee by the deadline set by the executive committee.
- Section 3. Each member shall participate in the fundraising activity to support chapter community service projects throughout the year.
- Section 4. Service examples include those that provide a service to the community without any personal gains.

Appendix E: Dismissal and Discipline Descriptions (in accordance with National Honor Society Handbook Chapter 7)

- Section 1. Chapter advisers may find that members occasionally fall below the standards by which they were selected. To preserve the integrity of the chapter, it may become necessary to discipline members.
- Section 2. A member can never be dismissed automatically for failing to maintain standards, not meeting member obligations or even being found guilty of violating school rules or the law. Members of the chapter should understand fully that they are subject to dismissal if they do not maintain the standards of scholarship, service, leadership, and character that were used as a basis for their selection.
- Section 3. A member can be considered for disciplinary action when performance falls below the acceptable levels of any of the standards by which he or she was selected, when the member fails to fulfill chapter obligations, or when the member is found guilty of violating school rules or the law.
- Section 4. A student should be warned in writing whenever he or she falls below any standard (except in cases of flagrant violation of school rules or the law)
- Section 5. The faculty council determines when an individual has exceeded a reasonable number of warnings, thus warranting consideration of dismissal.
- Section 6. In all cases of pending dismissal, a chapter member has a right to be notified in writing of the offenses and to a hearing before the faculty council.
- Section 7. Appeals of dismissal are to be handled first by the school principal and, thereafter, in the same way as disciplinary appeals in the student's school district.
- Section 8. A member who resigns 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).