

Membership Criteria

» Introduction (*excerpts from Constitution*): **National Selection Criteria**

The NHS National Council establishes national standards for all NHS chapters. Local chapters create their own by-laws, which are consistent with and comply with the NHS National Constitution. The “national” NHS establishes rules for membership that are based upon a student's outstanding performance in the areas of scholarship, service, leadership, and character. These four criteria for selection form the foundation upon which the organization and its activities are built:

Scholarship: “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 local school's faculty council meet the scholarship requirement for membership. These students are then eligible for consideration on the basis of service, leadership, and character.” (*NHS Constitution, Article IX, section 2*) *NB: Although a cumulative GPA may be the most objective membership criterion, it is inappropriate to admit a student into NHS based solely on his/her GPA.

Service: This quality is defined through the voluntary contributions made by a student to the school and/or community, done without compensation and with a positive, courteous, and enthusiastic spirit.

Leadership: Student leaders are those who are resourceful, good problem solvers, promoters of school activities, idea-contributors, dependable, and persons who exemplify positive attitudes about life. Leadership experiences can be drawn from school or community activity while working with or for others.

Character: The student of good character upholds principles of morality and ethics, is cooperative, demonstrates high standards of honesty and reliability, shows courtesy, concern and respect for others and generally maintains a good and clean lifestyle.

Specific standards for these four criteria may vary from one school to the next. Such variations are acceptable as long as they do not fall below the standards set by the National Council of the NHS. All chapters are required to write down the criteria and procedures used in their local selection processes.

The society adviser maintains copies of the local procedures and has them available upon request. Fairview adheres to these standards; see the following for a description of the procedures used for National Honor Society membership selection.

» Selection Process Specific to **Fairview**:

Becoming a member in NHS is a five-step process.

1. **Declaration of Intent** — The first step in becoming a member of NHS is to declare intent to become a member by attending an informational meeting about the society and filling out a Student Information Packet. The information meeting will detail the goals and expectations of the society and explain what it means to be a member so that potential members have a clear understanding of the commitment they will be making. At the meeting, potential members will pick up a Student Information Packet which they

will fill out and return to the NHS sponsors for review by the Faculty Council. Submission of this packet before the deadline is the student's declaration of intent.

2. **Faculty Review** — Students who deliver their Declaration of Intent by the stated deadline will go through a faculty review. This begins with verification of the student's GPA. In addition, teachers, administrators, and staff are solicited to provide insight about the nominated students. The goal here is to give adults in the building the opportunity to speak favorably about deserving students. Traditionally, members of NHS receive multiple positive comments.
3. **Faculty Council Review** — After the faculty has an opportunity to speak on behalf of the potential members, a comprehensive review of each nominated student is then conducted by the NHS Faculty Council. This committee is comprised of a core group of designated teachers representing each of the school's academic departments (five to eight members total). The review examines each student's GPA, essay responses, supplied additional information, faculty comments, and any other available pertinent information. When conducting the review, the committee utilizes the NHS membership criterion as the key benchmark for evaluation: scholarship, service, leadership, character. Some of these criterion are subjective (e.g. character), so there is an attempt to quantify these elements as part of the process. Remember, making membership decisions based solely on GPA is inappropriate (even though GPA is the most objective criterion). Evidence of existing leadership positions in other activities, personal commitment to community service, and well-roundedness are areas of interest to the committee. Although membership into NHS is indeed criterion-based, there is an element of norm referencing as well. Some membership decisions are based on the strengths of a student of the remaining nomination pool.
4. **Invitation** — Students who the faculty council and FHS staff believe will be strong, positive, and committed members of The Society will receive a letter inviting them to participate in the annual NHS Induction Ceremony. Letters are distributed at the beginning of the fall semester.
5. **Induction** — Students are not members of NHS until they attend an Induction Ceremony. Fairview holds one ceremony each year, and attendance is mandatory, so students should plan accordingly. The ceremony is a pleasant occasion and family members are encouraged to attend. Specific information about the ceremony is included in the invitation letter.

Once a Member, students address the four pillars of NHS (Scholarship, Leadership, Character and Service) by upholding the three Chapter Commitments:

1. **Academic Initiative** - Each semester, members are expected to participate in school or society-organized activities that facilitate higher standards of scholarship and academic performance. This may include tutoring in the SAC, participating in regular study sessions of Cocoa & Cram, and advocating for greater academic integrity.
2. **School Pride** - Members are also asked to engage in fostering greater school pride, and community appreciation. This may include collaborating with other school organizations to improve school climate through bully prevention, participating in school beautification, or fostering positive character through diversity panels.
3. **Chapter Service** - Finally, members are provided with unique opportunities to participate in significant

service projects extended to the entire chapter that may affect many people's lives. These projects will vary in type and scope, but all involve a respectable contribution of time and effort as service to the community.

Members are also expected to fulfill the following member requirements:

1. **Maintain a 3.75 weighted GPA (per semester)** — members are expected to continually strive to improve academically and be the very best students possible.
2. **Attend and participate in all regular NHS meetings and events (per semester)** — members foster community relationships through collaboration in service projects and regularly attending NHS meetings and events. When leaders regularly meet with other leaders, positive ideas and actions result for the benefit of the school and surrounding community.
3. **Participate in at least one activity or service project addressing each of the chapter commitments (per semester)** — Academic Initiative; School Spirit; Chapter Community Service.
4. **Design and participate in at least one committee service project (per semester)** — members exercise their unique leadership skills by collaborating with other members to identify and solve a problem in the school or community. When leaders create their own service projects, they can better take ownership of the impact they have on the community.
5. **Engage in at least 16 hours of community service (per semester)** — if 16 hours of service are not met through fulfilling the prior two member requirements, the remainder may be supplemented by service hours accumulated doing any legitimate in or out-of-school activities.
6. **Contribute a \$10 membership fee (annually)** — this fee will be used for annual chapter expenses like the Induction Ceremony, activities, and service projects.