

Glossary of Honor Society Terminology

The **National Honor Society (NHS)** and **National Junior Honor Society** are the nation’s oldest student recognition programs designed to recognize and engage high school and middle level students around a selected group of criteria, namely Scholarship, Leadership, Service, Character, and Citizenship. The following glossary has been developed to assist new chapters in understanding the terminology that is found throughout the Web site (www.nhs.us) and the *NHS* or *NJHS National Handbook*. References to Articles in the text below relate to sections of the national constitutions found at www.nhs.us/constitutions.

Term	Definition
Adviser	Member of the school faculty assigned to manage and administer all aspects of the Honor Society chapter. Principals and assistant principals <i>cannot</i> serve as chapter advisers, but are responsible for the appointment of a faculty member or members to serve in this capacity. Point(s) of contact for all official communications from the national office. Multiple advisers can be appointed to serve each year, however only one adviser’s name is included in the official database maintained at the national office. Syn/AKA: chapter adviser, sponsor, facilitator, moderator. As a matter of editorial style, NASSP uses this term spelled with an ‘e’. See Article VI, www.nhs.us/constitutions .
Affiliation	Term used by the national office (NASSP) to identify the formal, required relationship between the local chapter and the national office, fulfilled by the payment of the annual affiliation fee due June 30 each year. Invoices for this affiliation are mailed from NASSP to school principal each spring.
Bylaws	Operating procedures and guidelines, including obligations, for a group; a formal document; required for all Honor Society chapters to have, to make available for all chapter members, and to otherwise provide upon request. Distinguished from the “Constitution” which is the organizational framework from the national office. See www.nhs.us/bylaws .
Candidate	In the selection process, the term used to describe students who have been deemed academically eligible for consideration as members; not yet full members of the chapter.
Chapter	The local unit of the Honor Society, affiliated with the national office, which selects student members and conducts chapter activities for the school and/or the community.
Character	One of the essential criteria for the Honor Societies. NHS and NJHS refer to the definition of character provided by Character Counts!, namely a person of character demonstrates Trustworthiness, Respect, Responsibility, Fairness, Caring, and Citizenship. See also www.charactercounts.org .
Constitution	The document containing the fundamental laws/principles/guidelines of an organization. The Honor Societies operate under a single National Constitution, found at www.nhs.us/constitutions .

Criteria	Standards or rules by which something can be judged; the elements reviewed when considering a student for selection to the Honor Society; described in the local selection procedure guidelines, and based on standards set by the national office.
Dismissal	The process of formally removing a member of the chapter from active status; a permanent status once completed. Specific guidelines (i.e., due process) for which are delineated in Article 10 [X] of the National Constitution. <i>Note:</i> Dismissal from NJHS has no bearing on future consideration for NHS membership.
Due Process	Legal principle: “Write what you do; then do what you write.” Most applicable for chapter selection and disciplinary procedures. Fair procedures and rules that are applied equally to all and do not deprive students of their rights.
Elementary	Fundamental, essential. In schools, used to describe institutions that include some or all of grades K-6. Distinguished from Middle Level schools (grades 5-9 or a combination of grades within that range) and High School (grades 9-12) (<i>see also</i> , Secondary) Resources: www.nehs.org , www.naesp.org .
Faculty Council	The committee of the chapter, made up of five faculty members appointed by the principal; charged with selection and discipline and the creation and administration of official chapter guidelines. The FC is facilitated by the Chapter Adviser who serves as the sixth but non-voting member of the FC. No principal or assistant principal can serve as a member of the FC. <i>See</i> Article VII.
Fundraising	Activities conducted by the chapter to raise monies for use by the chapter or for making charitable donations as an act of service; governed by state and local school system policies.
Good Standing	As in, “He is a member in good standing.” Indicates an active member who continues to meet the standards by which he was selected and is fulfilling or has fulfilled all obligations to the chapter (dues, meeting attendance, service hours, etc.). Members who are <i>not</i> in good standing can have privileges revoked until such time that they return to being in good standing (<i>See</i> Article XV, Section 3).
Honorary Membership	A classification of Honor Society membership, distinguished from <i>active</i> or <i>graduate</i> membership. Awarded to those who, in the opinion of the Faculty Council, are supporting the purposes of the Honor Society at school or in the community. Per Article VIII, Section 3, from the student body, only students with disabilities or foreign exchange students are eligible for receiving this status.
Induction	Ceremony for becoming a member of a group; the formal ceremony where all successful candidates become members of the Honor Society. Preferred term for this ceremony in place of the less-commonly used “initiation” which implies hazing and other secretive or unacceptable practices for schools. <i>See</i> Article VIII, Section 4.

Leadership	A position of being in charge, guiding, or otherwise directing a group of individuals or an organization; a collective set of skills that can be taught to make one a leader; one of the core principles of the Honor Societies, reviewed for selection, skills for which are taught through chapter activities during the year.
Majority vote	Next integer above half or a simple majority; applied when Faculty Councils vote for candidates or to take disciplinary actions calling for 3 votes to carry a vote. Distinguished from consensus, plurality, unanimous or other majority votes defined as being other than 'simple.'
Membership	Belonging to a group, as in "She has earned membership in the National [Junior] Honor Society." Established by meeting or exceeding a set of selection criteria; with which comes a variety of obligations to the chapter and to oneself. Active members. <i>See also</i> "Honorary membership."
Middle Level	Term of the art in education for those grades found between elementary and high school, most commonly grades 5-9. Used to reference middle schools, junior highs, intermediate schools and the relevant grades in K-12 or K-8 schools. <i>See also</i> www.nmsa.org .
NAESP	National Association of Elementary School Principals, which in cooperation with NASSP (see below), administers the National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS, see below). www.naesp.org .
NASC	National Association of Student Councils, a program of NASSP which promotes student councils and leadership development in middle level and high schools. Established 1931. www.nasc.us .
NASSP	National Association of Secondary School Principals. Parent organization for NHS & NJHS. Also, in cooperation with NAESP, operates NEHS. The nation's leading association of educational leaders. www.principals.org .
NEHS	National Elementary Honor Society. A program of NASSP administered in cooperation with NAESP, recognizing outstanding elementary school students in grades 4, 5, and 6. Established in 2008. www.nehs.org .
NHS	National Honor Society. A program of NASSP that operates in high schools with members from grades 10 through 12. Established in 1921. www.nhs.us .
NJHS	National Junior Honor Society. A program of NASSP that operates in middle level schools with members in grades 6 through 9. Established in 1929. www.njhs.us .
Non-Selection	Used to identify the point when a candidate does not receive a majority vote of the Faculty Council when being considered for membership in the chapter.
Officers	Designated leaders of a group, most often elected by the general membership to serve a defined term. Duties are described in the local chapter bylaws. <i>See</i> www.nhs.us/officers .

Principal	Lead administrator of a secondary school; often has help from an assistant principal or vice principal. Final authority on all actions and decisions of the chapter at the local level. Appoints adviser and faculty council members annually. <i>See Article V.</i>
Scholarship	One of the core principles of the Honor Societies, used as a criterion for selection to assess levels of academic performance of a candidate; a cumulative standard of scholarship is defined by the local chapter as the performance indicator of this criterion. The National Constitution established the minimum standard for this criterion. <i>See Article IX.</i>
Secondary	In education, used describe schools found between Elementary and College (post-secondary). Generally used to include Middle Level and High School (<i>see also</i> , Elementary)
Selection	The process of choosing members of a group, in this case as members of the Honor Society. A process for selecting members is based on the National Constitution and the Recommended Selection Procedure provide by the national office. All chapters must publish their local selection procedures. <i>See Article IX.</i>
Service	One of the core principles of the Honor Societies, namely referring to actions done for or on behalf of others without any compensation provided to the individual performing the actions. Each chapter is required to conduct a minimum of one chapter service project each year, per the national constitution. <i>See Article XIV.</i>
Student Activities	The functions of groups of students at a school, such as a chapter of the Honor Society or the school's student council or other clubs and organizations, established with a faculty member who serves as adviser or coach. Most student activities groups function outside but in support of the regular classroom activity, hence their being referred to as co-curricular in nature. When these groups function outside of the school, they are often referred to as extra-curricular activities, e.g., scouts, religious youth groups, etc.

The language found above represents the common considerations given when defining these terms, made available to assist local chapters in understanding the expressions commonly used in communications from the national office. This glossary is not considered a component of formal policy for the Honor Societies but serves merely as a resource and guide for advisers in developing a fuller understanding of terminology as used by the national office. Official explanations of these terms and their specific usage for Honor Society functions are found in the national handbooks for NHS and NJHS, and within the content of the national Web site, www.nhs.us. Local chapters are encouraged to adopt this language for use in all official documents for their chapters.

--30--

v. 7.27.09