

*The National Honor Society
at The High School of Saint Thomas More*



SELECTION CRITERIA

The Organization

The National Honor Society seeks to live out and promote in others the four virtues of scholarship, leadership, character and service. The STM Chapter is an active group of many of the school's finest young students. Together, members work on a variety of service projects that benefit both the student body and larger community, while at the same time further developing sound leadership skills.

Selection

Selection for National Honor Society is based on scholarship, service, leadership, and character. While scholarship is the first criteria that must be met, the remaining qualities of service, leadership and character must likewise be evident in those students selected for NHS. To ensure fair and orderly administration of this chapter, the following guidelines and by-laws have been adopted. These guidelines and by-laws are established in accordance with the *Constitution of the National Honor Society*. Furthermore, let it be known that all decisions and actions of this chapter, now and henceforth, shall be in accordance with the *Constitution of the National Honor Society*.

While the faculty and administration encourages *all* of its students to strive for membership, it must be remembered that NHS membership is both an honor and a responsibility (*NHS Handbook*). To ensure integrity of the chapter, selection measures have been established.

General guidelines are as follows:

- 1) Final selection of membership is decided by the Faculty Council.
- 2) Candidates eligible for election to this chapter must be members of the sophomore, junior, or senior class.
- 3) Each candidate must be in attendance at The High School of Saint Thomas More for a period of at least one semester.
- 4) Membership selection shall be held once a year during the first semester of the school year.
- 5) **The sole responsibility of filling out the membership application belongs to the candidate.**
- 6) The personal essay is to be written by the candidate seeking membership.
- 7) **NO late information forms will be accepted.**

The following measures will be used by the Faculty Council to evaluate the candidate's performance in the areas of scholarship, leadership, service, and character (*NHS Handbook*, p. 24). Information regarding these four areas will be made available to the Faculty Council by use of the *NHS Candidate Information Form*, which each candidate will have completed. This form exists to support the student's candidacy by providing relevant information for use by the Faculty Council. This form should be signed by the student and a parent or guardian to verify accuracy of the data. These forms function as working documents to be used by the Faculty Council during the selection process (*NHS Handbook*, p. 29).

As part of the selection process, candidates are to submit an essay on the topic provided. The Faculty Council reviews these essays to find out more about the candidate than can be discovered from the forms alone. These essays should be crafted with care.

Scholarship: Candidates eligible for election to the chapter shall have a minimum **unweighted** and **unrounded** cumulative grade point average of 3.20. This scholastic level of achievement shall remain fixed, and shall be the required minimum scholastic level of achievement for admission to candidacy. All students who can rise in scholarship to the aforementioned standard can be admitted to candidacy for selection to membership. Their eligibility shall then be considered based on their service, leadership, and character (*By-laws*, ARTICLE II, Section 4).

Service: To be eligible for the service criteria, each candidate must be current with his or her requirements for the school's *Living the Faith* commitment. The school chaplain must indicate on the student's *NHS Candidate Information Form* that the student is in compliance with the number of hours needed for his or her grade level. A deadline for updating service hours was set and announced at the informational meeting in September and has since expired.

Leadership: Leadership eligibility is determined by examples provided by the candidate. The candidate will need to provide at least 2 examples of how they have shown leadership in a club, sport, or organization. These examples must be signed off by the club sponsor, supervisor, or coach. Just being a member of an organization will not count. Examples of how the individual took the membership a step forward and organized, trained, or directed the advancement of club/sport/organization is needed. The Faculty Council will determine fulfillment of the candidate's leadership based on the examples provided. "For those who fall below the cutoff, the Faculty Council should review their information sheets first in order to make a sound professional judgment regarding selection or non-selection" (*NHS Handbook*, p.31). **All examples must be accompanied by the signature of the club's sponsor or adviser. Involvement in activities during this (current) school year is to be excluded.**

Character: The Faculty Council of The High School of Saint Thomas More Chapter of the National Honor Society shall use “the multi-faceted definition of character known as the ‘Six Pillars of Character’ (part of the Character Counts Coalition). A person of character demonstrates the following six qualities: respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and citizenship” (*NHS Handbook*, p. 28). To find evidence of these six characteristics, each candidate is required to submit to five former and two current classroom teachers the “Teacher Evaluation” portion of the NHS Candidate Information Packet. This portion will consist of ten questions to be rated on a scale of 5/4/3/2/1.

In addition to the teacher evaluations, a student’s discipline record from last school year to present may be used. Major offences such as multiple detentions or suspensions, could result in non-selection. If non-selection is decided, it does not mean a student is ineligible for the remainder of their high school career. The student would be given a clean slate and only new offences could be taken into consideration.

Essay: Weight will be given to the quality of a candidate’s essay. The essay topic will focus on one of the four pillars of NHS. The essay is a chance for the students to provide information to the Faculty Council about how they have demonstrated and lived out one of the fundamental bases for NHS.

Selection Process

Completed *NHS Candidate Information Forms* will be reviewed by the Faculty Council. Once submitted, forms are sealed and not available to be reviewed by parents or students.

A list of prospective members will be distributed to the faculty to confirm that each faculty member agrees that each student on the list meets the NHS standards of character. Each faculty member will have the opportunity to express any concerns or praises about a student seeking membership.

Selection of members is determined by the Faculty Council. The Faculty Council will use all information provided by the student and faculty to assess that all standards have been met. An invitation will then be extended to the candidate to be inducted into the STM chapter of NHS.

The Faculty Council is composed of five individuals currently on staff at STM and are selected by the principal. The NHS advisor serves as a mediator.

Procedure for Induction

The chapter adviser will notify candidates who have been selected for induction. Inductees and their parents will receive a formal letter of confirmation. Induction will be held on the evening of **November 28, 2018** with a reception following for NHS members and their parents, faculty and administration of The High School of Saint Thomas More.

Those candidates who are not selected for membership will be informed in a timely and caring fashion. Every effort will be made to help the candidate understand the reason for not being selected and how he or she can increase his or her likelihood for selection the next year.

NHS Service Projects

Every chapter is obliged each year to complete a service project for the benefit of the school or community. These projects are to be initiated, planned, organized and executed by the members of the chapter.

Responsibilities of NHS Members

A member of the National Honor Society must always strive to be a positive influence in the school and outside community. Members are to be the visible role models in the school. Additionally, members are required to attend the bimonthly meetings, maintain the GPA standard, stay current with service hours, and participate in the variety of service projects that the chapter undertakes throughout the school year. Specifically, members are required to volunteer a minimum of four times throughout the school year (twice a semester).

Dismissal

According to the NHS bylaws, "Any member who falls below the standards of scholarship, leadership, character, or service may be dismissed from The High School of Saint Thomas More Chapter of the National Honor Society" (*By-laws, ARTICLE IV, Section 1*). A student may be dismissed because his or her GPA has fallen below the standard 3.200, he or she has committed a violation of criminal law or school regulations, due to offenses of the school conduct code, or failure to attend the majority of biweekly NHS meetings or participate in service activities. Once dismissed, a student may never again seek membership into NHS (*NHS Handbook, p. 58*). For full information on dismissal, seek the Saint Thomas More NHS Chapter By-laws available on the STM website (Look under *Academics – Academic Organizations*).

Commitment

Let it be known that this selection process “is considered public information, available to parents, students, and faculty upon request” (*NHS Handbook*, p. 23). This selection process must be administered with fairness, consistency, and a sense of professionalism among the Faculty Council, Chapter Adviser, Principal, faculty and all other evaluators.

Additional Information

For further information about membership selection, dismissal, or any other aspect of The Saint Thomas More Chapter of the National Honor Society, refer to the chapter's *By-laws* as well as the *National Honor Society Handbook*.

Please direct all questions to Mrs. Ehrlich.