

4.6041 National Honor Society

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Revision Dates:

I. PURPOSE

To establish district-wide standards for participation in the National Honor Society and the National Junior Honor Society.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all Memphis City Schools middle/junior high and high school students.

III. POLICY STATEMENT

It is the goal of Memphis City Schools to create a learning environment that is academically challenging for students. Memphis City Schools believes that participation in organizations that celebrate positive student development and academic achievement motivates students to excel. Memphis City Schools recognizes that the National Honor Society (NHS) and the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) encourage students to maintain high levels of academic achievement and promote student development. It is, therefore, the policy of Memphis City Schools to adopt the standards of the NHS and the NJHS in recognizing students in the areas of scholarship, character, leadership, and service. In accordance with the standards of the National Junior Honor Society, Memphis City Schools shall also recognize students in the area of citizenship.

All local chapters are expected to conform to this policy and to the rules and procedures found in the Constitution and Handbook of the NHS and the NJHS. In accordance with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) and local school guidelines, the Faculty Council of a local chapter shall determine membership in the organization based on a student's cumulative GPA and acceptable levels of character, leadership, and service (and citizenship for the NJHS).

To be considered for membership in either organization a Memphis City Schools student must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5. A local chapter may raise the GPA standard above the district minimum, apply it fairly and consistently, and include this standard in their locally published selection procedures.

IV. RESPONSIBILITY

A. Principals are responsible for enforcing this policy and adhering to the rules of the NHS and NJHS at their schools.

B. Principals are responsible for ensuring that written guidelines that explain the eligibility and admission standards and the rules for participation in the NHS and the NJHS are established and distributed to parents and students each school year in the school's parent and student handbooks.

C. The Office of the Chief Academic Officer is responsible for enforcing this policy. The Office is also responsible for maintaining on file a copy of each school's local NHS/NJHS eligibility and membership guidelines and for reviewing them for consistency with the constitution and handbook of the NHS and the NJHS.

Legal References:

Cross References:

1. National Honor Society/National Junior Honor Society Constitution and Handbook

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Communicating Information to Parents and Students

Schools shall inform parents and the general student population about the National Honor Society and the National Junior Honor Society, eligibility and admission standards, selection procedures, key contact persons, timelines associated with the admissions process, and disciplinary, dismissal, and appeals procedures. Each school shall communicate this information to parents and students at the beginning of the school year during registration, in parent and student handbooks, and when announcing opportunities. This information shall also be available on the school's website and through any other medium the school deems appropriate, such as schoolwide informational sessions to students and parents.

Eligibility

1. To be considered for membership in the National Honor Society a student must be a sophomore, junior, or senior. To be eligible for membership in the National Junior Honor Society a student must be in the second semester of the 6th grade or in the 7th or 8th grade.
2. Candidates for membership in the NHS and the NJHS must have been in attendance at the school for the equivalent of one semester. Based on the recommendation of the principal at the student's previous school, the Faculty Council may waive this provision for transfer students and students with special circumstances, such as students of military parents who are required to move with parents who have transferred in their work.
3. To be considered for membership in the NHS/NJHS a Memphis City Schools student must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.5. No student's GPA shall be adjusted from weighted to unweighted or from unweighted to weighted for eligibility or admission into the NHS/NJHS. A local chapter may raise the GPA standard above the district minimum, apply it fairly and consistently to all students, and include this standard in their locally published selection procedures.

Faculty Councils at local schools shall also set specific standards for character, leadership, and service in accordance with the guidelines established by the NHS/NJHS (must be publicized as above).

Screening, Selection and Admission Process

1. The Faculty Council shall establish selection procedures consistent with the rules and regulations of the NHS/NJHS. Procedures for screening and selecting candidates and admitting students to the local chapter must address the following:
 - a. Notifying parents and the general student population of the eligibility and admission criteria and timelines associated with the screening, selection, and admission process
 - b. Identifying students who meet the eligibility criteria regarding cumulative GPA

- c. Once scholarship criteria have been met, conducting a review of each candidate based on character, leadership, and service (and citizenship for NJHS)
- d. Communicating the decision of the Faculty Council to the student and parents
- e. Inviting students for membership in the organization

2. Each school shall conduct at least one induction ceremony each school year to admit the selected candidates.

Membership

1. Membership in the NHS/NJHS shall transfer with a member who brings a letter from his/her former principal or faculty advisor to the new school. Transfer members must meet the new chapter's standards, if applicable, within one semester in order to retain membership.

2. Faculty Councils can consider disciplinary actions that are related to a student's membership in the NHS/NJHS, up to and including dismissal, if circumstances warrant. Students who fall below the standards that were the basis for their selection (i.e., scholarship, character, leadership, and service) shall be promptly warned in writing by the chapter adviser and given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency before disciplinary action is taken. However, in the case of flagrant violation of school rules or the law, a member does not necessarily have to be warned and may be disciplined immediately. National Honor Society standards apply to both on and off-campus conduct.

3. The Faculty Council, in compliance with the rules and regulations of the NHS/NJHS, shall determine the procedure for dismissal. In all cases of pending dismissal, before the Faculty Council votes, a member has a right to a hearing before the Faculty Council. Dismissal procedures must include:

- a. Written warnings, except for flagrant violation (A reasonable number of warnings shall be determined by the Faculty Council.)
- b. Right to a hearing before the Faculty Council
- c. Appeal to the principal

4. The school shall periodically review the eligibility standards of the local chapter for consistency with this policy and the Constitution and Handbook of the NHS/NJHS.

5. Copies of school's NHS/NJHS published guidelines shall be submitted to the Office of the Deputy Superintendent for review.

Appeals

1. Students and parents may appeal the decision of the Faculty Council regarding nonselection of candidates and the disciplining and dismissal of members to the principal.

2. All appeals must be submitted to the principal in writing.

3. The principal shall review the available information from the parent and Faculty Council and seek justification for the decision from the Faculty Council. The principal shall inform the parents and student of his/her decision in a timely manner.

4. The decision of the principal is final. The state affiliate shall not serve as an appeal board for local chapter nonselection or discipline cases (including dismissal). In addition, the NHS and NJHS National Council and NASSP shall hear no appeals in cases of nonselection or discipline.