



## **Initial Eligibility and the Evaluation Process: National Honor Society**

Greetings,

The following information is presented to inform students and parents about the requirements for initial eligibility and the process by which candidates are offered an invitation to join the Atlantic Coast High Chapter of the National Honor Society.

### **I. Eligibility**

- Candidates do not become eligible for membership until their Junior or Senior year.
- Initial eligibility is based solely on the student's cumulative weighted grade-point average at the end of the sophomore year for junior induction as well as the cumulative weighted grade-point average at the end of the junior year for senior induction. All courses taken from the beginning of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade are included in this calculation. The district's records will be the only source for the determination of this GPA. We do not round their numerical data – a 3.49 GPA will not meet the requirement.
- Students are also required by the national organization to have been in attendance at Atlantic Coast for at least one full semester to be inducted into the National Honor Society. This is a guideline of the national office and its purpose is to allow the teachers at a school sufficient opportunity to work with the student prior to the evaluation process.

### **II. The Evaluation Process**

- All students who have earned a cumulative weighted 3.5 GPA at the end of their sophomore or junior year will receive an induction packet in late October indicating that they have met the first criteria: scholarship. Candidates for induction will have two weeks to complete the packet and demonstrate that they have met the qualifications in the three other categories that will be evaluated to determine eligibility for induction: character, scholarship, and leadership. Failure to meet the deadline for submission of the eligibility inquiry packet will result in the candidate being denied an invitation to join the NHS during this eligibility cycle.

- As part of the portfolio, you are required to submit evidence of at least 25(junior induction)/50(senior induction) hours of community service. This should be presented on a copy of the service hours log form (blank forms are available in the main office) or in writing from the organization in which you volunteered. Candidates who do not meet this requirement will automatically be denied an invitation to join the NHS.
- While the candidates are completing and submitting their portfolios, the faculty will be supplying their own evaluation of the candidates. This will be in the form of a ballot containing the names of all of the eligible students. The faculty is instructed to recommend or not recommend each of the candidates with whom they have worked. There are no requirements regarding the number of students on which a faculty member may offer opinion. Some teachers will comment on only one or two candidates (for any number of reasons) and other teachers will indicate a position on many candidates. The only requirement is that any faculty member indicating a “does not recommend” for a candidate must also offer (in writing) a reason for that decision. A decision to not recommend without an explanation is disregarded by the evaluation committee. There are some points regarding the faculty voting that should be considered by students and parents.
  - i. Teachers are free to use their own criteria for deciding which candidates to “recommend” and which to “not recommend”.
  - ii. It is not necessary for a student to have received a referral before a teacher chooses to indicate a “does not recommend” on his or her ballot. Students exhibiting classroom behavior that interferes with the classroom activities will often receive a vote to deny. Students with poor attendance, who skip classes, or with excessive tardiness will most likely receive votes to deny. Students who disregard school regulations related to use of cell phones or who present dress code issues may receive votes to deny. These offenses may or may not have resulted in a discipline referral, but the teacher is free to indicate “not recommend” in any case.
  - iii. Students, parents, or other interested parties may not attempt to lobby or influence a teacher’s decision. This action will immediately end the student’s eligibility. Something as simple as “Did you recommend me?”, even spoken with a smile, will end the candidate’s eligibility.
  - iv. No information will be provided to students or parents regarding how a specific faculty member evaluated a candidate. That information is confidential and will never be shared.
- Another part of the evaluation is the Attendance and Discipline report. The evaluation committee will consider this report along with the portfolio and the

results of the faculty balloting. Students and parents should note that the faculty committee places great weight on the candidate’s attendance. Students displaying irregular attendance or with excessive tardiness can be denied an invitation to join the NHS, even in cases of superb portfolio and no faculty votes to deny. If there are extenuating circumstances regarding attendance, please attach written documentation/explanation to your eligibility inquiry packet.

- Once all of the components described above have been collected, a faculty committee meets to evaluate all of the anonymous materials presented for each candidate and makes a final determination as to whether each individual candidate should be offered an invitation to join the NHS. This final decision is obtained by a “blind” vote – the five members of the committee do not know how each other have voted. A simple majority is all that is required to earn an invitation to join; a unanimous decision is not required.

We hope that this description of the eligibility and evaluation process provides the information you may need as we enter the new selection cycle.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email Mrs. Curran at [currank@duvalschools.org](mailto:currank@duvalschools.org)

I have received the outline of the eligibility and evaluation process and understand that all potential inductees will be evaluated anonymously and that the decision of the Faculty Council is final.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of potential NHS member

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date