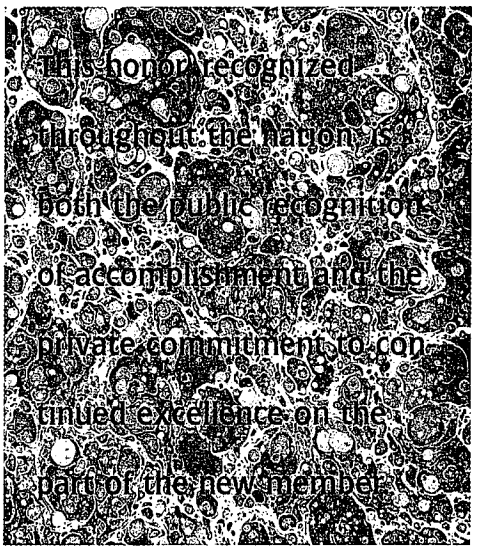
Selection Procedures

For many students, selection as a member of the National Junior Honor Society is the pinnacle of their achievements in school. This honor, recognized throughout the nation, is both the public recognition of accomplishment and the private commitment to continued excellence on the part of the new member. Because of the importance placed upon this aspect of secondary school life, local chapters are charged with creating a selection process that conforms to the national guidelines, is applied fairly and consistently to all candidates, and provides a meaningful recognition of deserving students.

Selection to NJHS is a privilege, not a right. Students do not apply for membership in the National Junior Honor Society; instead, they provide information to be used by the local selection committee to support their candidacy for membership. Membership is granted only to those students selected by the Faculty Council in each school. This is not an election, nor is membership automatically conveyed simply because a student has achieved a specified level of academic performance. NJHS is more than just an honor roll and the extent to which the local chapter emphasizes the other components of the selection process (leadership, service, citizenship, and character) should be carefully included in the selection process guidelines.



The selection process must be public information, available to parents, students, and faculty upon request. It should also be published in the student handbook, the school newspaper, in parent newsletters, or some other publication that is widely available to students and parents, and, in addition, is shared at orientation programs for new students. Proper dissemination of information about the chapter, particularly details concerning the selection process used at the school, will help prevent problems with students or parents who may wish to question the process.

To ensure that your description of the selection process is fully understandable, it is recommended that the chapter form a committee of students, teachers, and/or parents to review the description for clarity.

All decisions concerning selection have a certain subjective element, but problems can be avoided if the Faculty Council develops and follows some objective criteria. The National Council urges chapters to follow the recommended procedure described in Appendix 4. However, whatever procedure is followed, it must be fair, non-discriminatory, consistently applied, and written for public dissemination.

Prerequisite Conditions for Selection

1 According to the Constitution, only those students who have attended the school the equivalent of one semester may be considered for membership. This period is necessary for students to establish themselves and for the faculty to get to know them. Even after a semester, however, it may be necessary to contact a transfer student's former school for additional information.

Some candidates may be ineligible for induction because of the semester ruling. Many students, including students of military parents, are required to move with parents or guardians who have transferred in their work. The present school principal should seek a recommendation from the previous school principal pursuant to the candidate's selection. Based on the recommendation of the previous principal, the Faculty Council may waive the semester regulation.

2 Membership may be open to qualified second semester sixth graders and students in grades seven, eight, and nine. The Faculty Council may decide to choose only one or a combination of these classes, according to local needs, conditions, or traditions.

3 Whatever classes are eligible in a given school, academic requirements must be the same for all candidates in all classes. For example, you may NOT have a different GPA requirement for seventh graders than you have for eighth and ninth graders. The National Council considers different academic requirements for the various classes to be inappropriate.

4 Similarly, there can be no specific quota or percentage of members per class. Those students who meet the criteria should be inducted regardless of the number. If it is necessary to limit chapter size, the academic requirement for all candidates can be raised. (See "Changing the GPA Requirement.")

Regarding those classes that are eligible for membership, schools that include sixth grade may *not* include first-semester sixth graders as members of the NJHS chapter. However, when considering candidates for selection, it is appropriate to use grades earned and activities undertaken during the sixth grade year. Also, schools with a 9–12 structure may *not* have a separate, ninth-grade-only chapter of NJHS on their high school campus (a restriction that has been in existence since September 1983). However, schools with a 6–12, or similiar multi-level structure, may have two chapters (one NJHS for grades 6–9, and an NHS chapter for grades 10–12) but must apply for separate charters for each.

The Criteria

The Faculty Council of the chapter selects students who demonstrate outstanding performance in all five criteria of scholarship, leadership, service, citizenship, and character. According to the principles outlined in Article IX, Section 2, the Faculty Council should first identify students with the prerequisite GPA (as stated in the local selection guidelines), and then evaluate the candidates' performance in the areas of leadership, citizenship, service, and character.

While the academic criterion is important and should be considered first, membership should never be considered on the basis of grades alone, even though a Faculty Council may con-

sider scholarship as the most important of the five criteria. Schools that select members solely on the basis of scholarship are violating the Constitution and placing their charters in jeopardy.

Faculty Councils may wish to survey academically eligible students to determine interest in membership and to obtain information regarding service and leadership activities (see the sample "Student Activity Information Form" in Appendix 4). Students so surveyed should understand that such surveys are not applications for membership, and that review of information gathered does not guarantee selection.

In evaluating potential members for leadership, service, citizenship, and character, the Faculty Council often begins with a review of the definitions of these criteria. These definitions should also appear in the public description of the selection process. A common understanding of the criteria for selection helps all involved to accept and understand the professional decisions made by the Faculty Council.

Scholarship

The scholarship requirement set by the National Council is based on a student's cumulative grade point average. The phrase "cumulative grade point average" refers to the total academic performance as demonstrated by the grades received by the student while in attendance at the school where the chapter is found. For example, in a middle school containing grades six through eight, even when students are selected during their seventh grade year, grades from the sixth grade on should be used to compute the scholastic average. Obtaining grades from a student's elementary school would be inappropriate and only complicate the selection process, as well as present a problem of verification for the Faculty Council. Wherever possible, chapters are encouraged to utilize the same standard for computing GPA that is currently used within the school, since that is the system most easily recognized and understood by the students and their parents. Utilizing a nontraditional cumulative GPA calculation or scholarship average requires both additional time for the adviser or Faculty Council to complete the calculations, and additional explanation to be added to the written description of the selection process.

- The minimum grade point average allowable is 85 percent, B, 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale), or the equivalent standard of excellence. The Faculty Council may raise the required cumulative grade point average. The Faculty Council may also specify a prerequisite number of academic courses or weight grades in recognition of the varying degrees of difficulty of courses of study. In such cases, the Faculty Council must provide to the administration, students, and parents of the school the professional rationale for these guidelines or procedures.
- If a Faculty Council decides to weight grades in recognition of varying degrees of difficulty of courses, this weighting should be accomplished prior to determining the cumulative GPA in order, once again, to identify all students who have met the scholastic criteria prior to consideration of their leadership, service, citizenship, and character.
- Rules such as "no grade below 'B'" are not acceptable.
- A failing grade is not an acceptable reason to automatically eliminate a student's candidacy.

Schools with innovative grading practices (individualized, non-graded, or pass-fail) share in the requirement to select the top students for membership. Faculty Councils in these schools have the responsibility to determine ways to identify those students who meet the scholarship requirement. The Faculty Council must provide a rationale for this determination and include it in the written description of the selection process.

In all cases, only those 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 Faculty Council meet the scholarship requirement for membership in the National Junior Honor Society. These students are then eligible for consideration on the basis of service, leadership, citizenship, and character.

"Revisiting" Scholarship

Once it has been determined that a student has met the scholarship criterion, that issue can be put aside and the remainder of the Faculty Council's attention directed to the remaining four criteria. For the Faculty Council to bring up the "quality" of a student's grades or evaluate the degree of difficulty of the courses after the GPA has been determined is inappropriate in that this would be considered a "revisiting" of the scholarship criterion. Similarly, teacher recommendation/evaluation forms (an optional concern for local chapters) that include a space for rating the student's scholarship are inappropriate for the same reasons.

Schools that rate the level of the students' GPAs for their point system (See subsection on "Point Systems" for further explanation of this process) in the selection process are similarly revisiting scholarship (e.g. 97–100 = 4 points; 94–96 = 3 points, etc.). In the case of a school using a point system, points should only be applied to those candidates who have already met the scholastic criteria and now need to be rated on the remaining four criteria. The possible consequence of this inappropriate use of points when revisiting scholarship is that the school may find itself first informing the student that he/she has the necessary GPA to be a member, and then, because the student's GPA was not in the highest possible category (i.e., the student only got 3 points instead of 4), informing the student that he/she was not selected because "the GPA was not high enough to earn the required points for selection." This contradiction would be both inappropriate and confusing to candidates and their parents and thus should be avoided.

Changing the GPA Requirement

In cases where a school wishes to change the GPA requirement (by raising or lowering the GPA, but not beneath the 3.0 national minimum) there are a few key points to keep in mind:

1 Changes in the selection procedure should be made by the Faculty Council. The origin of the changes may be the administration, the faculty adviser, or even from the body of current chapter members. In all cases, however, the Faculty Council must provide formal approval.

2 As with all aspects of the selection procedure, the change(s) and all information related to the change should be published "in a timely fashion" and be available for easy dissemination to the public.

3 When considering the timing for implementing proposed changes, it is strongly recommended that a local chapter consider announcing the change at least ONE YEAR prior to formally establishing the new criteria. This timeline allows students to set new goals for their scholastic performance (the higher GPA) and sufficient time to achieve them. In addition, it allows the chapter to publish the new guidelines and to update the faculty and parents of all prospective members. An alternative method, and one that is more time-consuming, is to make the change of GPA effective with the entrance of the newest class at the school (i.e., the change takes effect with the entering sixth grade in a 6–8 school while remaining the same for rising seventh and eighth graders until they leave the middle school).

Under all circumstances, advisers and members of the Faculty Council are reminded that continued membership in the chapter is based upon students maintaining the standards under which they were admitted as members. Consequently, a member admitted with a 3.0 GPA would be expected to maintain that average as a member, even if the new standard of 3.25 were approved for members selected for later induction. In cases involving new scholastic standards, this may mean that a given group of chapter members operate under different standards for a period of years while the new criteria are being installed.

Leadership

The leadership criterion is considered highly important for membership selection. Some Faculty Councils may wish to interpret leadership in terms of number of offices a student has held in school or community organizations, although it is important to recognize that leadership also exists outside elected positions including effective participation in other cocurricular activities offered on campus. Other Faculty Councils may define leadership in less objective terms. Leadership roles in both the school and community may be considered, provided they can be verified.

The student who exercises leadership:

- Is resourceful in proposing new problems, applying principles, and making suggestions
- Demonstrates initiative in promoting school activities
- Exercises positive influence on peers in upholding school ideals
- Contributes ideas that improve the civic life of the school
- Is able to delegate responsibilities
- Exemplifies positive attitudes
- Inspires positive behavior in others
- Demonstrates academic initiative
- Successfully holds school offices or positions of responsibility; conducts business effectively and efficiently; demonstrates reliability and dependability
- Is a leader in the classroom, at work, and in other school or community activities
- Is thoroughly dependable in any responsibility accepted
- Is willing to uphold scholarship and maintain a loyal school attitude.

Character Guidelines

The National Council has approved the following recommendations for use when considering "character" of candidates:

A candidate will be able to demonstrate an outstanding record of conduct and behavior with regard to school and community rules, guidelines, and policies or be able to demonstrate sufficient growth and improvement to compensate for previous inadequacies. A Faculty Council is encouraged to document, for purposes of their own decision-making or if questioned by the principal, any sub-standard performance in the area of the character criterion. Such documentation might include such sources as:

a. Administrative records of the school
b. Counseling records from the guidance office
c. Conduct/behavior grades or ratings (including comments) on report cards
d. Professional records of individual faculty members (grade books, etc.)
e. Comments, based on professional evaluation and action, of individual faculty members on candidate evaluation forms

(continued to page 4–17)

Service

Service is generally considered to be those actions undertaken by the student which are done with or on behalf of others without any direct financial or material compensation to the individual performing the service. In considering service, the contributions this candidate has made to school, classmates, and community, as well as the student's attitude toward service can be reviewed.

The student who serves:

- Volunteers and provides dependable and well organized assistance, is gladly available, and is willing to sacrifice to offer assistance
- Works well with others and is willing to take on difficult or inconspicuous responsibilities
- Cheerfully and enthusiastically renders any requested service to the school
- Is willing to represent the class or school in inter-class and inter-scholastic competition
- Does committee and staff work without complaint
- Participates in some activity outside of school, for example, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, religious groups, volunteer services for the elderly, poor, or disadvantaged
- Mentors persons in the community or students at other schools
- Shows courtesy by assisting visitors, teachers, and students.

Citizenship

The student who demonstrates citizenship:

- Understands the importance of civic involvement
- Has a high regard for freedom, justice, and respect of the American form of government (representative democracy)
- Demonstrates mature participation and responsibility through involvement with such activities as Scouting, community organizations, and school clubs.

Character

Character is probably the most difficult criterion to define. The Faculty Council should consider the positive as well as the negative aspects of character. All judgments in this and other selection criteria should be free of speculation and rumor.

National Junior Honor Society is a member of the Character Counts![SM] Coalition. Through this activity, the society supports and recommends the use of a multi-faceted definition of character known as the "Six Pillars of Character." A person of character demonstrates the following six qualities: respect, responsibility, trustworthiness, fairness, caring, and citizenship. Schools are encouraged to take this model, modify it to meet their local needs, and utilize it frequently in the work of their chapter.

In addition, it can also be said that the student of character:

- Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
- Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (cheerfulness, friendliness, poise, stability)
- Upholds principles of morality and ethics
- Cooperates by complying with school regulations concerning property, programs, office, halls, etc.
- Demonstrates the highest standards of honesty and reliability
- Regularly shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others
- Observes instructions and rules, is punctual, and faithful both inside and outside the classroom
- Has powers of concentration, self-discipline, and sustained attention as shown by perseverance and application to studies
- Manifests truthfulness in acknowledging obedience to rules, avoiding cheating in written work, and showing unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others
- Actively helps rid the school of bad influences or environment.

Student Activity Information Forms

In order to ascertain the degree to which a student candidate meets the selection criteria, it is recommended that local Faculty Councils utilize a Student Activity Information Form (a sample of which is found in Appendix 4). Such forms are generally used to obtain information directly from the student regarding leadership and service activities and to elaborate on the student's perspectives concerning the Honor Society and its values.

These forms should not be considered under any circumstances as "applications" for membership. The form exists to support the student's candidacy by providing relevant information for use by the Faculty Council.

It is left to the discretion of the local principal, faculty adviser, and/or Faculty Council as to how much of this information is to be shared with the candidate not selected for membership (or his/her parents).

- Students who have been arrested and found guilty of civil offenses or who have a chronic record of breaking school rules should not be automatically excluded from consideration for membership. A proper regard for adolescent growth and behavior improvement is essential.
- It should be noted that, under provisions of federal law, pregnancy—whether within or without wedlock—cannot be the basis for automatic denial of the right to participate in any public school activity. It may properly be considered, however, like any other circumstance, as a factor to be assessed in determining character as it applies to the National Junior Honor Society. But pregnancy may be taken into account in determining character only if evidence of paternity is similarly regarded. (See Appendix 7 for further information on the legal aspects of selection.)

It is recommended that local forms include a parental/guardian signature affirming that they have reviewed the data and verify its accuracy. Other adult signatures may also be requested to verify participation in leadership or service activities.

These forms are for use by the Faculty Council as working documents to be used during the selection process in support of the student's candidacy.

Faculty Evaluation Forms

Selection for membership to the chapter is always to be by a majority vote of the Faculty Council. However, the local council members may wish to obtain additional information to assist them in making their decision.

Faculty evaluations may be used to supplement the Student Activity Information Forms gathered from each candidate. Once the students who possess the prerequisite GPA have been identified, they can submit a Student Activity Information Form detailing their service, leadership, citizenship, and character. The faculty evaluation may be used to support the strength of a student's candidacy in the areas of service, leadership, citizenship, and character. In the event of a low rating on one of the evaluations, it is always important to verify the reasons for such a rating, avoiding the "speculation and rumor" concepts described elsewhere in this handbook.

Evaluations bring to the attention of the Faculty Council information that may not otherwise be represented on the information forms. Upon reviewing the evaluations and verifying their accuracy, the Faculty Council is still required to undertake a vote on each candidate, selecting each student who receives a majority vote.

To avoid questionable entries on faculty evaluations, chapters should request that all evaluations be signed and that each evaluator be prepared to support any below-average rating with substantiating data based on sound professional judgment and action. Anonymous faculty evaluation forms should not be used. The local adviser serves as the link between the Faculty Council and the evaluators, and may conduct informal interviews with those teachers who provide the below-average ratings.

As with the Student Activity Information Forms, faculty evaluations are considered working documents to assist the Faculty Council in making sound decisions regarding membership. Such evaluations are expected to be used only by the Faculty Council, the adviser, and the principal and should be considered confidential unless local or state policies dictate to the contrary.

Point Systems

The constitution of NJHS makes no reference to point systems for selection of members. Furthermore, no formal approval or sanction for using such systems exists among current policies from the national office. This, however, does not preclude a local chapter from developing an effective selection procedure using "points" for service, leadership, citizenship, and character as long as the result retains compliance with all national guidelines.

Any selection process should follow these guidelines from the national constitution:

1. It is fair and applied consistently to all candidates.

2. It is described and published in an official school publication which is made available for students, parents, faculty, and others to review.
3. It is consistent with the rules and regulations of the NJHS as they are currently described in the national handbook.
4. It is determined by and meets the approval of the local Faculty Council and administration.
5. It concludes with a vote by the five appointed members of the Faculty Council to determine individual selection to the chapter. The selection of each member to the chapter shall be by a majority vote of the Faculty Council (Article IX, Section 3).

As per Article IX, Section 2 of the Constitution, selection procedures should first identify those students who meet the appropriate scholastic average, and then evaluate the candidates on the basis of service, leadership, citizenship, and character. To undertake this evaluation, chapters often use one of two forms of "point systems" to assist them in accurately reviewing a candidate's credentials:

System A: Using faculty evaluation forms, members of the faculty assign value to each candidate's service, leadership, citizenship, and character, often using a four-point scale, four being high, one being low. When using such a system, it is recommended that any rating of "two" or "one" be followed by comments indicating what circumstances led to this below-average rating. These comments can be verified by the chapter adviser prior to the meeting of the Faculty Council. At the meeting of the Faculty Council for selection, such ratings can be added up or averaged.

To assist in maintaining an image of a professional system, it is further recommended that an evaluation form be collected from all faculty members, even if some faculty provide no rating because they have never taught, coached, or advised any of the candidates.

System B: Using the Student Activity Information Forms, some Faculty Councils choose to assign point values for each activity listed on the form. This requires a thorough and detailed review of all of the activities on campus and in the community so that students are given a fair rating. Following the assigning of points, these are added up to determine whether or not a student has met the criteria by accumulating enough points. In such cases it is recommended that the student body be informed of the value of each activity prior to the selection process (for instance at a new student orientation or through the student handbook) in order to assist them in making choices that will help them in attaining membership.

If a point system is used, a few precautions are in order:

1. All tabulations should be checked and rechecked for accuracy.
2. If points assigned originate from faculty evaluation forms, such forms should be signed by the faculty members in order to verify their accuracy. Anonymous evaluations cannot ensure fairness and should be excluded from the process.
3. If points are added or averaged in order to determine a "cutoff point" for membership, two factors should be considered:
   a The cutoff should be determined prior to the reading of the candidates' forms.
   b. The cutoff should not be used as an absolute determinant of membership, but instead serve

merely as a guide. An absolute determinant would, under such circumstances, be viewed as a replacement for the Faculty Council vote and would not enable the Faculty Council to deliberate effectively over each candidate.

In addition, all of the students above the cutoff can easily be accepted as members, however, those who fall below the cutoff, since they already have successfully reached the scholastic cutoff (GPA), deserve individual consideration and review of their credentials even though they may not have enough "points." Thus, for those who fall below the cutoff, the Faculty Council should review their information forms first in order to make a sound professional judgment regarding selection or non-selection.

4. Point systems should not revisit the issue of scholarship. Once the student's GPA is shown to be sufficient for candidacy, the issue of scholarship should be put aside and only service, leadership, and character used for determining membership. A re-evaluation of a student's GPA to determine whether the academic performance was "good enough," would merely be questioning the judgment of those fellow faculty members who have already given their professional judgments by rendering grades for each student.
5. Points that give specific values to various activities on campus should have the support from and approval of the administration prior to implementation.

One of the worst responses an adviser can give to the question, "Why wasn't I selected for NJHS?" is, "You didn't get enough points." The logical consequence of such a statement is to ask where the student came up short, so you might as well save time and indicate that the Faculty Council did not approve the candidacy and, if your local policies require disclosure of information related to the Faculty Council deliberations, then indicate that the individual student was weak in one or more of the non-scholarship criteria.

Developing and implementing a fair point system can provide a local Faculty Council with an effective system for selecting members to the chapter. It is important to heed the precautions listed above in order to guarantee the appropriate use of this, and any other selection process devised at the local level.

The Recommended Selection Process

As a quick review, here are some of the most significant points to keep in mind in developing any selection process as outlined above:

1 The selection procedure should be determined by the Faculty Council and must be published and available for review by students, faculty and parents.

2 As the first step in the process, students' academic records should be reviewed to determine those persons who are scholastically eligible for membership, i.e., those persons who meet the required GPA standard.

3 Students who are eligible scholastically should be notified and informed that for further consideration for selection to the chapter they may complete the Student Activity Information Form, outlining their accomplishments in the areas of Service and Leadership (a sample of this form can be found in Appendix 4; note, this is not an "application").

4 If additional faculty input would be beneficial, all faculty members could be invited to make comments on candidates. However, the actual selections must be made by the five appointed members of the Faculty Council. See section above, "Faculty Evaluations."

5 The Student Activity Information Form should be reviewed by the Faculty Council, along with any other verifiable information about each candidate. Some Faculty Councils may choose to interview candidates personally. The leadership, service, citizenship, and character of all candidates should be reviewed carefully. Candidates receiving a majority

(continued to page 4–21)

Selection Guidelines: A Review of the Essentials

- Candidates must have attended the school the equivalent of one semester
- Membership may be open to qualified second-semester sixth graders, and students in grades seven, eight, and nine.
- A cumulative GPA is to be used for determining scholastic eligibility
- GPA requirements must be the same for all candidates in all classes
- No quotas or percentages of members per class can be established
- The national minimum cumulative GPA requirement is 3.0 (on a 4-point scale), 85, B or equivalent standard of excellence; this requirement may be raised at the local level
- Rules such as "no grades below a B" or "no failing grades" are not acceptable
- All five criteria must be considered in the selection process, though the weight that any individual criterion receives is determined by the local Faculty Council
- All local selection guidelines must conform with the national guidelines
- All selection procedures must be disclosed to students and parents.

NOTE: Initiation, blackballing, hazing, or the like are expressly prohibited as part of the selection process of any National Junior Honor Society activity. Any chapter found in violation of this regulation risks losing its charter. For this reason, it is suggested that the phrase "Induction Ceremony" instead of "Initiation" be used to refer to the formal presentation of new members to the school and community.

Notification of Inductees

Those students selected and their parents are generally notified promptly and personally by the principal, chapter adviser, Society president, or by engraved or printed letters. (See Appendix 4.) The letter may also outline some of the duties, responsibilities, or obligations of membership in the National Junior Honor Society.

As a courtesy, the chapter adviser or principal should also notify the officers and chapter members of the selection results at an appropriate time. This information should be held in confidence until the formal invitations to the induction ceremony are released.

vote of the Faculty Council should be inducted into the chapter.

6 Chapters should consider formal notification of all selected candidates and their parents to inform them in writing about selection and the timing of the induction ceremony. Schools should also seriously consider the method by which students who are not selected are informed about their non-selection to see that this method is both timely and considerate of their well-being.

7 To finalize the plans for induction, a plan should be devised for verification of membership, acceptance of the invitation for membership, and attendance at the induction ceremony.

Note: The national office would never use the word "apply" where NJHS candidacy is concerned. Members are "selected" by the faculty of the school through the Faculty Council to be a part of the chapter. Individuals do not apply for membership, but rather submit information, via the student activity information forms, for use by the Faculty Council in determining membership. Membership, therefore, is an honor bestowed upon an individual, and thus a privilege, not a position for which one applies nor to which one is "elected," nor a "right" of any individual.

Chapters should consider carefully the timing and method of notification and be sensitive to those who may have been candidates but were not selected for membership. It is recommended that special efforts be taken to show professional care in conveying this disappointing news to non-selected candidates, and to arrange for appropriate counseling of these students where warranted.

Regardless of the method of notification or announcement, it is advisable to follow up the official notification with a letter of confirmation. The letter should also outline some of the duties, responsibilities, and obligations of membership in the National Junior Honor Society. It is always advisable to see that parents of new members are also kept fully informed concerning selection to, induction of, and obligations of membership.

"Reapplication" for Membership

Membership in the National Junior Honor Society is a permanent condition unless a student's performance falls below the standards by which he or she was selected. To this end, chapters may not ask students to "reapply" on a yearly basis. This circumstance does not preclude a chapter's Faculty Council from requesting that students verify that they are still meeting the criteria for selection by updating their Student Activity Information Forms. However, this activity must not be interpreted as a formal return to the selection process with the student's continuing membership in doubt.

An active member becomes a graduate member upon "graduation" from the school, i.e., completion of the middle level curriculum. Only if a student is dismissed (using the process outlined in Article X of the Constitution) or resigns is the student's continuing membership in the Honor Society ever to be curtailed.

Non-Selection

Not selecting a student who has already been identified as being academically eligible can present a difficult situation for the principal, chapter adviser, and Faculty Council. The situation is bound to arise, however, given the necessarily subjective nature of some of the requirements for membership. The NJHS Constitution requires that a description of the selection procedure be published in an official school publication widely available to all students and their parents (Article IX, Section 4). This description should be well written and thorough in its portrayal of the selection process. In cases of non-selection, special efforts should be made to explain the selection process to those students who are unhappy about the results of the selection process.

Appeals in Cases of Non-selection

Chapters are not legally or constitutionally obligated to share with parents and students information concerning specific students not selected for membership in the Society. It is, however, a common or traditional expectation of school personnel to be able to explain how decisions regarding the growth and development of a student on campus were made and, furthermore, to provide effective direction to such students to assist them in reaching their goals, despite the existence of a specific setback. This tradition may influence the procedures used in the local process for notifying

and counseling with non-selected candidates. *(NOTE: Some states and or school districts may have policies or laws which supersede this statement regarding the giving of reasons for non-selection. Local chapters are encouraged to review local guidelines to verify their compliance with such standards.)*

Since the chapter adviser is closest to the selection process, it is this individual who is best prepared to provide immediate feedback. Should students or parents still not be satisfied, the next level of discussion should take place with the principal. The principal should, of course, listen to the concerns of students not selected, or from the parents of such students. Following such discussions, if the principal believes that some kind of technical or procedural mistake has been made, the principal may ask the Faculty Council to reconvene to review the situation. Technical or procedural errors might include the inadvertent omission of a student's name from the list of those qualified for induction, the erroneous averaging of grades, or failure to follow prescribed procedures.

Usually, however, non-selected students wish to question the judgment of the Faculty Council. It is important to try to help them understand that all decisions of the kind involved in the selection process have some subjective aspects, but that the decisions were derived in a fair manner and based on sound, professional judgment. In some cases, complainants choose to request a review by a new or different Faculty Council. Admittedly, a committee composed of a different group of people might well have produced a different result, though it is equally as likely that they might have come to the same conclusion. The admission of varied group judgments is not an effective objection to the selection process itself, but merely an indication that specific decisions reached by the council do not satisfy everyone. The principal is charged with choosing five persons to serve on the Faculty Council with assistance from the faculty adviser in whom he or she can place a high degree of trust. These members of the council must understand the importance of exercising their responsibilities in the most professional and objective manner possible.

In the absence of specific evidence to the contrary, however, the principal must assume that the members of the council are exercising their discretion in a legitimate manner and with the good faith expected of them.

Parents and students must understand that no student has a right to be selected for membership in a chapter of the National Junior Honor Society (See Appendix 7, prepared by the NASSP legal counsel, concerning the law and how it relates to governing the Society). Reconsideration of a Faculty Council's decision must be a rare occurrence if the council is to be expected to take its assignment seriously. It is important to uphold the integrity of NJHS standards and to recognize the potential danger of yielding to pressure tactics.

If a non-selected student or his/her parents wish to challenge the principal's decision they should follow the local school system complaint procedure.

The National Council and the NASSP have no authority to review or overturn the judgment of the Faculty Council regarding selection of individual members to local chapters.

Induction

Induction of new members into the National Junior Honor Society is an important event for the student, the chapter, and the school. The ceremony, whether public or private, provides an excellent opportunity to dramatize the purposes of the chapter. Because membership in the National Junior Honor Society represents high levels of achievement, the induction ceremony should also reflect high standards.

Edward Rynearson, founder of NHS, sister organization to NJHS, spoke eloquently concerning the induction ceremony:

> *"These exercises [the induction ceremony] should always be public in order that no one will confuse the society with a secret fraternity and that the school and community as a whole may catch the inspiration of higher ideals held up by the speakers. Again the parents of these selected pupils will be drawn closer to the school filled with a deeper appreciation of the work of their children. Being present at the induction of their children into the honor society will be a highly prized privilege and reward to many parents who have watched their children carefully and prayerfully.*
>
> *The program should be dignified and impressive throughout. The school at large will judge the society very largely by these public exercises. Here is a great opportunity to create an enthusiasm for scholarship among those who have not yet been awakened to the importance of a complete development of their higher powers. We shall never know how many real personalities have been lost who have all the native endowments of genius and leadership but who for lack of incentive or of proper environmental stimuli, have remained undeveloped and unknown."*

Guidelines for Planning Induction Ceremonies

The induction ceremony is usually conducted by the officers and members of the local chapter or, in the case of the initial induction, by members of a nearby school. The National Council has received suggestions that one special induction ceremony be developed and used by all chapters. However, the National Council firmly believes that schools should create their own ceremonies and procedures. As a result, there could be as many different ceremonies as there are chapters.

Several basic themes are included in the following discussion. Additional information about induction is available periodically in the NHS/NJHS section of *Leadership for Student Activities*, and in special mailings from the national office.

Planning the Formal Ceremony

In many schools, the induction ceremony is held at a school assembly that includes the entire student body, the faculty, and the parents of inductees. This is encouraged by the National Council. A reception for the inductees and their parents following the assembly has become a tradition in many schools.