



NEHS CHAPTER PROFILE

Beginning with the End in Mind

"I really believe what Stephen Covey says: You have to begin with the end in mind," explains Dr. Gale Vogel, principal of Smyrna Primary School in Smyrna, TN. Covey is renowned for his seminal work *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, and his principle-centered approach to living with fairness, integrity, and service. Covey's philosophy provided a fitting foundation to introduce the National Elementary Honor Society to Vogel's suburban Nashville Title I school in 2008.

As principal of one of the first schools to affiliate with NEHS, Vogel—who formerly served as assistant principal at Smyrna High School—says, "I saw the benefit of the Honor Society at the high school level, and I thought, 'Wow, this is fantastic training, involvement, and experience.'" So, when NEHS was made available at the elementary level she thought, "Here's an opportunity for me as an elementary principal to support that process. Because I began with the end in mind, I could really see the focus and the importance of elementary initiatives in terms of making kids successful in high school."

Smyrna's NEHS chapter has been committed to making Dr. Vogel's vision a reality ever since.

This preK-5 school's chapter is led by counselor Meghan McCleary. She values the leadership training NEHS affords members. McCleary explains chapter members run for

positions. "They have posters and they campaign. In fact, one of our students who moved on to middle school was the only sixth grader to run for student council there. She missed it, but only by a handful of votes. The faculty adviser said she is the only sixth grader he's ever seen run and do so well. He asked her where she got her leadership skills and she said by being a member of the National Elementary Honor Society."

There are other points of pride shared by McCleary and Vogel—one of the most notable being when the school held an open house to unveil a new addition, including a much-needed improved library. Their NEHS members stepped up to the plate, giving tours of the school and its new addition to board members and the director of schools. "That was challenging, but these kids

just met the challenge," Dr. Vogel reflects. "For fifth graders to take the director of schools on a building tour, I just felt that was a pretty incredible experience."

McCleary values NEHS for the benefits students derive. "You really do see growth. From the minute we start talking to them [about NEHS membership] in the fourth grade. They start to do even more and improve even more."

Vogel, meanwhile, explains the value perspective of NEHS through a faculty lens. "It is unifying to have faculty members working together to support NEHS. We've had a lot of faculty members volunteer for a number of years. All these NEHS activities take time. But they're willing and they see the benefit. NEHS unites your faculty because it gives them leadership roles too."



Proud new NEHS inductees after a recent ceremony

PHOTO COURTESY OF SMYRNA PRIMARY SCHOOL

ADVISER FAQs

Q: A student is transferring at the end of this school year. Will the student's NEHS membership transfer to the new school?

A: Per Article 7, section 6 of the NEHS Constitution, active membership transfers from chapter to chapter. Also, new transfer members may be enrolling in the fall. Your chapter bylaws should reflect this national policy as well. Once members are inducted, they never have to go through selection or induction again, even if they transfer schools.

For those members who are leaving, please provide a letter of verification to enable them to transfer membership to their new chapter. A sample membership transfer letter is provided in the online NEHS Adviser Resource Center under "Working with Members & Officers." If a member transfers to your school next year, please review the national policy

about transferring active membership and request a letter of verification from their previous chapter. If questions arise, email nehs@nehs.org.

Q: Our chapter will have a new adviser next year. How do I transition the adviser role to the next adviser?

A: Notify the national office so that your chapter's information is up to date in our database. This will help to ensure a smooth transition for the next adviser so he or she receives 2017-18 academic year communication in uninterrupted fashion. The new adviser's information can be submitted via the Adviser Change Form on the NEHS website or included on the annual chapter renewal invoice sent to your principal. If a new adviser hasn't been selected yet, please share this information with your principal.

WATSON FOUND AGAIN

That intrepid traveler and NEHS mascot Watson the bear has returned from Ann Arbor, MI, where he visited the NEHS chapter at Michigan Islamic Academy. Evelyn Sibek, NEHS chapter adviser, sent us letters her NEHS students wrote to Watson, and it was clear they kept him busy.

Leila, a fourth grader, wrote that Watson accompanied her to social studies, math, Arabic, and reading. Leila added, "In math, I showed Watson how to multiply and divide measurements. In Arabic, I taught him the meanings of some important words." Another student, Abdarrahan said, "Brother Salim,

the computer teacher, was teaching and me and Watson had a lot of fun. Watson and I learned about science. We were learning about sound." The students quickly bonded with Watson, who was a treasured companion to them throughout their school week. Adam, a fifth grader, lamented, "We will all miss cuddly, warm Watson. We hope we can see him again."

Watson will miss his new friends there, but is looking forward to meeting your students! Ask him to come for a visit and please include the following information:

- School name and address
- Event (service project, induction, etc.)



Watson in the fifth grade classroom with NEHS members

- Dates (provide alternatives in case Watson is "booked.")

Chapters are asked to provide a written summary and photos of the visit within 15 days of the visit's conclusion. Watson's travels will be highlighted in NEHS publications.

Submit your Watson requests to nehs@nehs.org.

IDEA EXCHANGE

BETTER THAN A THINKING CAP!

Here are some projects and activities from the National Student Project Database: www.nehs.org/projects.



FAMILY FUN FEST

**Wade Hampton High School
Greenville, SC**

The student council held a Family Fun Fest in August. Planning started in May. Council members began by making posters and flyers, which were placed in the community in July. They worked with the PTA to contact each entering freshman to personally invite them to the event. Prior to the event, council members decorated the school with helium-filled balloons. They gave tours of the building to new students and helped serve food to attendees. With more than 1,000 in attendance, it was an opportunity for the school to establish relationships with new families.

For an elementary school, this activity can be adapted to support incoming students in the lower grades. NEHS members can serve as ambassadors for new student orientation and welcome new families to the school.

SUMMER FUN BASKETS

**Academy of Greatness and Excellence
Teaneck, NJ**

With the goal of making others smile while keeping in mind the pillar of responsibility, NEHS members at the Academy of Greatness and Excellence (AGE) wanted to bring happiness to hospital patients. Members held a summer toy drive in their community. Over a one-month period, they collected summer toys, coloring books, board games, and other items for patients at the Joseph M. Sanzari Children's Hospital. In addition, they designed words-of-inspiration cards decorated by AGE students.

HERE'S AN IDEA!

Share a project with other NEHS chapters. Submit yours to the National Student Project Database to let us know about all of the great things your chapter is doing.

When submitting projects, provide a description that includes:

- Project date(s).
- Any documents that would help schools undertake your project, like flyers or forms.
- Details that give the reader a full understanding of the project's scope and impact.
- Photos if you have them!

Visit www.nehs.org/projects today.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Share *your* experience. Share your chapter's experience. We are always looking for creative project ideas to highlight or chapters to profile. Consider telling us your story for a future issue of *NEHS News*. Email nehs@nehs.org with details and your contact information. We can't wait to hear from you!



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NEHS NEWS

SUMMER 2017

BEFORE YOU BREAK FOR SUMMER

Here's an end-of-year chapter checklist to help you take off for summer worry-free and be ready to hit the ground running for the 2017–18 academic year.

Complete the annual adviser survey

Take the online NEHS adviser survey by June 30. The survey requests more insight into your chapter membership, as well as data on your chapter activity

from this year. A survey link is sent by email and is available on the home-page at www.nehs.org.

Renew your NEHS affiliation before June 30

Visit www.nehs.org/renew before June 30 to maintain your chapter's active membership.

Year-End Review (optional, but recommended)

Did you meet all of your chapter's goals for the year? What were your highlights, challenges, and accomplishments? Prepare an end-of-year report for your principal to reflect on your year. Consider including some of your members' reflections and plans for the upcoming school year. This is a good way to keep your principal engaged in the chapter.

"Like" the NEHS Facebook page at www.facebook.com/elementaryhonors for inspiration, news, and tips.



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“If you can dream it, you can do it.”

WALT DISNEY