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NEHS NEWS

Overcoming Obstacles Releases Much-Anticipated Elementary Curriculum New and Free Classroom Management Tools

From academically challenged to high-achieving students, every young person must learn how to communicate effectively, make sound decisions, and set meaningful goals in order to lead a healthy childhood and become a responsible and caring adult. Knowing how to resolve a conflict, build positive relationships, and cope with stressful situations are essential.

Overcoming Obstacles, the award-winning nonprofit life skills curriculum publisher, has just announced the publication of its new and highly anticipated elementary-level curriculum to complete its suite of free kindergarten through grade 12 life skills activities and lessons. Since 1992, Overcoming Obstacles educational materials have helped more than 45,000 educators across the U.S. and in 100 countries teach over 15 million young people life skills.

The K–2 and 3–5 grade level lessons each offer more than 60 hours of fun and educational activities to help educators teach listening, coping, self-control, empathy, cooperation, conflict resolution, respect, integrity, and responsibility. Teaching these lessons helps your students develop socially, academically, and emotionally.



LIFE SKILLS EDUCATION

The largest use of Overcoming Obstacles curriculum materials takes place in New York City, where the NYC Department of Education has used the lessons on communication, decision making, and goal setting as part of the district's advisory period, garnering great results.

Lois Herrera, CEO of safety and youth development with New York City Public Schools, says, "Schools that have embedded a life skills curricula into the fabric of what they do see an improvement in school culture and climate. It

helps students to be goal-focused, build relationships, create a plan, and realize how school fits into that larger plan that they have for themselves."

It is of the utmost importance for young people to be able to express themselves and to convey how they feel in today's complicated world. And it is equally important for them to learn how to be effective listeners, to respect diverse opinions and cultures, and to cope with stress and difficulty that too often plagues young lives.

Educators can begin implementing Overcoming Obstacles today by registering at overcomingobstacles.org to access the curricula, training, and support—all available for free.



ADVISER FAQs

Q: Can our chapter establish deadlines for appeals for nonselection?

A: Yes. The national office encourages establishing a formal appeals process, which includes a deadline to register appeals with the school principal. While there is no legal right to appeal nonselection decisions, chapters are encouraged to establish a procedure which allows the principal to hear parents' concerns and review nonselection decisions to ensure that the chapter's policies and procedures are in compliance with NEHS national policies.

If your chapter does establish a formal appeals process, it should be in writing and should include a deadline by which appeals must be registered (in writing or otherwise). Refer to pages 30–31 of the *NEHS Handbook* for additional guidance.

Q: How much time should we give candidates to complete their candidate forms?

A: There is no mandatory time limit in the national guidelines for chapters to use when asking students to complete their forms. However, we offer the following advice:

In this issue, we answer your questions about NEHS chapter membership.

Reasonableness. It is essential that the chapter provide a reasonable amount of time to complete and submit the forms you require.

School Events. Advisers should take into consideration aspects of the school calendar to avoid having your deadline on an already-busy day or period during the school year. Avoid deadlines on special school days. Similarly, choose a day midweek. Midweek allows you to

use Monday as a final reminder for all students regarding the submission schedule.

Size of Your Candidate Packet. If your candidate form is four pages and also asks candidates to find several teachers to complete recommendations, time must be provided for both steps in the process.

Delivery Methods. The *Handbook* encourages all advisers to take steps to ensure that all candidates are provided with the candidate forms. If forms are mailed home to students and parents, then time for delivery needs to be included in the schedule, along with time for the parents to review and sign off on the forms—another practice encouraged in the national guidelines.

Invite Watson to Visit Your School

Does your chapter have any exciting events on the horizon? Holiday service projects? Meetings with local dignitaries? If so, invite Watson to visit. He loves to help with morning announcements, service projects, and induction ceremonies—he also takes awesome photos! A visit to your local firehouse or city hall are some of his favorite outings.

Simply email nehs@nehs.org and include the following:

- Your name, school name, and full mailing address.
- The requested date(s) of the visit.
- The purpose of his visit (induction ceremony appearance, help with a service project, etc.)

When his visit concludes, you will need to provide a written summary and photos of his visit within 15 days of the visit's conclusion. His visit will be featured in an upcoming edition of *NEHS News*.



STUDENTS AS GLOBAL CITIZENS

Participate in the NASSP Student Leadership Initiative

There is no doubt that the world is becoming more interconnected. As this trend toward globalization continues, it is increasingly important that schools provide a strong foundation for students to become contributing members of a global society.

That's where the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) student leadership initiative on global citizenship comes in.

The two-year initiative began in 2016 with the goal of bringing together NASSP's student programs—the National Elementary Honor Society, National Honor Society, National Junior Honor Society, and National Student Council—to make a difference in schools, communities, and beyond.

To participate in the initiative, Honor Society chapters and student councils must complete a project that demonstrates one of the following five strands:

- **Equity.** Projects that engage or improve relations with varied and underserved populations.
Project examples: Special Olympics, No Name Calling Week, Best Buddies, etc.
- **Civic Engagement.** Projects that raise awareness or engage in civic-based activities.
Project examples: mock elections, voter registration drives, etc.
- **Positive Social Change.** Projects that raise awareness of or engage others in addressing social issues in the school and community.
Project examples: drunk driving awareness, Random Acts of Kindness Week, culture days, etc.

■ Empathetic Actions and Wellness.

Projects that assist people in need or crisis, or improve the environment.

Project examples: clothing/food drives, care packages for vets/homeless, donation drive for children's hospitals, etc.

■ Awareness/Perspectives.

Projects that raise awareness or promote meaningful dialogue on school and community issues.

Project examples: anti-bullying/smoking/drugs, blood drives, etc.

Chapters are asked to show their work by posting about it on social media using #MakingGlobalChange.

And remember, the idea is to think globally and act locally. Student projects do not have to be international in nature. Working to make positive change locally creates a ripple effect that could positively impact the world.

You can view projects by visiting www.makingglobalchange.org or logging in and perusing the National Student Project Database.

Here's some inspiration! In the first year of the initiative, chapters and councils performed over 8 million service hours; raised over \$6 million; donated approximately 118,000 pints of blood; and collected nearly 2.5 million pounds of food.

Your chapter can be a part of this and make a difference—encourage your students to participate, then you can post about their projects using #MakingGlobalChange!

More information can be found at www.makingglobalchange.org.



GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

STUDENTS CHANGING THE WORLD TOGETHER

WIN \$100 FOR YOUR CHARITY OF CHOICE

Post about your students' global citizenship project on Instagram with #MakingGlobalChange and your chapter could win \$100 for the charity of its choice.

A new winner is announced each month. To be eligible for the contest, posts must be on Instagram.

Visit www.makingglobalchange.org for more information.

IDEA EXCHANGE

IMAGINE THAT!

Here is a roundup of projects and activities you can discover when you search the National Student Project Database: www.nehs.org/projects.

FROM TRASH TO TREASURE

In an effort to raise awareness for the school recycling program, the student council of Roy Martin Middle School (RMMS) in Las Vegas, NV, organized a recycled art competition. The competition was open to all RMMS students and staff. The project required participants to create art from materials that would normally be deemed as trash or to create a project sharing the message "reduce, reuse, recycle." Your local NEHS chapter can solicit the help of your school's art teachers to assist students in crafting their vision and creating their project.



DECK THE HALLS WITH DISCOUNTS

'Tis the season to be shopping! The Canyon Springs High School student council in Las Vegas, NV, took advantage of the holiday season by holding a discount card fundraiser. The discounts consisted of half-off and buy one, get one free offers for many popular retailers and restaurants. Council members sold the cards for \$15, and with each one sold, the student council was able to keep \$10. The buyers were pleased with their savings and the student council turned a great profit to fund a trip to Disney. It was a win-win! How can your NEHS chapter adapt this project for your local community? Start by contacting local businesses to discuss the plan, work with students to design a discount card that will be accepted at participating retailers and restaurants, and empower your members to spread the word and take the lead on marketing the project to the student body, staff, family, and friends.



BAKE SALE FOR BABIES

During the month of January, National Honor Society members at John P. Stevens High School in Edison, NJ, sold candy-grams for \$1. They were in the shape of mittens and said "Give Warmth." Members attached York Peppermint Patties to them. To promote the project, they made flyers and PA announcements to raise awareness of the situation children are facing in Syria. The chapter raised over \$1,000 to send to the UN Refugee Agency and Karam Foundation in Washington D.C., to be sent to Syria. NEHS chapters can brainstorm to select a charity or organization to receive funds for babies and children in need, whether locally or in conflict-impacted regions of the world.



CHRISTMAS ANGELS FOUNDATION SERVICE PROJECT

Each year, the Phoenix Christmas Angels Foundation collects Christmas gifts for children in need in the Valley area. People donate gifts as they shop for their own relatives or friends. Students from Sunrise Mountain High School in Peoria, AZ, bring donations to their schools and schools forward them to the foundation's warehouse. This year, all 36 student council members worked at the warehouse for at least a two-hour shift, though many members worked several shifts. They sorted donated gifts, labeled and boxed them, ensured correct clothing and shoe sizes, etc. Two Sunrise Mountain students planned the service project and in total the 36 Sunrise Mountain student council members spent well over 100 hours at the warehouse.

For more ideas and to submit your own projects, visit the National Student Project Database at nehs.org/projects.



Explore the World Through Virtual Reality

It used to be that virtual reality was the stuff of movies—"The Matrix," for instance, famously showed a future where machines have taken over and people now live their lives in an immersive, augmented version of reality.

Thankfully, we're centuries away from the possibility of a robot uprising (we hope), and virtual reality is currently being used in classrooms to do a number of amazing things—even exploring the solar system!

A particularly exciting way to use virtual reality (VR) is to enhance global education curricula. With a smartphone and a VR headset device, your students could be globetrotting in no time. A popular VR headset is Google Cardboard.

It—or a similar cardboard device—can cost as little as \$3.00 each. There are even programs that will provide these for free to classrooms.

Maybe your district can purchase smartphones for your classroom. If they can't, reach out to your school community—you'd be surprised how many people have old phones that they would be willing to donate.

Once your students have their devices ready, you can download and utilize tools and apps like the following for exciting, globally immersive experiences:

- **Google Expeditions.** Take a virtual field trip together to places all over the U.S. and around

the world (as well as out of it!), including Gettysburg, Macchu Picchu, the Great Barrier Reef, the International Space Station, and more. Teachers can use a tablet to create lessons and add commentary during the "field trips." Available on iOS and Android.

- **Google Cultural Institute.** See famous museums and cultural sites around the world without having to leave the classroom.
- **Discovery VR.** Become part of a video from Shark Week, explore locations around the world with locals, and check out other Discovery Channel media.
- **Nearpod.** Another excellent virtual global field trip app. Here, teachers can add poll questions, build in commentary, and have students draw on the screen. Lessons are free or paid and can be filtered by subject, type, and grade. Available on iOS and Android.

And that's just the tip of the iceberg for using VR to enhance global education—there are even more uses for VR that extend beyond that and into science, math, art, and other subjects.

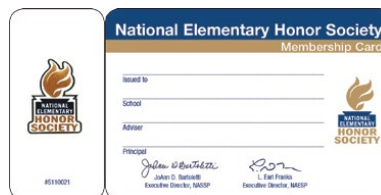
If you're looking for a fun and accessible way to incorporate more immersive, interdisciplinary activities into your global education curricula, consider supplementing or delivering lessons with virtual reality—and facilitate learning in a new and meaningful way.



Make Spirits Bright

From NEHS logo sweatshirts and window clings to Watson the bear and the NEHS holiday ornament, great gift ideas abound in the NEHS Store. And if you order using promo code **HOL17** through December 31, you'll get 15 percent off everything in your shopping cart. Once your list is complete, make sure to put the discount to good use by stocking up on chapter supplies before the new year begins. Recognition items such as stoles, cords, and other essentials are all eligible for the offer.

Take 15 percent off when you shop nehs.org/store through December 31.



Tell Us Your Story!

We are always looking for chapters to profile or clever project ideas to spotlight. Consider sharing your experience for a future issue of *NEHS News*. Email nehs@nehs.org with details and your contact information. We look forward to hearing from you!



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Be sure to
"like" the NEHS
Facebook page at
www.facebook.com/elementaryhonors for
inspiration, news, and
tips. (And to be sure
you see our posts, click
"Following," then
"See First.")



"The things that
make me different
are the things
that make
me ME."

Piglet (from
Winnie-the-Pooh)



Words of Wisdom

Here are some of our favorite quotes that you can use to begin a meeting, contribute to morning announcements, or at any other time when you're looking for motivational quotes to provide to your NEHS members or other students. What are some of your favorite inspirational quotes? Tell us on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/elementaryhonors.

"You must never be fearful about what you are doing when it is right." ROSA PARKS

"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much."
HELEN KELLER

"The true sign of intelligence is not knowledge but imagination." ALBERT EINSTEIN

"Be kind whenever possible. It is always possible."
THE DALAI LAMA

"The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time." THOMAS EDISON