



Charity Checklist

Get advice for choosing which charities your chapter should support.

Throughout the year, chapters ask the national office for guidance in determining how a charitable program can be evaluated for legitimacy. As you consider your options to partner with the chapter or your chapter members, use these points as part of your research.

- **Contacts.** It maintains a national point of contact (headquarters, office, etc.) and a point person for official interactions with participating schools can be identified; at the local level, there is a contact for the chapter adviser or principal.
- **External Validation.** It has been reviewed by groups such as Charity Navigator (www.charitynavigator.org) or Better Business Bureau (www.bbb.org) and posts the ratings publicly.
- **Lessons.** It has developed and makes available age-appropriate lesson plans for schools to use in connection with the program.
- **Mission.** The charitable organization maintains a meaningful mission that is expressed and explained for all to know; no aspect of this mission conflicts with the purpose of schools; a respect for student voice and a focus on student empowerment within this mission is valued.

- **National Capacity.** It is able to respond to requests for information and participation from the national audience that is associated with NASSP memberships; is relevant to all states.
- **The NASSP “List.”** If operating a contest, conference, or other activity to which students are invited to participate, such events have been approved by the NASSP National Committee on Student Contests, Programs, and Activities (www.nassp.org/contests) which lists programs that have been officially reviewed by NASSP based on several standards.
- **School Awareness.** The organization understands the school calendar; the priorities of teachers and administrators; the unique requirements of elementary, middle, and high school groups; and values the educational process.
- **Service Learning.** The program

incorporates the principles of service learning as a main component and delineates this in its materials; has developed meaningful and well-organized resources for teachers and students to use to learn about

the charity and the cause.

■ **Transparency.** It maintains transparent reporting on how all charitable donations are used to support the organizational mission.

■ **Turnkey.** Has developed a “turnkey” program that provides all forms, schedules, communications, resources, etc. for the

school from preplanning through evaluation.

Not all organizations will meet all of the criteria listed here, and some of these items may not apply to your current service and fundraising needs. However, you can use this as a framework to determine whether or not an organization is “legitimate” and will serve your chapter’s current needs and charitable efforts.



Use this checklist as a framework to determine whether or not an organization is “legitimate.”

ADVISER FAQs

Q: What steps should our chapter take when members fall below the membership standards or fail to meet the obligations of their membership?

A: Article 9 of the NEHS Constitution outlines the procedure for handling the discipline and dismissal of members. Each member is entitled to due process before any dismissal decision can be made.

Chapters must first identify the nature of the deficiency. If it does not involve a violation of school rules, a written warning and reasonable period of time for correction is required. Once the warning period has concluded and the member has fulfilled the terms outlined in the warning letter, the member is returned to good standing.

If the member remains deficient, the chapter may consider dismissing the member. In cases of pending dismissal, the member is entitled to a hearing with the faculty council. A majority vote is needed for dismissal.

Faculty councils are not required to dismiss, and chapters are encouraged to explore other disciplinary action in lieu of dismissal, to promote an inclusive approach to membership and to consider age-appropriate, positive disciplinary measures for members rather than resorting to the removal of students

In this issue, we answer your questions about membership standards.

from membership. Additional commentary is provided in the NEHS Handbook on pages 72–73.

Q: Can a student be considered for membership if they have a disciplinary record?

A: Yes. There is no automatic exclusion from consideration. Each academically eligible candidate should be offered the opportunity to be considered for membership. Candidates' conduct and disciplinary records can be taken into consideration during the faculty council's evaluation of their qualifications for membership. Per page 41 of the NEHS Handbook, "as with considerations of cumulative GPA where it is inappropriate to remove a student from eligibility simply because of a single low grade (even in the extreme case that a student earns a failing mark on a report card), a single low conduct grade or a single annotation of misbehavior in a student's disciplinary record should never automatically exclude a student from eligibility."

If the faculty council should determine that the candidate's conduct or disciplinary record does not meet the standards for membership, they may vote not to select the candidate for membership. A majority vote of the faculty council is required for selection.

ADVISER TIP

Induction Ceremony Assistance

If you are a new chapter, and don't have officers or current members in place to assist with your induction ceremony, consider reaching out to National Junior Honor Society and National Honor Society chapters in your community to assist with inducting your new members. This is a good way to network with area chapters, connect NEHS members with NJHS and NHS members, and establish continuity between the three Honor Society programs. While there is no automatic transition from NEHS to NJHS (or NJHS to NHS), establishing partnerships early on can help elementary students maintain and improve on the qualities that have already led to their early success.

Some NJHS and NHS chapters will allow their members to count this toward their individual or chapter service requirements, so don't hesitate to reach out to your secondary school counterparts for assistance as you navigate your way through your first induction experience.



CHAPTER PROFILE

It's Not Too Early to Start Building Leaders in our Schools

"I can't imagine leading a school without it," declares Kelly Andrews about her National Elementary Honor Society (NEHS) chapter. As principal of Charles Elementary School in Richmond, IN, she explains her Title I school sits in a community facing about a 75 percent poverty rate. The area has suffered from an economic decline spurred by the movement of its manufacturing base overseas. This challenging environment prompts Andrews to assert, "We need to grow college bound kids."

Her chapter faculty advisers and student members clearly get the message, as the chapter is morphing into its next stage of growth this year. Its activities had largely focused on fund-raising for a local children's hospital, and—while the chapter will continue to do things like that—it is now taking on activities with more of a service-project focus, such as peer tutoring and lunch buddy activities.

The student members are also putting more of a spotlight on their futures by bringing in guest speakers. "Lawyers, bankers, police officers—they're really starting to think about building some understanding of occupations and leadership. They're also looking at doing a parent career night or afternoon, where they bring in parents who can talk about their occupations."

Getting to this point has been an evolution over an eight-year period. Andrews began her association with NEHS in 2008–09 as principal of Garrison Elementary School, a K–6 building. Due to reconfiguration, Garrison closed in 2012, and the building was repopulated as a preK–4 school and renamed Charles Elementary. Starting all over again, the Charles NEHS



chapter was born. The intermediate school her students will attend after Charles does not have an NEHS chapter currently "but one of the goals of this group of kids this year is to get a chapter started [at the intermediate school] so they will have a group to go to," she explains.

Andrews' passion for the heritage of NEHS runs deep, since she was a member of NEHS's parent organizations: the National Junior Honor Society (NJHS) and National Honor Society (NHS). She reflects, "As a child, I was a people pleaser and a teacher pleaser and I wanted really good grades. So to actually be in the organization [NJHS and NHS] meant so much to me because it was the coolest thing in school. The kids who were in it were the leaders, and I wanted to be a leader early on. I've now earned five academic degrees and a doctoral degree."

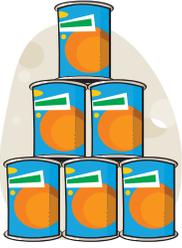
Andrews elaborates, "I think one of the things that Honor Society did was help me understand the service commitment to our community. I'm active on nonprofit boards. I'm now the president of the Indiana Association of School Principals. I'm a lifelong learner."

She notes, "The world is changing so rapidly and instilling success in students early on is really important. ... We want to grow leaders in our community and we need to start as early as fourth grade."



IDEA EXCHANGE

As you plan out your activities for the rest of the school year, consider doing one of these projects with your NEHS chapter members. For even more project ideas, log in to the National Student Project Database, which has more than 3,700 projects submitted by Honor Society chapters and student councils from around the country. Use your adviser login credentials to access the full database from the NEHS homepage at www.nehs.org.



CANNED FOOD DRIVE. As the holiday season and winter approaches, consider engaging your chapter members in charitable activities to provide much needed items to members of your school and local communities. Encourage your student body to participate in a schoolwide canned food drive. While this service project is a schoolwide effort, NEHS members can be responsible for establishing collection locations throughout the schools as well as collecting, counting, and sorting donated items.

Designate a local food pantry, homeless shelter, or other local organization as the recipient of your school's donations. To add fun and competition to this effort, keep track of which classrooms collect the most items and announce daily totals during the morning announcements. Engage your counseling department, lunch personnel, janitorial staff and front office staff as well. The chapter can consider offering a prize to the classroom that collects the most canned and nonperishable items, and smaller prizes to runners-up as well.

PEDIATRIC HOSPITAL BUCKETS. The NEHS members at Williams Heights Elementary School, in Waycross, GA, collect items for the pediatric wing of their local hospital each year in April. These items include coloring books, crayons, Play-Doh, Matchbox cars, activity books,

small stuffed animals, math flashcards, and other age appropriate items. The students then sort the items and place five to six in a bucket for either a boy or a girl. Once the buckets are full, they deliver them to the nurses in the pediatric wing. The buckets can be given to children who are patients to help pass the time while in the hospital room.

This is a relatively inexpensive service project (all items can be found at the dollar store) and the nurses love to receive them each year! And your chapter doesn't have to wait until April; this thoughtful project can take place year-round, and can be an ongoing effort by your chapter members and student body. Local family shelters and other organizations serving children may also be an option for this type of donation.

WARM MITTEN DRIVE. The National Junior Honor Society chapter at Accokeek Academy, in Accokeek, MD, sponsored a "warm mittens" drive and used the collected items to adorn their holiday tree in the school media center. The mittens remained as ornaments on the tree until it filled up, at which time they were donated to a local homeless shelter.

Your chapter can sponsor a similar drive, collecting mittens, hats, scarves, etc., to donate either to students in need who attend

your school or to individuals in the local community. Begin by establishing the schedule for the project. When will it begin, and for how long will you accept donations? Select convenient donation sites throughout your school and assign NEHS members to collect items at established times. Include reminders about the donations in your morning announcements and consider sending information about the drive home to parents. If any parents express a need for donations, arrange to set aside some items to be donated to students

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in your school, and the rest can be designated as community donations.

SUPPORTING HONOR FLIGHTS. The Needwood Middle School NJHS members from Brunswick, GA, left their homes and their eighth-grade prom on a Saturday night to be at the local airport to greet and show appreciation for their local World War II, Korean, and Vietnam veterans. The nonprofit organization Honor Flight Network had flown more than 40 local veterans to Washington, D.C., to visit the war memorials built to honor their service. The organizers asked that local citizens come to the airport to greet the veterans upon their return, so the NJHS students made posters thanking them for their service and stood along each side of the red carpet at the doorway to greet each veteran as they returned from D.C.

The NJHS members delivered carnations tied with patriotic ribbon to each veteran and greeted them with a handshake saying, "Thank you for your sacrifice and service." The veterans were thrilled to be greeted and given flowers by the students, and the students were excited and touched to be a part of this celebration. Parents who escorted their children to this service project were grateful that the children had been offered the opportunity to participate in the activity and were touched by the experience themselves.

Honor Flights take place year-round, and students of all grade levels can be included in these welcome home events. If your school is located near an airport, or if a convenient staging area can be agreed upon, consider involving your students (and their parents) in this show of appreciation for our nation's veterans. Visit www.honorflight.org for more information.

NEW STUDENT WELCOME. New students arrive in many schools throughout the year, both at the beginning of the year and after the first semester. Consider working with your counselor or registrar to identify transfer students and have an

THOUSANDS OF PROJECT IDEAS AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

Get inspired by more than 3,700 project ideas for community service, fundraising, civic activities, and more through the National Student Project Database. When you log in, you will have access to projects submitted by National Junior Honor Society and National Honor Society chapters, many of which can be adapted for elementary students. Use your adviser login credentials to access the full database, accessible from the www.nehs.org home page.



Do you have a project you'd like to share with other chapters? Please visit the National Student Project Database, and upload your project. Please include the date(s) the project took place.

NEHS member provide a personal tour to any new student joining your school in the new semester. Create a welcome letter or packet to share with the student and/or the student's parents. Include some information about your school and its history, a calendar of school events, and perhaps an invitation to functions from some of the other clubs on campus. If the student is from out of town, consider some highlights of the community and a calendar of local activities, perhaps even some samples from local business.

To prepare, have your chapter members select the highlights of the tour, write out descriptions, and then do a practice run to assure the availability of at least one member whenever called. Your chapter members will provide a warm welcome that will be appreciated by the student and their family.

Create a welcome letter or packet to share with the new student and/or the student's parents.

BY THE NUMBERS

WHAT ADVISERS ARE TELLING US

2015 E-Survey
RESULTS

CHAPTER/MEMBER DEMOGRAPHICS

40% MALE



60% FEMALE

SERVICE PROJECTS

TOTAL HOURS REPORTED

58,554

AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS
SPENT PER CHAPTER **325**



\$424,500

Total value of
service rendered

BASED ON THE VALUE PER HOUR OF SERVICE USING THE
MINIMUM WAGE OF \$7.25 AND THE TOTAL HOURS REPORTED

\$2,300

Value per
chapter

MOST COMMON CAUSES

Cancer awareness, research, and prevention

Leukemia and Lymphoma
Society/Pennies for Patients

American Cancer Society/
Relay for Life

Animals

Animal shelters
SPCA

Children's hospitals

Book drives/tutoring

Clothing collections



MONEY
RAISED

FOR CHARITABLE GIVING

\$110,400
TOTAL RAISED

AVERAGE AMOUNT RAISED
THROUGH COLLECTION DRIVES

that's
\$1,051

PER REPORTING CHAPTER

NEHS

Satisfaction RATING

98.9%

"Very Satisfied" or
"Satisfied" with services
received from NEHS

Benefits or services receiving the
highest ratings in order of value:

- NEHS National Handbook
- The national website,
www.nehs.org
- NEHS News (printed newsletter)

THANK YOU

to the advisers and principals
who took the time to respond
to this year's E-survey.

Look for the 2016 E-Survey coming in
April and plan to participate.

RESPONDENT STATISTICS

219

ADVISERS & PRINCIPALS
PARTICIPATED IN
THE SURVEY. THAT
REPRESENTS 14.6%
OF ALL CHAPTERS.

LOCATIONS
REPRESENTED

35

states & overseas,
coming from
CITY/TOWN*: 46%
URBAN: 21%
RURAL: 17%
SUBURBAN: 16%

NEHS In the News

Recent Induction: The Vivian Fowler Elementary School, Mount Pleasant, TX

The Sandra Campbell/Sue Edwards chapter of Vivian Fowler Elementary School joined the ranks of NEHS chapters in 2011, and the chapter recently inducted 39 new members. According to a news article in the *Mount Pleasant Daily Tribune*, the induction speaker was former student and NEHS chapter president Zaushalynn Lee, now a seventh-grader. Principal Cindy Davis concluded the event by acknowledging both the inductees and their parents. Judi Saxton, director of communication for the Mount Pleasant Independent School District, was quoted in the article saying, "These 39 students had to earn the privilege of being members of the National Elementary Honor Society; it is not something given to them. The district is proud of them. We know that they will



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE VIVIAN FOWLER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

gain a lot from their membership in this organization. Their experiences here will help set the tone for their future academic success as they move from elementary school to middle school, junior high school and eventually on to high school and beyond."

Has your chapter been featured in your local media? We'd love to hear from you! Send us a link and a photo (with photo credits) to nehs@nehs.org, subject: NEHS in the News.

Looking for some holiday cheer?

Find it in the NEHS Adviser Store! Celebrate your chapter and students with items like the NEHS ornament, a window cling, or a Watson teddy bear.

Shop now and get 15% off with promo code HOL15A. Hurry! The offer is good until January 15, 2016. Questions regarding sales orders can be directed to sales@nehs.org, or 866-647-7253.

store.nehs.org

We want to hear from you!

Do you have a resource to share? Books to recommend? Would your chapter make for a great profile story? Share your ideas and input with the national staff by emailing nehs@nehs.org.



NEHS is a program of the National Association of Secondary School Principals in partnership with the NAESP (National Association of Elementary School Principals) Foundation.

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NEHS News is the official newsletter of the National Elementary Honor Society, published four times a year in fall, winter, spring, and summer by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NAESP), 1904 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191-1537. Telephone: 703-860-0200. Website: www.nehs.org.
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NEHS is a program of NASSP

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Permit No. 480

NEHS NEWS

WINTER 2015

WHERE'S WATSON?

Watson, the official NEHS mascot, is quite the experienced traveler and is anxious to hit the road again—and he could be coming to your school! He is available to travel to visit chapters around the country to learn about any service projects and chapter activities that are currently underway. He'll even

show up for your induction ceremony!

If you'd like to have Watson visit your school, please email the national office at nehs@nehs.org with the adviser contact information, school name and location, and the date(s) of your event(s). Please contact the national office at least two weeks prior.



For more inspirational quotes, “like” the official NEHS Facebook page at www.facebook.com/elementaryhonors.

“If you can imagine it,
you can create it.
If you can dream it,
you can become it.”

WILLIAM ARTHUR WARD