

# **By-Laws of the Mitchell Chapter of the National Honor Society Of Secondary Schools**

**Revised 2014**

## **Article I – Name**

The name of this chapter shall be Mitchell Chapter of the National Honor Society Of Secondary Schools, Mimar Chapter.

## **Article II – Purpose**

The National Honor Society is an organization established to recognize and foster the characteristics of service, leadership, scholarship, and character in outstanding high school students.

## **Article III Powers Vested in the Organization**

Section 1. At the local level, the principal has the right to approve all activities and decisions of the chapter. The authority extends to selection and dismissal of members. The principal cannot serve as chapter advisor and is not a member of the voting Faculty Council. The principal shall receive appeals in cases of non-selection of candidates and in cases of the disciplining or dismissal of members. The principal appoints and works closely with the chapter advisor and the Faculty Council to develop and follow fair selection and dismissal procedures consistent with the Constitution.

Section 2. The advisor works with the Faculty Council in selecting members. The Faculty Council shall consist of five instructors employed by the Mitchell Jr/Sr High School and appointed annually by the advisor pending the principal's approval. The advisor and the Faculty Council shall cooperate in developing, implementing, and periodically reviewing all local and dismissal procedures and guidelines. No principal may be on the Faculty Council.

## **Article IV – Membership**

Section 1. Membership in this chapter shall be based on scholarship, leadership, character and service, as defined in the National Handbook and reprinted in Appendix II.

Section 2. Members of this chapter shall be known as active or graduate. The graduate members have no vote. Active members become graduate members at graduation.

Section 3. Differing standards and procedures among chapters may cause difficulty for students who transfer schools. A National Honor Society member who transfers from another school and brings a letter from the former principal or chapter advisor to the Mitchell advisor shall be accepted automatically as a member of the Mitchell chapter. In cases where the cumulative GPA standard of the Mitchell chapter is higher than that of the former school or when the requirements for the Mitchell chapter are more stringent than those of the former school, transfer students must meet the Mitchell standards within one semester in order to retain membership. It is the obligation of the student, when transferring schools, to notify the advisor of the new school's chapter of his/her membership.

Section 4. Members who resign or are dismissed are never again eligible for membership or its benefits.

### **Article V – Selection of Members**

Section 1. Candidates shall have been in attendance at Mitchell High School for a period equivalent to one semester, and shall be members of the sophomore, junior, or senior class.

Section 2. After completing the first quarter of the sophomore year, with an overall cumulative average of at least 94%, a student will be considered eligible for membership. Students will be informed in writing that they are academically eligible to complete a Student Activity Form in order to be considered for selection to the National Honor Society. Such forms can be obtained from the National Honor Society advisor. Eligible students must return the completed and signed Student Activity Information Form by the deadline designated by the National Honor Society advisor.

Section 3. The names of the eligible students who have filled out a Student Activity Form will be placed on a form and distributed to all faculty members of the Mitchell Jr/Sr High School who will consider and rank the students in elements of leadership, character, and service. The Faculty Council will appoint a cut-off score for National Honor Society prior to reading the candidates forms. Students above the cutoff score will be accepted into National Honor Society in accordance with the National Handbook. However, those who fall below the cutoff, because 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 will review their forms first in order to make a sound professional judgment regarding selection or non-selection.

### **Article VI – Meetings**

Section 1. The first meeting will be held in the fall with other meetings for the year to be determined.

Section 2. Meetings will be held monthly for all members of the National Honor Society and twice a month for Executive Committee members.

Section 3. The last meeting of the year shall be for the election of officers for the following year.

Section 4. Special meetings may be called by the advisor or by the president with the advisor's approval.

Section 5. All meetings shall be open meetings and shall be held under the sponsorship of the faculty advisor.

### **Article VII – Procedures for the Election of Officers**

Section 1. The officers of this chapter shall be a president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer, project chairman, and publicity chairman.

Section 2. Nominations for officers shall come from active members and shall not exceed five for any position.

Section 3. A majority of votes cast shall be necessary to elect any officer of this chapter. If the first vote does not yield a majority, a second vote shall be taken on the candidates who have received the highest number of votes.

Section 4. In the case of dereliction of duties, an officer may be replaced by vote of the chapter. In the case that the president is found in dereliction of duties, the vice-president shall take over the responsibilities of president and a new vice-president shall be elected by the chapter.

### **Article VIII – Duties/Responsibilities of Organization, Officers, Advisors, and Members**

Section 1. The election of members to this chapter shall be by a coordinated effort of faculty members of the Mitchell Jr/Sr High School, the Faculty Council, and the advisor.

Section 2. All members shall continue to reflect the standards that were originally met in becoming a member – scholarship (94% or better), character, leadership, and service. Any member who falls below the academic standard which was the basis for his/her election to membership shall be promptly warned. A National Honor Society member must maintain the academic standard for membership in order to retain his/her membership. A member will be allowed only one warning for academic deficiencies.

Section 3. Upon request, an active member of the National Honor Society who transfers from this school will be given a letter indicating the status of his/her membership and signed by the principal.

Section 4. An active member of the National Honor Society who transfers to this school will be notified of the local school's academic requirements and will be given one semester to meet the established standards.

Section 5. It shall be the duty of the president to preside at the meetings.

Section 6. The vice-president shall fill the chair of the president in his/her absence. The vice president will be responsible for organizing a committee to collect graduation stoles after the graduation ceremony. Such committee will be composed of members who are not part of the graduating class.

Section 7. The secretary shall keep all minutes of the meetings of business and all records on file. The secretary shall also certify to the school principal the number of National Honor Society members enrolled in each class and the names of those elected to membership in this chapter.

Section 8. The treasurer shall receive and disburse all funds of the chapter with advisor approval and shall keep an accurate account of receipts and disbursements in accordance with school regulations.

Section 9. The project chairman, in conjunction with the president and the advisor, shall be responsible for coordinating activities. Such activities include, but are not limited to: National Honor Society fundraisers, National Honor Society community service projects, and National Honor Society induction ceremony practice and set up.

Section 10. The publicity chairman shall be responsible for submitting activity results to the Activities Director and local media outlets. The publicity chairman will also be responsible for the upkeep of the National Honor Society display case.

Section 11. An executive committee shall be composed of the chapter officers and the chapter advisor. The executive committee helps direct the business activities of the chapter. This committee determines dues structures (not to exceed \$20.00/year – membership cannot be denied because of a student's inability to pay), makes recommendations concerning the by-laws, and determines time and place of meetings, meeting agendas, and special projects.

Section 12. All members will attend National Honor Society meetings as called. If not able to attend, the member shall notify the advisor in advance or the absence shall be considered unexcused.

Section 13. All members will remain active in at least three (3) school activities during the junior and senior year. (NHS counts as one.) School activities include participation in school sponsored sports, One Acts, Speech, School Musical, Jazz Band, Swing Choir, Science Club, Quiz Bowl, or other school sponsored organizations.

Section 14. All chapters are required to sponsor a chapter service project and all members are required to participate, assuming that the project meets the criteria as outlined in the constitution.

Section 15. In addition to the chapter service project, members are to engage in additional service according to their own talents and interests. Each member will complete eight (8) hours of individual service. Such service should be approved by the chapter advisor prior to service. A form shall be completed for each service project undertaken. Forms for individual service may be obtained from the chapter advisor.

Section 16. All members will take part in the annual induction ceremony while in Mitchell High School.

### **Article IX – Statement of Rights**

Section 1. The student is a member for life unless removed for cause as outlined in Article XIII of the By-Laws of the Mitchell Chapter (see below).

Section 2. At graduation from Mitchell High School, a student in good standing will wear the National Honor Society stole, which will be returned to the advisor following graduation.

### **Article X – Rules for Conducting Society Business**

Meetings shall be conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order.

### **Article XI – Amending By-Laws**

By-Laws may be amended as deemed necessary by the National Honor Society members pending ratification procedures.

## **Article XII – Ratification of By-Laws**

Section 1. Chapter by-laws will be approved by majority vote of the current National Honor Society members, subject to the approval of the Faculty Council, principal, and advisor.

Section 2. Sections dealing with revisions to the procedures for selection, discipline, and dismissal of members can be changed only by approval of the Faculty Council. A majority vote by the Faculty Council is required to ratify such change.

Section 3. By-laws shall be reviewed annually by the National Honor Society members.

## **Article XIII – Discipline and Dismissal of Members**

Section 1. The National Honor Society Faculty Council will use the following procedure for disciplinary action deemed necessary. A majority vote of the Faculty Council will be needed to proceed with any disciplinary action.

- a. A written warning will be given for minor disciplinary problems.
- b. Students who continue to disregard the standards of National Honor Society will be placed on probation. Probationary status will continue into subsequent school years.
- c. Students who disregard these preliminary warnings will be dismissed from National Honor Society.
- d. Any student who is put on probation or dismissed from National Honor Society may appeal and present his or her case to the National Honor Society Faculty Council and to the principal.

Section 2. A student may be dismissed from National Honor Society for a decline in his/her scholastic achievement that puts their cumulative GPA below 94%. A student whose cumulative GPA falls below the 94% level will be promptly warned. If, during the next semester, the member fails to meet the standards used as a basis for election to the society, his/her case will be reviewed by the National Honor Society advisor and the Faculty Council, and dismissal may result. Any student who has not met the standards used as a basis for election to the society by graduation may be immediately dismissed from National Honor Society via Faculty Council vote and shall not be allowed to wear the National Honor Society stole during the graduation ceremony.

Section 3. Students will also be referred to the advisor and may be dismissed from National Honor Society membership for incidents involving cheating, stealing, MIP, DUI, drug-related incidents, or any other criminal act. A warning is not required for possible dismissal. Instead, for such infractions the Faculty Council will immediately proceed to the second step of the due process for dismissal as outlined in Appendix I. Any member involved in repeated violations of school regulations may have his/her actions reviewed by the advisor and the Faculty Council.

Section 4. Students may be dismissed for non-compliance to the absence/tardy policy. The following absence/tardy policy will be applicable to all National Honor Society members.

- a. All members are expected to attend the meetings of National Honor Society and be punctual.
- b. If a member has two unexcused absences in a single school year, the member will be placed on probation. On the third absence, the person may be dismissed from National Honor Society membership. If the member has an excused absence from school, the member will also be excused from the National Honor Society meeting.
- c. A member will be considered tardy if arriving over five minutes late. Two tardies will be considered an absence. A student may be excused for late arrival if he or she notifies the advisor in advance of such need.
- d. Tardies will not carry over from one school year to the next. However, an accumulation of four absences during a student's membership may result in dismissal from National Honor Society.

Section 5. A student may be dismissed from National Honor Society for failure to fulfill his or her obligations as outlined in Article VIII of the Mitchell National Honor Society By-laws (see above).

Section 6. Summer violations are also grounds for dismissal.

Section 7. All students are entitled to due process in accordance with established policy for Mitchell High School. See Appendix I for the Due Process for Dismissal. Once a student is dismissed, he/she is never again eligible for membership in National Honor Society.

Section 8. Once removed from National Honor Society, the student cannot continue to use membership in National Honor Society on resumes or on scholarship applications.

#### **Article XIV – Emblem**

Section 1. Each member of the chapter shall be entitled to display the insignia adopted by the National Honor Society of Secondary Schools.

Section 2. Any member who withdraws or is dismissed from the chapter shall return the certificate and membership card.

# **Appendix I – Due Process for Dismissal from the National Honor Society**

1. The advisor, the principal, or the Faculty Council becomes aware of a possible violation of chapter by-laws.
2. The advisor meets with the Faculty Council to decide if there are grounds for dismissal from National Honor Society.
3. A member may be allowed limited warnings during his or her membership, but in the case of any violation of school rules justifying suspension or expulsion, or in the case of being found guilty of any criminal act under civil law – whether a misdemeanor or a felony – a warning is not required for dismissal, but a hearing will still be held. The hearing is identified in the constitution as a right of membership, and is guaranteed as “due process as identified by the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment of the U.S. Constitution.” This requires the chapter to notify the member of the action being contemplated, the reason(s) for the action, the date and time of the hearing, and the opportunity for the member to respond either in writing or orally. The student may be accompanied by parents or guardians.
4. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Advisor and the Faculty Council will meet in closed session to vote and render a decision.
5. The student will be notified in writing of the committee’s decision.
6. The committee’s decision may be appealed as per the school’s Due Process Procedures.

# **Appendix II – Definition of Leadership, Character, and Service**

## **Definitions of National Honor Society Qualities**

The National Honor Society Handbook - 16<sup>th</sup> Edition lists the following visible indications of a student who possesses leadership, service, and character.

### **1. Leadership - He or she:**

- 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 and spirit
- 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, or in other school or community activities (p. 29)

### **2. Service – He or she:**

- 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 interclass and interscholastic competition
- Does committee and staff work without complaint
- Participates in some activity outside of school (e.g., 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. (p. 31)

### **3. Character – He or she:**

- Takes criticism willingly and accepts recommendations graciously
- Consistently exemplifies desirable qualities of behavior (e.g., cheerfulness, friendliness, poise, stability)
- 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
- Manifests truthfulness in acknowledging obedience to rules, avoiding cheating in written work, and showing an unwillingness to profit by the mistakes of others
- Actively helps rid the school of bad influences or environment. (p. 31)