

**National Honor Society
Stillman Valley High School
Frequently Asked Questions**

The Stillman Valley High School Chapter of the National Honor Society inducts new members in the second semester of each school year. Prior to induction, prospective members are required to submit a membership application. Each application is reviewed, a character evaluation is considered, and a decision on membership is made by a committee of faculty members called the Faculty Council. Those students whose membership is accepted are installed at an induction ceremony in the spring of the school year.

Here are some frequently asked questions that may help you understand what is required of prospective members and the application process.

1. Who may apply for membership in NHS?

Any Stillman Valley High School student in his/her junior or senior year may apply for membership in NHS providing he/she first meets the minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) requirements. Other criteria for membership include: teacher character evaluation, participation in extracurricular and community activities, and a commitment to community service. Senior students who have previously applied but were not accepted for membership in NHS during their junior year are highly encouraged to submit a new application their senior year.

2. What are the minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) requirements for membership in NHS?

Prospective members must have a minimum GPA of a 3.0. Current members must maintain a 3.0 GPA to retain membership in NHS. Current members whose GPA falls below 3.0 are put on probation for one semester, ending with a review of the student's GPA after the probationary period. Members on probation who do not raise their GPA above 3.0 after the probationary period are subject to faculty review and possible revocation of the student's membership in NHS.

3. How do I apply for membership in NHS?

Students who are interested in applying for membership in NHS are required to complete a membership application. An application may be acquired by downloading it from the high school website. The application consists of two parts. The first part asks the student to provide information on extracurricular activities, leadership positions, community involvement, and service activities. The second part is a character evaluation which is completed by the faculty of Stillman Valley High School.

4. When do I apply for membership in NHS?

At the beginning of the second semester an invitation to apply will be delivered to any Jr/Sr who meets the GPA requirement. A specific and final deadline date for applying will be listed on the invitation letter. This deadline will NOT be extended; therefore, all applications must be turned in on or before this deadline date, or the application will not be accepted. NO EXCEPTIONS!!!! In addition, students who apply for membership in NHS are not automatically invited to join NHS. The application is used by the Faculty Council as one of the criteria for membership, along with the student's GPA, disciplinary record, and teacher recommendations.

5. When will I know if I've been accepted for membership in NHS?

Invitations to join the National Honor Society will be mailed to the applicant's home address prior to the induction ceremony. An announcement will be made at the end of the school day after all applications have been considered. Those students who are not offered membership have the right to speak with the advisor concerning the reason(s) for the applicant not being extended an invitation for membership into NHS.

6. Besides scholarship, what are the other criteria for membership in NHS?

The National Honor Society requires members to demonstrate leadership in and outside of school, perform service to their school and community, possess a character of high morals and ethics, and demonstrates citizenship by their membership in school and community organizations. The Chapter requires prospective members to list and describe their extracurricular activities, their leadership positions in these activities, their involvement in school and community activities, and the types and number of service hours performed in each of their high school years.

7. What are extracurricular activities?

Extracurricular activities include membership in school or community sports teams, band, chorus, musical, clubs, internships, part-time jobs, etc.

8. What is considered a leadership position?

A leadership position is any position in which the student had to manage, motivate, and oversee other people. These leadership positions can be elected or appointed positions in student government, clubs, or community organizations. Leadership positions can be associated with a particular service or community project. Work-related leadership positions (such as store manager, assistant manager, team leader, etc) are also acceptable.

9. What part does character play in the application process?

The SVHS Chapter of NHS holds in high esteem the character of its members. The faculty of SVHS will rate the character of each of the applicants and that will be used as a piece of the selection process. Therefore, students who have violated the SVHS target program or have been subject to disciplinary measures by Stillman Valley High School will most likely NOT be accepted for membership in NHS. While the likelihood of a student being granted membership in NHS for these types of infractions is slim, the student may still submit his/her application. Students who choose to do so are highly encouraged to also submit a detailed explanation of the circumstances of the infraction as well as what the student learned from being involved in this infraction.

10. What are community activities?

Membership in NHS requires active participation in the community outside of school. Community organizations include: Boy and Girl Scouts, Rockford Rescue Mission, Neighborhood Watch, community sports leagues (as a volunteer and not as a participant), service organizations like the Rotary Club or the Lions Club, professional groups like the Chamber of Commerce, Adopt-a-Highway or similar environmental groups or activities, local chapters of national charity organizations such as the American Cancer Society or American Red Cross, religious organizations such as church/synagogue/mosque, youth or mission groups, etc. Many of the activities of these types of volunteer organizations would fall under the "Service Hours" heading of the membership application. For instance, if you volunteered with the Red Cross two hours per week, you may list your involvement with the Red Cross in the "Community Activities" part of the application and the service hours performed as a Red Cross volunteer would be listed in the "Service Hours" section of the membership application.

11. What are service hours?

Service hours are the amount of time a student is involved in activities for which he or she receives no compensation. The student participates in these activities as a volunteer and with a “positive, courteous, and enthusiastic spirit.” Compensation does not only mean a monetary reward. Service hours that are performed in order to receive or boost a class grade or to satisfy the requirements of a class may not be used as part of a student’s application to NHS. In addition, service hours performed so a student may be rewarded with a trip, prize, or other non-monetary reward may not be included in the student’s application to NHS. The exception to this is any service activity associated with the Boy/Girl Scouts or similar organization whereby the student is recognized with a badge or similar type of award or recognition.

12. How many service hours do I need for membership in NHS?

For prospective members to NHS, there is no magic number of service hours needed for admission. However, in reviewing the application of prospective members, the Faculty Council takes into consideration some factors concerning service hours. First, the Faculty Council looks at the overall commitment to service on the part of the student. In doing so, the Council considers whether or not the student participates in a number of different service projects and activities. Second, the Faculty Council considers if the student demonstrates a consistent commitment to community service. In doing so, the Council looks at frequency of the service activity (i.e. once a week, once a month, or once a year). Students who have participated in a number of service projects on a consistent basis throughout their high school career are looked upon more favorably than those students who have never participated in service activities or who do so on an infrequent basis.

13. What should I include on my application?

In short: EVERYTHING! Leaving something out because there is not enough room on the application, you are too lazy, you are rushing through the application, you forgot, or you did not feel the information is significant might hurt your chances for acceptance into NHS. Typically, the Faculty Council is looking for a well-rounded student focused on academic success and who has a deep commitment in service to the community. Leaving important areas on the application blank will only diminish the chances of admission. This is not to say if you don’t have, for example, any leadership positions listed you will not get into NHS, but it certainly means the rest of your activities have to be that much stronger. While omitting relevant information on your application that would help the Faculty Council consider you for admission to NHS is not wise, fabricating or making up information on your application is much worse. The members of the Faculty Council are experienced teachers who are highly involved in their communities and generally know what sort of volunteer activities are available to young people. All volunteer activities listed on the student’s application must also include a contact name and telephone number or email address in order to verify the applicant’s service hours and activities.