

*Constitution of the James S. Rickards High School  
Adlai Stevenson Chapter of the National Honor Society*

**Article I**

**Name and Purpose**

**Section 1:** The name of this chapter shall be the Adlai Stevenson Chapter of the National Honor Society of Secondary Schools, which appears on the charter granted by the National Honor Society duly signed by the National Secretary.

**Section 2:** The purpose of this chapter shall be to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in the students of Rickards High School.

**Article II**

**Membership**

**Section 1:** Membership in this chapter shall be based upon scholarship, service, leadership, and character.

**Section 2:** Membership of this chapter shall be known as active or graduate. Upon graduation, members move to graduate status and are no longer able to vote on chapter business.

**Section 3:** Current sophomores, juniors, and seniors who have attended Rickards High School for at least one semester and have an unweighted cumulative GPA of 3.0 shall be eligible for membership.

**Section 4:** Candidates become members upon their induction at a special ceremony.

**Section 5:** Transfer students are automatically accepted into this chapter if they were members in good standing of the Honor Society at their previous school. Transfer students must produce a letter from the principal or sponsor of their previous chapter stating their Honor Society status.

**Section 6:** Members who resign or are dismissed from the chapter are never again eligible for membership or its benefits in this or any other chapter.

**Article III**

**Selection of Members**

**Section 1:** Members of this chapter of the National Honor Society shall be selected based on their meeting the GPA requirements, completing the application in a satisfactory manner, and positive recommendations from the school faculty and staff. The school principal shall have final say if these conditions are questionable in any way.

**Section 2:** All candidates who have an unweighted GPA of 3.0 or higher will be notified of their eligibility and invited to attend an introductory meeting and receive a student information packet, containing their application and instructions.

**Section 3:** Only applications returned on time will be considered for membership.

**Section 4:** Candidates selected for membership will be pinned during school by the NHS officers, and at that time, will be invited to the induction ceremony.

**Article IV**  
**Discipline/Dismissal of Members**

**Section 1:** All members of the chapter shall be subject to the following regulations:

- i. Each member must maintain a 3.0 unweighted cumulative GPA.
- ii. Each member must pay annual dues by the date announced at the first general meeting of the new school year (also stated in Article XIII, sections 4 and 5 of this constitution).
- iii. All members must attend general meetings. Members can miss no more than two general meetings (unexcused) per semester. If the excuse for missing a meeting is questioned or undocumented, it will be determined by the Faculty Council as to whether or not it is excused.
- iv. All members must acquire 30 service points per semester.
- v. All members must follow all school rules and civil laws.

**Section 2:** Any member who fails to maintain the standards used for membership selection shall face disciplinary action and possible dismissal from the National Honor Society. Failure to maintain the selection standards, including a 3.0 unweighted GPA, good citizenship (no "1s", suspensions, or reported referrals by teachers), attendance of regular meetings, participation in service projects and accumulation of the required number of service points (30 per semester), will result in the following consequences:

- i. A written warning from the advisor will be given to the member, and a letter will be sent home to the member's parent/guardian advising them that their current membership status may be in jeopardy if remediating actions are not taken.
- ii. The possibility of an appearance before the Faculty Council to explain the circumstances of the infraction, with their determination as to the consequences. **Dismissal is a possibility, and the Faculty Council will make the final decision.** If a member is dismissed, a letter to that effect will be sent home to the parent/guardian.

**Section 3:** If a member has fallen below the required 3.0 unweighted, cumulative GPA, the course of disciplinary action will be as follows:

- i. The advisor will send a letter home to the member and parent/guardian advising them of the situation. The member will be given the following 9-week grading period to raise his/her GPA to the required level.
- ii. If, after that 9-week period, the GPA is still below the required level, that member will be dismissed and a letter of notification will be sent to both the student and the parent/guardian.

**Section 4:** If a member fails to earn 30 service points during a semester, the course of disciplinary action will be as follows:

- i. A letter will be to both the student and the parent/guardian notifying them of the situation.
- ii. The member will be offered a chance to appear before the Faculty Council to explain the circumstances of their deficiency, and propose a corrective plan. The Faculty Council, after hearing the plea, will determine the appropriate action to take on behalf of each case. **Dismissal is a possibility.**

- iii. In the event that remedial action is proposed by the Faculty Council, the member will be given a time period in which to complete the remedial plan. If the member fails to meet the terms of the Council by the stated date, the member will be dismissed.
- iv. If the member makes an appointment to appear before the Faculty Council and fails to appear at the appropriate time, the member will be dismissed immediately.
- v. Any member that is dismissed will receive written notification of same, as well as having a letter sent to their parent/guardian.
- vi. **Termination is final and irrevocable, unless successfully appealed** (refer to Section 5, below). **Member will not be eligible for reinstatement in this or any other high school chapter of the National Honor Society.**

**Section 5:** A dismissed member may appeal the decision of the Faculty Council, under the Leon County School District policies governing disciplinary appeals. The principal is usually the first recipient of the appeal.

**Section 6:** Upon dissatisfaction of the chapter with an officer, the chapter may vote to remove the officer from his/her position. A two-thirds vote of members present at a general meeting shall constitute the removal of an officer.

- i. The dismissed officer shall not be removed from the chapter itself unless he/she infringes upon the regulations in Sections 1 – 4 of Article IV.
- ii. The removal of an officer shall not be appealed or reversed.
- iii. In the event of a vacancy, the president shall appoint a successor with the approval of the chapter by a two-thirds vote of those present at a general meeting.
- iv. In the event that the president is dismissed, the vice-president shall be promoted to the presidency, and the treasurer shall be promoted to vice-president. The treasurer may, however, decline the promotion. The new president shall then appoint a new treasurer (or vice president) with the approval of a two-thirds vote by the chapter (of those present at the general meeting).

## **Article V Officers**

**Section 1:** The officers of this chapter shall be president, vice president, recording secretary, corresponding secretary, treasurer, historian, and sergeant-at-arms.

**Section 2:** A majority of the votes cast shall be necessary to elect chapter officers.

**Section 3:** New officers shall be installed during the same ceremony as the induction of new members, in the spring of each school year.

**Section 4:** The duties of the officers are as follows:

- i. **President:** Shall conduct all meetings and oversee all business of the chapter. The President must be a senior and have been in NHS for a full school year.
- ii. **Vice-President:** Shall conduct all meetings in the absence of the President. The Vice-President shall keep track of all service points and attendance. The Vice-President shall update and publish the records of points and attendance at least

twice a semester for members, advisor, and Faculty Council to refer to as necessary.

- iii. Treasurer: Shall collect all dues and must notify the advisor and the President of members who have failed to pay their dues by the appointed date. The Treasurer shall be responsible for all financial transactions between the chapter and the school, such as making deposits and requesting checks for payment of club expenses. The Treasurer shall keep an updated record of chapter finances at all times, and make a report of this to the advisor and the President as requested. The handling of cash at fundraising events must be done by or under the supervision of the club advisor or an affiliated adult appointed by the advisor (as specified by Leon County School District regulations).
- iv. Corresponding Secretary: Shall act as a link between the officers, officers and members, chapter and student body, and persons outside of the school involved in chapter projects. The Corresponding Secretary shall create and maintain an accurate telephone/email directory of all members, and is responsible for the sending of any thank-you cards from the chapter.
- v. Recording Secretary: Shall record the minutes and attendance of all meetings, and have those minutes available upon request.
- vi. Historian: Shall take pictures at all NHS events and service projects, and publish these pictures periodically (at least twice per semester) on the NHS website. Historian will produce a video scrapbook presentation for viewing at the induction ceremony.
- vii. Sergeant-at-Arms: Shall be responsible for calling to, and maintaining, order during all general meetings, and for dismissing members who cannot follow procedure during these meetings.

**Section 5:** The officers and sponsor of the chapter shall comprise the Executive Board, described in the following terms:

- i. The Executive Board shall be in charge of all general meetings and business of the chapter.
- ii. The Executive Board shall hold regular during the school year and, if possible, during the summer.
- iii. The Executive Board shall vote on matters of business concerning the chapter, except for the dismissal of an officer.
- iv. The President shall not vote on matters of business before the Executive Board unless there is a tie vote. The President may vote in elections. The advisor should never need to vote on matters of business, and will not vote in officer elections.
- v. All actions of the Executive Board are subject to the review of the chapter, Faculty Council, and school administration upon request.

## **Article VI Principal**

**Section 1:** The principal shall reserve the right to approve all activities and decisions of the chapter.

**Section 2:** The principal shall annually appoint a member of the faculty as the chapter advisor who may serve consecutive terms.

**Section 3:** The principal shall receive appeals in cases of non-selection of candidates, and the disciplining of members.

**Section 4:** The principal shall appoint or approve annual selection of members of the Faculty Council, and may review their decision-making procedures at any time.

## **Article VII**

### **Chapter Advisor**

**Section 1:** The chapter advisor shall be responsible for the day-to-day supervision of the chapter, and will act as a liaison between the faculty, administration, students, and community.

**Section 2:** The chapter advisor shall maintain files on membership, chapter history, activities, and financial transactions. The chapter advisor shall maintain correspondence with and pay annual dues to the national office in a timely manner.

**Section 3:** The chapter advisor shall regularly review each member for compliance with society standards and obligations.

**Section 4:** The chapter advisor shall help the chapter officers understand and carry out their duties.

**Section 5:** The chapter advisor shall be an ex-officio, non-voting, sixth member of the Faculty Council.

**Section 6:** The chapter advisor shall be a member of the faculty, appointed annually by the principal, and may serve consecutive terms.

## **Article VIII**

### **Faculty Council**

**Section 1:** The Faculty Council shall consist of five voting faculty members at any given meeting. The chapter advisor shall be an ex-officio, non-voting, sixth member of the Faculty Council. ***No principal or assistant principal may be included on the Faculty Council.***

**Section 2:** Faculty members may volunteer to serve one or more consecutive years on the Faculty Council. The principal shall retain the right to approve and/or select all volunteers to the Council.

**Section 3:** The term of the Faculty Council shall be one year. Members may be appointed to consecutive terms.

**Section 4:** The Faculty Council will be called to hear the cases of any members who have failed to meet the requirements of the chapter but wish to regain their good standing, and will determine if they are justified in retaining their membership and, if so, under what conditions.

**Section 5:** The Faculty Council shall be available to develop and revise, when necessary, policies and procedures for selection, disciplining, and dismissal of members, all of which must remain in compliance with the national guidelines.

**Section 6:** The Faculty Council shall not be mandated to meet on a regular basis, but shall be summoned as needed.

## **Article IX**

### **Meetings and Attendance**

**Section 1:** There shall be regular bimonthly meetings of the chapter during the school year. Executive Board meetings will also occur bimonthly, as well as during the summer if desired.

**Section 2:** Special meetings, approved by the Executive Board, may be called by the chapter president.

**Section 3:** Any member who is disruptive during the meeting will be warned by the Sergeant-at-Arms. If the member continues to be a disruption, he/she will be dismissed from the meeting and will not receive points for attending, nor will the absence be counted as excused.

**Section 4:** If a member misses a meeting, it is his/her responsibility to read the minutes from that meeting.

## **Article X Attendance**

**Section 1:** Attendance of all general meetings of the chapter is required of all members. Two unexcused absences in a semester constitutes grounds for disciplinary action, as described in Article IV.

**Section 2:** Members must be present for more than half of a general meeting in order to receive credit for attending. Officers are not required to let members enter the meeting room once the meeting has begun.

**Section 3:** Attendance at all Executive Board meetings (also referred to as "Officer's Meetings") is required. Failure to attend 3 Executive Board meetings per semester is grounds to be dismissed as an acting officer, as per Article IV.

**Section 4:** Excuses for missed meetings must be written and delivered to the vice-president. The Executive Board will determine if the absence shall be excused or unexcused.

## **Article XI Elections**

**Section 1:** The election of new officers shall be held during the first general meeting of April.

**Section 2:** Each candidate shall be given one minute to address the chapter, and then members shall vote by secret ballot.

**Section 3:** Voting will be conducted as follows:

- i. Members will vote for one office at a time, beginning with President, followed by Vice-President, Treasurer, Corresponding Secretary, Recording Secretary, Historian, and Sergeant-at-Arms.
- ii. Members will vote only for those students who were duly nominated prior to the election.
- iii. After the first office has been voted on, the advisor will tally the votes and the results will be announced to the chapter.
- iv. After the results of each office have been announced, the remaining candidates are given the opportunity to "slide down" to the next office to be voted on if they would like to be considered for the position.
- v. Members must be present in order to vote, and must stay for the entire voting process to be completed.

**Section 4:** Installation of the new officers shall take place during the spring Induction Ceremony.

**Article XII  
Service**

**Section 1:** The Executive Board shall plan at least three service projects for the year.

**Section 2:** The service projects shall have the following characteristics: fulfill a need within the school or community, have the support of the administration and the faculty, be appropriate, be educationally defensible, and be well-planned, and well-organized and well-executed.

**Section 3:** The chapter shall publicize its projects in a positive manner.

**Section 4:** Participating in service projects, attending meetings, and other such chapter activities shall constitute the accumulation of service points for each member as described in the following terms:

- i. All members shall be required to earn no less than **30 service points per semester**. Failure to do so constitutes grounds for disciplinary actions as described in Article IV. Ten (10) documented outside community service points will be allowed to be credited towards the 30 points per semester. The Executive Board, and in some special cases the Faculty Council, will determine whether any particular outside service opportunities are acceptable for credit.
- ii. Service points shall be awarded in the following manner;

Attending a general or Executive Board meeting	1 pt./mtg.
Participating in an NHS service project	2 pts./hr.
Committee member	1 pt./hr.
Committee Chairperson	1 extra point
Outside service project	1 pt./hr. (max. 10 pts.)

\*Special projects may have separate point schedules, which will be announced prior to the event or project.

**Article XIII  
Dues**

**Section 1:** Dues for the chapter will be collected annually by the Treasurer.

**Section 2:** Annual dues will include funds to cover our national membership dues and the cost of a chapter t-shirt to be worn at our public events. These dues should not exceed \$20.00 per year.

**Section 3:** Funds collected which are not used for either of the two expenditures listed above will be placed in the chapter's general fund (which is subject to accountability by Rickards High School and the Leon County School District) and used for various chapter and altruistic activities. The expenditure of these funds will be determined by the Executive Board.

**Section 3:** Dues shall be paid by the second general meeting in September. Failure to do so constitutes grounds for disciplinary action.