NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY CONSTITUTION
INDEPENDENCE HIGH SCHOOL CHAPTER

Article I. Name and Purpose

Section 1. The name of this organization shall be the Independence High School Chapter of the National Honor Society.

Section 2. The purpose of this organization shall be to foster enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote worthy leadership, and to develop character and citizenship in the students of Independence High School.

Section 3. The Independence High School Chapter of the National Honor Society shall be under the sponsorship and supervision of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), 1904 Association Drive, Reston, VA 20191-1537.

Article II. 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 Chapter Advisor, who may serve consecutive terms.

Section 3. The principal shall annually appoint a Faculty Council composed of five faculty members, who may serve consecutive terms.

Section 4. The principal may appoint alternate members to the Faculty Council to serve in the absence of a current member.

Section 5. The principal shall be a part of the local school board district appeal process for non-selection or dismissal cases.

Article III. The Chapter Advisor

Section 1. The Chapter Advisor shall be responsible for the direct, day-to-day supervision of the chapter and act as a liaison between faculty, administration, students, and the community.

Section 2. The Chapter Advisor shall maintain files of membership, chapter history, activities, and financial transactions. The Chapter Advisor shall send the annual report to the national office, as required by the National Council of the National Honor Society.

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 IV. Faculty Council

Section 1. The Faculty Council shall consist of five voting faculty members appointed annually by the principal. The Chapter Advisor shall be an ex officio, non-voting, sixth member of the Faculty Council. No principal or assistant principal shall be included on the Faculty Council.

Section 2. The term of the Faculty Council shall be one year. Members may be appointed to consecutive terms.
Section 3. The Faculty Council shall meet as required to review the procedures of the chapter, to select members, and to consider dismissal, non-selection, other disciplinary actions, and warning cases.

Section 4. The Faculty Council shall develop and revise, when necessary, all chapter procedures for selection, disciplining, and dismissal of members, all of which must remain in compliance with national guidelines. Any and all additions, deletions, and modifications shall be reported to the principal.

Section 5. An alternate member of the Faculty Council shall exist in the event that a regular member is unable to participate in the selection process.

Article V. Membership

Section 1. Membership in the Independence chapter, as in all National Honor Societies, is an honor, a privilege, and a responsibility bestowed upon a student. Selection for membership is by a Faculty Council and is based on outstanding scholarship, character, citizenship, leadership, and service. Once selected, members have the responsibility of continuing to demonstrate these qualities.

Section 2. Membership shall be known as active, honorary, and graduate. Active members shall become graduate members at graduation. Graduate members shall have no voice or vote in chapter affairs. The Faculty Council shall reserve the right to award honorary membership to school officials, principals, teachers, NHS Advisors, adults, students with disabilities or foreign exchange students in recognition of achievement and/or outstanding service rendered to the school in keeping with the purpose of the National Honor Society. Honorary members shall have no voice or vote in chapter affairs.

Section 3. Candidates become members when inducted, and not before they are inducted, at a special ceremony.

Section 4. Members who are seniors in good standing are eligible to be nominated by the Independence chapter to compete in the NHS Scholarship Program.

Section 5. A NHS member who transfers from another school and presents a letter from the former principal or Chapter Advisor to the Independence Advisor shall be accepted automatically as a member in the Independence chapter. Transfer students must then meet the Independence chapter's standards within one semester in order to retain membership.

Section 6. Members of the National Honor Society shall continue to demonstrate the qualities upon which their selection was based, striving to provide exemplary leadership and volunteer service to Independence High School and the community.

Section 7. All NHS members are expected to attend all scheduled meetings, including, but not limited to, chapter meetings and committee meetings. Any member who fails to attend a minimum of 75% of scheduled meetings will risk dismissal from the NHS. A member who has more than one unexcused absence from scheduled meetings will risk dismissal from the NHS.

Section 8. All NHS members must display exemplary character. Any act that calls a member’s character into question may result in dismissal from the NHS.

Section 9. All NHS members must display exemplary scholarship. NHS members must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 (on a 4.0 point scale) and a quarterly scholastic average of 3.5 (on a 4.0 point scale) in order to maintain membership. NHS members who fall below the aforementioned standard shall be given one quarter in which to bring their academic standing back to level required for membership. This accommodation will be made no more than once for any member.

Section 10. All NHS members must perform ongoing community service.
   a. 20 hours of community/school service must be completed each school year (2 hours per month).
b. 10 of the 20 required hours are to be earned as part of a project that is not sponsored by the National Honor Society or another Independence High School organization.

c. Hours for activities that are not sponsored by the National Honor Society must receive approval from the Chapter Advisor prior to the event.

d. NHS members must provide written verification of participation in a qualifying service activity from a responsible adult to the Chapter Advisor in order to receive credit for service hours.

e. Failure to meet the minimum 2-hour monthly requirement during the school year will result in the assignment of 1.5 additional service hours for the following month. Any member who fails to meet their service obligation more than once will risk dismissal from the NHS.

f. Hours from summer service activities will not count toward the 20 hours.

g. Guidelines for service activities:
   i. Any event whose primary purpose is to benefit the community is considered community service.
   ii. Entertainment counts only if there is no admission cost or the profit from admissions goes to a charitable cause.
   iii. An event sponsored by a charitable organization that is designed to directly benefit the organization is not considered service.
   iv. Any educational service must involve direct contact with students.
   v. Activities that are an expected part of membership in a church or school organization cannot be counted toward NHS service hour requirements.
   vi. All service hours must be documented in order to qualify toward NHS service hour requirements. This includes the approval of the activity, the verification of the sponsor, the timely submission of the appropriate forms (due dates will be set by the Chapter Advisor), and the subsequent review of all materials by the Executive Council.

Section 11. All NHS members are expected to attend NHS functions, including, but not limited to, fund raising activities, service activities, and the annual Induction Ceremony.

Section 12. Annual dues for membership in the Independence Chapter of the National Honor Society shall be $25.00, payable to the Independence High School National Honor Society within 30 calendar days of induction.

Section 13. Members who resign or are dismissed are never again eligible for NHS membership or its benefits.

Article VI. Selection of Members

Section 1. To be eligible for membership, candidates must be members of the junior or senior class and have been in attendance at Independence High School for the equivalent of one semester.

Section 2. Candidates must have a cumulative scholastic average of at least 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale). Candidates shall then be evaluated on the basis of service, leadership, and character.

Section 3. Students must fill out an application on-line (IHS homepage) and submit by the designated due date. Handwritten and/or late applications will be discarded.

Section 4. All applicants will be required to submit one essay with the application and two (2) "Verification Statements of Leadership."

Section 5. The names of candidates who have submitted a completed application on time will be included on a Faculty Evaluation Form that is to be distributed to all faculty members, coaches, and staff. Each staff member will be asked to provide an evaluation/recommendation for each candidate with whom they are familiar. Each staff member will also be encouraged to include comments, which will be
shared with the Faculty Council. A staff vote for membership is not permissible, but the Faculty Council strongly considers input from the staff.

Section 6. Discipline history of all candidates will be checked by the Chapter Advisor (s), and will be shared with the Faculty Council. Any student who has been suspended and/or has had three (3) detentions should not apply and will not be considered eligible.

Section 7. Service hours submitted to Independence High School will be reviewed by the Faculty Council. Juniors are required to have thirty (30) documented service hours and seniors are to have forty (40) documented service hours by the established deadline. Students who do not have the appropriate number of service hours on file with the school will not be considered eligible for application.

Section 8. Once the Faculty Council has had time to review the submitted/collected material, they will convene (in closed session) to discuss and vote on candidates. Candidates must receive at least 3 of 5 votes to qualify for membership.

Section 9. The selection procedure shall be established by the Faculty Council and shall be consistent with the rules and regulations of the National Honor Society. A description of Independence’s selection procedure (posted on the Independence homepage) is available to any persons requesting a copy.

Section 10. The National Council and the NASSP shall not review the judgment of the Faculty Council regarding selection of individual members to the Independence chapter.

Article VII. Dismissal

Section 1. The procedure for dismissal shall be determined by the Faculty Council in compliance with the rules and regulations of the National Honor Society.

Section 2. Members who fall below the standards that represent the basis for their selection shall be promptly warned in writing by the Chapter Advisor and given a reasonable amount of time to correct the deficiency, except that in the case of a flagrant violation of school rules or of civic laws a member does not necessarily have to be warned.

Section 3. The Faculty Council shall determine when an individual has exceeded a reasonable number of warnings.

Section 4. In all cases of impending dismissal, a member shall have the right to a hearing before the Faculty Council.

Section 5. For purposes of dismissal, a majority vote of the Faculty Council is required.

Section 6. A member who has been dismissed may appeal the decision of the Faculty Council under the same rules for disciplinary appeals in the Independence Public School System.

Section 7. The National Council and NASSP shall hear no appeals in dismissal cases.

Article VIII. Chapter Officers

Section 1. The officers of the chapter, their duties, and the method of their election shall be determined by the members of the Independence Chapter, approved by Faculty Council and the principal, and described in the chapter bylaws.

Section 2. New officers shall be installed at a special meeting.

Section 3. Elections of officers shall take place no later than two months following the Induction Ceremony.

Section 4. The officers of the Independence Chapter of the National Honor Society shall be President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Historian, President-Elect, Vice President-Elect, Treasurer-Elect, Secretary-Elect, and Historian-Elect.

Section 5. Members must be seniors in good standing to be eligible to hold the office of President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, and Historian.
Section 6. Members must be juniors in good standing in order to be eligible to run for President-Elect, Vice President-Elect, Treasurer-Elect, Secretary-Elect, and Historian-Elect.

Section 7. Members who have successfully served as an officer-elect will automatically be installed in that office after the preceding officer has graduated. The installment will be done at a meeting of the chapter.

Section 8. It shall be the duty of all officers and officers-elect to attend all NHS meetings and Executive Council meetings.

Section 9. It shall be the duty of officers-elect to work with the current officers to ensure a smooth transition from one year to the next.

Section 10. Elections for officers-elect:

   a. Another member of the chapter shall nominate members to a particular office.
   b. Members may accept multiple nominations to different offices.
   c. Members who have accepted a nomination must complete a “Cabinet Position” form.
   d. The membership will rate each candidate for each office (1 = least suitable, 2 = more suitable, etc.). The ratings will be summed and the candidate with the greatest total is elected to the position. In the event of a tie, the candidate with the greatest number of ‘most suitable’ votes will be elected.
   e. A candidate who is elected to more than one office shall choose a single office to hold and the runner-up in the office that is not chosen shall be elected to that office.

   i. Responsibilities of President: The President of the Independence High School Chapter of the National Honor Society shall Prepare the agenda for all meetings with advice from the Executive Council; Confirm the agenda with the Chapter Advisor one week prior to the meeting (with the exception of emergency meetings); Preside at all meetings of the Independence High School National Honor Society; Be aware of parliamentary procedure and use it accordingly at chapter meetings; Appoint necessary committees and delegate leadership responsibilities; Serve as an ex officio member on all NHS committees; Represent the Independence High School National Honor Society at school and public functions; Meet regularly with the Chapter Advisor to discuss the progress of ongoing projects; Write and deliver a speech on the Goals and Achievements of the National Honor Society at the Induction Ceremony; Conduct the actual induction of new members at the Induction Ceremony; Maintain a record of actions taken during his/her tenure to be passed onto the President-elect

   ii. Responsibilities of Vice President: The Vice President of the Independence High School Chapter of the National Honor Society shall: Preside at all meetings and perform all duties of the President in the President’s absence; Assist the President in maintaining order at chapter meetings; Be aware of parliamentary procedure and call the President’s attention to irregularities in procedure during chapter meetings; Coordinate the activities of committees, all leadership projects, and group service projects; Plan and Preside at the Induction Ceremony; Write and deliver a speech on Service at the Induction Ceremony (including a synopsis of group service projects performed by the chapter); Maintain a record of service hours completed by members and report deficiencies to the Chapter Advisor; Serve the remaining term of the President if he/she is removed from office or resigns; Maintain a record of actions taken during his/her tenure to be passed onto the Vice President-elect.

   iii. Responsibilities of The Secretary of the Independence High School Chapter of the National Honor Society shall: Keep accurate, complete
minutes of all general and executive meetings; Keep accurate, complete attendance records of all meetings; Keep a proper file of all incoming and outgoing correspondence; Assist the Chapter Advisor with all official chapter correspondence; Prepare any necessary chapter reports; Protect any/all records of the chapter; Keep and update calendars of all chapter events for the school year; Keep an updated roster of all current chapter members and inductees, including addresses, home telephone numbers, and email addresses; Prepare any announcements that concern full chapter meetings or chapter activities; Assist the Chapter Advisor in maintaining an up-to-date collection of all necessary forms and documents on the Independence NHS website; Write and deliver a speech on Scholarship at the Induction Ceremony; Maintain a record of all committee reports; Maintain a record of actions taken during his/her tenure to be passed onto the Secretary-elect.

iv. Responsibilities of The Treasurer of the Independence High School Chapter of the National Honor Society shall: Receive and account for all money that comes into the chapter treasury; Maintain an accurate and timely record of all chapter expenditures; Chair all fund raising activities of the chapter; Assist the Chapter Advisor in preparing a statement of estimated receipts and expenditures for the school year; Pay out all funds on authorization of the Executive Council; Assist the Executive Council in an annual audit of all financial records; Report on the financial status of the chapter at each NHS meeting; Write and deliver a speech on Leadership at the Induction Ceremony; Maintain a record of actions taken during his/her tenure to be passed onto the Treasurer-elect.

v. Responsibilities of The Historian of the Independence High School Chapter of the National Honors Society shall: Record the activities of the chapter through photographs, video, newspaper clippings, written reports, etc.; Maintain a bulletin board that will showcase the activities and members of the chapter and update its contents at least once a month; Assist the Chapter Advisor in maintaining a web page to showcase the activities and members of the chapter and update its content at least once a month; Assist the Chapter Advisor in preparing news releases related to NHS activities and achievements; Write and deliver a speech on Character at the Induction Ceremony; Assist the Chapter Advisor in preparing material for the yearbook and the school newsletter; Maintain a record of actions taken during his/her tenure to be passed onto the Historian-elect.

Section 11. Be aware of parliamentary procedure and use it accordingly at chapter meetings

**Article IX. Executive Committee**

Section 1. The Executive Committee of Independence's NHS shall consist the Officers of the Independence Chapter and the Chapter Advisor.

Section 2. The Executive Committee shall have general supervision of the affairs of the chapter between its business meetings, make recommendations to the chapter, and determine and perform such other duties as are specified in the chapter bylaws. All actions and recommendations of the executive committee shall be subject to the review of the chapter membership.

Section 3. The Executive Committee shall have the responsibility for ensuring that chapter activities and procedures follow school policy and regulations.

**Article X. Meetings**
Section 1. The Independence Chapter shall have regular meetings during the school year on days designated by the Executive Committee and in accordance with school policy and regulations.

Section 2. The regularity of the meetings shall be designated in the bylaws.

Section 3. The Independence Chapter President or other designated student leader may call special meetings approved by the Executive Committee.

Article XI. Activities

Section 1. The Independence Chapter shall determine one or more service projects for each year.

Section 2. All members of the Independence NHS shall regularly participate in these projects.

Section 3. These projects shall have the following characteristics: fulfill a need within the school or community; have the support of the administration and the faculty; be congruent with the mission statement of Independence High School; and be well planned, organized, and executed.

Section 4. Each member of the Independence Chapter shall have the responsibility for choosing and participating in a service project that reflects his or her particular talents and interests. This is in addition to the chapter projects to which all members contribute.

Section 5. The Independence Chapter shall publicize its projects in a positive manner.

Article XII. Official Insignia

Section 1. This organization shall have an official emblem selected by the National Council. The emblem shall be uniform.

Section 2. The distribution of the emblem and the rules for its use shall be under the exclusive control of the National Council.

Section 3. Each active, honorary, or graduate member shall be entitled to wear this emblem.

Section 4. Any member who resigns or is dismissed shall return the emblem to the Chapter Advisor.

Section 5. The motto of the National Honor Society shall be Noblesse Oblige.

Section 6. The official colors of the National Honor Society shall be blue and gold.

Article XIII. Bylaws

Section 1. The Independence Chapter shall write bylaws to amplify sections of this Constitution and to clarify operating procedures of the chapter. Bylaws do not need the approval of the National Council but must be consistent with the Constitution of the National Honor Society.

Section 2. The chapter bylaws shall contain information concerning the election and duties of officers, the schedule of meetings, member obligations, dues, and the like.

Article XIV. Amendments

This constitution may be amended at any meeting of the Independence National Honor Society Faculty Council or by mail by an affirmative vote of three members of the Faculty Council.

October 2008; revised October 2012