

FREERPORT AREA HIGH SCHOOL NATIONAL HONORS SOCIETY

2025-26 PROSPECTIVE MEMBER APPLICATION

Mr. John Beneigh

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Requirement questions should be directed via email or in-person to Mr. Beneigh.

Completed portfolios are due to Mrs. O'Shell - School Counseling/Athletic Office

DEADLINE: Thursday, January 15, 2026 by 2:41pm.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of the Freeport Chapter of the National Honor Society is to create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character in the students of Freeport Area Senior High School. These four principles shape the organization's activities and are reflected in the members' responsibilities.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Freeport Chapter of the National Honor Society is to bring together a group of highly intelligent and mature students that have the ability to:

1. Promote a high level of scholarship within the Freeport Area School District.
2. Provide community service that has a direct impact on the greater Freeport community.
3. Become role models for younger students and peers in the Freeport Area School District through various leadership roles.
4. Display high standards of character through their interactions with students, faculty and community members.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

FAHS NATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY CHAPTER

All upperclassmen are eligible to apply for this chapter, meeting the following requirements:

1) Scholarship

Per chapter guidelines, students must have a minimum standard of excellence.

Academic Check (completed by faculty)

- i. 3.8 QPA for high school tenure (all grade levels prior to 01/13/26)
- ii. Honors level courses enhances the applicants eligibility as per the rubric

2) Service

This involves voluntary contributions made by a student to the school or community, done without compensation.

Activity Check (completed by student applicant)

- i. At least 3 after school activities during high school tenure (could include the same activity over three years, both in-school or out-of-school; for example, Marching Band, Track, Boy Scouts, Youth Group, Football, etc.). Employment and school clubs do not count.
- ii. Community service (non-school) during this past summer or during the first semester of this current school year, uncompensated. Maximum points awarded for 10+ hours.
- iii. *All activities and community service must include a signed/dated verification by someone that is not related to the student. Family members cannot verify service activities.*

3) Leadership

Student leaders are those who are resourceful, good problem solvers, and idea contributors. Leadership experiences can be drawn from school or community activities while working with or for others.

Leadership Essays (completed by student applicant)

- i. Answer all prompts to display a better understanding of your philosophy and leadership experiences

4) Character

The student of good character is cooperative; demonstrates high standards of honesty and reliability; shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others; and generally, maintains a clean disciplinary record.

Integrity Check (completed by faculty)

- i. Behavior: Cleared by faculty for behavior, plagiarism, or cheating infractions
 1. Infractions must be documented and communicated throughout the school year with administration and/or parents
- ii. Attendance: Cleared by office for extensive unexcused absences or late arrivals
 1. 9 pts maximum during academic year
 - a. Unexcused tardy is 1 point
 - b. Unexcused absence is 3 points

A Faculty Review Committee will review your portfolio with Student IDs only, in order to keep it confidential and blind, avoiding partiality and bias. See the rubric example used for scoring applicants within this packet for more information.

PROSPECTIVE MEMBER PORTFOLIO ITEMS

All portfolio items must be submitted at one time, on time by Thursday, January 15, 2026. All portfolio items must be in a manila folder, in order, not stapled nor hole-punched. On the outside of the manila folder, please include Student Name & the words "Prospective Member".

- Page 1: Cover Page
 - Full Name (no nicknames)
 - Student I.D. Number
 - Current Grade Level
 - FAHS National Honors Society PROSPECTIVE Member - 2026
 - Student Signature and Date
- Page 2: Rubric
 - a. Include the rubric (inside this packet)
- Page 3: Extracurricular Activity Check
 - This should be a new page created by you, after the Cover Page
 - State your name, include the date and your signature
 - Create a table, including the following information:
 - i. Activities Involved during your high school tenure
 - ii. School Years (or Semesters) Involved
 - iii. What your involvement consisted within this activity (be thorough and very specific)
 - iv. Contact Information for Sponsor/Coach (Phone Number *and* Email)
 - v. State if it is School Related or Non-School Related

****As a reminder, clubs do not count as afterschool activities. Also, family members cannot be the contact person for confirmation.*

- Page 4: Community Service Check
 - After the activity check, provide written documentation *from the sponsor* (that includes their signature/contact information) of your participation. Your community service experience or experiences need to be during the *April 2025 -January 2026* timeframe.
 - There is no need to attach verification of *more* than 10 community service hrs.
 - As a reminder, clubs do not count as afterschool activities (exception: certain Key Club activity hours can count if confirmed by Mrs. Haugh no later than January 9th).
 - Family members cannot be the contact person for confirmation.
- Page 5: Leadership Essays
 - Please start this portion on a separate page, after the Activity Check.
 - *Review minimum requirements on previous pages within this packet*
 - Include your Student ID only, NOT your name
 - Answer each interview question, following these guidelines:
 - Restate the question (do not rewrite the question itself)
 - Number each response (as shown below)
 - Do not include specific names within these responses
 - Times New Roman, 12-font, double-spaced, 1" margins
 - 150-200 words per response required

1. *Think of one time when you were faced with a challenge or conflict while leading others (big or small). Describe what happened, how you responded in the moment, and what you learned from it.*
2. *Describe one accomplishment that made you feel proud because of the effort you put in or the effect it had on others. How does this experience connect to the kind of person you hope to become?*
3. *Tell us about someone you know personally (a peer, teacher, coach, family member, etc.) who you believe is a true leader. What do they do that makes you see them that way, and how has their example shaped how you think about leadership?*
4. *Describe a moment when you helped someone or contributed to your school/community in a way that may not have been recognized by others. What motivated you to do it, and what did you take away from that experience?*
5. *Think of a time when you had to make a choice that tested your integrity or values. What was the situation and how has that moment influenced how you think about character?*

Rubric and Appeals Policy:

All students will receive rubric scores (for acceptance and non acceptance).

- *Based on the three categories (Scholarship/Service/Character), these are objective scores (aka, it is what it is based on one's work and documentation).*
- *The leadership interview responses will be judged by five faculty committee members (blind readings without student names). The average score will provide the score for the Leadership category (average scores above 3.5 will receive 4 points; average scores below 3.49 will receive 3 points; and so on).*
- *The rubric is the final and most important reference for making candidate decisions.*
- *Appeals should be addressed to the faculty advisor. Any appeals must be emailed to beneigh@freeport.k12.pa.us within two calendar days after receiving the letter with a detailed explanation to the faculty committee regarding the reason for the appeal and what additional information should be considered (as it relates to the rubric scoring).*
- *Final appeal decisions will be made by the building principal.*

Dates to Remember

Thursday, September 4, 2025

Prospective Membership Meeting (WIN Time)

Thursday, January 15, 2026

Prospective Member Portfolio due to Mrs. O'Shell

Friday, February 6, 2026

Decision notifications will be made before or on this date

Friday, February 27, 2026

New Membership Dues (\$20) owed to Mrs. O'Shell

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

Meeting (WIN Time) for Mandatory Ceremony practice

Tuesday, March 3, 2026

7pm Ceremony (HS Auditorium)

April/May *Post-ceremony email sent to discuss requirements to continue membership through 2026*

Membership Dues

If accepted, all members are required to pay a \$20, one-time fee for chapter dues, no later than February 27th. Checks made payable to "Freeport Student Activities Fund"

Writing Strong Responses for the NHS Application

Your short essays (150–200 words each) are your chance to show us who you are beyond grades and activities. Strong answers will be personal, specific, and reflective. Here are some tips to guide your writing:

1. Tell a Story, Not Just a List

- Don't just name roles or achievements—focus on one moment that mattered.
- Use concrete details: What happened? Who was involved? How did you respond?
- Example: Instead of writing "I was captain of the soccer team and showed leadership," you could describe a moment when the team was discouraged after a loss and explain how you motivated them.

2. Show Reflection

- The "so what?" matters most. After describing the situation, explain what you learned about yourself, others, or leadership.
- Admissions isn't just about what you did, but how it shaped your values and goals.

3. Be Honest and Personal

- Choose experiences that genuinely meant something to you—even small or everyday ones.
- Authentic writing sounds like you. Avoid overused phrases like "I am passionate about..." or "I strive to..." unless you back them up with specifics.

4. Focus on Your Voice

- Imagine telling your story to a friend—you'd be clear, natural, and specific. Write in that same style.
- Don't worry about "big words" or perfect grammar; we care more about your ideas and perspective.

5. Avoid Generic Answers

- Answers like "The most important quality of a leader is responsibility" or "Service makes the world a better place" are too broad. Instead, show us those ideas through your own experiences.
- Ask yourself: Could someone else write this exact essay? If the answer is yes, add more personal detail.

✨ Bottom line: Your essays should give us a glimpse of your real character. Specific stories and honest reflection will stand out more than a polished but generic response.

PROSPECTIVE MEMBER RUBRIC

STUDENT I.D. _____ (not your name)

ACADEMIC CHECK

- 4 points – 3.8 QPA or higher (from all HS marking periods thus far); 3 or more honors-level courses throughout high school tenure
- 3 points – 3.8 QPA or higher (from all HS marking periods thus far); 2 honors-level courses throughout high school tenure
- 2 points – 3.8 QPA or higher (from all HS marking periods thus far); 1 honors-level course throughout high school tenure
- 1 point – 3.8 QPA (from all HS marking periods thus far); 0 honors-level course throughout high school tenure
- 0 points – did not meet QPA standard OR did not participate in honors-level courses

AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITY & COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICE CHECK ALL ACTIVITIES MUST BE UNCOMPENSATED

- 4 points – at least 3 after school activities (during high school tenure) AND 10+ hours of community service without compensation confirmed (during this past summer thru 1st sem.)
- 3 points – at least 2 after school activities (during high school tenure) AND at least 10+ hours of community service confirmed (during this past summer thru 1st sem.)
- 2 points – at least 1 after school activity (during high school tenure) AND 8+ hours of community service confirmed (during this past summer thru 1st sem.)
- 1 point – at least 1 after school activity (during high school tenure) AND 6+ hours of community service confirmed (during this past summer thru 1st sem.)
- 0 points – did not meet standard

LEADERSHIP ESSAYS

- 4 points – provides substance all responses; includes 3+ leadership experiences
- 3 points – provides substance all responses; includes 2+ leadership experiences
- 2 points – provides some substance all responses; includes 1+ leadership experiences
- 1 point – missing or lacking thoughtful substance; does not include leadership experience
- 0 points – did not meet standard

INTEGRITY CHECK

- 4 points – 9 or less points on attendance scale AND no disciplinary actions (cheating/plagiarism)
- 2 points – 10+ points on attendance scale OR 1 disciplinary actions (cheating/plagiarism)
- 0 points – 11+ points or more on attendance scale OR 2+ disciplinary actions

TOTAL POINTS EARNED _____

**MUST MEET 13 POINTS OR MORE FOR ACCEPTANCE.
EXPLANATIONS TO THOSE APPLICANTS NOT ACCEPTED WILL BE BASED OFF OF THIS RUBRIC SCALE*