The National Honor Society (NHS)

Established in 1921

Four main purposes have guided chapters of NHS from the beginning: "To create enthusiasm for scholarship, to stimulate a desire to render service, to promote leadership, and to develop character." (from the NHS Constitution) These purposes also translate into the criteria used for membership selection in each local chapter. In 1921, under the leadership of Dr. Edward Rynearson, principal of the Fifth Avenue High School, Pittsburgh, Pa., the organization grew from the original Alpha Chapter at the Fifth Avenue School to more than 1,000 chapters by 1930. Equipped with a constitution, an emblem and motto, and a group of dedicated principals as coordinators, the new NHS organization quickly developed into one of the country's leading educational groups.

What is NHS?

Honor Society members are expected to maintain the standards that were used as the basis for their selection. In addition, the chapter must conduct a number of service projects for the school or community each year, and to see the development of group service projects.

Candidates for membership

Membership is based on a student's outstanding performance in the areas of scholarship, service, leadership, and character.

Scholarship:
Students who have a cumulative grade point average 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale) or equivalent standard of excellence, or a higher cumulative average set by the local school's Faculty Council, meet the scholarship requirement for membership. These students are then eligible for consideration on the basis of service, leadership, and character.

Service:
This quality is defined through the voluntary contributions made by a student to the school or community, done without compensation and with a positive, courteous, and enthusiastic spirit.

Leadership:
Student leaders are those who are resourceful, good problem solvers, promoters of school activities, idea-contributors, dependable, and persons who exemplify positive attitudes about life. Leadership experiences can be drawn from school and community activities while working with or for others. A portion of the leadership must be conducted at Westlake High School.

Character:
The student of good character upholds principles of morality and ethics, is cooperative, demonstrates high standards of honesty and reliability, shows courtesy, concern, and respect for others, and generally maintains a good and clean lifestyle.

Candidacy

Candidacy forms are available on the WHS website and due by March 26, 2026, by 3:30 p.m. No late forms will be accepted.

Fulfilling the minimum requirements does not guarantee membership.

Students who are eligible scholastically (cumulative GPA of 3.5) (i.e., "candidates") may complete the **Candidate Form**. This form outlines the candidate's accomplishments in the areas of Service and Leadership. Care should be taken to follow the established guidelines and time schedule for completing and submitting the forms. Students and parents sign these forms when submitting them, indicating that the content is both complete and accurate.

Selection Process

An appointed faculty committee reviews each Candidate Form for consideration; their decision is based on the candidate's excellence in GPA, leadership, service, and character. Please note that social media networks are a form of public information and may be viewed as a means of establishing character. The faculty staff is then invited to review the Candidate List for further input. The Candidate List is then presented to administration for approval. All students who submit a Candidate Form will be notified of selection/non-selection in a timely manner. Please be reminded that **fulfilling the minimum requirements does not guarantee membership.**