

# ***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:** Chapter membership shall be based on scholarship, service, leadership, and character. The four pillars should be upheld by all members.

**Section 2:** Chapter membership 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:** Juniors, and second-semester sophomores who have attended Rickards High School for at least one semester and have an unweighted cumulative GPA of 3.25 shall be eligible for membership.

**Section 4:** Candidates who apply and are accepted become members upon their induction at a special ceremony, conducted once per year following the selection of new officers for the upcoming school year.

**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 or email from the principal or sponsor of their previous chapter stating their society status.

### **Section 6: Amendment 1, Membership Hardship Clause**

- i) Should a student of James S. Rickards High School who is qualified for the National Honor Society and wishes to join but was unable to attend induction in their sophomore or junior year for reasons of "hardship", they may appeal their case to a panel. Examples of hardship include issues of transferring schools, and any other valid reason provided to the chapter advisors. The appeal panel will consist of the advisors and executive committee of the chapter. This prospective student must draft a formal appeal to [nhsrickards@gmail.com](mailto:nhsrickards@gmail.com), from which a member of the executive committee will reply with a time during lunch or after school for them to speak with the panel. This student should prepare a record of their high school community service, current grades, and reason for wanting to join the society before speaking to the panel. The executive committee will hold a majority vote on whether the student should be admitted to the society, with advisors voting only if there is a tie.
- ii) After a prospective member is passed by the panel, they must attend a special ceremony similar to induction as per the National Constitution of the National Honor Society. The executive committee will reach out to these members about when this special induction ceremony will take place after receiving notice of passing the panel.
- iii) Members inducted this way will not have the opportunity to go through probation, having only 1 strike. They must be prepared to have their hours and dues turned in on time and completely.

**Section 7:** 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 fulfillment of the GPA requirements, completion of the application in a satisfactory manner, no disciplinary suspensions or major infractions such as cheating or fighting during the spring semester of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade year and current year for Sophomores and 10<sup>th</sup> grade year and current year for Juniors, and lack of negative reviews from 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 3.25 or higher and meet Article III. Section 1. criteria will be notified of their eligibility and invited to complete an application to apply for membership.

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

**Section 4:** Candidates selected for membership must attend the induction ceremony to become an active member of NHS.

## 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 3.25 unweighted cumulative GPA.
- ii. Each member must pay annual dues by the date announced at the first general meeting of the new school year. Failure to pay dues can result in automatic removal from the organization.
- iii. All members must attend general meetings. If a member misses a general meeting it is their responsibility to read the email recap and ask questions if necessary. Also, they will have to earn an additional point that semester to replace the meeting point.
- iv. All members must acquire at least 25 service points per semester and points must be submitted within 2 weeks of completion of the activity. Seniors' points are occasionally reduced due to deadlines and will be announced at meetings if they are.
- v. All members must join the NHS Remind and Canvas groups. Also, all members must regularly check their email for important information from NHS.
- vi. All members are responsible for checking the points sheet that is emailed monthly to see their status in the club.
- vii. All members must follow all laws and school rules.

**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 3.25 unweighted GPA, good citizenship (e.g. no "1s," suspensions, or reported referrals by teachers), regular attendance of meetings, participation in service projects, good character values, upholding the four pillar values and accumulation of the required number of service points (25 per semester), will result in the following consequences:

- i. A written warning email from the officer board will be given to the member advising them that their current membership status may be in jeopardy if remediating actions are not taken. Names on the points spreadsheet will also be highlighted in various colors to alert members of possible probation/expulsion.
- ii. Names on the spreadsheet will appear in red when they are in jeopardy of being removed from the club and it is the members responsibility to remedy the situation that has placed them in a probationary standing.

**Section 2.a:** If a member falls below the required 3.25 unweighted cumulative GPA, the course of disciplinary action will be as follows:

- i. The advisor will send a letter/email to the member advising them of the situation. The member will be given the following 9-week grading period to raise their 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.**

**Section 2.b:** If a member fails to earn 25 service points during a semester, the course of disciplinary action will be as follows:

- i. A letter/email will be sent to the student notifying them of the situation and a date by which the situation must be corrected.
- ii. In the event that remedial action is allowed, the member will be given a time period in which to complete the remediation plan. If the member fails to meet the terms of remediation by the stated date, the member will be dismissed.
- iii. **Termination is final and irrevocable, unless successfully appealed. Members will not be eligible for reinstatement in this or any other high school chapter of the National Honor Society.**

**Section 2.c:** If a member has been caught engaging in academic dishonesty by a faculty member on any assignment, the course of disciplinary action will be as follows:

- i. A letter will be given to the student notifying them of the situation; the letter must be signed by both the student and parent and then returned to the sponsor within one week of receiving the letter.
- ii. Failure to return the letter within the allotted time will result in immediate removal from NHS.
- iii. A second academic dishonesty offense will result in immediate removal from NHS.

- iv. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating on any assignment such as a phone/cheat sheet/notes or using the internet when not allowed, giving or receiving work to/from another student, using AI to complete assignments and plagiarism (not citing sources).

**Section 2.d:** If a member receives a suspension, the course of disciplinary action will be as follows:

- i. An in-school suspension (OFI) during life of membership will result in warning of the member via letter/email.
- ii. A second in-school suspension (OFI) incident will result in automatic removal from NHS.
- iii. One out-of-school suspension incident results in automatic removal from NHS.

**Section 3:** A dismissed member may appeal the decision, under the Leon County School District policies governing disciplinary appeals. The principal is the recipient of the appeal and has the final say in any appealed dismissal.

**Section 4:** Upon dissatisfaction of the chapter with an officer, the officers and Chapter Advisor may vote to remove the officer from their position.

- i. The dismissed officer shall not be removed from the chapter itself unless they infringe upon the regulations in Sections 1–3 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 approval by the Chapter Advisor.
- iv. In the event that the President is dismissed, the remaining officers may announce their desires to replace the President and the remaining current officers and Chapter Advisor will vote for the new President. The new President, current officers, and Chapter Advisor shall then appoint a new officer from the pool of members to replace their position.
- v. If the officers and Chapter Advisor cannot agree upon the replacement, they may choose to put it to a vote of the members at the next meeting.

## **Article V**

### **Officers**

**Section 1:** The officers of this chapter shall be President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, and Parliamentarian.

- i. If one of these positions is unfilled by a general election, the current officers and Chapter Advisor may fill the position with a qualified member. A person may not run for multiple positions in the general election.

**Section 2:** A majority of the votes cast shall be necessary to elect chapter officers. The Chapter Advisor has a twenty five percent vote for each officer position if they wish to use it.

**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:** Officers are only allowed two excused absences or one unexcused absence from meetings (executive board and general meetings) per school year. Upon a third excused absence or second unexcused absence, officers will be removed from their officer position. An excused absence means the officer has informed the Chapter Advisor of their pending absence from a meeting at least 24 hours prior to the meeting or wakes up sick the day of a meeting and must inform the Chapter Advisor immediately or it will be an unexcused absence.

The duties of the officers are as follows:

- i. **President:** The President is in charge of making the meeting PowerPoints and sharing those with the Chapter Advisor the Thursday prior to the general meeting. The President shall conduct all meetings and oversee all business of the chapter. The President must be a senior with a 3.25 GPA, not have been put on probation for any reason, been in NHS for a full school year, and maintain all four of pillars of NHS. The President must remain in constant communication with the Chapter Advisor and other officers. Should another officer fail to complete their duties or need assistance, it is the responsibility of the President to step in and help.

- ii. Vice President: The 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 email the points sheet at least twice a month for members and the Chapter Advisor to refer to as necessary (first and third school Tuesdays of every month). The Vice President must be a senior with a 3.25 GPA, not have been put on probation for any reason, been in NHS for a full school year, and maintain all four of pillars of NHS.
- iii. Treasurer: The Treasurer shall write receipts for all dues not paid electronically, deal with emails regarding electronically paid dues and make sure the points sheet is up to date on who has paid dues. The Treasurer shall work with the Vice President and dues will be recorded and shared with members at least twice a month until all members have paid (first and third school Tuesdays of every month). \*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). The Treasurer will sit on the ICC board and report findings back to the group at the following officer meeting, should the ICC board meet that month/year. The Treasurer must be a senior with a 3.25 GPA, have been in NHS for a full school year, and maintain all four of pillars of NHS.
- iv. Secretary: The Secretary shall act as a link between officers and members, chapter and student body, and persons outside of the school involved in chapter projects. The Secretary shall create and maintain an accurate telephone/email directory of all members, and is responsible for relaying any and all communications from NHS officers or Chapter Advisor to the membership at large, including but not limited to notifications and reminders of events, meeting recaps, updating Canvas, and thank-you cards as appropriate from the chapter. The Secretary must alert the Chapter Advisor of all bounce back emails immediately and must try other methods to contact those members (remind/canvas). The Secretary must be a senior with a 3.25 GPA, have been in NHS for a full school year, and maintain all four of pillars of NHS.
- v. Historian: The Historian shall take pictures at all NHS events and service projects, collect photos from members and publish these pictures periodically on the NHS Instagram account. The Historian will publish a "Focus Story" for the NHS Instagram Account at least twice a month (first and third school Thursdays of the month). The Historian will produce a video scrapbook presentation for viewing at the induction ceremony. The Historian must be a senior with a 3.25 GPA, have been in NHS for a full school year, and maintain all four of pillars of NHS.
- vi. Parliamentarian: The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for calling to order and maintaining order during all general meetings and Induction, attendance spreadsheets for executive board meetings and general member meetings, and for dismissing members who cannot follow procedure during these meetings. The Parliamentarian shall be responsible for working with the Vice President following every meeting to update the attendance portion on the points sheet. The Parliamentarian must be a senior with a 3.25 GPA, have been in NHS for a full school year, and maintain all four of pillars of NHS.

**Section 5:** The officers and Chapter Advisor 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 monthly meetings during the school year at 3:30 pm on the first school Monday of every month.

- iii. The Executive Board shall hold regular monthly officer meetings during the school year at lunch on the last Monday of every month. These meetings shall be called Executive Board or Officer meetings.
- iv. The Executive Board shall vote on matters of business concerning the chapter.
- v. Should there be a tie vote on a matter the Chapter Advisor will break the tie.

## **Article VI**

### **Principal**

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

**Section 2:** The principal shall annually appoint a member or members of the faculty/staff as the Chapter Advisor(s) who may serve consecutive terms.

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

## **Article VII**

### **Chapter Advisor**

**Section 1:** The Chapter Advisor(s) 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(s) 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(s) shall regularly review each member for compliance with NHS standards and obligations.

**Section 4:** The Chapter Advisor(s) shall help the chapter officers understand and carry out their duties.

**Section 5:** The Chapter Advisor(s) shall be a member of the faculty/staff appointed annually by the principal, and may serve consecutive terms.

## **Article VIII**

### **Meetings**

**Section 1:** There shall be regularly scheduled meetings of the chapter during the school year (3:30pm on the first school Monday of every month). Executive Board meetings (Officer Meetings) will also occur regularly (during lunch on the last school Monday of the month, roughly one week prior to the regularly scheduled meeting), as well as during the summer if desired. The first officer meeting will be during the pre-planning week of school and officers must attend. Additional Executive Board meetings may be called by the Chapter Advisor and/or Officers.

**Section 2:** Special meetings may be called by the Chapter Advisor, President or by agreement of a majority of the Executive Board.

**Section 3:** Any member who is disruptive during a meeting will be warned by the Parliamentarian. If the member continues to be a disruption, they will be dismissed from the meeting and will not receive credit for attending, nor will the absence be counted as excused.

**Section 4:** If a member misses a meeting, it is their responsibility to read the recap email/canvas announcement from that meeting.

**Section 5:** Members must login to the meetings on time. Admittance to the meetings will close promptly at 3:33pm.

**Section 6:** The device a member uses to login in with must have their first and last name so officers know who they are admitting to the meeting. Failure to have your device properly named may delay your admittance and potentially not allow you to be admitted.

## **Article IX**

### **Attendance**

**Section 1:** Attendance of chapter's general meetings is required of all members.

**Section 2:** Members must be present for more than half of a general meeting to receive credit for attending. Officers are not allowed to admit members into the meeting after the meeting has been ongoing for three minutes.

**Section 3:** Excuses for missed meetings by members must be electronically submitted via NHS Remind or NHS Email and the Chapter Advisor 24 hours prior to the meeting. The Executive Board will determine if the absence shall be excused or unexcused. If a member wakes up sick and cannot login to a virtual general meeting they must communicate immediately via email or Remind with the officers and the Chapter Advisor.

**Section 4:** Members can redeem a missed meeting by earning an additional hour that semester.

## **Article X**

### **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:** Campaigning will be allowed by the candidates only. All campaigning must be done in a positive format. Negative campaigning will result in the member being removed as a candidate and if is in clear violation of the character pillar potential removal as a member.

**Section 4:** Voting will be conducted as follows:

- i. Members will vote for one office at a time, beginning with President, followed by Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, Historian, and Parliamentarian.
- ii. After the first office has been voted on, the advisor and current officers will tally the votes and the results will be announced to the chapter.
- iii. Members must be present in order to vote, and must stay for the entire voting process to be completed.

**Section 5:** If no one runs for a position the Chapter Advisor and current officers may ask members that they feel would represent the organization well to run and or appoint a position if there is no one to oppose them in an election.

**Section 6:** Installation of the new officers shall take place during the spring Induction Ceremony.

## **Article XI**

### **Dues**

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

**Section 2:** Annual dues will include funds to cover national membership dues, teacher appreciation week project, school improvement project, Induction cost, and the cost of a chapter t-shirt to be worn at our events. Seniors will also have an additional fee for the graduation stole.

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

**Section 4:** Dues are non-refundable.