

NHS APPLICANTS' FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Will I be admitted to NHS if I have evidence of involvement for each section? Admission is based on strong credentials in each of the four areas. Not all activities require the same level of participation or commitment. Admission is granted at the discretion of the Faculty Selection Committee. Service to school, community, and leadership are all requirements for selection. A particularly strong section in one domain will not necessarily compensate for a weak section in another domain.

2. I participate in many activities for my sports booster/parent club. Can I count these as service hours? Many sports teams expect their athletes to participate in one or more booster club activities. Many times, the fundraisers and activities benefit your team. As a result, you may not count the hours spent on booster activities toward Service to Community. The Committee considers this “double-dipping.” You are already getting credit under Section 1 - Service to School for the team membership. You cannot get double points by counting these activities under Section 3 - Service to Community as well. (See #11 for a definition of Service to Community.)

3. I am a member of Key Club. Can I count those activities towards my service hours? You have a choice. You can count Key Club under Section 1 - Service to School, OR you may count your service hours towards Section 3 - Service to Community. Where do you need the credit? You may not “double-dip” and use the same activity under two sections.

4. What does the Committee consider leadership? Most importantly, leadership should be appointed or elected. Many of you possess “leadership skills,” or lead by example, that is not disputed. However, the CB East NHS chapter requires a more tangible demonstration of leadership. Many students have leadership roles in student government, sports, scouting, religious organizations, and places of employment. Leadership is the ONLY area for which something may be considered under two sections – for example, if you play baseball and are a team captain, you may list this as service to school and leadership. Leadership will ultimately be decided by the Faculty Selection Committee. In the past teaching Sunday School, coaching Little League, or giving lessons on an ongoing basis have been considered leadership roles by the committee. The FSC does not consider umpiring, refereeing, lifeguarding or babysitting as acceptable forms of leadership.

5. Is it possible to demonstrate leadership without an elected or appointed position? While elected or appointed leadership is the ideal, in some cases students without leadership titles have demonstrated outstanding leadership in an organization. For instance, a student may have taken the initiative to organize and run a school-wide fundraiser as a member of a service club. This demonstrates significant organization, planning, management of other students, and follow-through which the FSC considers essential to demonstrate exceptional leadership. If applicable to you, there is a section of the in-school activity form that your advisor will complete. If it is an out of school activity, you may wish to stress the need for this additional information to your advisor so they may include it in their letter of reference.

6. Can I count my Choir/Concert Band class for Section 1 - Service to School? Any class you take for CB East academic credit may not be counted as service to school or service to community. Even the hours after school and the concerts are requirements. However, there are some activities that would count since they are not a part of a school class. These may include: Marching Band, Pit Orchestra, Men’s and Women’s Choir, Select Choir, and String Ensemble.

7. What if I can't get one of my Activity Evaluation forms back before the application deadline? The CBE NHS In School and Out of School Activity Evaluation Form deadline is set in stone. Any documentation not received by the due date will not be considered. Since NHS application invitation letters were sent home in mid-July, two months is enough time to adequately complete the application and procure all documentation.

8. I just joined a new club this year. Can I count it under Section 1 - Service to School? Significant participation in the activity in question must have occurred PRIOR to submission of your application for that activity to count for membership purposes. For example, if you PLAN to be on the baseball team in the spring or to lead a Youth Group class in January, this does not count as an activity you have completed. However, if you were elected as a team captain for a fall sport after your sophomore season but completed significant work in this role between the end of your sophomore fall sports season and the junior year application deadline, you may list this as leadership. Only activities performed starting your SOPHOMORE year are eligible for application purposes. If you received awards at your Ninth Grade Graduation assembly, THEY ARE NOT TO BE INCLUDED IN YOUR APPLICATION.

9. What if I'm absent the day the application is due? The deadline is set in stone. Absent or not, the application is due on the due date. Not waiting until the last minute will eliminate the worry of missing the due date.

10. How does the Committee determine whether I meet the requirement for "good character"? Good character is one of the four tenets of National Honor Society members. The Committee gauges this by checking the discipline record of each applicant. Any record of cheating, plagiarism, intentional dishonesty, or repeated infractions of school policy within the past 12 months would disqualify a student from membership in NHS. This applies to criminal offenses in the community as well. Additionally, any dishonesty in completing this application would disqualify a student from membership as well. Students who have committed infractions greater than 12 months prior to application may complete an additional form discussing this infraction. In addition, teachers, coaches, and administrators are asked to comment on character of applicants.

11. Can I get my parents, or a relative, to write a letter verifying leadership or community service? Because of the obvious conflict of interest, unfortunately the Committee cannot consider activities that are only verified by parents and/or relatives. Usually, an outside person can still be asked to verify your participation. It is rare that there is no one else affiliated with an activity that would necessitate your parent writing the letter.

12. How does the Committee define "Service to Community"? Service to Community is seen as volunteering in meaningful activities that serve the needs of the general community. The general community is seen as existing beyond family and school, and represents not-for-profit organizations. For example, a student who volunteers to help address envelopes at a realtor's office is not serving the needs of the larger community, but benefiting a small group of for-profit individuals. There are many not-for-profit organizations in the Central Bucks community that would benefit greatly from having our students volunteer to help them. Of course, any activity for which you receive compensation will not be considered under this section.

13. I cleaned out my closets and donated the contents to a charitable organization. Can this count as "Service to Community"? The Faculty Selection Committee believes that community service should be an ongoing, participatory activity. Cleaning out one's closet and donating clothes and toys is a charitable activity, but it does not fit the description of ongoing, participatory involvement.

14. As a junior, I don't think I meet all the requirements for membership this year. Can I reapply next year? As long as you keep up your grades, you will be invited to apply again as a senior. Every year the NHS inducts both juniors and seniors in the fall.

15. I participated in the Relay for Life. Can I count the full 24 hours I was at the track? You may count the time spent gathering donations and actually walking/running around the track. For most students, this comes to 2 hours. You may not count 24 hours for Service to Community. This also applies to other events in which you may participate like charity music performances or runs. While a runner or musician may spend hours preparing for these events, for our purposes only your time actually completing the final task will count as service. Participating in a charity concert will only earn you the hours of the concert, not the hours required to prepare or rehearse for the concert.

16. Once I become a member, do I always remain a member of the NHS? In order to receive credit for membership and to stay in good standing, members must adhere to all CB rules and local laws, maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5, perform a minimum of 15 hours of community service at a minimum of 4 NHS sponsored events and pay annual dues each year of membership.

17. Can I get my application packet back once it is evaluated by the Faculty Selection Committee? We are unable to return any information you provide in your application packet. Many advisors and coaches agree to write letters of recommendation on condition of anonymity. It would be disingenuous of us to violate their trust and return the sealed contents to you. Please be sure to make copies of any special awards or supplemental materials you are including. Do not provide the originals.

18. I volunteer to serve as a peer tutor. Does that count as leadership? Leadership generally requires evidence of the creation, management, or implementation of a project. Working as a tutor is an act of community service but is generally not leadership.

19. Who determines if I am granted admission to the NHS? What happens if my application is denied? The CB East Faculty Selection Committee evaluates every application. Admission is based on strong credentials in each of the four areas (service to school, service to community, leadership, and character). No candidate is awarded membership based on academic achievements alone, regardless of class rank, GPA, test scores, or academic awards.

Administrators and NHS advisors do not make any decisions regarding the acceptance or denial of applicants. This job is left to the sole discretion of the Faculty Selection Committee. If the committee determines that your application does not warrant admission, if you are a junior you will be able to reapply your senior year as long as you maintain a 3.5 cumulative GPA. Often students strengthen their leadership and service to school and community during their junior year.