

Recognition

Beyond the Gold Stars: Exploring Effective Recognition Practices

Presenter:

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Belief Statement: Purposeful Recognition, led by a vision and goals to foster initial engagement, creates opportunities to celebrate accomplishments of many, builds awareness of unique avenues for personal growth and a developing a sense of identity and belonging, and ultimately motivates all to rise to new levels of achievement.

Workshop Contents

1. Introductions and Session Goals
2. Defining Recognition Programs in Schools
3. Values for Recognition Programs
4. Variables for Recognition Programs
5. Assessment
6. Resources
7. Conclusions

Note: The PowerPoint used for this session and this handout will be available online in the future. Because the NHS website (www.nhs.us) is being revamped at this time, an online location cannot be assigned as of this session. Please contact David Cordts at cordtsd@nassp.org for the information regarding the location.

L4SA: October 2011: RECOGNITION

Q: What can our chapter do to expand our recognition of our school's most outstanding students?

A: Typically student recognition is highlighted at a school's annual awards day in the spring. Honor Society advisers understand the value of such recognition as seen at the chapter's induction ceremony each year as well. Most students are motivated toward greater accomplishments when they are publicly recognized for the good things they do. Here are some tips for building a strong student recognition focus for your chapter.

1. **The Pillars.** Recognize the four NHS and five NJHS pillars regularly. As expressed on the Purposes of the organizations, these represent the focus for every chapter at school – find time to emphasize them every month.

2. **Wall of Fame.** Eastview HS in Apple Valley, MN, home of the 2011 National Adviser of the Year, Dr. Todd Beach, maintains an NHS Wall of Fame at their school. Accomplishments of the chapter over the years can be seen proudly hanging at the school for all visitors. Alternatively your chapter can establish a trophy/awards case or maintain a bulletin board to promote your chapter's accomplishments. This will motivate the younger students on campus to set goals to be part of your chapter in the future.



3. **Local News.** Does your chapter submit newspaper articles for every chapter project? Even if you don't get published, keep sending in the submissions. Two suggestions: 1) Establish public relations

responsibilities as a duty of a chapter officer (or create a new position), and 2) establish a relationship with the education reporters so your submissions can be sent to one individual every month.

4. **Facebook.** Have your students become ‘likers’ on www.facebook.com/nhsandnjhs and/or establish your own chapter social media site. It’s another place to recognize student accomplishments and learn of the good works of others at the same time.



5. **Chapter website.** Use your chapter website or pages for the Honor Society on your school website to promote the accomplishments of your members.

6. **Reports.** When your chapter completes a project or a member wins an award, take time to share that at a school board meeting or with your superintendent – or at the very least inform your principal in case he or she is out of the loop. Follow the example of Pittston (PA) Area HS that writes a summary report at the end of every year to share all that they’ve accomplished with the educational leaders of the community.

7. **NSLW.** Support National Student Leadership Week every April (see www.nhs.us/nslw) and recognize student leaders in your chapter but in other student organizations as well.



8. **History.** Keep track of every year’s accomplishments and include them in the chapter history shared at your induction ceremonies. The new members and their parents will value knowing that their accomplishments will be noted.

9. **Chapter meetings.** Find a “moment of praise” at every meeting of your chapter. A sincere congratulatory message from the adviser or chapter president will go a long way.

10. **School wide recognition.** Students are doing great things every month in their academics, activities, athletics, and the arts. Take note of all that is happening at your school and help your Honor Society find a role in supporting student accomplishments through meaningful recognition activities throughout the year.

Selecting your location

To prepare for your event and the selection of the best location, consult the lesson from Washington Student Leaders/Susan Fortin: Abraham Maslow and School Spirit*. The model presented by WSL is a great exercise for your student leaders to start the planning process.

The **site** selected for the event is very important. It is suggested that each chapter determine where to hold its ceremony and reception based on the 'Seven S's' of site selection:

- 1. Size**—How many can be seated? Can every student in the school (or the number of expected participants) fit into the site?
- 2. Sound**—Can everyone hear? Is a PA system needed?
- 3. Sight**—Can everyone see the speakers and facilitators? When materials are displayed for view, can everyone see them?
- 4. Supplies**—Do you have the necessary supplies ordered and other presentation materials ready? Are audio and visual aids available? (PA system, video screen, etc.)
- 5. Schedules**—What is your timeline and what are your time limits for the day? Will the school require schedule modifications to accommodate student movement to and from the event if you're holding the event on campus during the school day? Will you be able to accomplish everything in the time allotted?
- 6. Script** -- Has the script for your ceremony been written and copies shared with all of your participants?
- 7. Special program** --Don't forget to create a commemorative printed program to share with the new members and their parents. Include the date and location on the cover and be sure to double check the spelling of each inductee's name. Post a PDF online for those unable to attend.

Finally, keep in mind, in our social media-conscious age, parents will want to photograph or video their child for this special event, thus adding extra importance to the Sound and Sight components above. Consider creating a special scene, perhaps including your chapter or school banner as the backdrop, for after-the-ceremony photos where a chapter member can volunteer to take photos of individual students and their families. Don't neglect the idea of taking a group photo of all of the new members – with adviser and principal included – to share with the local media and the national office when all is done.

*As found in *Leadership Lessons: Lessons to Lead By*. © 1998 NASSP. Lyn Fiscus, Editor. Available from <http://store.nassp.org>.

(Excerpt from the NHS Handbook, 2011 edition, © NASSP)

Daily Celebrations:

--Magnificent/Marvelous/Motivational
Monday

--Terrific Tuesday

--Wonderful/Wacky Wednesday
(When? sday or Humpday)

--Thankful/Theatrical/Thoughtful
Thursday

--Fantastic/Fun/Freaky Friday

Positive, focused, even variable usage.

Resources for Recognition

1. *All About Achievement Through Recognition*. © 2005. DifferenceMakers, Ltd. (The “Original” Mike Smith). Available from www.differencemakers.com or <http://store.nhs.us> or <http://store.nasc.us>. Featuring the PRIDE program to increase student achievement; provides a sound model for ongoing recognition efforts throughout the year.
2. *Recognizing Student Leaders*. (68 pp.). ©2002. PaperClip Communications. Available from www.Paper-Clip.com. Written for college activities directors, this resource is filled with a great variety of project ideas to enhance the work of your student leaders – more ideas than you could possibly use in a single year.
3. “Student Recognition Programs”, *The Practitioner*. © 1989 NASSP. Volume XV, No. 3. Published in April 1989 for NASSP members. Copies available upon request (until I can get it posted online).
4. NASSP Student Contests and Activities Committee standards for Student Recognition Programs. www.nasc.us/scaa (see “Program Guidelines”). Since 1939, NASSP has helped to assess many contests and activities offered to schools through a set of standards for effective and meaningful programs. The National Advisory List of Contests and Activities is a key resource for principals and advisers when making recommendations to students and their parents.
5. *Leadership for Student Activities* magazine published by NASSP. Various issues including:
 - a. May/June 1991. Theme: Recognition Programs.
 - b. March 2003. Theme: Accolades, Awards, and Appreciation.
6. “The Power of Tradition” © 2011 as a White Paper in The Herff Jones Achievement Series. Published March 2011. Available from www.herff-jones.com.
7. “How to Enhance Your School’s Reputation”, *Tips for Principals*. © 2000 by NASSP. Published January 2000. Copies available upon request. Focusing on building good PR for your school, this brief includes several additional suggestions for improving the image of the school in the eyes of the community.
8. Public Relations: The Adviser’s PR Toolkit, www.nhs.us/advisersprtoolkit.

A copy of this list of resources and some of the articles included will soon be available at www.nhs.us/recognition. See also the “Recognition & Graduation” section of <http://store.nhs.us> for the official recognition paraphernalia from NASSP.

Certificate of Appreciation

Awarded to

Presented

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For participation in the workshop

Recognition: Beyond the Gold Stars

As evidence of a commitment to professional development and to recognizing students, staff, administrators, parents, and volunteers for the many achievements they earn and the many contributions they make to the education and development of young people.

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