



## 2016 NASC National Council of Excellence Awards High School Criteria

Student councils must include evidence for items 1–23 in the portfolio to be eligible for the National Council of Excellence or National Gold Council of Excellence awards.

### I. Governance

#### *(Governing Documents)*

1. A constitution and/or bylaws exist and is used to govern the council
2. Each council member receives a copy of the constitution/bylaws and a copy is available on the Web or in the school's media center where others may review the documents
3. Evidence of student-led activities and meetings

#### *(Elections)*

4. Evidence of annual elections that include activities found in civic elections
5. Written election rules and/or campaign procedures
6. There is a written process for ballot counting and announcing election results

#### *(Meetings)*

7. Copy of student council meeting calendar or list of meeting dates
8. Evidence that Parliamentary Procedures are regularly used during meetings

### II. Service

#### *(Participation in Service)*

9. Evidence of a council-sponsored service project that promotes full student body participation  
*\*Please indicate the total number or percentage of the student body that participated in council-sponsored service projects during the course of the school year.*  
*Estimated Number: \_\_\_\_\_ or Percentage: \_\_\_\_%*

#### *(Serving the Community)*

10. Evidence of a community service project

### III. General Activities and Operations

#### *(Spirit and Social Activities)*

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|-----|---|
| 11. | Examples of two spirit or social activities   |
| 12. | Evidence of an activity that highlights the diversity in the student body/school<br>[or]<br>Evidence of an activity that appeals to different student audiences |

#### *(Council Operations)*

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|-----|--|
| 13. | Copy of student council budget   |
| 14. | Example of council role or membership report   |
| 15. | Evidence of meetings with the principal or designee  |
| 16. | Evidence of student council participation on a school-level committee<br>[or]<br>Evidence of student council participation on a district-level committee or school board |

#### *(Fundraising)*

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|-----|---|
| 17. | Evidence of a council-sponsored fundraising project |
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#### *(Leadership Training)*

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| 18. | Evidence of participation in two or more leadership training sessions by all council members           |
| 19. | Evidence of adviser participation in professional development session on student council or leadership |

#### *(Communications)*

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|-----|---|
| 20. | Example of a student council memo, announcement, or video broadcast |
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### IV. Civic Engagement and Student Voice

#### *(Civic-Based Activities)*

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|-----|--|
| 21. | Sample of council materials explaining an activity's or project's civic connection<br>[or]<br>Evidence of classroom instruction explaining the civic connections of council activities |
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#### *(Student Voice)*

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| 22. | Evidence of student council activities that provide a forum for student opinions and ideas |
| 23. | Evidence of at-large student participation on student council committees                   |

## Additional Evidence

Student councils must include evidence from at least **21** items in the “Additional Evidence” category to qualify for the National Council of Excellence and at least **26** items to qualify for the National Gold Council of Excellence.

### I. Governance

#### *(Governing Documents)*

24. Evidence of changes/update to the Constitution or bylaws or minutes from a meeting of the Constitution Committee

#### *(Elections)*

25. Involvement or contribution by local Board of Elections officials through information resources, presentations, or direct assistance
26. Use of voting machines or online voting for school elections
27. Student council elections include voter registration, voting precincts, or other characteristics of local/state elections.

#### *(Meetings)*

28. Evidence of student council officer meetings
29. Minimum of three samples of meeting agendas

### II. Service

#### *(Serving the School)*

30. Evidence of promoting service to its members and others  
[or]  
Council is registered and participates in the President’s Volunteer Service Award Program

#### *(Serving the Community)*

31. Evidence of a student generated list of community needs
32. Evidence of involvement by community leaders or groups with a council-sponsored service or service learning project

#### *(Service Learning)*

33. Evidence of council support for a service learning project in the school
34. Evidence of service learning features in a student council service project (See Service Learning Addendum)

### **III. General Activities and Operations**

#### *(Spirit and Social Activities)*

Evidence in activity advertisements, goals, or statement of purpose that demonstrates the promotion of positive social behaviors and camaraderie

- 35. Evidence of an activity that aids in the transition of middle level (or other entry grade) students into the high school
- 36. Evidence of an activity designed to engage new students and welcome them to the student body

#### *(Council Operations)*

- 37. Example of finance recordkeeping
- 38. Copy of Treasurer's report or meeting minutes showing finance activities
- 39. Copy of council membership roll
- 40. Evidence of a scrapbook or similar historical record of council activities
- 41. Copy of a student survey given during the current or previous school year
- 42. Evidence of active membership with a district, state, or regional student council organization

#### *(Fundraising)*

- 43. Copy of project revenues and contributions
- 44. Evidence of pre-project research on potential charities
- 45. List of reputable charitable groups and organizations considered by the student council

#### *(Leadership Training)*

- 46. Copy of training log or skill mastery chart

#### *(Communications)*

- 47. Evidence of council members' writing or oral presentations
- 48. Copy of student council submission for publication in print or to the web

#### **IV. Civic Engagement and Student Voice**

##### *(Civic-Based Activities)*

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|-----|--|
| 49. | Evidence of involvement by community leaders or agencies in a council project or activity  |
| 50. | Proof of attendance at a civic meeting   |
| 51. | Evidence of a council officer presentation to a civic board/committee (examples include school board, city or county board/committee, or civic club) |

#### **V. Other Council Activities**

##### *(Local and State Involvement)*

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| 52. | Evidence of introducing or applying skills, knowledge, or ideas that were learned while attending a local or state event                                 |
| 53. | Proof of participation in a professional development activity that enhances skills and knowledge of student council management or leadership instruction |

##### *(Other Leadership Training)*

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| 54. | Evidence of regular leadership training activities for student council members                           |
| 55. | Evidence of leadership training provided to other clubs or to the general population of the student body |

## Project Submissions

**To earn the National Councils of Excellence Award, a high school council must:**

- A. Enter a minimum of **3 projects** into the National Student Project Database, or
- B. Enter a minimum of **4 projects** into the National Student Project Database for a Gold-level award

Only projects that have been entered and approved for publishing to the web will be considered.

### **Project Categories:**

Projects may be in any of the 16 categories listed in the project entry menu, but each must be from a different category. After entering each project, an automated email with the projects' identification numbers, titles, categories, and entry date will be received. That information is then entered into the spaces that follow.

### **Project summaries must:**

- A. Be a minimum of 200 words in length
- B. Include detailed descriptions that identify the goals of the projects, highlights, outcomes, totals, and a general overview of the projects

**Project content that has been cut and pasted from a previously entered project will not be considered as a valid project entry for this award.**

Student councils submitting projects like or similar to ones that have been entered in a previous year must enter new content, and the project title should appropriately identify the year in which the project took place.

For example, use "Homecoming 2015," not simply "Homecoming."

The [National Student Project Database](#) will automatically assign an identification number to each project entered. Projects may be entered into the database at any time during the year. After entering each project and clicking the submit button, a message window should appear on the user's screen to confirm the project submission.

Do not close the project database screen until the submission confirmation is seen. Click the submit button a second time if the window did not appear.

Project entries are typically reviewed by NASC staff and approved for publishing to the database within two business days of submission. On approval, an automatic email is sent to the email address entered into the project entry form. It is important to keep the confirmation email that includes the project ID number, project title, and an attached PDF certificate.

The project ID number, project title, category, and entry date is information to be entered on the next page of this NCOE application. Councils may want to include copies of the project confirmation emails and certificates in their NCOE portfolios as evidence.

## **Principal Recommendation and Recognitions**

### **Principal Recommendation:**

Please upload a signed letter of recommendation from the school principal. The letter must be on school letterhead and no longer than two pages and saved in Word or PDF format. It should provide detailed and concise information about the student council.

Examples of topics to address may include:

- The reliability, initiative, and performance (or other traits) of the student council
- The impact of council projects and activities on student life and the community
- How the student council has enhanced or supported the principal's vision for the school
- Explanation of how the student council has fit into or progressed the educational mission of the school

A sample letter is available on the National Councils of Excellence [Resources for Principals](#) page on the NASC website.

## **Recognitions and Media**

### **Recognition**

Please list and briefly summarize any recognitions that the council has received during the past year. This may include any individual student or adviser recognition (must be recognized for their work in their student council capacities). Include the dates of each and the agencies or organizations bestowing the recognitions.

### **Media**

Please identify any stories or news coverage your council received this past year. Be sure to include links to the stories or videos.