NATIONAL COUNCIL
OF EXCELLENCE AWARD

DEADLINE TO APPLY: FEBRUARY 15, 2022

3 Steps to Becoming a High School National Council of Excellence

Congratulations! Applying for the NCOE award is a testament to your student council's commitment to lead and serve others. Student councils can follow this guide to organize their evidence and activities before applying for national recognition.

All council activities and projects submitted for the 2022 NCOE Award must take place between January 1 and December 31, 2021.

Step 1: Review the Award Criteria.

- Student councils should familiarize themselves with the checklist of required and additional evidence, the project submission requirements, and the online application process, all of which are detailed in this guide.

- Student councils applying for the NCOE award must meet all required evidence indicators and submit three projects. Optionally, councils can apply for the NCOE Gold award by also meeting the required number of additional evidence indicators and submitting four projects.

Step 2: Collect Evidence for the NCOE Portfolio and Submit Projects

- Councils should create electronic or notebook-style portfolios in which they compile and organize evidence of meeting the award criteria.

- Councils must submit three or four projects into the National Student Project Database, strictly adhering to the Project Submission Guidelines. Record each project title, ID, category, and date of entry in the Project Entries section of this guide, as this information is required during the online application process.

- The council adviser and student members must review the portfolio with the school principal. The school principal must confirm that the student council has included evidence of meeting all required indicators and, if applying for NCOE Gold, any additional indicators before continuing to the online application process.

Step 3: **Complete and Submit the Online Application.**

- Designate one adviser or student with a verified NatStuCo account to complete the application on behalf of the student council. Once started, the application can only be accessed and submitted by the user who started it. The application may be accessed for review and editing at any time prior to submission.

- Sign into the online application portal using the same login credentials as for the NatStuCo website and complete all required steps.

- The applicant must provide the name and email address for the adviser and principal. Both individuals will receive an email with a unique link to provide a recommendation for the council. This process is mandatory even if the adviser is the one completing the application. The application cannot be submitted until the recommendations are completed.

- Once the applicant, adviser, and principal have completed their sections of the application, the applicant must log back into the application portal to submit. Applications cannot be edited after submission.

Advisers: Advisers can log in to the application using their existing **NatStuCo website credentials.**

Students: Students can log in to the application using an **adviser-verified student account.**

NCOE HIGH SCHOOL CRITERIA 2022

Required Evidence for High School Student Councils

I. Governance

Governing Documents

- ☐ 1. A constitution and/or set of bylaws exist and are 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

- ☐ 1. Evidence of elections that include activities or features found in civic elections.
- ☐ 2. Written election rules and/or campaign procedures.
- ☐ 3. There is a written process for ballot counting and announcing election results.

Meetings

- ☐ 1. Copy of student council meeting calendar or list of meeting dates.
- ☐ 2. Evidence that Parliamentary Procedures are regularly used during meetings.

II. Service

Participation in Service

- ☐ 1. Evidence of a service project that addresses a school or local need.
- ☐ 2. Evidence of a council-sponsored service project that promotes full student body participation.

Serving the Community

- ☐ 1. Evidence of a community service project.

III. General Activities and Operations

Spirit and Social Activities

- ☐ 1. Examples of two spirit or social activities.
- ☐ 2. Evidence of an activity that highlights the diversity in the student body, or evidence of an activity that appeals to different student audiences.

Council Operations

- ☐ 1. Copy of student council budget.
- ☐ 2. Example of council role or member participation report.
- ☐ 3. Evidence of in-person or virtual meetings with the principal or designee.
- ☐ 4. Evidence of student council participation on a school-level committee, or evidence of student council participation on a district-level committee or school board.

Leadership Training

☐ 1. Evidence of participation in two or more in-person or virtual leadership training sessions by all council members. *(These can include adviser-led lessons or those led by a guest facilitator.)*

Communications

☐ 1. Example of a student council memo, announcement, or video broadcast.

IV. Civic Engagement and Student Voice

Civic Based Activities

☐ 1. Sample of council materials explaining an activity or project's civic connection, or evidence of an in-person or virtual presentation explaining the civic connections of council activities.

Student Voice

☐ 1. Evidence of student council activities that provide a forum or other in-person or virtual means for student opinions and ideas to be expressed and collected.

☐ 2. Evidence of at-large student participation on student council committees.

Additional Evidence for High School Student Councils

To be eligible for National Gold Council of Excellence recognition, student councils must meet at least 26 of the additional evidence indicators listed below. Each indicator must be in your council's portfolio and reviewed by your principal. For each section, check all boxes that apply and then write down the total number of additional evidence indicators met at the end of this section.

I. Governance

Governing Documents

☐ 1. Evidence of review, changes, or updates to the Constitution or bylaws, or minutes from a meeting of the Officers or a Constitution/Bylaws committee.

Elections

☐ 1. Involvement or contribution by local Board of Elections officials through information resources, presentations, or direct assistance.

☐ 2. Use of voting machines or online voting for school elections.

☐ 3. Student council elections include voter registration, voting precincts, or other characteristics of local/state elections.

Meetings

☐ 1. Samples of two meeting agendas and a description of how they are shared with the student body and faculty.

☐ 2. Evidence of at-large student participation on student council committees or in other supportive roles.

II. Service

Serving the School

- ☐ 1. Evidence of promoting service to members and others.
- ☐ 2. Evidence of a service project that benefits the school.
- ☐ 3. List of school needs identified by the student council that were considered as possibilities for a service project.

Serving the Community

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

Service Learning

- ☐ 1. Evidence of council support for a service learning project in the school.
- ☐ 2. Evidence of service learning features in a student council service project, including planning, action, reflection, and celebrating success.

III. General Activities and Operations

Spirit and Social Activities

- ☐ 1. Evidence in activity advertisements, goals, or statement of purpose that demonstrates the promotion of positive social behaviors.
- ☐ 2. Evidence of an activity that aids in the transition of younger students into the middle level grades.
- ☐ 3. Evidence of an activity designed to engage new students and welcome them to the student body.

Council Operations

- ☐ 1. Copy of student council budget.
- ☐ 2. Copy of treasurer's report or meeting minutes showing finance activities.
- ☐ 3. Copy of council membership roll.
- ☐ 4. Evidence of a scrap book or similar historical record of council activities.
- ☐ 5. Evidence of student council participation on a school-level committee.
- ☐ 6. Evidence of student council participation on a district-level committee or school board.
- ☐ 7. Copy of a student survey given during the current or previous school year.
- ☐ 8. Copy of a project or activity evaluation used with the student body.
- ☐ 9. Evidence of active membership with a district, state, or regional student council organization.

Fundraising

- ☐ 1. Evidence of a council-sponsored fundraising project or a charitable collection project if fundraising is not allowed.
- ☐ 2. Copy of project revenues and contributions report.
- ☐ 3. Evidence of pre-project research on potential charities.
- ☐ 4. List of reputable charitable groups and organizations considered by the student council.

Leadership Training

- ☐ 1. Evidence of adviser participation in a professional development session on student council or leadership.
- ☐ 2. Evidence of attendance or participation in officer training.
- ☐ 3. Sample of a leadership lesson or skill building activity.

Communications

- ☐ 1. Evidence of council members' writing or oral presentations.
- ☐ 2. Copy of student council submission for publication or presentation (print or electronic media).

Building a Positive School Climate

- ☐ 1. Evidence of an activity that contributes to the development of a positive school climate.
- ☐ 2. Evidence of an activity that fosters positive relations between faculty/staff and students.
- ☐ 3. Evidence of engaging or collaborating with a parent group connected to the school, such as PTA, PTO, boosters, etc.

Responsible Social Media Use

- ☐ 1. Example of using social media in an effective and responsible manner to communicate with council members and the student body.

IV. Civic Engagement and Student Voice

Civic-Based Activities

- ☐ 1. Evidence of involvement by community leaders or agencies in a council project or activity.
- ☐ 2. Evidence of a council officer presentation to a civic board or committee, such as the school board, city or county board/committee, or civic club.

V. Other Council Activities

Local and State Involvement

- ☐ 1. Evidence of introducing or applying skills, knowledge, or ideas that were learned while attending a local or state event.
- ☐ 2. Student council hosts or participates in a joint activity with another school.

Other Leadership Training

- ☐ 1. Evidence of regular leadership training activities for student council members.
- ☐ 2. Evidence of leadership training provided to other clubs or to the general population of the student body.
- ☐ 3. Evidence of council members sharing their leadership skills by leading a training session or activity with younger students.

Total Number of Additional Evidence Indicators: _____

NCOE PROJECT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

- Student councils applying for NCOE must enter a minimum of three projects into the National Student Project Database, while NCOE Gold requires four project submissions.

- Each project entered must be identified in a different database category. Categories are:

Appreciation	Holiday Activities
Ceremonies	Homecoming
Character Building	Leadership Development
Citizenship Development	Recognition
Civic Based Activities/Event	School Spirit/Student Engagement
Fundraising for School/Group	Service to the Community
Fundraising for Charity	Service to the School/School Improvement
Green Projects	Student Voice

- Student councils may submit projects to the database until January 31, 2022, in order to allow adequate time for NASSP Student Leadership to review and approve submissions. Project submissions must be approved and published in the database to be included in the NCOE application.

- When entering a project, designate it as "NCOE entrant" (checkbox on submission form) and indicate the award year as 2022.

- Project summaries must be 200 words or longer. Include detailed descriptions that identify the roles of the student council in the project, the goals of the project, and other aspects such as highlights, outcomes, and totals.

- Projects similar to those of a previous year (e.g. Homecoming, prom, etc.) may be submitted only if they include current content, data, and the year in which the project took place in the title (e.g. "Spirit Week 2025"). Content copied from a previous project submission will disqualify the project.

- Include photos council members engaged in projects and any related video and media links.

- A pop-up window will appear on the user's screen that confirms the project submission. Do not leave the submission page or close the browser until the pop-up is seen.

- If a project is approved, the National Student Project Database will automatically assign a six-digit ID number and send a confirmation to the email listed on the project entry. Save the email for future reference.

- The following types of activities will not be approved as "student council projects" for the NCOE awards:

  o Elections, committee and council meetings, etc. that are required operational (business) and governance activities per the council constitution.

  o Attendance as delegates to conferences, workshops or similar events

  o School events, assemblies, etc., in which council members have no significant leadership roles or responsibilities

PROJECT ENTRIES

National Council of Excellence requires three (3) projects to be entered into the National Student Project Database, and the Gold level requires four (4) projects.

Project 1 Title: _____

Project 1 Database ID: _____
(Each project has a unique 6-digit/letter identification number in the project database.)

Project 1 Category: _____
(Each project listed on the NCOE application must be from a different project category as listed on the project database entry form.)

Project 1 Date of Entry: _____

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Project 2 Title: _____

Project 2 Database ID: _____
(Each project has a unique 6-digit/letter identification number in the project database.)

Project 2 Category: _____
(Each project listed on the NCOE application must be from a different project category as listed on the project database entry form.)

Project 2 Date of Entry: _____

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Project 3 Title: _____

Project 3 Database ID: _____
(Each project has a unique 6-digit/letter identification number in the project database.)

Project 3 Category: _____
(Each project listed on the NCOE application must be from a different project category as listed on the project database entry form.)

Project 3 Date of Entry: _____

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Project 4 Title: _____

Project 4 Database ID: _____
(Each project has a unique 6-digit/letter identification number in the project database.)

Project 4 Category: _____
(Each project listed on the NCOE application must be from a different project category as listed on the project database entry form.)

Project 4 Date of Entry: _____