

**The House System**  
**For the Secondary School, by Ty Fischer**  
*July 14, 2008*

**THE HISTORY**

At the university level, the term *house system* is generally synonymous with *residential college system*. The house system at Harvard University and the residential college system at Yale University, for example, are identical: they were founded at the same time, with a donation from the same benefactor, and have the typical organizational structure found in all standard residential college systems.

**THE VISION**

The Houses exist to divide up a larger school into small, permanent, faculty-led, cross-sectional, human-friendly components for the purpose of camaraderie, spiritual growth, unity and mutual helpfulness.

**OUR MISSION:**

To divide the student body into houses for the above listed purposes using good principles, creating a sustainable structure, .

**PRINCIPLES—a House should be:**

1. Decentralized—Thus it should not be a mechanism of school administration. They should involve significant freedom for the faculty and the student body.
2. Faculty led—The house should be faculty members.
3. Socially robust—The houses should encourage students to build friendships and enjoy competition, social interaction amongst students.
4. Genuinely diverse—Each house should encourage students to meet, interact with and build friendships across grade level boundaries, gender boundaries and interest groups or cliques.

**STRUCTURE**

Each house will follow this pattern:

It will be led by a Master who will be chosen by the Fellows, the Alumni and the Senior Members of House. The Master should be a faculty member and is the leader of the House.

It will also have a Dean who is a faculty member chosen by the Fellows, the Alumni and the Senior Members of House to be the Master second in command.

The rest of the faculty member of each House will be called Fellows.

The Student membership will be made up of alumni, senior members (10<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> graders) and junior members (7<sup>th</sup> – 9<sup>th</sup> graders).

## **ACTION PLAN**

1. Faculty should be divided up putting faculty members from different academic areas into different houses.
2. Each group of faculty members should choose officers—master, dean and fellows for each house.
3. Dedicate one of the rooms to be the Commons of each house and start the House's library in that room.
4. Each House can decorate their Commons to fit their history and traditions.
5. Make a weekly, monthly and yearly cycle of the community life of each house and create competitions between the houses as well.
6. Set up facebook and email loop for each of the houses.
7. Each House should create a coat of arms.
8. Each House should have its own mascot.
9. Each House should have a monthly and annual awards ceremony for a member of their House or members to be recognized.
10. Each Commons should have a few good magazines in it.
11. Divide the houses up by having the Masters make the initial division keeping family members together generally but looking to create Houses that have diverse gifts.
12. There should be a student counsel made up of elected leaders of each House.
13. Note—make sure that you have food at every event.
14. Post pictures of House events online.
15. Create holiday card with House Mascot.
16. Have a competition explaining the ancestry of your mascot.
17. Have a commonplace book containing the signatures, memorable quotes and events of the House for that year.
18. Develop one House event or competition a month.

## **Weekly Events**

1. Masters Tea.
2. Weekly Devotions and prayer.

## **Monthly Events**

1. Feast Day Luncheons.
2. Award Ceremony

## **Annual Events**

September

October

November—Turkey Bowl Flag Football Tournament

December

January

February—Pancake Race on Fat Tuesday

March—

April—Student Fundraiser Competition

May

## **LONG TERM ACTIONS**

1. Have a Junior and Seniors Commons area for each of the House. The Junior Commons is for everyone and the Senior Commons is only for the Senior Members of the House can use.
2. Each House should have its own Library.
3. Eventually each Houses' mascot should be a live animal.
4. Have alumni and other learned people just hang out in the Commons.
5. Build a network of Associates of each House. Prominent Community Members who are invited to join in the life of a particular House.
6. Have a piano in the Junior Commons.