

CHARTER OF THE HALDANE OUTLOOK

[HISTORY: Ratified by the founding Editorial Board of The Haldane Outlook on AUGUST 28, 2024. Amended 8/31/2025. Amendments noted where applicable.]

I. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

1. The goal of *The Haldane Outlook*, the student newspaper of Haldane High School, is to inform the Haldane School community on issues pertaining to the school and student life, through the practice of good journalism.
2. *The Haldane Outlook* is established as a designated public forum for student editors to inform their readers, as well as for the free discussion of issues that concern their readers. Content should reflect areas of school interest, including topics of controversy or dissent. The Editor-in-Chief (EIC), with counsel of the Community and Faculty Advisor(s), will make the final content decisions for *The Haldane Outlook*.
3. All student journalists-- including Editors, staff members, and contributing writers/photographers/illustrators-- must follow professional standards of journalism, in reporting and writing. [Amended 8-31-2025]
4. *The Haldane Outlook* is committed to remaining an independent voice. We reject prior review by school officials or administrators, as well as any and all other individuals or groups save for those whom the Editors allow to advise on matters of style and/or content.

II. NEWSPAPER STAFF

1. **Editor-in-Chief (EIC):** The Editor-in-Chief is responsible for leading *The Haldane Outlook*, with council from the Community and Faculty Advisor(s). The Editor-in-Chief makes the final decisions on all aspects of the paper, except for the filling of and removal from positions (see §III. 2. & 3.) and is responsible for all content in the newspaper. [Amended 8-31-2025]
2. **Managing Editor:** The Managing Editor acts as deputy to the EIC and helps oversee the section editors and the production of the paper. The Managing Editor assumes EIC duties in the absence of the EIC.
3. **Editorial Board:** The Editorial Board is comprised of all the Section Editors, Production Editors, the Editor-in-Chief, and the Managing Editor. *The Editorial Board votes by a 2/3 majority on the adoption of the newspaper's Charter and any amendments thereof.*
4. **Community Advisor(s):** The Editorial Board consults the Community Advisor(s) on matters involving the newspaper. The Community Advisor(s) gives guidance to the students on libel and journalistic ethics; balance and objectivity; taste and writing style. The Community Advisors adhere to the standards outlined in the Journalism Education Association's "JEA Advisor Code of Ethics" and work as a team with the Faculty Advisors. [Amended 8-31-2025]
5. **Faculty Advisor(s):** The Editorial Board consults the Faculty Advisor(s) on matters involving the newspaper. The Faculty Advisor(s) gives guidance to the students on libel and journalistic ethics; balance and objectivity; **taste** and writing style. . The Faculty Advisors adhere to the standards outlined in the Journalism Education Association's "JEA Advisor Code of Ethics" and work as a team with the Community Advisors. [Added 8-31-2025]

III. OPERATING PROCEDURES

1. **Production of the Newspaper:**

- a. *Issue Planning.* The EIC, Managing Editor and Section Editors will outline each issue and assign the writing and reporting of articles, the taking of photographs, drawing of artwork, or (if applicable) the soliciting of ads.
 - b. *Photography Workflow.* The Photo Editor will review photo assignment submissions by photographers, ensure file naming conventions are followed and pull first selects to submit to the Section Editor. For all photo submissions not selected as well as any miscellaneous submissions not earmarked for the current issue, the Photo Editor will upload properly named photos to the Outlook Archive. First selects for the issue will be reviewed by the Section Editor in consultation with the EIC and top select(s) will be chosen for each assignment. Top selects will be sent to the photo editor for visual optimization and then will be uploaded to the issue folder.
 - c. *Editing Procedure.* Section Editors will complete one round of edits for their respective articles and photographs. Next, the EIC and Managing Editor will edit all articles and return the article draft to the Section Editor who will communicate with the writer. (Exceptions to this process can be made for time-sensitive articles or articles that are deemed complete by the EIC.) After the writer has addressed the EIC, Managing Editor and the Section Editors' comments, the draft will be submitted by the Section Editor to the EIC. The EIC and Managing Editor will make any final changes and will send the article to the Copy Editor(s). Copy will edit the articles for grammar and style but not content, fact-check them and send them, after editing, to the Design Editors. The Community and Faculty Advisor(s) may provide editing advice during the editing process to assist writers and editors in learning and practicing the standards of professional journalism and, will review articles before they are printed or published on the website. [Amended 8-31-2025]
 - d. *Layout.* The Chief Design Editor and Deputy Design Editor will begin laying out the paper a few days before the print deadline. The EIC and Managing Editor will work with the Design Editors to complete the paper by the print deadline.
 - e. *Contributing (non-staff) Writers, Photographers and Illustrators.* Haldane students who are not a member of *The Haldane Outlook* staff but would like to submit an article/photo/artwork to the newspaper must first pitch their idea to *Outlook* editors via [this](#) google form. This applies to all outside contributors, including members of the Journalism class. This is to prevent duplicate coverage of the same event or topic and to ensure that all proposed content meets the journalistic standards of *The Haldane Outlook*. The EIC and Managing Editor will review submitted Contributor ideas on a rolling basis, with input from Section Editors as needed, and will accept/reject them in a timely manner. If an idea is accepted, the student may then submit their story/photo/artwork to the appropriate Section Editor, at which point it will be subjected to the *Outlook's* regular editing process. Contributors will be asked to respond to feedback and edit their story/photo/artwork during this process. Acceptance of a story/photo/artwork into the editorial process does not guarantee it will be published in *The Haldane Outlook*. *The Haldane Outlook* reserves the right to make necessary changes to contributed work for the purposes of length, grammar and clarity. *The Haldane Outlook* also reserves the right to defer, delay or to reject a student submission, without bias toward the author.
2. **Procedure for Changeover of Staff:** The Editor-in-Chief position will be appointed by the outgoing Editor-in-Chief in consultation with the Community and Faculty Advisor(s), except in the case of removal from position where the procedures outlined in §III. 3. will be followed. For all other positions facing an outgoing vacancy (e.g. seniors graduating or juniors and underclassmen not desiring to continue their role next year etc.), candidates may apply via an open application process in March of that year. Candidates will be vetted and chosen by the current EIC and Managing Editor, in consultation with the Community and Faculty Advisor(s), taking into account editor recommendations, past performance, quality of work, and resume of the candidate. All outgoing editors will train their designated replacement during the spring

quarter. Candidates may not be turned away on account of gender, sexuality, religion, disability, or socioeconomic status. [Amended 8-31-2025]

3. **Removal from Position for Poor Performance:** All concerns regarding Editors or other staff not performing their duties adequately, including being unable to handle their work, leaking sensitive information, condoning plagiarism, or other major failures of journalistic standards, should be presented to the Editor-in-Chief who will investigate the situation and, in consultation with the Managing Editor and Community and Faculty Advisor(s), issue warnings or performance reviews. The EIC and Managing Editor acting jointly, and in consultation Community and Faculty Advisor(s), may also take action to remedy the issues, including removal and replacement of uncooperative Editors or staff. In the case of poor performance by the Managing Editor, the EIC, in consultation with the Community and Faculty Advisor(s) will perform the duties of removal and replacement. In the case of poor performance by the Editor-in-Chief, he/she/they can only be removed by a 2/3 majority vote of the Editorial Board. After a successful 2/3 majority vote to remove the EIC, the Editorial Board will convene to discuss replacement candidates and appoint a replacement to fill the EIC position by simple majority vote. [Amended 8-31-2025]
4. **Approval and Removal of Community Advisor:** If, under extenuating circumstances, the position of Community Advisor is vacated, or if the Editorial Board decides by $\frac{2}{3}$ majority to vote “no confidence” in the current Community Advisor(s), the Editorial Board will consider new candidate(s). The Editorial Board will convene to vote on the proposed candidate(s) by simple majority. [Amended 8-31-2025]
5. **Approval and Removal of Faculty Advisor:** The Haldane Administration may assign Faculty Advisors to the Haldane Outlook, but they will not be part of the Outlook’s decision making process until approved by a simple majority vote of the Editorial Board. If, under extenuating circumstances, the Editorial Board decides by $\frac{2}{3}$ majority to vote “no confidence” in the current Faculty Advisor(s), the Advisor(s) will be removed from all decision making processes of the Outlook. [Added 8-31-2025]
6. **Endorsements:** The newspaper will not endorse candidates for Student Council or other student elections. Editors, staff, or contributing staff members may be included in informative, equitable candidate profiles in the newspaper, but these sections must be written and edited exclusively by staff who are non-candidates and who are designated by the EIC in consultation with the Community and Faculty Advisor(s). If the EIC is a candidate for student election, the Community and Faculty Advisor(s) will designate the staff writers and editors for the candidate profiles selection. [Amended 8-31-2025]
7. **Appellate Procedures:** Any person who wishes to appeal any action or decision of the newspaper should submit a letter to the EIC. The EIC is responsible for final decisions on content and coverage of the newspaper.
8. **Amendment of the Charter:** Amendment of the charter requires a 2/3 majority vote of the Editorial Board.

IV. POLICIES & GUIDELINES

A. Ethics

1. As an agent of the free press, *The Haldane Outlook* will act in accordance with First Amendment principles.
2. *The Haldane Outlook* will strive to be accurate, fair, and impartial in its coverage of issues that affect the school community and will explain to readers its journalistic processes when necessary.
3. *The Haldane Outlook* will cover the total school population as effectively and accurately as possible, will treat all people with respect and will not demean individuals on the basis of age, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, or mental/physical disabilities.
4. Reporters of *The Haldane Outlook* can grant sources anonymity for matters that demand the public’s right to know only as a last resort. Reporters should interview at least one other anonymous source to confirm the validity of information obtained from them.

5. Reporters of *The Haldane Outlook* must be clear with their sources about what is on record and what is off record. *The Haldane Outlook* will not publish information obtained off record.
6. *The Haldane Outlook* staff will adhere to standards of professional and student journalism as outlined in the National Scholastic Press Association Model Code of Ethics.

B. Content policy

1. *The Haldane Outlook* will use honest methods to gather news.
2. The EIC will hold factual information in opinion columns and editorials to the same standards of accuracy as news stories.
3. *The Haldane Outlook* will hold itself responsible for all that is printed.
4. *The Haldane Outlook* will not publish any material for which there is evidence that the author, on or off the staff, is using the paper to their personal means
5. *The Haldane Outlook* does not accept or publish everything it receives from interested contributors. The EIC and Managing Editor will determine when such materials will be printed.
6. Any staffer may write commentary; that writer's byline indicates that the opinions expressed are the writer's own.
7. *The Haldane Outlook* will attempt to ascertain all possible story ideas for each issue, but will select story ideas for coverage based on standard values of newsworthiness.
8. No cartoons, art, or photographs that editorialize may appear on the News pages unless it is clearly labeled.
9. *The Haldane Outlook* constitutes plagiarism to be any instance in which a member of staff attempts to publish as their own at least one full sentence of someone else's writing without proper citation.

C. Maintaining Independence

1. *The Haldane Outlook* will remain free of outside interests, investments, or business relationships that may compromise the credibility of its news reporting.
2. No individual or group outside the newspaper, except the Community and Faculty Advisor(s) and those who are asked by the EIC to advise the newspaper on issues of content and style, will review the newspaper prior to its release to the public. *The Haldane Outlook* will reject any attempts by the school administration to withhold the newspaper from publication. [Amended 8-31-2025]
3. *The Haldane Outlook* will not, under any circumstances, permit any source to read or edit an article before publication. However, the source may review direct quotes used in the article to ensure that they are accurate.

D. Corrections policy

1. All factual errors, including misidentifications and misspellings of names and titles, should be corrected. The Corrections Box is a reflection of the integrity of the newspaper.
2. If possible, the Corrections Box should be placed on the Editorial page, along with the masthead, under a suitable heading.
3. The EIC is responsible for corrections.
4. If an article published on the website is corrected, the fact that it was updated must be noted at the head or foot of the article.

E. Letters to the Editor policy

1. *The Haldane Outlook* encourages Letters to the Editor so that readers may participate in a scholastic free press in an open forum.
2. *The Haldane Outlook* will not print anonymous Letters to the Editor without the approval of the EIC and Managing Editor.

3. The EIC and Managing Editor will choose letters for publication on the basis of timeliness and potential reader interest.
4. *The Haldane Outlook* reserves the right to edit letters for length, appropriateness and grammatical correctness without altering meaning.

F. Obituary policy

1. *The Haldane Outlook* will cover stories involving the death of current students, administration, and alumni, including photographs (when possible) and relevant facts concerning the death.
2. *The Haldane Outlook* will work to obtain permission from the deceased's family before publishing any information regarding the cause of death. If permission is not granted, the EIC in consultation with the community advisor(s) reserves the final say in publication of cause of death.
3. *The Haldane Outlook* will report on suicide without sensationalizing the suicide or the manner of death, following the guideline "Best Practices and Recommendations for Reporting on Suicide," published by reportingonsuicide.org. The newspaper will utilize "Best Practices" or another reputable resource on suicide prevention to provide prominent sidebar information on warning signs, what to do and whom to call. If possible, follow-up reporting on suicide as a public-health issue will be included, in consultation with school mental health experts, such as the social worker.
4. *The Haldane Outlook* will treat all deaths in a tasteful, respectful way.
5. A newspaper issue, or portion of an issue, should not be dedicated to or in memory of the deceased.

G. Reporting on Crime

1. If a student, staff or faculty member is accused of a crime, *The Haldane Outlook* will report on it based on accepted professional journalism standards.
2. The names of all accused individuals 18 years or older will be included in the story, regardless of whether that individual is a teacher, student, administrator, etc. The name of any student under 18 years old who is being tried as an adult in the court system will be included in the story. A student under 18 years old who is being tried as a minor will have their name omitted from the story, unless the paper receives explicit permission from the individual to name them. If the paper receives such permission, the inclusion of their name will be at the discretion of the Editor-in-Chief and Managing Editor.
3. The names of victims of alleged crimes will not be included, unless the victim gives the paper explicit permission.
4. Should a student be subjected to disciplinary action by the administration of Haldane Central School District, the student's name and the names of any other students directly involved should not be mentioned regardless of age, unless the individual gives their explicit permission.
5. The names of faculty/administration or other school employees subjected to disciplinary action will be included in the reporting.
6. Reporters will treat all individuals involved in criminal proceedings with sensitivity and compassion.

H. Advertisements Policy

1. *The Haldane Outlook* reserves the right to turn away any advertisement at the discretion of the EIC.
2. *The Haldane Outlook* does not necessarily endorse the advertisements that appear in its issues.
3. *The Haldane Outlook* will be clear in differentiating advertisements from articles.

I. Takedown Request Policy [Added 8-31-2025]

1. Once a story is published, *The Haldane Outlook*'s general policy is to not change or remove any content (including quotes, names and information) due to requests from outside sources. Before publication, editors

and other staff members have worked to ensure the validity, newsworthiness and ethics of our work. For these reasons, the editorial board will not take down past articles except in extraordinary circumstances. A task force will be assigned to respond to each request and determine action. Content will only change if it is found to be false, potentially libelous, dangerous, or causing exceptional harm. If a story is altered, we will make it clear to the readers what edits were made.

J. AI Policy [Added 8-31-2025]

1. Guiding Principles.
 - a. **Human-first:** All reporting, writing, editing, and final creative choices are the student's own. AI can be part of the process, but it should never be the product.
 - b. **Integrity:** Do not mislead audiences or alter reality. Maintain academic honesty.
 - c. **Transparency:** Disclose meaningful AI use to editors and, when appropriate, to readers.
 - d. **Accountability:** If your name is on it, you're responsible for everything it contains.
2. Allowed Uses. AI use is limited to **ROUTINE, LOW-IMPACT** assistance that does not change meaning or originality. For clarity, this includes the following:
 - a. Spellcheck, grammar suggestions, AP-style prompts (human-reviewed)
 - b. Transcription (e.g., Otter) and basic formatting
 - c. Photo edits limited to global adjustments (exposure, white balance, crop) consistent with photojournalism norms
 - d. Audio cleanup for clarity (e.g., light noise reduction) that does not alter content
 - e. Brainstorming angles, headline ideas, interview questions
 - f. Bias checks (flags only—no auto-rewrites)
 - g. Research leads (e.g., “who to contact,” backgrounders); reporters must independently verify
 - h. Selective AI photo/audio tools that do not add/remove content (e.g., Lightroom AI noise reduction)
3. Prohibited Uses.
 - a. AI-written articles (doesn't matter if it's the whole piece or just a paragraph; student journalists should be doing the writing)
 - b. AI-written captions, cutlines, or social media copy (beyond minor grammatical suggestions).
 - c. AI “making up” interviews, quotes, data, or sources.
 - d. AI-generated photos or artwork.
 - e. Generative fill/expansion or object removal/addition that changes the recording of reality *without labeling such as a photo illustration AND receiving EIC approval.*