

NLS HOUSE SYSTEM DOCUMENT





NTARE LOUISEN LUND
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL RWANDA



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1.1 Why the RCA House System at NLS



The Ron Clark Academy (RCA) is a highly acclaimed nonprofit middle school in Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States, founded by Ron Clark and Kim Bearden in 2007. The academy is known for its vibrant and innovative teaching strategies that emphasize experiential learning, a strong sense of community, and a joyful learning environment. RCA serves as a model for other schools and regularly hosts educators from around the world to observe and learn from its unique teaching methods.



RCA is also known for its House System, a structure that divides students into different "houses," fostering a sense of community, healthy competition, and student engagement. This system encourages teamwork and belonging, motivating students to excel in academics and personal development.

We have decided to implement the RCA House System at the Ntare Louisenlund School (NLS) because it offers significant benefits that will positively impact both students and teachers. Schools that have adopted this system have reported remarkable improvements in the overall educational experience. Students have highlighted how the House System fosters friendships and helps them form closer bonds with their peers. Teachers have observed that students perform better academically when they are motivated by earning points and receiving encouragement from their classmates.

Our school has chosen to introduce the House System to cultivate a strong culture of belonging, where students feel more connected to one another and their community. Additional benefits include fostering school spirit, encouraging healthy competition, and creating an environment where both academic and personal growth are celebrated.

The house points system is not just about earning rewards; it's about building a community grounded in respect, responsibility, and resilience. Every action, no matter how small, contributes to a larger sense of belonging and achievement. True success comes from working together, embracing challenges, and lifting each other up. As our students and staff members contribute to your house, remember that it's not the points themselves but the lessons learned along the way—collaboration, persistence, and curiosity—that define your growth and the impact you make.

1.2 Sorting into Houses

On the first day of the school year, all students come together for the exciting sorting ceremony, where a spinning wheel determines their house and shapes their journey ahead. This year, the ceremony took place on each student's arrival day, with the principal and several NLS staff members cheering them on. Once their house was revealed, students were guided to their dorm rooms based on their house assignment.

All students, teachers, matrons, and housekeeping staff are proud members of different houses, fostering a strong sense of belonging and community. The sorting process happens by chance, under the slogan, "You don't choose the house, the house chooses you." Currently, each house consists of up to 20 students and 4-5 NLS staff members, creating a balanced and diverse group.

ALTRUISMO™

AMISTAD™

ISIBINDI™

RÊVEUR™

SOLLEVARE™

NUKUMORI™

ONRAKA™

PROTOS™

1.3 Distribution of House Points

As an International Baccalaureate (IB) World School, we are guided by the 10 IB Learner Profiles, which outline the characteristics we strive to develop in our students. These include being Inquirers, Knowledgeable, Thinkers, Communicators, Principled, Open-minded, Caring, Risk-takers, Balanced, and Reflective. These profiles aim to nurture well-rounded, globally-minded individuals who contribute positively to their communities and the world.

The IB learner profiles are integral to our school's philosophy and directly informed the creation of our house point categories. To streamline the process of awarding points through the app, we simplified the system by organizing all 10 profiles into three broad categories. This approach ensures that our house points system remains aligned with IB values while making it easier for staff to assess and reward student behavior in a consistent and efficient manner.

Our house points system encourages and recognizes students who demonstrate key values and attributes. The categories represent important aspects of personal growth and contribution to the school community.

NLS staff members can award 1 to 4 points in each category based on the behaviors they observe daily, with 4 points being reserved for truly exceptional actions.

Responsible and Respectful: Points are awarded to students who demonstrate accountability, respect for others, and ethical behavior.

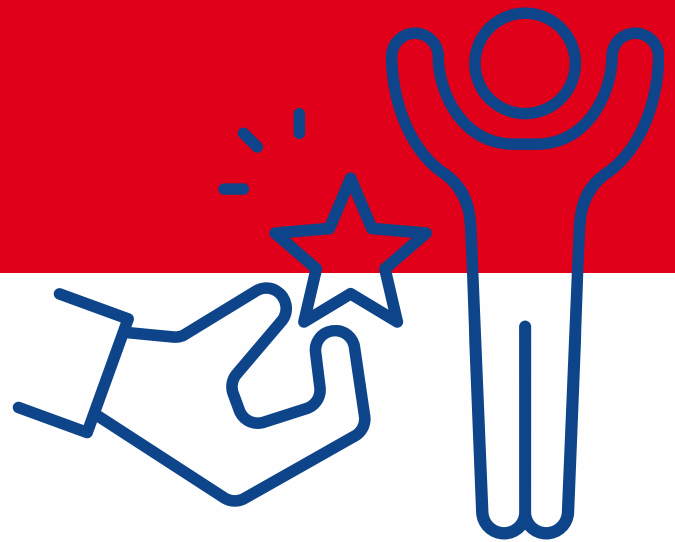
Aligns with the IB Learner Profiles of being "Principled," "Open-minded," and "Reflective."

Collaborative and Compassionate: This category celebrates students who value teamwork, empathy, and contribute positively to both the school and the wider community.

Reflects the IB Learner Profiles of being "Caring," "Communicator," and "Balanced."

Curious and Resilient: Points in this category are given to students who show a love for learning, problem-solving, perseverance, and the courage to take risks.

Aligns with the IB Learner Profiles of being "Inquirer," "Knowledgeable," "Thinker," and "Risk-taker."



Examples

In the Responsible and Respectful, a student who notices a classmate struggling to keep up with notes and offers to share their own after class, ensuring the classmate stays on track, could earn 3 points.

In the Collaborative and Compassionate category, a student who helps clear the cafeteria table by collecting trays and disposing of waste, even if it's not their mess, could earn 2 points.

In the Curious and Resilient category, a student who takes the initiative to ask a teacher for clarification on a topic they didn't understand, showing resilience in learning, could earn 1 point.

In this system, 4 points are awarded for truly outstanding behaviors, while 1 point might be given for smaller, yet positive actions, such as seeking clarification from a teacher.

1.6 House Points App

The RCA House Point App is a digital platform used at NLS to track and manage the house points in real time. It allows all NLS staff members to award points to students who demonstrate positive behaviors based on our three predefined categories: Responsible and Respectful, Collaborative and Compassionate, and Curious and Resilient.

The app is designed for ease and efficiency, allowing staff to award points quickly, while students and staff can view house standings in real time through the Leaderboard. The dynamic board shows which house is leading at any given moment, with standings that can shift instantly when a staff member records a student's positive action. Points can only be awarded by staff, not by students themselves, ensuring fairness and consistency, while students are motivated by the sense of competition and recognition.

Accessible on both smartphones and computers, the app can be easily used in classrooms or during school activities. At NLS, the RCA House Point App simplifies the process of awarding points, aligns with our school values, and ensures that all staff can contribute to fostering a positive, engaged school environment.



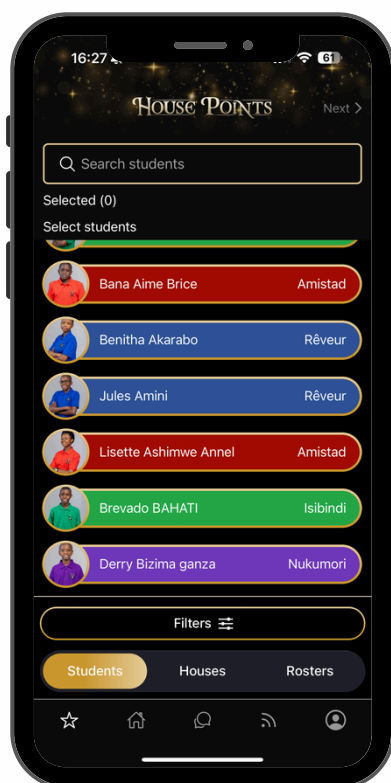
AWARD HOUSE POINTS

Award points to students on the spot.



ENGAGE STUDENTS & PARENTS

Send notifications to parents automatically when students earn house points - via in-app notifications.



BUILD SCHOOL-WIDE COMMUNITY

Track 4 to 8 houses and show points in real-time.



SEE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

Create reports by House, grade, student, staff, or category.

1.4 The collaboration within Houses

Since our first day of school, NLS has experienced many exciting events, meaningful moments, and inspiring visitors. Each house has taken on unique responsibilities, contributing to a vibrant and dynamic school culture. From organizing World Kindness Day and pajama parties to delivering impactful speeches, these activities have not only strengthened the bonds within each house but also fostered a sense of unity across all houses through shared experiences.

In addition to these events, our house system has also played a role in instilling responsibility and teamwork in everyday routines. Week by week, each house takes turns cleaning the cafeteria after meals. This initiative has not only helped maintain a clean and welcoming environment but has also demonstrated remarkable progress in fostering accountability and cooperation among students.

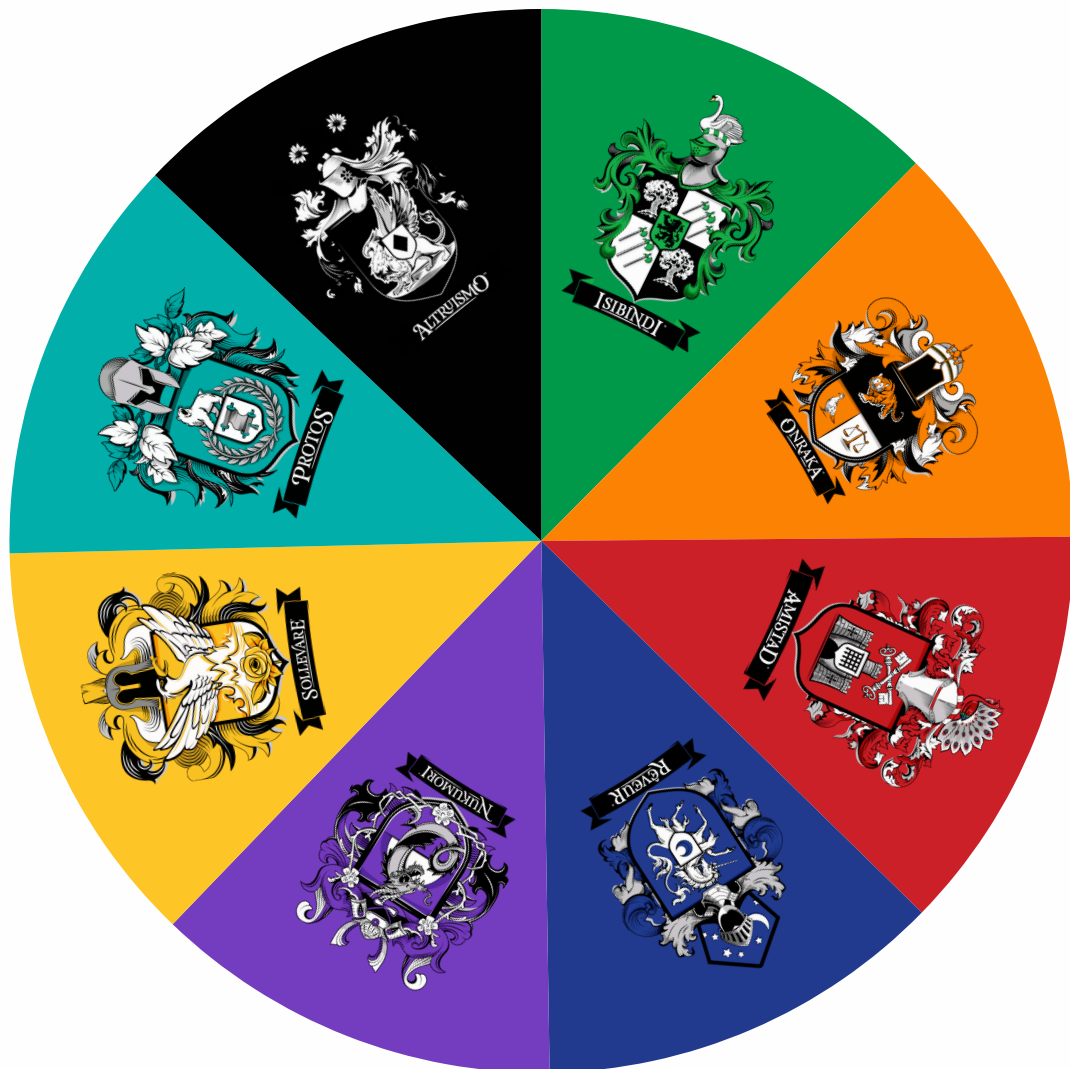
Events like Rock Your House Day have added a competitive edge, where students challenge one another in fun and engaging activities. Yet, the emphasis remains on collaboration, reminding students that true success comes from community, teamwork, and mutual support. These moments have truly enriched the NLS experience, creating lasting memories and life lessons that will stay with our students for years to come.



1.5 Spinning the Wheel

At NLS, spinning the House Wheel is a significant tradition. On their very first day, new students spin the wheel to determine which of the eight Houses they will join—a decision that stays with them until they graduate. This moment is exciting and symbolic, with staff from each House gathered around to cheer and encourage, creating a welcoming and energetic atmosphere. The wheel is divided into sections representing the Houses, with pegs that determine the House each student will be sorted into. This exciting event fosters school spirit and a sense of belonging from the start.

In addition to the first-day tradition, the wheel can also be spun on other days and occasions, such as during our NLS Monday Assembly. At the end of each assembly, the Student of the Week—one representative from each House—spins the wheel to win free points for their House, ranging from 4 to 100 points. The number spun is then added to the respective House's total in the House Points App, further fueling the competitive spirit. These moments create an energetic atmosphere, boosting morale and encouraging friendly competition. Spinning the wheel is more than just a ritual; it helps create bonds within the Houses and ignites excitement throughout the school community.





Lead with Heart, Serve with Soul.



House of the Givers

Symbol

Members of Altruismo can be heard making a hissing sound — Sss! — or seen holding their hands like a quivering snake. They turned the symbol of a snake into something that doesn't represent evil, but instead represents a bold and fierce power that is ready to strike and do great things at any moment.

Symbolic Animal:The Snake

Language:Portuguese

Heritage: Brazil

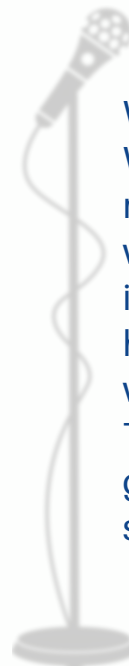


House History

Altruismo traces its origins to the rainforests of the Amazon, where a group of powerful Brazilians were given the name because of the Portuguese meaning behind it: "the Givers." This special group is known for striking a balance between bold strength and altruistic giving — a team that knows that real power comes not from looking out for yourself but from empowering others. They care deeply about lifting others up, but they also maintain a fiercely competitive spirit and pride.

Chant

We are strong, we are kind,
With open hearts and steady minds. We give to all, we do what's right, Altruismo shines its light! Alt ALT beat With hands and hearts to help, We walk together in all we do Together we give, together we grow, Altruismo leads the show!

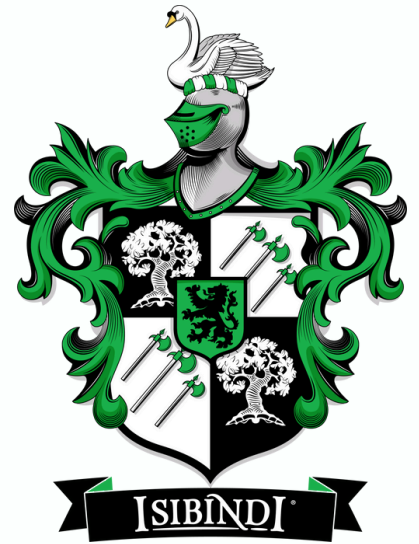




Isibindi on the rise, with courage we succeed.

Symbol

The second is The Crossed Keys. To make this, we make a fist with each hand, and cross our arms to make an "X" over the chest — left arm over the right — which symbolizes the crossed keys of friendship from our crest. This sign is also the American Sign Language signal meaning protection.



Symbolic Animal: The Mute Swan and the Lion
Language: Zulu
Heritage: South Africa

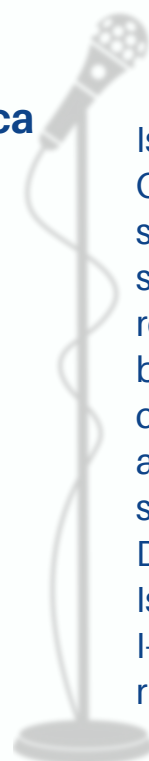
House of Courage

House History

Isibindi is a tight-knit group of individuals, like a pride of lions, where family means everything. The House's symbolic animals, the mute swan and the lion, serve to empower incoming members. While new students might be quiet or shy at first, the longer that they are in the House, the more they begin to display the characteristics of strength and bravery. In Zulu, Isibindi means "courage."

Chant

Isibindi, Isibindi, hear our call,
 Courage and strength we stand tall,
 Hearts so fierce, spirits bright together we rise
 ready to fight Feel the vibes bring the heat
 Isibindi pride can't be beat
 Raise your voice and shout allowed
 Isibindi strong forever proud
 I-S-I-B-I-N-D-I
 Isibindi on the rise,
 I-S-I-B-I-N-D-I Isibindi on the rise,
 I-S-I-B-I-N-D-I





Strength in power, power in purpose.

Symbol

The bengal tiger is the symbolic animal of the house, which is a quiet and consistent strength. It exercises great restraint in using its power until the time is right. Much like the tiger, Onraka earns its stripes by showing self-control in everything they do. This is balanced by the emerald dove, who reminds them that peace is a great strength as well.



House of Unity

Symbolic Animal: Bengal Tiger and Emerald Dove

Language: Tamil

Heritage: India

Chant

Onraka House, we stand so tall,
Fearless champions, we won't fall!
Together strong, united we rise, In
the spirit of victory, we reach for the
skies! Onraka House, hear our
cheer, With strength and courage
we persevere, together we rise, we
'll make our marks in unit and pride
we ignite the spark! O-N-R-A-K-
Aaaaa(×2)

House History

Onraka traces its origins to the land beyond the Himalayan mountains, where a group of powerful Indians were given the name because of the Tamil meaning behind it: the House of Unity. This group of very special individuals is known for the way that they stick together through any and all challenges. They always behave as a team — like a family — that knows that any obstacle in front of them will not be able to hold them back if they deal with it together. If they all work together to lift each other up, then the whole team will be able to rise to new heights as one. The House does not believe, however, that being unified means being the same as everyone around them. Instead, the history of the land of their heritage, India, reminds them that unity in diversity is the true strength of the House.



One Heart, One Mind, One Amistad.



House of Friendship

Symbol

The House of Amistad has two hand signals. The first is The Heart. To make this, we cup our hands together, joining the fingertips at the top and the thumbs at the bottom — to create a heart shape.

Symbolic Animal: Bengel Tiger and Emerald Dove

Language: Spanish

Heritage: India



House History

Amistad is the House that originates from Mexico. A group of individuals that are quiet but powerful, they are known most for their kindness of heart. This is why, in the language of their ancestry, their name means "friendship."

Incoming members are often a mix of extremes — the students can be extremely intelligent, creative, friendly, and competitive; Amistad is a very diverse group! The House takes great inspiration from its symbolic animal, the peacock, and the leaders always remind the members of this saying: "Once the peacock finds its feathers, it discovers who it really is." The encouragement is for each student to find his or her own feathers and discover their brilliance. While students may enter timidly, they learn to become brave as they find their true selves.

Chant

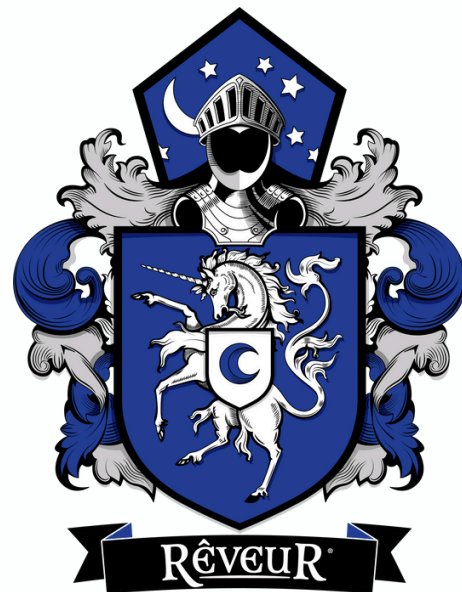
Amistad Amistad, strong and true,
Together we win in all we do.
Hearts of fire, spirits high,
We rise as one, we reach the sky.
Friendship, unity side by side,
In amistad, we wear our pride.
Step by step we show no fear,
Amistad's voice is loud and clear.



Rise, Renew, Reveal.

Symbol

Rêveur's hand signal is The Crescent Moons. To make this, we cup our hands into a "C" shape, hold them up, and cross our arms over our chests with the moons up. In a rally with other members of the house, we pump our arms three times with the signal — chanting "hup — hup — hup!" — and on the third time, everyone howls. Because when the moon comes out, the wolves come out!



Symbolic Animal: The Wolf
Language: French
Heritage: France

House of Dreamers

Chant

Rêveur strong, we stand tall,
 together we rise, we never fall. Work
 hard, dream big, smile often and
 never give up. Rise, Renew, Reveal

House History

Rêveur is a royal House whose name in French means "dreamers" or "idealists" — because the members who fill this group are students filled with freedom and wild abandon who recognize their dreams and will let nothing stand in the way of achieving them. This can be seen in the unicorn, which is on the center of the House's crest, a powerful creature who is almost impossible to tame. Similarly, the House of Rêveur is a House of passion.



With Warmth, we thrive.

Symbol



Nukumori's hand signal is The Peace Sign. To make this, we hold out our hands with our index and middle fingers up and the others clenched tight downward in a fist. This signal shows others that we exist for peace and kindness with all houses.

Symbolic Animal: Dragon
Language: Japanese
Heritage: Japan



House of Kindness

Chant

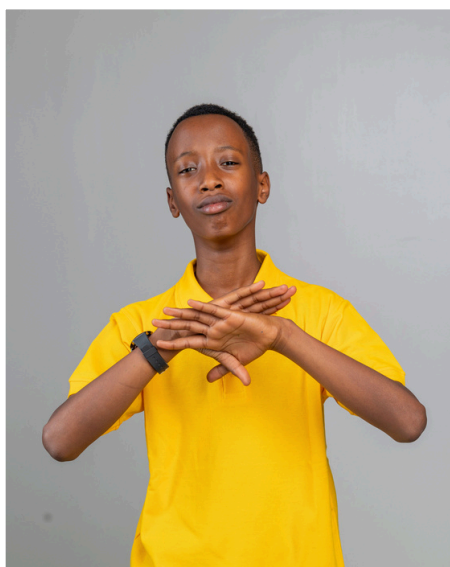
A warmth of love, a soothing light, In darkest time we shine so bright, A bond unbroken, strong and true Nukumori binds me and you. A little acts that help us grow, A shared smile a hand to lend, Nukumori our faithful friend, Nukumori spirit guides our pride. N-U-K-U-MORI Nukumori in the pride.

House History

Nukumori is the House that originates from Japan. A group of individuals that understand that kindness is the true strength that will build their character, the members of the House of Nukumori are known for the friendship that they extend to everyone around them. They treat others with respect, and in doing so they earn the respect of all others. Incoming members have a heart of kindness — even if they do not even see it within themselves in the beginning! That is because they learn that the great level of kindness that they must extend to all others grows over time to become a more full and beautiful character trait. This is why they take great inspiration from the symbol of the cherry blossom: it reminds the members of the House that kindness must be grown and cared for like a delicate flower, until it blossoms into the most beautiful flower in the entire garden. But kindness does not necessarily mean meekness or timidity. Kindness means stepping in and defending others, taking care of them and seeking what is best for others as well as ourselves. This is why the dragon is Nukumori's symbolic animal. Filled with ancient power and wisdom, it is fierce when the time calls.



Lift to Rise, Rise to Lead



Symbol

Sollevare's hand signal is The Phoenix. To make this, we fan out all of our fingers on both hands, then overlap our hands and interlace our thumbs at the bottom so that the fingers along the top spread out like feathery wings. This symbol reminds other members of the House that we will rise up no matter what!

Symbolic Animal: The phoenix

Language: latin

Heritage: Italy



House History

Sollevare is the House that originates from Italy. It was formed by a group who understood that the true strength of being undefeated warriors lies in always getting back up, no matter how many times they may be knocked down. The members of the House of Sollevare are known for their uplifting nature — always rising above, and helping others do the same. This is where their name comes from in Latin, meaning to “lift” up. New members have a spark of creativity — even if it is only a dim spark in the beginning, they will grow to have a great fire of creativity as they continue on! This is because it takes great creativity to see the ability to rise above in any circumstance; being able to lift others up means seeing past the current problem, and thinking ahead about the next step. All of these things together are why the House of Sollevare takes inspiration from the Phoenix as their symbolic animal. The Phoenix is a powerful creature who is able to rise up from the fire and ashes, reborn into an even greater being because it has learned from its mistakes or sacrifices. Full of ancient power and wisdom, the Phoenix reminds the members of the House not only that it is their duty to rise up from the ashes, but also their duty to help others do the same. Because when we uplift everyone around us, we uplift and create a better world for us all.

House of Uplifting

Chant

Sollevare, we rise together we are all we need, Sollevare take the lead (Patrick) Sollevare, we rise up high Sollevare, we touch the sky Sollevare, we stand up tall Sollevare, we never ever fall we rise x4 we rise to the top and we never ever stop and we don't stop, and we don't quit Sollevare in the house and you know it's lit. x2



Leading with Vision, Innovating with heart.

Symbol



Protos's hand signal is The Bear Claw. The Bear is often seen as the ancient symbol of family, as the powerful protector of family. This sleeping giant hibernates to recharge but then becomes one of the most powerful creatures of all! To make this signal, we curl in both the fingers on both hands, and turn both hands inward toward our shoulders while crossing both arms over our chest. This sign is also the American Sign Language signal meaning bear.



Symbolic Animal: The Bear
Language: Greek
Heritage: Greece

House of Success

Chant

Protos leads with strength and might. In success and excellence, we shine so bright! Together we strive, with courage and grace. Each step we take, we lead and embrace. Protos stands strong, leading the race!

House History

Protos is an ancient House of wisdom whose name reflects the Greek root word meaning "first" — the House whose destiny is defined by striving for excellence. Protos knows that wisdom and knowledge will be the strength that will guide them towards academic success. They pursue wisdom in everything that they do. This is why the scroll is on top of a shield in the center of the House crest: wisdom coupled with patience is a catalyst through which those who have mastered it have attained scholarship. The ancient Greek laurel represents peace and patience. It reminds the members of the House that they must seek to become the types of scholars who earned a crown through a peaceful greatness. The Corinthian soldier, whose helmet is at the top of the crest, was an ancient warrior who was both a citizen and a soldier. The House of Protos knows that they defend their House best by being the most upstanding citizens of their school and community overall.