

# Leadership

## Competition Rules Board August Meeting Minutes

August 1, 2023

The NSDA Competition Rules Board members held their virtual meeting August 1, 2023. In attendance were President Pam Cady Wycoff, Vice President Dr. Tommie Lindsey, Jr., Byron Arthur, David Huston, Adam Jacobi, Jennifer Jerome, and Jay Rye.

*President Wycoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.*

The Competition Rules Board began the meeting with a moment of silence in remembrance of former Board member, Timothy Sheaff.

### COMPETITION RULES

#### **Membership Correspondence**

In accordance with our goal of increased membership engagement, any letters submitted to the Competition Rules Board prior to the meeting were included in meeting materials to inform the Board of ideas, requests, and concerns during the Board's decision-making process. Thank you to the individuals who took the time to share their feedback.

#### **Last-Chance Qualifier**

##### **Moved by Rye, seconded by Jerome:**

"Offer a Last-Chance Qualifier tournament to allow students from schools that attended their district tournament the opportunity to qualify to the National Tournament in main events."

**Passed: 6-0-1**

**Aye:** Wycoff, Arthur, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Rye

**Abstain:** Lindsey

In 2022 and 2023, schools that attended their district tournament were permitted to enter any districts-eligible student into the NSDA Last-Chance Qualifier for another chance to qualify to the National Tournament in main events. In 2023, over 1,700 students from 490 schools participated, and 193 entries from 159 schools qualified to the National Tournament. The Competition Rules Board reviewed an assessment of the 2023 Last-Chance Qualifier and determined that the Last-Chance Qualifier will be an ongoing opportunity for qualification to the National Tournament each year.

#### **Middle School National Tournament**

The Middle School National Tournament returned to in-person competition in 2023 for the first time since 2019. The Competition Rules Board reviewed an assessment of the event and determined that the Middle School National Tournament will be held in-person as a general practice in future years.

#### **Supplemental Event-Only Opportunities**

##### **Moved by Huston, seconded by Lindsey:**

"Allow each member school to enter up to two member students in supplemental events who did not qualify for the National Tournament."

**Passed: 7-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Rye)

In 2021 and 2022, each school had the opportunity to enter two non-qualifying students that attended the district tournament into supplemental events. In 2023, the opportunity expanded to allow every member school to enter any two districts-eligible students who did not qualify into supplemental events. Over 900 students

who did not qualify in a main event attended the 2023 National Tournament to participate in supplemental events. The Competition Rules Board determined that this opportunity for participation in supplemental events will continue on an ongoing basis at future National Tournaments.

### ***Assessment of the 2023 World Schools Debate Invitational and Qualification Standards***

#### **Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Huston:**

“Rescind the motion to pilot a requirement that at least one of a district’s World Schools teams be composed of students from the same school beginning in 2023-2024.”

**Passed: 7-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Rye)

In May 2023, the Competition Rules Board voted to pilot a requirement that at least one of a district’s two World Schools teams be composed of students from one school. The purpose of the trial was to facilitate and determine the merits of moving toward a school-based World Schools Debate format to foster participation and growth of this format of debate.

The Competition Rules Board reviewed an assessment of the 2023 World Schools Debate Invitational. Over 74% of teams at the 2023 World Schools Debate Invitational were made up of students from different schools; 13 districts brought two school-based teams, and an additional 13 districts brought one hybrid and one school-based team. Additionally, the group reviewed member feedback regarding the May 2023 decision to pilot a requirement that at least one of a district’s two World Schools teams be composed of students from one school. There was a strong sentiment among members that the ability to send two hybrid teams to Nationals positively builds regional community, breaks down silos of students from different backgrounds, and creates opportunities for schools that only have one or two interested students.

At the August 2023 meeting, the Competition Rules Board voted to rescind the decision to require at least one of a district’s World Schools teams be composed of students from one school. The requirement will not be in effect for the 2023-2024 school year; instead, rules that governed the 2022-2023 selection of teams will remain in place. Districts will have the autonomy to determine the composition of their two World Schools teams. Each district can send two school-based teams,

two hybrid teams, or one of each to the 2024 World Schools Debate Invitational.

The Competition Rules Board will continue to consider other strategies for growing the World Schools Debate format. For the first time, World Schools will be offered at the 2024 Last-Chance Qualifier, and teams must be composed of students from one school to compete. The NSDA remains committed to promoting World Schools as a format and is working to create new judge training materials and other resources to grow the event.

Finally, the Competition Rules Board would like to commend the students and coaches of the USA Debate team for winning the 2023 World Schools Debating Championships!

#### **Moved by Huston, seconded by Arthur:**

“Allow District Committees the autonomy to determine whether a student’s participation in the district tournament series is a prerequisite for participation on their district’s World Schools team.”

**Passed: 7-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Rye)

Previously, all students who were interested in participating on the district’s World Schools team must have competed in another event at their district tournament to be eligible for selection. Some District Committees shared that this requirement made scheduling the tournament a challenge, and it discouraged students from pursuing World Schools as their preferred event. Other districts believe this requirement is key to maintaining participation numbers in other main events at the district tournament. Beginning in 2023-2024, District Committees will have the autonomy to determine whether to require that students must participate in the district tournament series in a different event as a prerequisite for participation on their district’s World Schools team.

#### ***Equity Pause***

The Competition Rules Board used the [NSDA Equity Lens](#) to reflect on the nature of their meeting deliberations and whether their decisions and decision-making processes are transparent, accountable, and reflect the organization’s core value of equity.

*The meeting adjourned at 7:50 p.m. Tuesday.* 

## **QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? IDEAS?**

We want to hear from you! Send your feedback to [board@speechanddebate.org](mailto:board@speechanddebate.org).