

# Leadership

## Competition Rules Board January Meeting Minutes

January 10, 2023

The NSDA Competition Rules Board members held their virtual meeting January 10, 2023. In attendance were President Pam Cady Wycoff, Vice President Dr. Tommie Lindsey, Jr., Byron Arthur, David Huston, Adam Jacobi, Jennifer Jerome, Renee Motter, and Jay Rye.

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

### COMPETITION RULES

#### **Assessment of the World Schools Debate Invitational**

The Competition Rules Board began an assessment of the World Schools Debate Invitational that is held alongside the National Tournament each summer. The Competition Rules Board discussed the main purpose of the event and the unique nature of it. The district qualification methods and hybrid district teams were evaluated to determine whether the current process best serves the original and/or potential purpose of the event. This discussion will continue at a future meeting to determine whether the current qualification system and invitational format serve its purpose and create potential for our current and future membership.

#### **National Tournament School Awards Assessment**

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

“Beginning at the 2023 National Tournament, add ‘total counted entries’ as the tiebreaker for school award winners.”

**Passed: 8-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter, Rye)

The school awards formula was simplified in 2020 to ensure accuracy, and it was adjusted in 2022 due to fewer

elimination rounds being held in-person compared to the online National Tournament. Because of this simplification, there was an increase in the number of tied schools for the 40th spot in the School of Honor awards. Adding the tiebreaker of “total counted entries” allows ties among schools earning equal school award points to be broken based on the number of entries that earned points in that category for the school. The rationale for using this tiebreaker is that awarding a school with multiple entries clearing to elimination rounds over a school with one entry in the final round is more representative of a sweepstakes award. Additionally, the Competition Rules Board assessed the point values earned by speech, debate, and Congress entries and determined that the current formula does ensure that each event type has equal weight in determining overall school award winners.

#### **District Congress Judging Eligibility**

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

“Remove from the district Congress rules: ‘Unaffiliated judges and parliamentarians are required. College-age judges are permitted at the discretion of the District Committee. Current high school students may not judge any portion of the district tournament series.’”

**Passed: 8-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter, Rye)

This change removes the requirement that district Congress judges and parliamentarians must be unaffiliated. All judges at the district tournament in speech, debate, and Congress events are expected to adhere to the Code of Honor and recuse themselves from judging any round in which there is a conflict of interest per the policy outlined on page 96 of the

Unified Manual. District Committees may still determine that only unaffiliated judges may adjudicate any portion of their tournament, but this is no longer a requirement of the national office.

Additional clarifying language will be added to the manual to make it clear that districts are not required to equally separate students from each school among all chambers in Congress; students from the same school may be grouped in chambers to facilitate judge placement.

College-age judges are still permitted to judge at the discretion of the District Committee, and high school students are still prohibited from judging; however, these lines in the Unified Manual will be removed from the Congress section because they are already repeated in the overall district rules requirements.

### **Novice Lincoln-Douglas Topic**

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

“Replace the novice Lincoln-Douglas topic and resources by 2023-2024.”

**Passed: 8-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter, Rye)

The novice Lincoln-Douglas topic is an optional topic that coaches and tournaments may choose to use each year in September/October. The same topic is used each year, and it was created to be accessible to new debaters so that coaches can have a consistent, beginner-friendly topic to guide their novice LD curriculum using educational materials provided by the NSDA. The Competition Rules Board received feedback from the Black/African-American Coaches' Caucus that the current novice LD topic, *Resolved: Civil disobedience in a democracy is morally justified*, is putting new students in a position to argue or listen to arguments that are not aligned with their own beliefs about issues of social equity and justice, especially in the context of protests against racism and police brutality that have occurred across the world in recent years. A new novice Lincoln-Douglas topic and resources will be released in time to be used for the 2023-2024 season.

### **Rule Change Submission Prioritization**

The Competition Rules Board continued to assess and prioritize remaining rule change submissions from the membership that have not yet been addressed. The group determined a timeline for discussion and a process for resolution for each item.

### **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.

### **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. This correspondence was considered during the Board's decision-making process. Thank you to the individuals who took the time to share their feedback

*The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m. Tuesday.* ✨

**QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? IDEAS?**

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