

Leadership

Competition Rules Board March Meeting Minutes

March 28, 2023

The NSDA Competition Rules Board members held their virtual meeting March 28, 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

Strategic Planning

The Director of Competition and Events shared an update on progress related to competition rules strategic plan objectives. This update described ongoing work, development and assessment regarding judge accreditation, National Tournament judge obligations, the Last-Chance Qualifier and supplemental event opportunities for non-National Tournament qualifiers, free online competition through the Springboard Series, and updates to Tabroom.com. The Competition Rules Board reviewed, analyzed, and shared feedback regarding progress on these objectives.

National Tournament Rules Assessment

Moved by Huston, seconded by Lindsey:

“Power match main debate events in rounds 3 through 6 at the National Tournament.”

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

Moved by Lindsey, seconded by Jerome:

“Allow judges to adjudicate students from their state, but not their district, in final rounds at the National Tournament.”

Passed: 7-1

Aye: Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter

No: Rye

Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Rye:

“Require all judges at the National Tournament to write feedback on their ballots at the 2023 National Tournament.”

Passed: 7-0-1

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

Abstain: Lindsey

The Competition Rules Board assessed the three following rules that were used for the first time at the 2022 National Tournament. First, all judges were required to write feedback on their ballots. The Competition Rules Board determined this rule will be continued at the 2023 National Tournament, and the national office will begin implementing the initial stages of an equity review of ballot comments to ensure that feedback that may have elements of harassment or discrimination is brought to the Belonging and Inclusion Station for review. Second, judges were permitted to adjudicate students from their state, but not their district, in final rounds. This rule will continue at future National Tournaments to help meet the representation and experience goals related to final round judge paneling. Finally, rounds 3 through 6 in main debate events were power matched. The Competition Rules Board determined this rule will continue at future National Tournaments because it aligns with district rules and brought the percentage of clearing entries into parity with main speech events.

Assessment of the World Schools Debate Invitational

The Competition Rules Board continued their assessment of the World Schools Debate Invitational that is held alongside the National Tournament each summer. The Competition Rules Board discussed the advantages and disadvantages of potential pathways forward for World Schools at Nationals. At the May Competition Rules Board meeting, the group will assess coach feedback from the post-district tournament survey and determine whether to keep the current district-based qualification system or to pilot a new requirement that requires at least one of a district's two World Schools teams to be composed of students from one school. This new requirement would still give districts the autonomy to determine how World Schools teams are selected, and school-based and hybrid teams would compete in the same division at the tournament. The goal of this trial would be to assess how a move toward a school-based World Schools Debate format impacts participation, competitive success, and growth of World Schools as a format.

Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence at the 2023 National Tournament

Moved by Huston, seconded by Motter:

"At the 2023 National Tournament, generative artificial intelligence should not be cited as a source; while something like ChatGPT may be used to guide students to articles, ideas, and sources, the original source of any quoted or paraphrased evidence must be available if requested. Students are prohibited from quoting or paraphrasing text directly from generative AI sources like ChatGPT in events in which speeches must be the original created work of a competitor."

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

The Competition Rules Board discussed the implications of the use of ChatGPT and other generative artificial intelligence technologies during debate rounds, preparation time in limited prep events, and as a tool for writing speeches. At the 2023 National Tournament, students in events in which speeches must be the original work of the competitor (Extemp, Original

Oratory, and Informative) are not permitted to quote or paraphrase text directly from generative AI sources. Students are not prohibited from using generative AI to guide their research process or help them generate ideas before the tournament or during Extemp prep, but they cannot quote, paraphrase, or cite generative artificial intelligence sources like ChatGPT during their speeches. All original source material cited during speeches must be provided if questioned. In debate events, students may use generative AI to assist with the research and idea generation process pre-tournament and during the tournament in accordance with the Guidelines for Internet-Enabled Device rules; however, generative AI should not be cited as a source, and debaters must have original source material of any paraphrased or quoted evidence available upon request. The goal of this ruling is to guide students in their preparation for the 2023 National Tournament; further discussion on this issue and its implications for the upcoming school year will continue with additional stakeholders in the summer and/or the fall as needed given this evolving technology.

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 during the Board's decision-making process. Thank you to the individuals who took the time to share their feedback.

The meeting adjourned at 8:25 p.m. Tuesday. 

QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? IDEAS?

We want to hear from you! Send your feedback to board@speechanddebate.org.