

Leadership

Competition Rules Board November Meeting Minutes

Nov. 13, 2023

The NSDA Competition Rules Board members held their virtual meeting November 13, 2023. In attendance were President Pam Cady Wycoff, Vice President Dr. Tommie Lindsey, Jr., Byron Arthur, David Huston, Adam Jacobi, Jennifer Jerome, and Renee Motter.

President Wycoff called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

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 for consideration during the Board's decision-making process. The Board welcomes membership feedback.

World Schools Invitational Breaks

Moved by Lindsey, seconded by Jerome:

“At the United States World Schools Invitational, a maximum of 64 teams that have a 4-2 or better record will advance to elimination rounds. Ties will first be broken based on total team scores, dropping the best and worst scores.”

Failed: 3-4

Aye: Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur

No: Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter

The United States World Schools Invitational manual currently states that all teams with a 4-2 or better preliminary round record will advance to elimination rounds. The Competition Rules Board considered a tie-breaking proposal designed to advance a maximum of

64 teams with a 4-2 or better record in an effort to create a predictable schedule and logistics for WS competitors, judges, supervisors, and tournament personnel. The Competition Rules Board ultimately voted to maintain the current rules in the manual; the World Schools Invitational will continue to break all teams with a 4-2 or better record to maintain consistency with other debate advancement procedures to ensure all teams with a winning record have the opportunity to compete in elimination rounds.

NSDA Online Schools District

In 2020, the Competition Rules Board created the NSDA Online Schools District to expand National Tournament qualification opportunities for educational institutions that conduct 100% of their schooling virtually. Participation in this district thus far has been too low to hold a district national qualifying event. The Competition Rules Board affirmed that students from schools in this district may compete in the Last-Chance Qualifier despite not attending a district tournament, and that partners at the Last-Chance Qualifier must reside in the same geographic area. Schools that are part of the NSDA Online Schools District may also bring competitors to the National Tournament in supplemental events.

Assess Qualification Opportunities

Association growth strategies continue to call for the exploration of alternative access points to the National Tournament. The Competition Rules Board assessed the existing avenues to qualify for the National Tournament through district tournaments and the Last-Chance Qualifier, and endorsed the exploration of an additional online qualification opportunity in 2024-2025 to supplement the existing avenues for National Tournament qualification.

Notes in Extemp, Commentary, and Impromptu

Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Motter:

“Develop a plan to survey, explore, and test a pilot for the use of a notecard while speaking in limited preparation events (e.g., Extemporaneous Speaking, Extemporaneous Commentary, and Impromptu.)”

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

The Competition Rules Board assessed a proposal to allow competitors in Extemporaneous Speaking, Extemporaneous Commentary, and Impromptu to use notes while delivering their speech. Currently, rules allow students to prepare and utilize notes during preparation time, but no notes may be used during the presentation. In 2024-2025, the Association will survey and pilot strategies for allowing students to use the front and back of a 4” x 6” notecard during their speech in limited preparation events and evaluate feedback to determine whether this rule warrants permanent change.

PF and LD September/October Topic Release Date

Moved by Huston, seconded by Lindsey:

“September/October topics for Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum will be released August 1. The voting period will be July 25-31.”

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

Currently, September/October topics for Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum are released on August 8 with voting occurring August 1-7. Beginning in August 2024, these topics will be released on August 1 with voting occurring July 25-31. This change will create a consistent one-month preparation period for all topics throughout the school year.

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.

Adjourn

Moved by Huston, seconded by Lindsey:

“Adjourn.”

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

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.