



Winter Board Meeting, January 16, 2024
Location and Time: Online, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. CT

Call to Order/Welcome

Legal Update

Each Board meeting includes executive session time allotted for relevant updates on any pending legal matters and/or executive business concerns.

Review Membership Correspondence

In accordance with our goal of increased membership engagement, letters submitted to the Board will be included in our meeting materials to inform the Board of ideas, requests, and concerns that have been submitted for consideration.

Consent Agenda Approval

Via consent agenda, the Board will be asked to officially read the full September Board meeting minutes into the official record. They have already been approved and published online. In addition, this meeting's consent agenda will include acceptance of the Q1 Strategic Plan report as reviewed by all Board Subcommittees (Internal Affairs, External Affairs, and Governance).

Strategic Realignment Update and Presentation

The NSDA is embarking on a strategic realignment process with the goal of creating a framework for our future that will define the unique role of the NSDA in service to the speech and debate field while putting the mission and values of the NSDA at its core. Over the past year, the NSDA has engaged the services of Education First, a national, mission-driven strategy and policy organization with unique and deep expertise in education improvement. With support from Ed First, the NSDA is evaluating a redesign of our membership model to offer greater inclusion, opportunity, and access for middle and high school students whose schools do not currently offer speech and debate, especially those traditionally marginalized because of their race, gender, or income.

The project leads from Ed First will be meeting with the Board and staff to do the following:

- Explain how the design of the project's goals, approach, and deliverables support operationalizing the NSDA's new, broader, and more inclusive mission by identifying ways to create greater access to high-quality speech and debate programs while also strengthening the organization's financial health.

- Review how the research and development of recommendations engaged a broad set of stakeholders including those in the communities the NSDA aspires to grow membership within.
- Understand the strengths and challenges stakeholders identified with the NSDA's current membership model and the opportunities they identified for creating greater access to high-quality speech and debate programs.
- Preview the deliverables that the project is creating, how they will be used to inform the NSDA's decision-making, and the questions and decisions that will be in front of the Board as a result.

Acceptance of FY23 Financial Audit and 990 Tax Return

The Internal Affairs Committee met with the Association's CPA and voted to recommend acceptance of the FY23 Audit. The audit and 990 tax return will be provided as resource material for review, and the committee will seek full Board acceptance of both.

Strategic Anchor Review and Thematic Goal Discussion

The organization's strategic anchors have proven useful in decision-making and prioritization over the last few years. The Board will do a brief review of the anchors to judge their continuing durability. Are these anchors still the lens through which each decision should be evaluated? Do they help to avoid the temptation to make overly pragmatic or opportunistic decisions that may diminish our focus on strategic goals? The current anchors include:

- A relentless focus on generating credibility and stability for speech and debate as a school-based activity.
- The ability to leverage recognition and membership to inspire decision-makers to prioritize quality speech and debate programs.
- Commitment to enable meaningful participation in speech and debate for traditionally marginalized and disenfranchised students.

For the past few years, the NSDA strategic theme for the year has been, "Adopt an advocacy orientation that champions student agency and voice." The intent of the strategic theme is to clarify what is most important, right now. It is a "rallying cry" that is singular, qualitative, temporary, and shared across the leadership team of staff directors and Board members. To discuss the 2024-2025 thematic goals, we should ask, "If we accomplish only one thing during those 12 months, what would it be?" or "What must be true after next school year for us to be able to look back and say with any credibility that we had a good period?" This is an opportunity for Board members to share thoughts on potential themes for the 2024-2025 school year.

Disruptors Think Tank Discussion

Life after the pandemic has changed how many educational institutions, companies, governments, and organizations operate. Disruptors include a variety of factors that cause change in an industry or market. As an organization, are we positioned in a nimble way to both respond to unfamiliar challenges and also embrace unforeseen opportunities? Is our Board equipped and properly trained to create the best space for addressing these issues? As recommended by the Governance Committee, the Board will consider a proposal for a

consultant to advise, guide, and offer strategies for effectively navigating these challenging discussions.

Updates and Reports (Time Permitting)

- **Appointed Board Process Update**
The Governance Committee has approved a process and timeline for the nomination and appointment of Board members moving forward. The Board will review the Governance Committee's recommendation and provide input and feedback.
- **2022-2024 Board Priorities and Approaches**
Based on the 2021-2022 Board Evaluation results, analysis, and feedback, the Governance Committee reviewed and recommended two key Board priorities to span two fiscal years. The primary areas are 1) Strategic Alignment and Oversight and 2) Board Composition and Structure. The Board President will provide a brief overview of the progress on these two key priorities and solicit Board comment/questions.
- **Chapter Manual Revamp Progress Report**
NSDA staff have been working on a restructuring of the NSDA Chapter Manual to ensure it is comprehensive, accurate, and user-friendly. One step in this process is the inclusion of "Expectations of Conduct" that were created and approved by a Board ad hoc committee last year. The Board will receive a progress update on the manual and current proposed language for further review, evaluation, and feedback.
- **Hall of Fame Survey Report**
The Board will be provided the results of a recent survey of the current Hall of Fame members seeking their thoughts on the current system and criteria for elected inductees and appointment of the Legends selection. The Board will discuss preferred next steps in the review process.
- **Board Subcommittee Updates**
Each Standing Committee chair (External, Internal, and Governance) will be given the opportunity to outline a few key updates on their committee's targeted goals and ongoing projects.

Adjournment