



Competition and Rules Leadership Committee Meeting, September 15, 2026

Location and Time: Online, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. CT

Call to Order/Welcome

On September 15, 2026, the first Competition and Rules Leadership Committee (CRLC) meeting of the 2026-2027 school year will be held.

Onboarding

The Competition and Rules Leadership Committee will discuss the scope of their role, committee meeting processes, and expectations for members. The group will also review the strategic plan that outlines the goals of the Association.

Subcommittee and Rule Change Prioritization

A majority of the Competition and Rules Leadership Committee's work will take place through subcommittees. Based on priorities identified in the strategic plan, the Office of the Executive Director has identified five potential subcommittee focus areas: Middle School Growth Strategy, Assessment of Debate Evidence Rules, Assessment of Congressional Debate Rules, Curricular Debate Strategy, and Student Programming. CRLC members will prioritize three of these areas for focused work during the 2026-2027 school year. CRLC members will also review rule change proposals submitted by members and determine which proposals the committee will prioritize for discussion this year.

Extemp Notecard Pilot

Beginning in 2024-2025, districts were given the option to participate in a pilot rule allowing competitors in Extemporaneous Speaking to use the front and back of a 4 x 6" or smaller notecard while speaking at the district tournament. The notecard was required to be prepared during the competitor's preparation period; pre-written or previously used notes were not permitted. The pilot rule was not used at the High School National Tournament but was implemented at the Middle School National Tournament. The Competition and Rules Leadership Committee will review feedback on the pilot and determine whether to extend it, discontinue it, or adopt the rule for use at all district tournaments and the National Tournament.

District Growth Plan Requirements

The Competition and Rules Leadership Committee will assess proposed standards for district splits, transfers, combinations, and dissolution. Under the proposed framework, districts with fewer than 15 schools would be placed on a two-year growth plan with established metrics. District leadership would work with NSDA staff to develop the plan, including identifying growth and school recruitment strategies appropriate for the area, opportunities to strengthen coach recruitment and retention, and resources or materials needed to support the district's success. If the established growth metrics are not met by the end of the two-year period, the district would

no longer be eligible to host a national qualifying district tournament, and schools within the district would have the option to transfer to an adjacent district.

District split requests would be evaluated every two years to align with district leadership election years. When possible, split requests would be coordinated with district dissolutions to help maintain a relatively consistent overall National Tournament size. Requests from individual schools to transfer from one district to another would be evaluated by the national office based on the best interests of the students, schools, and districts involved.

Equity Pause

At the end of deliberations, the Competition and Rules Leadership Committee will utilize the NSDA Equity Lens to consider, reflect on, and address whether their decisions and decision-making processes are transparent, accountable, and reflect the organization's core value of equity.

Adjourn