

# Leadership

## Board of Directors Fall Minutes

San Francisco, CA  
September 29-30, 2023

The NSDA Board of Directors held its fall meeting September 29-30, 2023. In attendance were President Pam Cady Wycoff, Vice President Dr. Tommie Lindsey, Jr., Byron Arthur, Alan Coverstone, Dr. Mike Edmonds, Sara Gibson, David Huston, Adam Jacobi, Jennifer Jerome, Anoop Mishra, Renee Motter, Jay Rye, and Holly Williams.

*President Wycoff called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.*

### WELCOME

President Wycoff welcomed and thanked the Board, Executive Director, directors, and all staff for their preparations for the meeting. She emphasized that she and the Board look forward to what they can and will accomplish together to fulfill the mission, vision, values, and equity statement on behalf of all they serve. She relayed excitement regarding the Board's efforts to work together to make a positive difference as the Board considers policy decisions and "big picture planning" regarding Strategic Planning and Board Restructuring.

The Board welcomed the presence of Anneteke Adoga, 2022 Student of the Year finalist and two-time champion in Informative Speaking. This is the Board's third opportunity to experience and consider student representation at a Board meeting, and the first opportunity to do so in person.

The spring 2023 Board meeting minutes were approved online prior to publication and officially read into the record. President Wycoff noted that Dr. Mike Edmonds would serve as the equity advocate on Friday and Holly Williams would serve in this role on Saturday.

### MISSION MOMENT

This moment is designed to set the tone for the meeting and purposefully remind all present of our mission, vision, values, and goals as the Board deliberates and conducts business on behalf of our current and future membership. The Board watched an In Memoriam video ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uv4GpfOgy2g](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uv4GpfOgy2g)) and reflected on the immense impact of Mr. Sheaff and the integral role of servant leaders in our organization.

### TEAM BUILDING ACTIVITY

The Board participated in an interactive team building activity led by Holly Williams to enhance and facilitate discussion and deliberation.

### LEGAL/CONFIDENTIAL MATTERS

Each Board meeting includes time allotted for relevant updates on any pending legal matters or other business that require discussion in executive session.

### MEMBERSHIP CORRESPONDENCE

In accordance with our goal of increased membership engagement, letters submitted to the Board are included in meeting materials to inform the Board of ideas, requests, and concerns that have been submitted for consideration. This is an opportunity to briefly highlight, clarify, and/or frame action items on the docket in light of these submissions.

## STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES AND TARGETED GOALS

### Moved by Rye, seconded by Jacobi:

“Approve the targeted goals of the Board Standing Committees.”

**Passed: 13-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Mishra, Motter, Rye, Williams)

Prior to the Board meeting, members were asked to submit questions about the prior Standing Committee minutes and FY24 Standing Committee Goals, so that they could be addressed by the appropriate committee chair either before or during the meeting prior to acceptance. Each committee chair highlighted key objectives for the year. In addition, President Wycoff underscored key elements of the FY23-FY24 Board Priorities and efforts that will be taken to maximize each Board member’s “time, talents, and treasure.” The Board had the opportunity to discuss ways in which the Board and staff can further maximize Board committee work as well as Board meeting strategies to cultivate strategic thinking throughout the year.

## 2023 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESULTS

Director of Membership Annie Reisener led the Board through forecasting the values and activities related to loyal, neutral, and vulnerable members, followed by a summary of the 2023 Membership Survey Results. This interactive session allowed the Board to learn more about the strategies in place to secure loyalty and continued membership in the Association and offer insights and reactions to positively impact membership efforts.

## FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET REPORT REVIEW

### Moved by Arthur, seconded by Edmonds:

“Accept the Draft FY23 Financial Report as presented.”

**Passed: 13-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Mishra, Motter, Rye, Williams)

Director of Business and Finance Laura Stein, Executive Director J. Scott Wunn, and related staff leadership answered questions related to the FY23 Budget results. The Internal Affairs Committee sought acceptance of the FY23 Budget report.

## FISCAL YEAR 2024 OPERATING PLAN AND STRATEGIC REALIGNMENT

The FY24 strategic plan objectives were approved by the Board at its previous spring meeting. The staff completed the comprehensive plan document, which was shared with each Board subcommittee. The Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director presented an update of the work with Ed First regarding assessment of the organization’s current business model, the goals of the project, current timeline, process overview, and potential framework revisions. The staff provided updates and sought feedback from the Board regarding Development, Information Technology, Marketing and Advocacy, and other specific elements of the strategic plan for consideration. Board members had the opportunity to ask questions of clarification on these aspects.

## FISCAL YEAR 2024 FINAL BUDGET PROPOSAL

### Moved by Arthur, seconded by Gibson:

“Accept the FY24 Budget proposal.”

**Passed: 13-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Mishra, Motter, Rye, Williams)

The Director of Business and Finance, Executive Director, and related staff leadership answered questions related to the proposed amended FY24 Budget. The Internal Affairs Committee sought approval on the proposed FY24 Budget.

## BOARD COMPOSITION RESTRUCTURING PLAN

### Moved by Lindsey, seconded by Edmonds:

“Approve the Board Composition Restructuring Plan as recommended by the Governance Committee and as amended by the Board of Directors.”

**Passed: 11-2**

**Aye:** Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jerome, Mishra, Rye, Williams

**No:** Jacobi, Motter

As part of its FY23-FY24 Board Priorities, the NSDA Board has been considering various changes to the NSDA’s Board and overall leadership composition. The process of restructuring NSDA leadership infrastructure began in 2016 with the addition of non-elected Board members who were appointed to serve on the Board to add additional expertise and provide a unique perspective on governing

issues regarding 501(c)(3) nonprofit standards. In 2018, new term limits were implemented to facilitate appropriate turnover in Board membership.

Over the past year and a half, the Board, through the work of its Governance Committee, has been considering potential adjustments and/or additions designed to enhance the overall governance system of the NSDA and, in turn, serve the diverse needs of our membership and the broader spectrum of speech and debate communities. This work led to a series of diverse focus group meetings during the spring to provide instrumental feedback on the Board's initial thoughts and concepts. The Board considered that feedback and finalized its fourth iteration of the concept for further review and consideration by the NSDA membership.

In late August, two public forum sessions were held, during which coaches were provided an overview by President Pam Wycoff regarding the context and rationale for the changes being proposed. The Board Governance Committee has since considered this feedback and suggested a few minor modifications and clarifications to the final proposal for consideration by the Board at the fall meeting.

Additionally, a status report regarding the Governance Committee's ongoing process for securing and reviewing potential appointed Board member nominations and/or renewals under the current system was discussed. Actions needed to facilitate a successful governance transition were addressed, including refinement of the Board's rubric for selecting and evaluating nominations.

[For more information, read the complete proposal »](#)

## EQUITY PAUSE

Board member Dr. Mike Edmonds led the Board through an equity pause prior to recessing for the day to process interactions and actions to ensure the Board was mindful of its equity framework.

## RECESS

**Moved by Edmonds, seconded by Lindsey:**

"Recess for the day."

**Passed: 13-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Mishra, Motter, Rye, Williams)

*The meeting resumed at 9:00 a.m. on Saturday.*

## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR ANNUAL REVIEW

**Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Mishra:**

"Enter into executive session."

**Passed: 12-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Mishra, Motter, Rye, Williams)

**Moved by Coverstone, seconded by Arthur:**

"Exit executive session."

**Passed: 13-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Mishra, Motter, Rye, Williams)

**Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Mishra:**

"Approve the 2023 Executive Director Evaluation as discussed."

**Passed: 13-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Mishra, Motter, Rye, Williams)

The Board finalized the annual performance review of Executive Director J. Scott Wunn. The Executive Director Evaluation materials served as the basis for the discussion. Based on the evaluation materials provided, Board members had the opportunity to share their observations to shape a review that highlights areas of competence and areas for improvement.

## HONOR CODE/CONDUCT UPDATE

The Executive Director provided a brief update to the Board on the staff plan to complete its integration of recommendations provided by the Ad Hoc Conduct Committee that completed its work in FY23.

## HALL OF FAME/LEGENDS COMMITTEE PROCESS ASSESSMENT

Given the expanding size and scope of our organization and the evolution of our mission and vision during its extensive history, the Board agreed to form an ad hoc committee to further document the procedures in place and further evaluate the purpose, procedures, and standards established for these honors. The committee may also research and explore standards utilized in other organizations for consideration. President Wycoff provided a preliminary overview of plans and a timeline to populate this ad hoc, and asked for membership recommendations for consideration, given the charge/mission for the group.

## CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION UPDATE

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Director of Marketing and Advocacy Angela McMillan provided a written update on the work of the Centennial Committee. She answered questions concerning the plans and progress of the committee and also asked questions regarding aspects in which the Centennial Committee wanted specific feedback.

## EQUITY AND INCLUSION

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Director of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Dr. Paul Porter provided an update on several aspects of the organization's efforts in the area of DEI. His overview included updates on the FY24 Equity Commitments, the newly formed Wellness Committee, the new Student Alliance, and the new Multicultural Alliance.

## ADDRESSING/LEVERAGING ORGANIZATIONAL DISRUPTORS

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As the Board continued to discuss and consider the role that disruptors play in our mission work, there were a few areas of potential focus to consider for this meeting's discussions. First, the Board discussed public relations and crisis communication strategies required in relationship to disruptors. Second, the Board discussed the insights and observations gathered from a coach listening session regarding the organization's DEI efforts and goals of achieving an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members. Finally, the Board discussed the recent surge in generative artificial intelligence and its positive and negative implications in education as well as speech and debate competitions. An extension of all of these discussions are the ways in which the NSDA is in a unique position to leverage these disruptions and/or be more prepared for the aftermath of disruption.

## EQUITY PAUSE

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Board member Holly Williams led the Board through an equity pause prior to adjourning for the day to process interactions and actions to ensure the Board was mindful of its equity framework.

## ADJOURN

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**Moved by Lindsey, seconded by Coverstone:**

"Adjourn."

**Passed: 11-0** (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter, Rye, Williams)

*The meeting adjourned at 2:15 p.m. on Saturday.* 

**QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? IDEAS?**

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