

Leadership

Board of Directors Spring Minutes

May 14-15, 2021

The NSDA Board of Directors held its virtual Spring meeting March 14-15, 2021. 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, Renee Motter, Tom Rollins, and Jay Rye.

President Wycoff called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

PRIOR MEETING MINUTES

The previously approved minutes from the March meeting were officially read into the historical records by unanimous consent.

MISSION MOMENT

Board members viewed a “mission moment” video prepared by staff. The segment was an extension of the latest *Rostrum* theme, featuring several middle school members expressing what the NSDA Code of Honor means to them. Board members reflected on their statements and how they reaffirmed the importance of engaging students at this level to foster their communication skills as well as important life skills. The student’s reflections reinforced how our organization strives to create a culture of civil discourse and the ongoing need to be a source of inspiration for students and coaches.

DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

NSDA Equity Lens Pilot Framework

The NSDA has built a pilot DEI framework for individual Board committees and the full Board to utilize as they

dialogue, deliberate, and decide on key issues. This pilot framework, a set of distinct and key questions, will serve as a guide for the next 18 months. Director of Development and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Nicole Wanzer-Serrano shared her insights with the Board on how the framework can be used as an important tool moving forward. The Board offered unanimous endorsement of the framework presented.

Equity Officer Committee and Judge Accreditation Committee Progress

Two ad hoc committees, Equity Officer and Judge Accreditation, were established this year by the Office of the Executive Director to provide key DEI focus on important aspects of tournament and competition facilitation. Director of Development and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Nicole Wanzer-Serrano has served in the role of staff liaison for these committees. She reported on initial goals and objectives as well as ongoing efforts to enhance judge training.

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

Appointed Board Member Selection

Moved by Rollins, seconded by Edmonds:

“Move into executive session.”

Passed: 11-0 (Wycoff, Lindsey, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter, Rollins, Rye)

Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Coverstone:

“Move into general session.”

Passed: 11-0 (Wycoff, Lindsey, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter, Rollins, Rye)

Two appointed Board members’ terms will end August 31, 2021. This includes the seat held by Tom Rollins and

the Administrative Representative seat held by Robert Runcie. The Governance Committee presented a status report of their search and/or their recommendation for candidates with expertise in the targeted areas of school administration, diversity, equity, and inclusion, finance, or marketing. During executive session, the Board voted to invite Anoop Mishra to serve as an appointed Board member beginning August 1, 2021, and ending July 31, 2023. He has accepted this appointment and brings a wealth of experience in finance and business operations, as well as speech and debate. Anoop Mishra is an alumni member of the National Speech & Debate Association who graduated from Homewood High School (AL) after being coached by Hall of Fame coach Pat Bailey. He was the national champion in Lincoln-Douglas Debate in 1988. He earned his MBA at The Wharton School and currently works as a Regional Executive/VP at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta.

Strategic Planning

Each Board member participated in surveys evaluating the FY21 strategic objectives. These surveys were organized according to the standing committee that has oversight of the particular FY21 strategic objective. The Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director, along with the standing committee staff liaison, met with each committee to share results and further discuss changes that could be made to each FY21 objective in establishing the FY22 objectives. Executive Director Scott Wunn and Assistant Executive Director Amy Seidelman presented their proposed wording of the FY22 objectives based on the preliminary feedback of the standing committee surveys and discussions. These recommendations were reviewed by the Board to set in motion the framework for FY22.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

Alumni Marketing Proposal

Director of Development and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Nicole Wanzer-Serrano presented an update on the new branding infrastructure concepts from Jackson Spaulding that will serve as the framework for future NSDA alumni marketing work. After the overview, she fielded additional questions from the Board.

Development Fiscal Year 2021 Update

Director of Development and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Nicole Wanzer-Serrano offered a brief update regarding the status of sponsorships and donations and then fielded questions and comments from the Board.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

Tabroom.com Fees

Moved by Lindsey, seconded by Rollins:

“Approve the Executive Director’s proposal for implementation of a plan for Tabroom.com services for the purpose of increasing economic sustainability of the system in the 2021-2022 school year.”

Passed: 12-0 (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter, Rollins, Rye)

Beginning in August of 2021, the NSDA will implement a modest fee for use of Tabroom.com services. For more information, please visit www.speechanddebate.org/tabroom.

Fiscal Year 2022 Pre-Budget

Moved by Rollins, seconded by Rye:

“Approve the FY22 pre-budget as proposed by the Director of Finance, Executive Director, and Assistant Executive Director.”

Passed: 12-0 (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter, Rollins, Rye)

Director of Business and Finance Laura Stein offered a brief overview of the pre-budget and fielded questions and comments on the end-of-year projections. The Internal Affairs Committee brought forth their recommendation on the budget proposal, which was approved unanimously by the Board.

NATIONAL TOURNAMENT UPDATE

Executive Director Scott Wunn provided an overview of the current entry count status for the middle school and high school tournaments, an overview of any challenges that were faced during this particular qualifying season, and anticipated challenges that will be uniquely faced this year. The Executive Director fielded questions from the Board concerning the updates presented.

LEGAL MATTERS UPDATE

Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Arthur:

“Move into executive session.”

Passed: 12-0 (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter, Rollins, Rye)

Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Arthur:

“Move into general session.”

Passed: 12-0 (Wycoff, Lindsey, Arthur, Coverstone, Edmonds, Gibson, Huston, Jacobi, Jerome, Motter, Rollins, Rye)

At each meeting, the Board sets time to discuss any ongoing legal matters in executive session.

CALENDAR PLANNING

The Board completed a calendar planning survey prior to the meeting. In order to best facilitate full attendance for general Board and standing committee meetings in 2021-2022, survey results including format, location, timeframes, and dates were discussed to establish a workable framework for implementation.

MEMBERSHIP CORRESPONDENCE

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

Appointed members concluded their Board governance business. The meeting recessed at 4:00 p.m. Friday.

Elected members of the Board reconvened at 9:07 a.m. Saturday morning to discuss Competition Rules items.

COMPETITION RULES

Assessment of Three-Year Process for Finalization of Rules

Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Motter:

“Accept the proposed revision of competition rules evaluation process timeline.”

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

In 2018, the Board passed a motion to accept a competition rules and evaluation timeline that created a three-year process for major competition and rules changes (Year One: Assessment and Development Phase; Year Two: Collaborative Feedback and Decision-Making Phase; and Year Three: Trial Implementation Phase). The description of the original timeline as passed by the Board can be found on page 10 of the 2018 November/December *Rostrum*. The Board discussed under what circumstances this process can be expedited, and if done, what procedures may be used to adjust this timeline. Any action for rules or

competition requiring immediate implementation to meet an exigent need, whether due to pressing circumstances or to address equity issues, would require a vote of six of eight Competition Rules Board members, irrespective of how many are present at a Competition Rules meeting. The Board of Directors Handbook (page 30) will be updated to reflect this change.

Evaluation of Pilot Publication Rules

Moved by Jerome, seconded by Motter:

“Continue the pilot publication rules for 2021-2022.”

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

The NSDA District Tournament Feedback Survey helped inform the Board’s determination that the pilot publication rules that allow expanded access to source materials should be continued for further study.

Artistic Plagiarism

Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Jerome:

“Prohibit artistic plagiarism as outlined in the rules.”

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

Beginning in 2021-2022, in Interpretation events, artistic plagiarism of videos of previous final round performances and/or other video media is prohibited and grounds for penalty. Exceptions will be made for replication of a performance coached by the same person.

District Auditing Procedures

No rule change was recommended at this time, but the Rules Revision and Evaluation Committee did review the rule to re-establish that it is a fair and reasonable expectation for committee members and coaches. The rule will be further examined for clarity, accountability, and implementation in the High School Unified Manual.

Evidence Exchange Rules Update

As a continuation from the 2020 National Tournament, if evidence is read in a debate round and an opponent asks to see it, the student has one minute to produce it or they have to start using prep time. The purpose of the rule is to cut back on the lengthening of debate rounds. Clarification of this rule will be communicated to teams and judges attending the 2021 National Tournament. This pilot rule is currently specific to the National Tournament. After further review, this rule may be considered for future implementation during the school year.

Allow Translation of Interpretation Source Material

Moved by Motter, seconded by Jerome:

“Allow transcription/translation of non-English material for performance in English in accordance with established guidelines.”

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

In Interpretation events, competitors may translate and perform non-English material in English. The original source material in its original language must be publicly accessible, and competitors must obtain an official translation through the original source’s copyright holder or through a non-automated, manual translation service with permission from the copyright holder. If the non-English material is in video or audio format, an official translation and an official transcription must be obtained.

National Tournament Adjudication Panels

Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Jerome:

“For 2021 National Tournament asynchronous events, the Executive Director will adjudicate any rules issues. All decisions are final.”

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

The Board discussed suggestions that will facilitate decision-making in a timely manner yet allow sufficient time to resolve protests and appeals at the National Tournament. This change does not preclude the Executive Director from seeking advice and counsel.

Home School Eligibility

Moved by Rye, seconded by Huston:

“Accept the Executive Director and Assistant Executive Director’s recommendations to explore and create additional pathways for home school memberships.”

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

Currently, there are some home schooled students who do not have access to membership or National Tournament qualification because state association policies deem them ineligible.

The proposal allows for the development of alternative pathways for home school students to participate in NSDA membership and its competitions.

District Committee Appointed Members

The Board discussed the level of engagement of the optional District Committee appointed member system to add a sixth coach for the purpose of inclusively representing the current and future community that the district should serve. The Board identified ways in which greater levels of participation by District Committees could be encouraged and achieved.

Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Rye:

“Adjourn.”

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

The meeting adjourned at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday. 

QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? IDEAS?

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