



2020-2021

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High School Unified Manual Chapter, Rules, and Tournament Operations

The **National Speech & Debate Association** is the largest interscholastic speech and debate organization serving middle school and high school in the United States. The Association provides competitive speech and debate activities, high-quality resources, comprehensive training, scholarship opportunities, and advanced recognition to more than 150,000 students and coaches every year. For more than 90 years, the National Speech & Debate Association has empowered nearly two million members to become engaged citizens, skilled professionals, and honorable leaders in our society.

OUR MISSION: The National Speech & Debate Association connects, supports, and inspires a diverse community committed to empowering students through competitive speech and debate.

OUR VISION: We envision a world in which every student has access to membership in the National Speech & Debate Association, providing the educational resources, competitive opportunities, and expertise necessary to foster their communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and creative skills.

***Editor's Note:** For quick reference throughout this document, new changes for the current year are highlighted in **yellow**. Other recent changes made within the past one or two years remain highlighted in **gray**.*



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Table of Contents

SECTION 1: High School Chapter Manual	6
Membership	7
I. School Membership	7
II. Recording Merit Points`	8
III. Individual Membership	11
IV. Degrees	12
V. Chapter Procedures.....	13
Supplies	14
Code of Honor	18
District and National Leadership	19
I. District Committee	19
II. Board of Directors	19
Quick Reference for Chapter Advisors/Coaches	21
Schools	21
Students	21
Tournaments	21
Points	21
SECTION 2: High School Event Rules Manual	23
Main Event Rules	24
Policy Debate	24
Public Forum Debate.....	25
Lincoln-Douglas Debate	27
Congressional Debate	35
Original Oratory	44
Informative Speaking	44
Program Oral Interpretation	45
Interpretation.....	46
Extemporaneous Speaking.....	50
Supplemental Event Rules	54
Extemporaneous Commentary	54
Prose and Poetry	54
Extemporaneous Debate	55
Expository	57
Impromptu	57
Storytelling	57
USA World Schools Debate Invitational	59
SECTION 3: District Tournament Operations Manual	60
Planning the District Tournament	61
Guidelines for Scheduling	61
Online Registration and Tabulation: Tabroom.com or SpeechWire.....	61

Tournament Roles and Responsibilities	61
Tournament Officials.....	61
Suggested Tournament Roles.....	61
Standards for Holding a District Qualifying Tournament	62
District Eligibility	62
National Qualification Levels	64
Auto-Qualification.....	65
School Eligibility and Entry Limits	66
Student Eligibility and Requirements.....	67
Online District Tournament Requirements	70
Online Requirement.....	70
Rules for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices	70
Online Tournament Platforms and Software	70
Judge Instruction.....	70
Speech Events	70
Asynchronous Speech Requirements.....	71
Duo Interpretation	71
Extemporaneous Speaking.....	71
Debate Events (PF, LD, CX, BQ).....	71
Running the District Debate Tournament	73
General Rules and Instructions	73
Absolute Pairing Priorities.....	74
Pairing Rounds One and Two	74
Pairing Subsequent Rounds	75
Running the District Congressional Debate Tournament	77
General Rules and Instructions	77
Assigning Students to Chambers.....	79
Tabulation	79
Qualifiers and Alternates	80
Running the District Speech Tournament	81
General Rules and Instructions.....	81
The Up/Down Model	82
Sectioning in the Up/Down Model	82
Sectioning.....	82
Moving Entries from Sections	82
Speaker Order	83
Balance of Power	83
Changing Ranks	83
Scoring Ties	83
Final Round	83
Determining National Qualifiers and Alternates.....	83
The California Plan	85
Planning Preliminary Rounds	85
Preset Preliminary Round	85

Powered Preliminary Rounds.....	87
Determining Semifinal Qualifiers.....	87
Pairing the Semifinal Round.....	87
Determining Final Round Qualifiers.....	88
Pairing the Final Round.....	88
Determining National Qualifiers.....	88
Sweepstakes Awards	89
Overall District Sweepstakes Plaque.....	89
Congress, Debate, and Speech Sweepstakes Awards.....	90
District Cumulative Sweepstakes Award.....	90
Reporting to the National Office	91
District Tournament Audit Procedures	92
District Tournament Rules and Penalties	93
Debate Events.....	94
Speech Events.....	95
Judge Instructions and Guidelines	96
General Instructions.....	96
Statement on Conflicts of Interest in Judging.....	96
District Team for USA World Schools Debate Invitational	98
Methods to Select the World Schools District Team.....	98
Coach of the World Schools District Team.....	99
District Qualification Process for Big Questions Debate	100
Entries/Qualification Process.....	100
SECTION 4: National Tournament Operations Manual	101
Entry Requirements	102
Instructions for Registering.....	102
General Rules	105
Eligibility and Qualification.....	105
Overarching Competition Rules.....	105
Tournament Procedures for Debate Events	109
General Rules and Instructions.....	109
Protocol for States with Seven or More Districts.....	111
Debate Pairing Instructions.....	111
Tournament Procedures for Main Speech Events.....	115
General Rules and Instructions.....	115
Speech Sectioning Instructions.....	115
VII. Speech Rules Infractions.....	121
National Congressional Debate Procedures	123
Supplemental Event Procedures.....	128
Supplemental Events.....	128

Sectioning and Tabulation.....	130
World Schools Debate Procedures: USWSDI	132
Basic Overview.....	132
Entries	132
Judges.....	132
Motions.....	132
Participation in Supplemental Events	132
Big Questions Capstone Event Logistics	133
Entries	133
Judges.....	133
Topic.....	133
Participation in Supplemental Events	133
National Tournament Awards	135
Team Awards.....	135
Individual Awards.....	136
APPENDIX A: Debate Event Time Limits.....	137
APPENDIX B: Speech Event Time Limits	138
APPENDIX C: Casebook Questions	139
APPENDIX D: Congress Evidence Challenge Form	143
APPENDIX E: Change Log	144
Questions?.....	154



2020-2021

SECTION 1: High School Chapter Manual

The National Speech & Debate Association functions on two levels: first, as an organization to govern and promote speech and debate activities; and second, as an honor society to recognize and support speech and debate education.

This section focuses primarily on official rules pertaining to high school membership, individual student and coach participation, member enrollment, governance, and acknowledgement of service.

For questions not answered here, please contact the national office at info@speechanddebate.org or call (920) 748-6206.

Membership

I. School Membership

A. Chapter Activation: Eligible schools may join the Association or renew membership by paying annual dues and completing an online renewal with the permission of their principal or head school administrator. Paid chapters are entitled to:

1. Access to the online point recording site (Points Application) and enrollment of individual students/coaches upon payment of individual enrollment fees (see below).
2. *Rostrum*, the official publication of the National Speech & Debate Association, is issued five times a year in mid-August, mid-September, mid-November, mid-February, and mid-April. Each paid member chapter receives one copy. There is a fee for additional subscriptions, which may be ordered at www.speechanddebate.org/store.
3. Access to the district tournament to qualify for the National Tournament. Entry allotment is based on the chapter strength of members and degrees on record prior to the district tournament entry deadline set by the District Committee. A District Committee may also choose to charge an entry fee for entry to the district tournament.
4. Access to thousands of resources on the Association's website. From lesson plans, coaching techniques, and live webinars to recorded videos and sample final round performances, the National Speech & Debate Association is the leading provider of academic and competitive resources for speech and debate.

Important Notice: To best serve our students, strengthen the creation and sustainability of programs, and establish continuity from middle school to high school, the Board of Directors voted at the Fall 2015 Board Meeting to require school affiliation for all memberships beginning with the 2016-2017 school year. Any high school, middle school, home school, or virtual school recognized as an accredited public or private school by the state in which those schools compete may join the National Speech & Debate Association. All current non-school-based clubs and organizations are encouraged to work with the Association and area school districts to create speech and debate programs through their students' schools. Students who are currently Association members through their area non-school-based clubs and organizations may request to have their memberships transferred at any time to their accredited public and private schools by contacting info@speechanddebate.org.

B. Chapter Classification: Each school is designated a member chapter or charter chapter, which determines its credit toward a district's strength of chapters and therefore the district's number of qualifiers to the National Tournament.

1. **Charter Chapter:** The Association's highest school membership honor. A chapter is automatically chartered if, after at least one year at member status, it has earned at least 50 degrees within a three-year period. Small schools with a grade 9-12 enrollment of fewer than 500 students must earn at least 25 degrees within a three-year period. If at any point a charter chapter does not meet the minimum three-year strength requirements, it can apply for a one-year extension, or it reverts to member chapter status. If a charter is suspended for non-payment of dues, it may return as a charter chapter if it has been less than three years since its last membership and all prior invoices (including missing year dues) are paid in full. Charters issued before 1931 are permanent and remain valid as long as chapter dues are paid. The school principal may surrender the charter.

Schools earning charter status for the first time are issued a complimentary commemorative plaque by the NSDA. Schools chartered before the 2016-2017 school year have the option of purchasing a plaque from the NSDA Store to complement their original charter document.

2. **Member Chapter:** A chapter that has never earned charter status, is returning after more than five years of absence, or as a former Charter did not maintain charter strength renewal requirements over a three-year period.

C. District Placement: New member schools are placed in a district by the national office based on geographic location and district size equalization.

D. District Size: No district will be allowed to split into two districts unless they establish 40 charter chapters for two consecutive years.

II. Recording Merit Points

A. Chapter Records

1. A student will gain high school membership immediately after the student membership fee is paid.
2. Students earn merit points for participating in interscholastic contests and for service in non-competitive speaking engagements, judging middle school or novice competition, coaching middle school students, and participating in theatrical speaking performances. See rules under each section below for more details.
3. Points may be recorded any time during a student's enrollment in grades 9-12 for speaking activities occurring during those grade levels, except for service projects, which may be recorded for up to one year prior. **Only the chapter advisor of record may submit emails with changes/corrections to records.**
4. Points may not be entered for graduated seniors after July 15 of their graduation year.
5. The coach must take care to enter the student's legal name (not nickname), capitalizing appropriate letters. This is important for consistent identification of the student. "Jon," "Johnny," or "Jack" should not be a substitution for "Jonathan." "James Andrew Smith" is different than just "Andrew Smith."
6. Please record points promptly after each event in which points were gained. Indicate the correct start and end date; separate recording may be necessary for Congress, where there is a daily limit of 24 points.
7. Under "Where Held," list the place of each contest. If a school, list the name of the city and the name of the school (e.g., Omaha-North HS). Generic names such as "Washington HS" are vague and such entries may be stricken. Instead, use complete names (e.g., Kansas City-Washington HS). If a college, list the name and city (e.g., Central State Univ.—Edmund). Avoid acronyms like UCLA or CSU.
8. An interested student or parent who is not deeply involved in debate or contest activity may be appointed Recording Secretary and given the responsibilities of keeping the credit point records. The instructor must still check records for accuracy.
9. Several tournaments participate in our automatic point recording program. Please see our *High School Point Recording Guide* for more information.

B. Recording Interscholastic Debates

- Public Forum, Lincoln-Douglas, and Policy Debate are recorded in the “Debate” category, and are worth 6 points per win and 3 points per loss or non-decision. **Only one win/loss is recorded *per round***, so for a panel of judges, the prevailing decision is entered.
- Congressional Debate or other assembly speaking is recorded in the “Congress” category. Students earn 1-6 points per speech or per complete hour of presiding (so a panel of judge scores must be *averaged*). When a 6-pt. scale is not awarded, use the following conversion table:

8-pt. scale	30-pt. scale	60-100-pt. scale	Pts. to Record
8	28-30	97-100	6
6-7	23-27	90-96	5
4-5	18-22	84-89	4
3	13-17	77-83	3
2	8-12	70-76	2
1	1-7	60-69	1

Tourney Placement	Pts. to Record
1st	24
2nd	23
3rd	22
4th	21
5th	20
<i>(and so forth)</i>	

No more than 24 points may be recorded per calendar day. An official scorer must be present. At least four hours of debate must be held.

- A minimum of four schools must be present at a tournament for merit points to be earned in all events.
- Non-Association debate events, such as Mock Trial, Parliamentary Debate, or Spontaneous Argument are recorded in the “Debate” category, and are worth 4 points per win and 2 points per loss or non-decision.
- If there is no official scoring, Girls/Boys State participants may earn up to 24 total points if they are a candidate for elected public office.
- If a debate round is cancelled or not held due to forfeiture or drawing of a bye, no points are recorded.
- If a tournament has middle school competitors, a high school student may only earn points for rounds against middle school competitors if the tournament has at least four high schools competing.
- Wins or losses may not be recorded for debates against non-school entities, such as a civic organization. Public debates held before an audience of such an entity may be recorded under “Service,” but cannot also be recorded with a win/loss under “Debate.”
- The International Public Policy Forum (IPPF) debate essay contest is recorded under Debate, either as Policy Debate or Public Forum Debate.
- Students may earn NSDA merit points for asynchronous competition. Students may only earn points for competing in one asynchronous competition per day. Tabulation software and the NSDA site will not regulate this; it will be the affirmative duty of coaches to ensure what is posted is in line with this rule.
- The NSDA is piloting a rule for 2020-2021 that allows students to earn up to 75 merit points for intrasquad and intersquad competitions that do not have the required four schools participating. Tabulation software and the NSDA site will not regulate this; it will be the affirmative duty of coaches to ensure what is posted is in line with this rule.

C. Recording Interscholastic Speech Contests

- A minimum of four schools must be present at a tournament for merit points to be earned in all events.
- Public speaking or interpretive events are recorded by their individual category name. Student ranks, or rank-equivalents (conversion for point totals or alternate systems) are used.
- Only **one rank or round placing** may be entered for a panel of judges. For elimination rounds prior to a final round, an average of a panel’s ranks may be used. For the final round, tournament placement is the rank.

4. Main Association events may earn 6 points per 1st rank, 5 points per 2nd rank, 4 points per 3rd rank, 3 points per 4th rank, and 2 points for ranks of 5 and below. Those events include Extemporaneous Speaking, Original Oratory, Informative Speaking, and Humorous, Dramatic, Duo, and Program Oral Interpretation.
5. Non-main Association events may earn 5 points per 1st rank, 4 points per 2nd rank, 3 points per 3rd rank, 2 points per 4th rank, and 1 point for ranks of 5 and below. Use the appropriate category name, or a similar category name as appropriate.
6. Extrapolate what speech categories best match outside contests. For example, American Legion Oratorical Contest's two speaking events are recorded as Original Oratory and Extemporaneous Speaking. Poetry Out Loud, Slam Poetry, and Spoken-Word Poetry are recorded as Poetry. Where ratings are used instead of rankings, please use the table below.
7. Students may earn NSDA merit points for asynchronous competition. Students may only earn points for competing in one asynchronous competition per day. Tabulation software and the NSDA site will not regulate this; it will be the affirmative duty of coaches to ensure what is posted is in line with this rule.
8. Use the following table to convert *non-rank ratings* to ranks for the purpose of online recording:

Non-Rank Round Rating	Grade	Points	Points	Rank to Input
Superior		25	95-100	1
Excellent		24	90-94	2
Good <i>or</i> Exceeds Expectations	A	20-23	71-89	3
Fair <i>or</i> Meets Expectations	B	15-19	42-70	4
Average <i>or</i> Does Not Meet Expectations	C	10-14	10-41	5
		0-9 ^o	0-9 ^o	None

^oSevere deficiency, and therefore, not worth any points

D. Recording Non-Competitive/Service Speaking

1. **Limits:** Up to 200 service points may be reported per year; service activities can be recorded retroactively for the current and immediate past school years only. *Students may not record points in both contest and service speaking* (this includes final rounds that may have an audience of more than five people). **Coaches have the autonomy to determine what service activities qualify for service points within the following parameters.**
2. **Point Value:** Students receive five points for each service activity, with a limit of four activities per day.
3. **Audience:** An audience of at least five people must be present for each service speaking activity. **For non-speaking service activities, an audience is not required.**
4. **Disallowed Activities:** Students may not record points for service activities done as part of a classroom requirement or for competitive performances at a summer institute. Work for which students are financially compensated may not receive points.
5. **Examples of Service Activities:**
 - a. Coaching middle or elementary school students for two hours prior to a tournament
 - b. Judging a round of middle school competition
 - c. Performing a speaking role in a play or musical
 - d. Participating in reader's theatre, one-act, or a choral reading group
 - e. Giving a speech at a political rally
 - f. Volunteering at a homeless shelter
 - g. Doing a demo debate for new students on the team
 - h. Recording an episode for a podcast

- i. Participating in a panel discussion or public debate
 - j. Volunteering to help at the ballot table at an after school tournament
 - k. Volunteering at a summer camp for middle or elementary school students
 - l. Working at a team fundraiser
 - m. Speaking as part of a religious service
6. **District and National Tournament Points:** Points earned at the district and national tournaments are automatically posted. Coaches must accept these points

III. Individual Membership

A. Students

1. The school will be assessed a \$20 membership fee per student enrolled by the local chapter advisor. A student becomes a member upon payment of this fee. Points are recorded online for student participation in interscholastic contests or service speaking endeavors. Once a student has earned 25 merit points (see section on point recording), at least 10 of which were gained in interscholastic contests, the student will earn their first Merit seal in the National Forensic League Honor Society.
2. **Standards:** The applicant should have a real interest in speech, maintain a high standard of contest ethics, and be of good character. Tests to be applied to each applicant should include:
 - a. Deserving by ability and achievement, to be honored with Association membership and the key or pin?
 - b. Will granting membership to this person favorably affect the significance of Association membership in this school and elsewhere?

In case of doubt, it is better to defer granting membership. The applicant can always be admitted later; once admitted, it is difficult and painful to remove them.

All students who become members of the National Speech & Debate Association must affirm the honor society's Code of Honor. Member students pledge to uphold the highest standards of integrity, humility, respect, leadership, and service.

3. Student applicants should rank scholastically in the upper two-thirds of their class. Rank may be based either on the work of the previous semester or upon the entire high school record, whichever the principal believes will most fairly measure the scholastic worth of the applicant. If the applicant ranks in the lowest third of the class, membership must be deferred until their work improves. In special circumstances the principal may by letter recommend to the Board of Directors that a student be accepted for membership in spite of scholastic or credit point deficiency.
4. The high school faculty is also authorized to elect members and it should be requested to do so if the chapter without just cause declines to elect a qualified applicant.
5. Ninth grade students in a junior high school may be elected to membership by the high school they expect to attend. Only ninth grade students may be elected to high school Association membership in junior high chapters. Ninth grade students may, if local rules permit, participate as members of the high school squad.

B. Instructors/Coaches

1. Instructors receive all points recorded for students they coach. They qualify for membership and advanced degrees according to the same schedule provided for students and must apply and pay the individual membership enrollment fee. On attaining a total of 15,000 points, the instructor will be entitled to wear a diamond-set Association key or pin; additional diamonds accrue at 30,000, 60,000, 90,000 and each 30,000 points thereafter, and the minimum time for each diamond is five years as a member coach.

- An instructor who obtained membership as a student will have all of their points earned as a student transferred. An instructor who obtained membership as a student prior to 1996 should report that fact to the national office for assistance with the points transfer.
- Degrees for up to three paid member coaches may count in each chapter toward district standing and tournament apportionment. Member coaches must have paid memberships to be eligible. However, more than three paid member coaches may earn points during a season.

C. Enrollment/Application

- Coaches will generate a \$20 invoice for each new member after the student is enrolled online. Please pay this invoice within 30 days. Schools may pay this fee online by credit card or remit a check or money order payable to National Speech & Debate Association. **Any individual membership fee not paid within 60 days of the membership merit date will be assessed 1.5% of the invoice.** A school with any outstanding debt to the Association will not be allowed to participate in the District or National Tournament until those fees are paid in full.
- Refund requests must be submitted within 72 hours of creating an invoice and are granted on a case-by-case basis.
- The advisor will receive a paper copy of the hand-engrossed certificates for each new member. The chapter advisor should inspect certificates for accuracy and report any issues or missing certificates to the national office within 30 days. Beyond 30 days, a replacement fee of \$5 per certificate is charged.

D. Transfer of Membership: A student or coach may transfer from one chapter to another without charge or loss of points. If a new certificate is desired, \$5 must be remitted. Transfer may be done automatically on the points system, or by emailing/calling customer service staff.

E. District Eligible Members: Up to three paid member coaches and all paid member students will count in determining chapter strength, and therefore, district standing. Students are district eligible if their membership is paid, they have 25+ merit points, and they have a valid, unique email address on to their NSDA account.

F. Student Website Registration Procedures: Only students officially registered as a member user on the organization's website may compete in district competition. Learn how students can create and link an account, as well as how advisors can accept linked account requests at <https://www.speechanddebate.org/account-roster-management/>.

IV. Degrees

A. Advantages of Advanced Degrees: Advanced degrees provide constant incentive for further effort. To obtain the many advantages of advanced degrees, advisors should record points earned by members as soon as they have qualified for such degrees. Doing so will give the chapter and district the fullest measure of recognition and provide the maximum interest and enthusiasm for the program.

- Each degree adds a distinctive seal to the membership certificate. These are sent to chapters, periodically, as individuals advance in their degrees. Seals should be affixed to the original membership certificate so that three-eighths of an inch of the left side of the former seal will remain uncovered by the new one.
- The key or pin of the member may be jeweled to designate the highest degree held. Students who attain 500 points may wear the silver monogram.
- Degree of Excellence and above permits students to receive service points for judging novice rounds.



4. The number of entries in the district tournament from each chapter is based upon the number of paid members and degrees on record prior to the district tournament entry deadline set by the District Committee.
5. Seats in the district Congressional Debate are apportioned among the chapters on the basis of membership and degrees on record based on the last district standing prior to the district tournament entry deadline set by the District Committee.
6. The charter chapter report of standings is based upon the number of members and degrees enrolled during the past year. Each degree counts as much as one individual membership.
7. Each degree adds to the cumulative chapter record, which leads to earning the Leading Chapter Award, and helps to advance the standing of the district.

Alert chapters will see to it that each degree award is mentioned in the school or local paper. It is a proper form of publicity and highly effective in expanding student interest in speech. Newspapers are usually eager to use brief items concerning honors awarded to local students by a national organization. Coaches may access custom press release templates at www.speechanddebate.org.

- B. Applying for Degrees:** No application or fee is required for any advanced degree. The degrees will be recorded in the national office as soon as a member has the necessary number of points on record.

Degree	Points	Strength	Certificate Seal	Pin Insignia - Gem
Honor	75	2	Bronze	Emerald
Excellence	150	3	Silver on White	Blue Sapphire
Distinction	250	4	Metallic Gold on Gold	Ruby
Special Distinction	500	5	Silver on Pink	Double Ruby
Superior Distinction	750	6	Silver on Blue	Triple Ruby
Outstanding Distinction	1,000	7	Silver on Violet	Quadruple Ruby
Premier Distinction	1,500	8	Silver on Black	Quintuple Ruby

V. Chapter Procedures

- A. Approaches to Recognizing Students:** Certificates, degrees, and keys should be presented to the members at a school assembly, an awards day program or other appropriate occasion. Both school and community papers should be given the names of the students honored and asked to give brief acknowledgment of the achievements the honor represents.

Giving full and deserved recognition to successful speakers is a sure way of arousing in younger students the desire to follow the same course and likewise to be honored for their achievements.

- B. Induction:** The national organization prescribes no ritual for the initiation of new members, inasmuch as such procedure might be contrary to local school regulations. In the absence of such rule, an appropriate ceremony for the induction of new members may be employed.
- C. Insignia:** The emblem of our organization is shaped like a key, symbolizing the unlocking of the powers of expression. The shape of the main part of the emblem is octagonal, which symbolizes the many angles from which a question must be studied. The eye symbolizes the light which study will throw upon all questions. The letters "NFL" stand for "National Forensic League." The lamp designates knowledge. The emblem is made of sterling silver plated with rhodium to preserve indefinitely its metallic luster. Silver is used instead of gold to distinguish the emblem from the collegiate honor keys. One should be very proud to wear this distinctive insignia.

Generations of students have proudly worn our insignia as a tangible sign of their success in mastering the techniques of effective communication. Keys and pins, and especially the advanced degree jewels make excellent awards to worthy students. Any member may obtain a key or pin (plain or jeweled) to reflect standing in the Association.

Keys are made of silver, heavily plated with a special rhodium plating, and are guaranteed against defect by the manufacturer. Should one be found unsatisfactory, please return it to the national office for replacement.



TIP: Chapters may find it to be simpler, quicker, and cheaper to establish a small “bank” of insignia so members can trade their pins for jeweled pins as they qualify for them. These members release their plain pins for use by new members, who in turn will qualify for jeweled items later.

- D. Ordering Keys and Pins:** Honorary insignia are available as either keys or pins in the actual sizes shown here. All items may be ordered either plain or with designated jewel. Visit www.speechanddebate.org/store to order online.
1. Advisors may order silver keys and pins for students. Gold insignia are for instructors only.
 2. Please order insignia online at www.speechanddebate.org/store.
 3. If an emblem is lost, a new order completed in the regular manner may be submitted. There is no rule barring possession of more than one emblem by any member.
 4. All orders for new insignia are to be mailed to the national office, not to the manufacturer.
 5. A member holding an advanced degree when they obtain a key may order the jewel at that time.
 6. Insignia for jewelling or change of jewelling is not to be sent to the national office. Send the insignia and a copy of the degree report sent to the chapter, plus the proper remittance to the manufacturer.

Supplies

Various supplies are available for purchase or offered complimentary to Association chapters. Ordering may be done via the online NSDA Store. Remittance must accompany the order for any purchases. Following is a sample listing of supplies.

- **Diploma Seals:** Chapters wishing to affix Association seals to the diplomas of their graduating members may obtain such seals from the national office. The seals are one inch in size, embossed on bronze, silver, gold, rose, blue, and purple foil to designate the degree held by the member. Each package contains an assortment of seals. Replacement packets of all bronze, all silver, all gold, all rose, all blue, all purple, or all black are available. Diploma seals must not be awarded to members not attaining advanced degrees.
- **Magazine:** *Rostrum*, the official publication of the National Speech & Debate Association, is issued five times a year in mid-August, mid-September, mid-November, mid-February, and mid-April. Each **paid member** chapter receives one copy. There is a fee for additional subscriptions, which may be ordered at www.speechanddebate.org/store.

Awards

- **Leading Chapter Award:** Each year, the Association presents a Leading Chapter award to the school that has accumulated the highest total members and degrees in each district.
 - To be eligible in a given year, a school must:
 - have at least five years of membership;
 - add new members and degrees during the school year.

- A school must not:
 - have received the award in the prior five years;
 - have lost its charter status, become suspended or expelled.
 - A tie is broken in favor of the school which enrolled the greater number of new members and degrees during that school year.
 - After winning the award, the school's accumulated total returns to zero and it begins a new record.
 - The standing of each chapter in the district is made available each Fall.
- **Honorary Membership:** A chapter may elect one Honorary member for each 100 members and degrees earned by that chapter; not more than one a year. Honorary members must be adults who have contributed in some significant way to the speech program of the local chapter, but have not earned Association membership as a student or instructor.

A special form for honorary membership is required and is available from the national office. There is no fee. An appropriate membership certificate is issued. A Gold Chapter Honorary key is obtainable from the national office.
 - **Student Honor Cords:** Where local rules permit, graduating seniors may wear official Association Silver and Ruby Honor Cords at Graduation ceremonies. The cords may be ordered at www.speechanddebate.org/store.
 - **District Chair Awards in Honor of Ralph E. Carey:** District chairs are charged with running district tournaments, are responsible for the welfare of the Association in their districts, and advise the Board on Association policy. District chair awards are earned in the following manner:
 1. The chairperson of the district in first place on May 1 receives 8 units, the next three receive 4 units, and the next nine receive 2 units. All others receive 1 unit.
 2. For 3 units, a chair is given a bronze chairperson award, for 5 units a silver award, and for 8 units a Ralph E. Carey gold award. No chair is ever given a lower award than one previously received, but units accumulate over several years toward a gold award; more than one may be earned.
 3. The Ralph E. Carey Distinguished District Chair Trophy is a career award presented each year to one outstanding chair for lengthy and superlative service. Awards also are presented to the best new chair, chair of the year, and the best chair communications.
 - **Student of the Year:** Each Chapter may nominate one graduating senior as District Student of the Year using the designated form. The nominee must: be an Association member in their senior year of high school; demonstrate strong academic standards; actively engage their community through service and action; exhibit dedication to forensics and commitment to values of the Association. Each individual district determines the manner in which nominees are reviewed and selected. Each District Student of the Year is eligible for consideration as National Student of the Year, determined through a review process coordinated by the national office.
 - **All American:** Each year, the Association recognizes the top 25 student point earners in the country. Standards are based on a combination of competitive points and service points, of which no more than 25% of the point total can include service. In order to qualify, a student must have competed once at Nationals.
 - **All State:** The All State Award recognizes the top 1% of point earners in each state. Standards are based on a combination of competitive points and service points, of which no more than 25% of the point total can include service.
 - **Academic All American:** The Academic All American award recognizes students who have:
 - Earned the degree of Superior Distinction (750 points)
 - Completed at least 5 semesters of high school
 - Demonstrated outstanding character and leadership
 - Earned a GPA of 3.7 on a 4.0 scale (or its equivalent)

NOTE: If the GPA is between 3.5 and 3.7 on a 4.0 scale (or its equivalent), students also must have received an ACT score of 27 or higher, or a New SAT score of 1300 or higher

Coaches of students who meet these requirements should submit an application for the award, available online, along with character references and academic transcripts.

- **Student Service Citations:** Students receive one citation for every 100 service points achieved. A single act of service, such as community speaking, usually garners between two and five service points. The number of citations a student receives will be noted as “first degree,” “second degree,” “third degree,” and so on. Coaches will receive notification on the Points Application when students reach new degrees, and may download certificates and press releases when students earn those honors.
- **Student Service Plaques:** Each chapter may award Association service plaques to students who render service (conducting chapter affairs, running tournaments, judging, etc.). The 4.5” x 6.5” plaques feature the embossed NFL seal. Plaques may be ordered from the national office.
- **Hall of Fame:** Individuals with 25 years of coach membership in the National Speech & Debate Association, or who are retired from coaching and teaching, are eligible to be nominated for this prestigious award. Existing Hall of Fame members and all coaches with three or more diamonds elect each year’s class to the Hall of Fame.

- Don Crabtree Distinguished Service Award:** A special honor conferred upon coaches by the Association is the Don Crabtree Distinguished Service Award (renamed in 2018). A special gold key is granted to a coach member for 20 citations and a bronze plaque is given for each additional 50 citations for the following services:

Recruiting a new chapter	2
Sponsoring a new chapter	2
Year as a district chair	5
Year as member of a District Committee	3
Year as member of the NSDA Board of Directors.....	3
District tournament tab staff (non-District Committee member).....	1
Holding a tournament for 4+ schools	1
Tabbing a tournament for 4+ schools	1
Volunteering at the National Tournament.....	1
Serving in a tab room at the National Tournament	3
Chairing an event at the National Tournament.....	3
Serving on the National Tournament host committee.....	5
Curriculum/educational support for national office	1
Pre-approved speech and debate advocacy events.....	1

Whenever a member is entitled to a citation, the Coach Service Citation form (available online) should be filled out and sent to the national office, but no application should be submitted for a service not specifically listed above.

1. The service should be described by citing time, place, name, or event so as to establish its identity beyond possibility of confusion with any similar one. Several services may be listed on one blank, but the forms should not be crowded.
2. Citations must be applied for within two years from the date of the service or they cannot be allowed.
3. Signature of school official is required only if the service has not been established by national record or attached papers.
4. Citations approved at the national office will be signed by the Executive Director and kept at the national office until the number required for an award has been attained. At that time, they should again be sent to the national office to claim the award.

Code of Honor

“As a student or coach member of the National Speech & Debate Association, I pledge to uphold the highest standards of humility, equity, integrity, respect, leadership, and service in pursuit of excellence.”

Humility: A member does not regard oneself more highly than others. Regardless of a person’s level of success, an individual always looks beyond oneself to appreciate the inherent value of others.

Equity: A member respects individuals and their individual differences as well as fosters equity, diversity, and inclusion. A member promotes empowerment for people from all backgrounds, including race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and ability.

Integrity: A member is honest, ethical, and adheres to the competition and conduct rules of the organization. A member follows the NSDA discrimination and harassment policy and abides by the rules of their schools, tournaments, and localities.

Respect: A member demonstrates civil discourse in their interactions with others. A member maintains and contributes to a safe space and welcoming environment for all.

Leadership: A member is aware their words and actions influence others. A member commits to thoughtful and meaningful words and actions that reflect NSDA core values.

Service: A member exercises their talents to provide service to peers, community, and the activity. At all times a member is prepared to work constructively to improve the lives of others.

(Adopted September 23, 2007 | Updated February 2021)

District and National Leadership

I. District Committee

Election: Each district shall elect a district committee to provide stewardship and leadership to its chapters, conduct the district tournament, and perform such other local duties. One advisor at each chapter may cast a ballot online for members of the District Committee from a list of coaches affiliated with a current member school in the district. Advisors must rank a minimum of six and a maximum of eight coaches. Each paid member school shall have one vote. Elections will be held in odd-numbered years. District Committee members will be elected to serve a two-year term.

A member of the committee has the right to serve even though they leave the school from which they were elected if they transfer to another school within the district. If a position becomes vacant, a new member is chosen according to the original vote. After the election, the District Committee may deliberate and appoint one additional member to serve a term simultaneous with their elected term via majority vote of the committee members.

II. Board of Directors

A. Election: Note: In 2019, the Board of Directors voted to eliminate the age-based 70-rule for the 2020 election and beyond. Election of national officers shall be conducted in even numbered years as follows:

1. Any member coach with five years of Association coaching experience, who is listed as a member coach of record at an paid member school, may become a candidate for the Board of Directors by so advising the executive director in writing before January 19 via certified mail.
2. Eligibility requirements for elected Board of Director candidates, beginning with the 2024 election:
 - a. Any individual who has served 12 or more years on the Board is ineligible to run for the Board.
 - b. Any individual who has served only one term is eligible to run for a second term immediately following the first term.
 - c. Any individual who has served two consecutive terms must step off the Board for a minimum of four years before being eligible to run for a third and final term.
 - d. Any individual who did not serve their first and second terms consecutively is eligible to run for a third and final term immediately following the second term.
3. Present national officers whose terms expire on July 31 shall become candidates for re-election by filing a written statement with the executive director by January 19 via certified mail.
4. Candidates shall be allotted one column in *Rostrum*, not to exceed 400 words in length, to support their candidacy, due January 19.
5. Each chapter shall vote online for up to four directors. Each paid member school shall have one vote. Those candidates not elected to the Board shall be designated as alternates in order of finish.

B. Organization:

1. The Board of Directors consists of a president, vice president, at least six elected directors, one representative from secondary school administrators, and additional Board appointed directors. The number of Board appointed directors is not to be equal to or greater than the total number of elected directors. The Board, by majority vote, may expand or decrease the number of elected and appointed directors as long as the action does not violate the above provisions.
2. The Board of Directors will select one of its own as president, and another of its own as vice president. Only elected Board members, currently serving on the Board, who have served a minimum of two full years on the Board, are eligible for appointment to a Board leadership position. All leadership positions are elected for two-year terms in even numbered years at the Fall Board meeting by the Board members present at the meeting.

3. If the term of office of the current Board president ends on August 1 of the leadership election year, the current vice president will assume the role until the Fall Board meeting election. If there is a vacancy in the middle of the term of office of the current Board president, the vice president assumes the office of president for the remainder of the current term.
4. If the term of office of the current Board vice president ends on August 1 of the leadership election year, the seat will remain vacant until the Fall Board meeting election. If there is a vice presidential vacancy in the middle of the term of office of the current vice president, the Board will select one of its own to serve as vice president for the remainder of that term.
5. If the term of office of both the current Board president and vice president ends on August 1 of the leadership election year, an interim president will be appointed by the current Board president before their term ends. They will serve from August 1 to the Fall Board meeting election. In the event of vacancies in both offices in the middle of their terms, a new officer election will be held at the next scheduled Board meeting. Appointed directors and the school administrator serving on the Board are not eligible to be president or vice president.
6. Any Board member who serves at least one full four-year term as a member of the Board of Directors will be invited to serve the following year as an advisor to the Board's standing committees, ad hoc committees, working committees, or focus groups as an emeritus member. When appropriate, these advisors will be called upon by the chairs of these committees for advice and counsel.

Quick Reference for Chapter Advisors/Coaches

Schools

- Eligible schools may join the Association or renew membership by paying annual dues and completing an online renewal with the permission of their principal or head school administrator.
- To earn and retain a charter, enroll at least 50 new degrees within a three-year period or 25 new degrees for schools with fewer than 500 students enrolled in 9th through 12th grade. Annual dues must be paid every year to retain the charter, or it is suspended.

Students

- The school will be assessed a \$20 membership fee per student enrolled by the chapter advisor. Points are recorded online for student participation in interscholastic contests or service speaking endeavors.
- Student members retain their points as they move from middle school to high school.

Tournaments

- **Equitable Tournament Practices**
 - This list is applicable to all tournaments. District Committee members have additional expectations for running the district tournament. See page 94 for Equitable Tournament Practices at the district tournament series.
 - Equity is a core value of the National Speech & Debate Association. Tournaments should read through the [Inclusive Tournament Checklist](#) and implement relevant methods for making their tournaments as safe, welcoming, and inclusive as possible.
 - All tournament hosts are encouraged to adhere to and make public a Harassment and Discrimination Policy. Tournaments are welcome to use the [NSDA Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#).
 - Tournament hosts are encouraged to create an Equity Office to hear inquiries and reports related to the Harassment and Discrimination Policy.
 - Tournament hosts are encouraged to use the following language on top of all ballots used at the district tournament:
 - “We are all influenced by implicit bias, or the stereotypes that unconsciously affect our decisions. When judging, our implicit biases negatively impact traditionally marginalized and disenfranchised students. Before writing comments or making a decision, please take a moment to reflect on any biases that may impact your decision making.”
 - If tournaments are held online, hosts are encouraged to include this additional language on their ballots: If a district tournament is held online, ballots must also include this language:
“Please remember that the video quality of a student’s performance or speech may be impacted by lighting, internet, access to equipment, and other family members’ presence in the home. To ensure a more equitable experience for our participants, please be sure your decision-making process and comments are related only to the content and quality of the presentation or speech itself.”
 - Tournament hosts are encouraged to share the free judge training course and free cultural competency course materials found [here](#), created in partnership with NFHS, with all tournament judges.

Points

- A student may earn points at any time while that student is enrolled in grades 6-12. Points may be recorded while the student’s school is a member of the Association.
- Point values for interscholastic competition:
 - Only one ranking or decision shall be entered **per round**. For speech rounds with panels, the average rank is used, except for finals, where overall tournament placing is used.

- Public Forum, Lincoln-Douglas, and Policy Debate: 6 points per **win**; 3 per **loss** or no decision.
- Mock Trial, Parliamentary Debate, Supplemental, and other non-Association debates: **4** per **win**; **2** per **loss**/no decision.
- Association main speech events (Extemporaneous Speaking, Original Oratory, Informative Speaking, Dramatic/Humorous/Duo/Program Oral Interpretation): rank of – **1st** = 6 points; **2nd** = 5 points; **3rd** = 4 points; **4th** = 3 points; **5th/lower** = 2 points.
- Non-Association main speech events (including Impromptu, Commentary, Expository, Poetry, Prose, etc.): rank of – **1st** = 5 points; **2nd** = 4 points; **3rd** = 3 points; **4th** = 2 points; **5th/lower** = 1 point (see p. 5 for a chart of how to convert non-ranks to ratings).
- Congressional Debate: **1-6** points per speech (average of panel); **1-6** points per complete hour of presiding. Maximum 24 points per calendar day; an official scorer must be present.
- The NSDA is piloting a rule for 2020-2021 that allows students to earn up to 75 merit points for intrasquad and intersquad competitions that do not have the required four schools participating. It is the responsibility of the coach to ensure that no more than 75 points per student are entered for scrimmages.
- Point values for **service**:
 - Limit: 200 points per school year
 - Audience Speaking Engagements: Audiences of at least **five** people if it's a speaking activity, outside of interscholastic competition, outside of classroom requirement
 - Value: 5 points per project; limit 4 projects per day
 - See the section on Novice/Middle School Judging and Coaching points.
- Coaches become members upon payment of the membership fee.
- Coaches earn all the points of their students and will retain all of their points earned as a member student on their coaching record.



2020-2021

SECTION 2: High School Event Rules Manual

The following rules should be interpreted literally and followed exactly. All members are entitled to assurance that points were earned and reported strictly according to the rules. The national office will check all reports critically and strike out incomplete or questionable entries.

For questions not answered here, please contact the national office at info@speechanddebate.org or call (920) 748-6206.

Main Event Rules

Policy Debate

1. **Resolution:** The resolution will be one requiring a policy judgment. The current national question will be used. Refer to www.speechanddebate.org/topics for the current topic.
2. **Entries:** An entry is comprised of two students from the same school; each debating both sides of the resolution and advancing on its own record. No substitution is permitted once the tournament has begun.
3. **Order of Speeches:** Each debater must give one and only one constructive speech, one period of questioning, one period of answering, and one rebuttal speech, in the following order:

Note: In 2020, the Board of Directors voted to permanently increase each team's preparation time to eight minutes.

Affirmative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Negative Cross Examines Affirmative	3 minutes
Negative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Affirmative Cross Examines Negative	3 minutes
Affirmative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Negative Cross Examines Affirmative	3 minutes
Negative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Affirmative Cross Examines Negative	3 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Prep time	8 minutes per team

4. **Prompting Philosophy:** Oral prompting, except time signals, either by the speaker's colleague or by any other person while the debater has the floor, is discouraged though not prohibited and may be penalized by some judges. Debaters may, however, refer to their notes and materials and may consult with their teammate while they do not have the floor.
5. **Use of Electronic Devices:** The use of laptop computers is permitted at the National Tournament. The use of laptop computers at the qualifying tournament will be the autonomous decision of each district. Laptop use must comply with the "Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Debate Events."
6. **Timing:** Timekeepers are an option but not required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their partners or the judge may keep time. Prep time for each team is **eight** minutes.

Public Forum Debate

1. **Resolution:** Specific resolutions for district tournaments held during certain months and the National Tournament topic are available online at www.speechanddebate.org/topics. Public Forum Debate focuses on advocacy of a position derived from the issues presented in the resolution, not a prescribed set of burdens.
2. **Entries:** An entry is comprised of two students from the same school; each debating both sides of the resolution and advancing on its own record. No substitution is permitted once the tournament has begun.
3. **Procedure and Order of Speeches:** Prior to EVERY round and in the presence of the judge(s), a coin is tossed by one team and called by the other team. The team that wins the flip may choose one of two options: EITHER the SIDE of the topic they wish to defend (pro or con) OR the SPEAKING POSITION they wish to have (begin the debate or end the debate). The remaining option (SIDE OR SPEAKING POSITION) is the choice of the team that loses the flip. Once speaking positions and sides has been determined, the debate begins (the con team may lead, depending on the coin flip results). Following the first two constructive speeches, the two debaters who have just given speeches will stand and participate in a three-minute "crossfire". In "crossfire" both debaters "hold the floor." However, the speaker who spoke first must ask the first question. After that question, either debater may question and/or answer at will. At the conclusion of the summary speeches, all four debaters will remain seated and participate in a three-minute "Grand Crossfire" in which all four debaters are allowed to cross-examine one another. The speaker who gave the first summary speech must ask the first question. The speakers from each team will continue to ask and answer questions. Teams should alternate asking and answering questions rather than allowing one team to dominate so that a balance between teams is achieved. All speakers are encouraged to participate in the Grand Crossfire. Speakers should listen respectfully to opponents' questions and answers.

Note: In 2020, the Board of Directors voted to permanently add one additional minute to each summary speech and one additional minute to each team's preparation time.

First Speaker - Team A	4 minutes
First Speaker - Team B	4 minutes
Crossfire	3 minutes
Second Speaker - Team A	4 minutes
Second Speaker - Team B	4 minutes
Crossfire	3 minutes
Summary - First Speaker - Team A	3 minutes
Summary - First Speaker - Team B	3 minutes
Grand Crossfire	3 minutes
Final Focus - Second Speaker - Team A	2 minutes
Final Focus - Second Speaker - Team B	2 minutes
Prep Time	3 minutes per team

4. **Plans/Counterplans:** In Public Forum Debate, the Association defines a plan or counterplan as a formalized, comprehensive proposal for implementation. Neither the pro or con side is permitted to offer a plan or counterplan; rather, they should offer reasoning to support a position of advocacy. Debaters may offer generalized, practical solutions.
5. **Prompting Philosophy:** Oral prompting, except time signals, either by the speaker's colleague or by any other person while the debater has the floor, is discouraged though not prohibited and may be penalized by some judges. Debaters may, however, refer to their notes and materials and may consult with their teammate while they do not have the floor and during the Grand Crossfire.
6. **Use of Electronic Devices:** The use of laptop computers is permitted at the National Tournament. The use of laptop computers at the qualifying tournament will be the autonomous decision of each district. Laptop use must comply

with the “Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Debate Events.”

7. **Timing:** Timekeepers are an option but not required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their partners or the judge may keep time. Prep time for each team is three minutes.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate

1. **Resolution:** The resolution will be one requiring a value judgment. Districts must use the current Lincoln-Douglas topic for the month in which the competition occurs. Refer to www.speechanddebate.org/topics for the current topic.
2. **Entries:** Each contestant will debate both sides. No substitution is permitted once the tournament has begun.
3. **Order of Speeches:**

Affirmative Constructive	6 minutes
Negative Cross Examination	3 minutes
Negative Constructive	7 minutes
Affirmative Cross Examination	3 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	4 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	6 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	3 minutes
Prep Time	4 minutes per debater
4. **Timing:** A timekeeper is an option but isn't required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their opponent or the judge may keep time. Prep time for each debater is four minutes.
5. **Use of Electronic Devices:** The use of laptop computers is permitted at the National Tournament. The use of laptop computers at the qualifying tournament will be the autonomous decision of each district. Laptop use must comply with the "Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Debate Events."

Previous Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Debate Events

Below are the previous guidelines for laptop use in debate events. These rules will no longer be used at the National Tournament beginning in 2020. If the district tournament is held in person, districts may choose to use these guidelines, provided 60 days advance notice is given to the district. If a district tournament does not state otherwise, the New Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Debate Events will govern their contest.

- A. Computers equipped with removable wireless cards must have the cards removed before the beginning of any round of competition. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disengage the equipment.
- B. Computers with built-in wireless capability may be used only if the wireless capability is disabled. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disable the equipment.
- C. Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
- D. Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information from any source (coaches or assistants included) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Internet access, use of email, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited. (This does not prohibit non-electronic communication between debate partners during prep time.)
- E. **Penalty:** Contestants found to have violated provisions A through C above will forfeit the round of competition and receive zero merit points. Contestants found to have violated provision D (above) will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all rounds and merit points.
- F. **Availability of Evidence:** Contestants electing to use computers have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent. Printers may be used. Evidence may be printed in the round or produced electronically, but must be provided in a format readable by the opposing team and the judge.

- G. Contestants electing to use computers are responsible for providing their own computers, batteries, extension cords, and all other necessary accessories. Tournament hosts will not be responsible for providing computers, printers, software, paper, or extension cords for contestants.
- H. Because public speaking decorum remains an important element of debate, all debaters are expected to stand at the front of the room facing the judge while speaking.
- I. Contestants choosing to use laptop computers and related equipment accept the risk of equipment failure. Judges and/or contest directors will give no special consideration or accommodation, including no additional speech time or prep time, should equipment failure occur.
- J. By choosing to use laptop computers in the round, debaters are consenting to give tournament officials the right to search their files. Debaters who do not wish to consent should not use computers in the round.

NEW GUIDELINES for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Debate Events

These rules apply to Policy Debate, Public Forum Debate, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, and Big Questions Debate. These rules will be used at the National Tournament beginning in 2020. These rules are required for any district tournament whose debate events are held online. If a district tournament does not state otherwise, these guidelines will govern their contest.

- A. Contestants may use electronic devices (including laptop computers, tablets, and/or cell phones) to access the internet during debate rounds with the following conditions:
 - 1. Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information for competitive advantage from non-competitors (coaches, assistant coaches, other non-competing students) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Information that would be restricted would include but not be limited to coach/non-participating competitor generated arguments, advice on arguments to run, questions to ask during cross examination, and other information not generated by the participating competitors in your round.
 - 2. Internet access may be used to retrieve files, exchange evidence and/or arguments, research arguments, and partner to partner communication, and communication between other participants in the round. These electronic device guidelines do not limit communication between debate partners during the debate round.
- B. **Penalty:** Contestants found to have violated these provisions will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all rounds and merit points in that event.
- C. **Availability of Evidence:** Contestants electing to use computers have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent. Printers may be used. Evidence may be printed in the round or produced electronically but must be provided in a format readable by the opposing team and the judge.
- D. Contestants electing to use computers are responsible for providing their own computers, batteries, extension cords, and all other necessary accessories. Tournament hosts will not be responsible for providing computers, printers, software, paper, or extension cords for contestants. Host schools may provide wireless internet access, but will not guarantee that contestants will be able to gain access when needed.
- E. Contestants choosing to use laptop computers and/or related devices accept the risk of equipment failure. Judges and/or contest directors will give no special consideration or accommodation, including no additional speech time or prep time, should equipment failure occur.
- F. By choosing to use electronic devices in the round, debaters and other relevant parties are consenting to give tournament officials the right to search their devices in the event of a protest. The device may only be searched by tournament officials and must be restricted to files and/or electronic exchanges relevant to the protest.

Failure to comply would result in the upholding of the protest. Debaters and coaches should be present as their device is searched. Debaters who do not wish to consent should not use electronic devices in the round.

Evidence Rules for Policy, Public Forum, Lincoln-Douglas, and Big Questions Debate

Evidence is one of the important components of arguments in debate rounds. All debaters involved are expected to act in an ethical manner that is in accordance with the rules. In keeping with the National Speech & Debate Association Code of Honor, all participants are expected to use and interpret evidence, evidence rules, and procedures in good faith.

7.1. Responsibilities of Contestants Reading Evidence

- A. **Evidence defined.** Debaters are responsible for the validity of all evidence they introduce in the debate. Evidence includes, but is not limited to: facts, statistics, or examples attributable to a specific, identifiable, authoritative source used to support a claim. Unattributed ideas are the opinion of the student competitor and are not evidence.
- B. **Oral source citation.** In all debate events, contestants are expected to, at a minimum, orally deliver the following when introducing evidence in a debate round: primary author(s)' name (last) and year of publication. **Any other information such as source, author's qualifications, etc., may be given, but is not required.** Should two or more quotations be used from the same source, the author and year must be given orally only for the first piece of evidence from that source. Subsequently, only the author's name is required. Oral citations do not substitute for the written source citation. The full written citation must be provided if requested by an opponent or judge.
- C. **Written source citation.** To the extent provided by the original source, a written source citation must include:
1. Full name of primary author and/or editor
 2. Publication date
 3. Source
 4. Title of article
 5. Date accessed for digital evidence
 6. Full URL, if applicable
 7. Author qualifications
 8. Page number(s)
- D. **Paraphrasing, authoritative source versus general understanding.** If paraphrasing is used in a debate, the debater will be held to the same standard of citation and accuracy as if the entire text of the evidence were read. Paraphrasing may be used to shorten or clarify one specific portion of an original source. It should not be confused with general summary of an entire book, chapter, study, etc., which may only be used for information that is widely considered to be common knowledge. Paraphrasing focuses on a single idea, while summary focuses on a general concept. For example, if a debater references a specific theory by a specific author, the debater must also be able to provide an original source as well as the specific text from the original source which is being paraphrased. If a debater were to reference social contract theory in general, that would not be an authoritative source that would require citation. However, if the debater references "John Locke's Social Contract," evidence would need to be available.
- E. **Ellipses prohibited.** In all debate events, the use of internal ellipsis (...) is prohibited **unless it is a replication of the original document.** Debaters may omit the reading of certain words; however, the text that is verbally omitted must be present in the text of what was read for opposing debaters and/or judges to examine. The portions of the evidence read including where the debater begins and ends must be clearly marked (as outlined in 7.1.G.2.).
- F. **Availability of evidence.**
1. In all debate events, for reference, any material (evidence, cases, written citations, etc.) that is presented during the round must be made available to the opponent and/or judge during the round if requested. When requested, the original source or copy of the relevant (as outlined in 7.1.F.2.) pages of evidence read in the round must be available to the opponent in a timely fashion during the round and/or judge at the conclusion of the round.
 2. **Original source(s) defined.** Understanding that teams/individuals obtain their evidence in multiple ways, the original source for evidence may include, but is not limited solely to, one of the following:

- a. Accessing the live or displaying a copy of a web page (teams/individuals may access the internet to provide this information if requested).
 - b. A copy of the page(s) the evidence is on, the page preceding, and the page following, or the actual printed (book, periodical, pamphlet, etc.) source.
 - c. Copies or electronic versions of published handbooks (i.e., Baylor Briefs; Planet Debate, etc.).
 - d. Electronic or printed versions or the webpage for a debate institute or the NDCA sponsored Open Evidence Project or similar sites.
3. Debaters, even if they have acquired the evidence other than by original research, are responsible for the content and accuracy of all evidence they present and/or read.
- G. **Distinguishing between which parts of each piece of evidence are and are not read in a particular round.** In all debate events, debaters must mark their evidence in two ways:
1. Oral delivery of each piece of evidence must be identified by a clear oral pause or by saying phrases such as “quote/unquote” or “mark the card.” The use of a phrase is definitive and may be preferable to debaters. Clear, oral pauses are left solely to the discretion of the judge.
 2. The written text must be marked to clearly indicate the portions read or paraphrased in the debate. See 7.2.B.3 for the penalty for failing to clearly indicate paraphrased text. In the written text the standard practices of underlining what is read, or highlighting what is read, and/or minimizing what is unread, is definitive and may be preferable to debaters. The clarity of other means of marking evidence is left to the discretion of the judge.
- H. **Private communication prohibited.** Private, personal correspondence or communication between an author and the debater is inadmissible as evidence.

7.2. Definitions of Evidence Violations

- A. “Distortion” exists when the textual evidence itself contains added and/or deleted word(s), which significantly alters the conclusion of the author (e.g., **deleting ‘not’**; **adding** the word **‘not’**). Additionally, failure to bracket added words would be considered distortion of evidence.
- B. “Non-existent evidence” means one or more of the following:
1. The debater citing the evidence is unable to provide the original source or copy of the relevant pages when requested by their opponent, judge, or tournament official.
 2. The original source provided does not contain the evidence cited.
 3. The evidence is paraphrased but lacks an original source to verify the accuracy of the paraphrasing. If a student paraphrases from a book, study, or any other source, the specific lines or section from which the paraphrase is taken must be highlighted or otherwise formatted for identification in the round.
 4. The debater is in possession of the original source, but declines to provide it to their opponent upon request in a timely fashion (as outlined in 7.4.C.).
- C. “Clipping” occurs when the debater claims to have read the complete text of highlighted and/or underlined evidence when, in fact, the contestant skips or omits portions of evidence.
- D. “Straw argument”
 A “straw argument” is a position or argumentative claim introduced by an author for the purpose of refuting, discrediting or characterizing it. Reliance on a straw argument occurs in a debate round when a debater asserts incorrectly that the author supports or endorses the straw argument as their own position.

Note: A debater who acknowledges using a “straw argument” when verbally first read in the round, would **not** be misrepresenting evidence. However, if the debater fails to acknowledge the use of a “straw argument” and their opponent questions the use of such an argument, then that debater has committed an evidence violation.

7.3. Procedures for Resolving Evidence Violations

- A. Judges are responsible for resolving disputes between debaters regarding oral citations (7.1.B.); written source citations (7.1.C.); distinguishing between what parts of each piece of evidence are and are not read in a particular round (7.1.G.). When the judge(s) have such a dispute in the round, they must make a written note on the ballot or inform the tabulation committee of the dispute. They must do so particularly if it impacts the decision in the debate. **These decisions may not be appealed.**
- B. An appeal can only be made if the issue has been raised in the round with the exception of the issues listed in 7.3.C. Appeals may only be made if judge(s) have misapplied, misinterpreted, or ignored a rule.
- C. A formal allegation of violation of the evidence rules is permitted during the round only if the debater(s) allege a violation of 7.2.A. (distortion); 7.2.B. (nonexistent evidence); 7.2.C. (clipping). If a formal allegation of violation of these rules is made during a round, the following procedures must be followed: (see section 7.3.D. for procedures for making a formal allegation after the conclusion of the round):
1. The team/individual alleging a violation must make a definitive indication that they are formally alleging a violation of an evidence rule.
 2. The team/individual alleging the violation of the evidence must articulate the specific violation as defined in 7.2.A.; 7.2.B. and/or 7.2.C.
 3. The judge should stop the round at that time to examine the evidence from both teams/individuals and render a decision about the credibility of the evidence.
 - a. If the judge determines that the allegation is legitimate and an evidence violation has occurred, the team/individual committing the violation will be given the loss in the round. Other sanctions may apply as well as articulated in 7.3.E.
 - b. If the judge determines that the allegation is not legitimate and that there is no violation, the team/individual making the challenge will receive the loss in the round.

Note: Teams/individuals may question the credibility and/or efficacy of the evidence without a formal allegation that requires the round to end. Teams/debaters may make in-round arguments regarding the credibility of evidence without making a formal allegation or violation of these rules. Such informal arguments about the evidence will not automatically end the round, and will be treated by the judge in the same fashion as any other argument.
- D. The tabulation committee is authorized to hear: (1) appeals, pursuant to 7.3.B., claiming that a judge ignored, misinterpreted or misapplied rules other than those from which no appeal is permitted pursuant to 7.3.A.; (2) appeals from a judge's decision, pursuant to 7.3.C., on a formal in-round allegation of distortion or non-existent evidence (note: **judge decisions regarding clipping may not be appealed**); and (3) a formal allegation of distortion or nonexistent evidence that is made for the first time after conclusion of the debate.
- E. The procedures for making an appeal or post-round formal allegation are as follows:
1. A coach or school-affiliated adult representative from the school(s) competing in the debate or a judge for the round must notify the tabulation committee of intent to submit an appeal or formal post-round allegation within 20 minutes of the end of the debate round. The 20-minute time period begins once the last ballot from all rounds (if flighted, both flights) has been collected by the tabulation committee.
 2. The coach must submit the post-round formal allegation to the tabulation committee within 10 minutes of the formal notification of the intent to appeal. The allegation must be in writing and articulate the specific evidence violation that is being challenged. The challenged contestant and coach will then be notified.
 3. If the tabulation committee determines that the original protest has merit, the coach or school affiliated adult and contestant(s) being challenged will be given 20 minutes to provide evidence denying, or to the contrary of

the claim. If such evidence cannot be offered, the challenged debater(s) will be given the loss in the round and may be subject to additional penalties. If the tabulation committee determines that the allegation is not legitimate and that there is no violation, the team/individual making the challenge will receive the loss in the round.

4. The tabulation committee has the discretion of extending the time limits for these actions if circumstances do not allow a coach or school-affiliated adult to be available within the prescribed time limits.
- F. The tabulation committee's decision to disqualify a student can be appealed by the coach or school affiliated adult. The following procedure should be followed:
1. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the tabulation committee within 10 minutes of the notification to disqualify.
 2. The tabulation committee will then submit the appeal to the national office referee(s). The committee will contact the national office referee once the written appeal has been received. Both sides will be able to provide written explanations and supporting evidence to defend their individual side.
 3. A decision will be rendered in a timely manner. The decision of the national office shall be final and cannot be appealed.
 4. No more than one round may occur between the round being protested and the decision of the national office referee.
 5. If the appeal is successful and the contestant(s) may now continue in the tournament, they will be put into the appropriate bracket for pairing the debates.
- G. If appeals are made in rounds in which multiple judges are being used, normal procedures should be followed to ensure each judge reaches their decision as independently as possible. Judges will be instructed not to confer or discuss the charge and/or answer to the potential violation. It will be possible for one judge to determine that an evidence violation has occurred and the other judge(s) to determine no violation has occurred. The tabulation committee will record the panel's decision in the same fashion as a normal win or loss; the outcome is thus tabulated in the same fashion as a round in which an evidence violation has not occurred. If the majority of the panel finds an evidence violation did not occur, no sanction may be applied to the team/individual charged with the violation. If the majority finds a violation has occurred, the appropriate penalties will be administered.

7.4. Penalties for Evidence Violations

- A. If the judge determines that an entry has violated one of the rules listed in 7.3.A. and 7.1.H. (oral citation, written citation, indication of parts of card read or not read, use of private communication), the judge may at their discretion disregard the evidence, diminish the credibility given to the evidence, take the violation into account (solely or partially) in deciding the winner of the debate, or take no action.
- B. If a debater(s) commits an evidence violation for "clipping" (7.2.C.), the use of a "straw argument" (7.2.D.), or the use of "ellipses" (7.1.E.), it will result in a loss for the debater(s) committing the evidence violation. The judge should award zero speaker points (if applicable), and indicate the reason for decision on the ballot.
- C. If debater(s) commits an evidence violation of "distortion" (7.2.A.) or have used "non-existent evidence" (as defined by 7.2.B.) the offending debater(s) will lose the debate and be disqualified from the tournament. However, if a debater(s) loses a round due to "non-existent evidence" (7.2.B.) violation during an in-round formal allegation, but can produce it after the round within 20 minutes to the tabulation committee, the committee may decide not to disqualify the entry. The loss that was recorded by the judge may not be changed. If a post-round protest is levied against a debater for not providing evidence or an original source in round (non-existent evidence), and the judge confirms they in fact did not provide the evidence in a timely fashion when requested in round, the debater(s) will lose the round and be disqualified from the tournament. However, if a debater(s) produces the evidence within the post-round challenge period, that debater(s) may avoid disqualification.

- D. Evidence infractions violate the Code of Honor. Depending on the severity, an offense may result in notification of said offense to the contestant's high school administration and chapter advisor, loss of all District and/or National Tournament merit points, including trophy and sweepstakes points for the offending student(s), and/or revocation of Association membership. These decisions would be left to the national office, and not the individual District Committee.

7.5. Tournament Adjustments

- A. Under no circumstance will a tournament or part of a tournament be re-run because of a violation of these rules.
- B. In the case of a disqualification of a debater(s), all ranks and decisions of other debater(s) made prior to the start of the round being protested stand and no revision of past round ranks will take place. Penalties listed in 7.4. will be applied.
- C. When a round has been held between the round being protested and a final decision regarding the protest, the result of that round will be recorded as follows:
 - 1. If the protest is upheld, and a debater is disqualified, the opponent of the disqualified debater will receive a forfeit win.
 - 2. If the protest is overruled, and the protesting debater won the protested round, no revision of the result on the ballot will take place.
 - 3. If the protest is overruled, the protesting debater lost the protested round, and had no previous losses, no revision of the result on the ballot will take place.
 - 4. If the protest is overruled, the protesting debater lost the protested round, and had a previous loss, the opponent will receive a forfeit win regardless of the result on the ballot.

Congressional Debate

1. A **session** is defined as including:

- A. Minimum of three hours.
- B. 18-20 students as the optimum number for a three-hour session; otherwise, a session should be lengthened by ten minutes per each additional student beyond 20. Chambers may not be larger than 30 students.
- C. Election of a presiding officer. The presiding officer must be elected with a majority of the vote. If one candidate does not receive a majority of votes, eliminate the candidate with the fewest votes and vote again. If candidates are tied for the fewest number of votes, vote to determine which of the tied candidates should remain in contention. Repeat this process until one candidate receives a majority of votes.
- D. New seating chart (necessary accommodations for students with special needs may be made).
- E. Resetting of precedence/recency. See 'Recognizing Speakers' below.
- F. New legislation that has not been debated in a previous session at that tournament.
- G. **Optional pilot rule for districts: Time for debate per legislation item should last no more than one-third of a session's floor time.**

Note: In 2019, the Board of Directors voted to pilot a limit to the time per debate. Districts may choose whether to use this rule during for their 2020-2021 district tournament. It will not be used at the 2021 National Tournament.

2. **Recognizing Speakers**

- A. When more than one speaker seeks the floor, the presiding officer must follow the precedence/recency method:
 - 1) First recognize students who have not spoken during the session.
 - 2) Next recognize students who have spoken fewer times.
 - 3) Then recognize students who spoke earlier (least recently).
- B. Before precedence is established, the presiding officer should recognize speakers fairly and consistently. They may not link recognition of speakers to previous recognition of students asking questions, moving motions, or longest standing (standing time).
- C. During any session, precedence/recency should not reset, to ensure that all students in a chamber have an equal opportunity to speak and receive evaluation from scorers. When a new session begins, precedence/recency will be reset along with a new seating chart, and election of a presiding officer.
- D. Before precedence is established, the presiding officer should explain their recognition process and it must be fair, consistent and justifiable.
- E. Scorers will include answers to questions when evaluating speeches.
- F. A speaker may yield time on the floor during debate (for questions or clarifications) but that speaker will remain in control of their three minutes (see #6 below regarding questioning).

3. **Speeches introducing legislation** are allotted up to three minutes, followed by two minutes of questioning by other delegates. A student from the school (or at the national level, the district) who wrote the legislation gets the privilege of recognition (called *authorship*), regardless of precedence; otherwise the presiding officer may recognize a "sponsor" from the chamber, provided this recognition follows the precedence guidelines above. Regardless, this speech of introduction must be followed by two minutes of questions. Should no student seek recognition for the authorship/sponsorship, the chamber will move to lay the legislation on the table until such time that a student is prepared to introduce it.

4. **The first negative speech** must be followed by two minutes of questions.

5. **Following the first two speeches** on legislation, the presiding officer will alternately recognize affirmative and negative speakers, who will address the chamber for up to three minutes, followed by one minute of questioning by other delegates. If no one wishes to oppose the preceding speaker, the presiding officer may recognize a speaker upholding the same side. When no one seeks the floor for debate, the presiding officer may ask the chamber if they

are “ready for the question,” at which point, if there is no objection, voting may commence on the legislation itself. There is no “minimum cycle” rule; however, if debate gets “one-sided,” the chamber may decide to move the previous question.

- A. In the event a student speaks on the wrong side called for by the presiding officer and the error is not caught, the speaker shall be scored and the speech shall count in precedence, but the speaker must be penalized at least three points for not paying close attention to the flow of debate.
 - B. In the event a student speaks on an item of legislation *not currently* being debated, said speech shall count in precedence, but zero points shall be awarded.
6. **The presiding officer fairly and equitably recognizes members to ask questions** following each speech. The presiding officer starts timing questioning periods when they have recognized the first questioner, and keeps the clock running continuously until the time has lapsed. Speakers are encouraged to ask brief questions, and may only ask one question at a time. Two-part/multiple-part questions are not allowed, unless piloting the direct questioning method (see below). There is no formal “permission to preface,” however; presiding officers should discourage students from making statements as part of questioning, since that is an abusive use of the limited time available.
7. The presiding officer will pause briefly between speeches to recognize any motions from the floor; however, they should not call for motions (at the beginning of a session, the presiding officer should remind members to seek their attention between speeches).
8. **Amendments** must be presented to the presiding officer in writing with specific references to lines and clauses that change. This must be done in advance of moving to amend.
- A. The parliamentarian will recommend whether the amendment is “germane”—that is, it upholds the original intent of the legislation—otherwise, it is considered “dilatatory.” The title of the legislation may be changed.
 - B. A legislator may move to amend between floor speeches. Once that motion is made, the presiding officer will read the proposed amendment aloud and call for a second by one-third of those members present, unless they rule it dilatatory.
 - C. Should students wish to speak on the proposed amendment, the presiding officer will recognize them as per the standing precedence and recency, and the speech will be counted toward their totals, accordingly.
 - D. Simply proposing an amendment does not guarantee an “author/sponsor” speech, and any speeches on amendments are followed by the normal one minute of questioning.
 - E. Amendments are considered neutral and do not constitute an affirmative or negative speech on the original legislation.
 - F. If there are no speakers or the previous question is moved, the chamber may vote on a proposed amendment without debating it.
9. **All major voting** (such as the main motion/legislation) which a congressperson’s constituents should have a record of, shall be done with a counted vote. Secret balloting is used when voting for presiding officer.
10. Students should ask permission to leave and enter the chamber when it is in session (move a personal privilege). However, do not interrupt a speaker who is addressing the chamber.
11. Continuing in 2017-2018, District Committees may again pilot direct questioning at their district congress tournament, provided 60 days’ advance notice is given to the community. Coaches are encouraged to check with local tournament officials to see if direct questioning will be used in their area. At the 2018 National Tournament and beyond, direct questioning will be piloted in the semifinal and final congressional sessions. The presiding officer will open the floor for questions following each speech. The presiding officer will recognize questioners for a cross-examination period of no more than 30 seconds. **Questioners will be chosen according to a separate questioning recency.**
12. **Use of Evidence (also see the section on Congressional Debate Evidence Rules)**
- A. Visual aids are permitted in Congressional Debate, provided they do not require electronic retrieval devices in the chamber.

B. All evidence used is subject to verification. Honesty and integrity are of utmost importance in legislative debate. Falsification or deliberate misuse of evidence may result in the legislator being suspended by tournament officials.

C. **NEW GUIDELINES for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Congressional Debate**

These rules will be used at the National Tournament beginning in 2020. These rules are required for any district tournament whose Congressional Debate events are held online. If a district tournament does not state otherwise, these guidelines will govern their contest. If a district holds their Congressional Debate qualifying events in person, they may choose to use the Previous Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Debate Events provided the decision is announced 60 days in advance of the event.

NEW GUIDELINES: The use of internet enabled electronic devices is permitted. Students may not use the internet to gain help from coaches, other students, or any person, such that it would prevent the speech from being the original work of the competitor. Electronic device use must comply with the “New Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Debate Events.”

13. Since the rules above ensure fairness for competition, they may not be suspended; the presiding officer should rule such motions *out of order*; except to extend questioning and allow for open chambers provided the tournament staff permits doing so.

Congressional Debate Legislation Guidelines

Most legislation should have a national/domestic focus that the U.S. Congress would have *jurisdiction* over, taking the form of a **bill**. A bill establishes details behind *how* a particular law must work, including when it takes effect, how much tax levy would be appropriated (if applicable), how infractions/violations will be dealt with, etc. A bill may answer the who, what, when, where—and most specifically how—but it will never answer “why.” Legislators explain rationale behind bills in their speeches, and how a bill implements its solution can spark deeper, more meaningful debate.

Students should consider what the U.S. Congress has jurisdiction over. Since the Executive Branch runs most of the agencies that enforce federal laws, understanding those helps; for more information, visit www.usa.gov/Agencies/Federal/Executive.shtml. While foreign affairs often fall under the jurisdiction of the Executive Branch, funding efforts such as USAID can have an impact on the success or failure of United States involvement in other countries, and therefore, can be framed as a bill. Inspiration for legislative ideas can be found at thomas.loc.gov.

Writing an effective bill involves more time and research than researching one written by someone else. Students must ask themselves what the legislation does, who is involved (government agencies), where it happens, when it is feasible to take place and how much time is needed for implementation, and how it should be carried out (a plan of action). All of these questions must be answered in writing the sections of the bill, with thoughtful consideration as to how thoroughly each section explains its plank of implementing the overall bill’s plan of action.

Resolutions are simply position statements on issues Congress does not have jurisdiction over (such as a foreign issue, although a bill can suggest foreign aid), or further action (such as amending the Constitution). Resolutions lack the force of law, and never establish enforcement.

Appropriate **topics** exhibit seriousness of purpose. The action proposed should be feasible, and such that the actual United States Congress might debate it. Topics should be debatable, meaning substantive argumentation exists on both sides. Legislation should be typed and double-spaced with line numbers, **not exceeding one page**. Capitalizing the words “WHEREAS” and “RESOLVED” in resolutions, and “SECTION” in bills, as well as inverse-indenting each clause or section helps to distinguish between ideas and concepts.

The samples above show proper formatting. In the resolution, note the semicolon, and how it precedes the word “and” at the end of each “whereas” clause, and the phrase “now, therefore, be it” at the end of the last “whereas” clause.

Note: Legislation that is submitted for consideration at the district and/or national tournament may be rejected if serious issues exist with the adherence to these guidelines.

Templates for bills, resolutions, and resolutions to amend the Constitution are available online at www.speechanddebate.org.

A Bill to Establish a Specific Policy

BE IT ENACTED BY THIS CONGRESS THAT:

1. **SECTION 1.** State the new policy in a brief declarative sentence, or in as few sentences as possible.
- 2.
- 3.
4. **SECTION 2.** Define any ambiguous terms inherent in the first section.
- 5.
6. **SECTION 3.** Name the government agency that will oversee the enforcement of the bill along with the specific enforcement mechanism.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
10. **SECTION 4.** Indicate the implementation date/timeframe.
- 11.
12. **SECTION 5.** State that all other laws that are in conflict with this new policy shall hereby be declared null and void.
- 13.
- 14.

Introduced by Name of School

A Resolution to Urge Further Action on a Specific Issue

1. **WHEREAS,** State the current problem (this needs to be accomplished in one brief sentence); and
- 2.
- 3.
4. **WHEREAS,** Describe the scope of the problem cited in the first whereas clause (this clause needs to flow logically from the first); and
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
8. **WHEREAS,** Explain the impact and harms allowed by the current problem (once again, the clause needs to flow in a logical sequence); now, therefore, be it
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
12. **RESOLVED,** By this Congress that: state your recommendation for dealing with the problem (the resolution should be a clear call for action); and, be it
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
16. **FURTHER RESOLVED,** That (an *optional* additional recommendation; if not used, end the previous clause with a period).
- 17.
- 18.

Introduced by Name of School

Congressional Debate Evidence Rules

Based on recommendations from the Congress Evidence Committee, the Board of Directors had a discussion of how evidence is currently used in Congressional Debate and the concerns surrounding students' appropriate, substantiated, and ethical use of evidence in Congressional Debate speeches. The Board of Directors officially voted to adopt these Congressional Debate evidence rules for use during the 2017-2018 competition season and beyond.

7.1. Responsibilities of Contestants Reading Evidence in Congressional Debate

- A. **Evidence defined.** Debaters are responsible for the validity of all evidence they introduce in the debate. Evidence includes, but is not limited to: facts, statistics, or examples attributable to a specific, identifiable, authoritative source used to support a claim. Unattributed ideas are the opinion of the student competitor and are not evidence.
- B. **Oral source citation.** In all debate events, contestants are expected to, at a minimum, orally deliver the following when introducing evidence in a debate round: primary author(s)' name (last) and year of publication. **Any other information such as source, author's qualifications, etc., may be given, but is not required.** Should two or more quotations be used from the same source, the author and year must be given orally only for the first piece of evidence from that source. Subsequently, only the author's name is required. Oral citations do not substitute for the written source citation. The full written citation must be provided if requested by an opponent or judge.
- C. **Written source citation.** To the extent provided by the original source, a written source citation must include:
1. Full name of primary author and/or editor
 2. Publication date
 3. Source
 4. Title of article
 5. Date accessed for digital evidence
 6. Full URL, if applicable
 7. Author qualifications
 8. Page number(s)
- D. **Paraphrasing, authoritative source versus general understanding.** If paraphrasing is used in a debate, the debater will be held to the same standard of citation and accuracy as if the entire text of the evidence were read. For example, if a debater references a specific theory by a specific author, the debater must also be able to provide an original source. If a debater were to reference social contract theory in general, that would not be an authoritative source that would require citation. However, if the debater references "John Locke's Social Contract," evidence would need to be available.
- E. **Ellipses prohibited.** In all debate events, the use of internal ellipsis (...) is prohibited **unless it is a replication of the original document.** Debaters may omit the reading of certain words; however, the text that is verbally omitted must be present in the text of what was read for opposing debaters and/or judges to examine. The portions of the evidence read including where the debater begins and ends must be clearly marked (as outlined in 7.1.G.2.).
- F. **Availability of original source.**
1. When challenged, the original source or copy of the relevant (as outlined in 7.1.F.2.) pages of evidence read in round must be available to the student making the challenge within two speeches. In all debate events, for reference, any evidence that is presented during the round must be made available to the opponent during the round if requested.
 2. **Original source(s) defined.** Understanding that teams/individuals obtain their evidence in multiple ways, the original source for evidence may include, but is not limited solely to, one of the following:
 - a. Accessing the live or displaying a copy of a web page (teams/individuals may access the internet to provide this information if requested).

- b. A copy of the page(s) the evidence is on, the page preceding, and the page following, or the actual printed (book, periodical, pamphlet, etc.) source.
 - c. Copies or electronic versions of published handbooks (i.e., Baylor Briefs; Planet Debate, etc.).
 - d. Electronic or printed versions or the webpage for a debate institute or the NDCA sponsored Open Evidence Project or similar sites.
3. Debaters, even if they have acquired the evidence other than by original research, are still responsible for the content and accuracy of the evidence they present and/or read.
- G. **Distinguishing between which parts of each piece of evidence are and are not read in a particular round.** In all debate events, debaters must mark their evidence in two ways:
- 1. Oral delivery of each piece of evidence must be identified by a clear oral pause or by saying phrases such as “quote/unquote” or “mark the card.” The use of a phrase is definitive and may be preferable to debaters. Clear, oral pauses are left solely to the discretion of the judge(s) and parliamentarian.
 - 2. The written text must be marked to clearly indicate the portions read in the debate. In the written text the standard practices of underlining what is read, or highlighting what is read, and/or minimizing what is unread, is definitive and may be preferable to debaters. The clarity of other means of marking evidence is left to the discretion of the judge.
- H. **Private communication prohibited.** Private, personal correspondence or communication between an author and the debater is inadmissible as evidence.

7.2. Definitions of Evidence Violations in Congressional Debate

- A. “Distortion” exists when the textual evidence itself contains added and/or deleted word(s), which significantly alters the conclusion of the author (e.g., **deleting ‘not’**; **adding** the word **‘not’**). Additionally, failure to bracket added words would be considered distortion of evidence.
- B. “Non-existent evidence” means one or more of the following:
- 1. The debater citing the evidence is unable to provide the original source or copy of the relevant pages when requested by their opponent, judge, or tournament official.
 - 2. The original source provided does not contain the evidence cited.
 - 3. The evidence is paraphrased but lacks an original source to verify the accuracy of the paraphrasing.
 - 4. The debater is in possession of the original source, but declines to provide it to a student who challenges, the chair, or the parliamentarian upon request.
- C. “Clipping” occurs when the debater claims to have read the complete text of highlighted and/or underlined evidence when, in fact, the contestant skips or omits portions of evidence.
- D. “Straw argument”
A “straw argument” is a position or argumentative claim introduced by an author for the purpose of refuting, discrediting or characterizing it. Reliance on a straw argument occurs in a debate round when a debater asserts incorrectly that the author supports or endorses the straw argument as their own position.

Note: A debater who acknowledges using a “straw argument” when verbally first read in the round, would **not** be misrepresenting evidence. However, if the debater fails to acknowledge the use of a “straw argument” and their opponent questions the use of such an argument, then that debater has committed an evidence violation.

7.3. Procedures for Raising Evidence Questions During a Congressional Debate Session

The procedures for making an In-round evidence question are as follows:

- A. Congressional Debate entries must rise to a point of information after a speech to formally request a copy of the evidence cited, the citation, or the original source of evidence. When requested during the point of information, the presiding officer will instruct the debater being challenged to produce the copy of the evidence, citation, or original source. The debater being challenged must produce the requested materials in a timely fashion. Should a debater feel they are not receiving the information they requested in a timely fashion, they may rise to another point of information for the presiding officer and parliamentarian to address the situation.
- B. Debaters who request the information may receive the evidence from the presiding officer within a period of two speeches. The round would not be put on hold for the request to be completed. For example, if a debater rises to a point of order after speech #4, then by the conclusion of speech #6, the requested evidence should be presented to the presiding officer.
- C. If after reviewing the evidence in question, a debater feels that an evidence violation has occurred, they may submit a formal allegation by completing an evidence challenge form (see Appendix) and, after making a motion to approach the chair, the debater will present the form to the presiding officer and parliamentarian.

7.4. Penalties for Resolving Evidence Violations During Congressional Debate

- A. All evidence challenges must occur during the session of Congressional Debate where an alleged violation took place, and should happen before a vote on the pending legislation. If the concern arises during the last cycle of speeches, the parliamentarian may grant a challenge after the vote, prior to the first speech on a new piece of legislation.
- B. Parliamentarians are responsible for resolving disputes between debaters regarding oral citations (7.1.B.); and written source citations (7.1.C.). When the parliamentarian has such a dispute in the round, the parliamentarian must submit the protest form to the tabulation committee. All protest forms will be submitted to the tabulation committee.
 1. The parliamentarian will determine the legitimacy of the challenge, and if the parliamentarian considers the request justified, the debater making the allegation will move a point of order to address the allegation to the chamber.
 2. The debater being challenged will be recognized by the presiding officer for a response to the evidence violation.
 3. The parliamentarian will evaluate the legitimacy and severity of the charge and make a recommendation to the presiding officer for action. The recommendation may be charged against either student involved in the dispute. Depending upon the severity of the offense, the parliamentarian may opt to censure the debater(s). Refer to section 7.5. for an outline of the severity of offenses and corresponding actions.
 4. The presiding officer will announce the parliamentarian's decision and recognize either/both debaters for consequent action.
- C. Procedures for Appealing the Parliamentarian's Decision
 1. An appeal can only be made if the issue-in-question has been raised, by a student, in the round. Appeals may only be made if the parliamentarian has misapplied, misinterpreted, or ignored a rule.
 2. A coach or school-affiliated adult representative must notify the tabulation committee of intent to submit an appeal of the parliamentarian's ruling within 20 minutes of the end of session as recorded by the Parliamentarian for that chamber.
 - a. The coach must submit the post-round appeal to the tabulation committee within 10 minutes of the formal notification of the intent to appeal. The allegation must be in writing and articulate the specific evidence violation and ruling that is being challenged.

- b. If the tabulation committee determines the appeal has merit, both parties involved in the original dispute will be given 20 minutes to respond.
 - c. The tabulation committee will make a decision and has the discretion of extending the time limits for these actions if circumstances do not allow a coach or school-affiliated adult to be available within the prescribed time limits.
3. At the district tournament level, the tabulation committee’s decision to disqualify a student’s rankings for that session can be appealed by the coach or school- affiliated adult. The following procedure should be followed:
- a. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the tabulation committee within 10 minutes of the notification to disqualify.
 - b. The tabulation committee will then submit the appeal to the national office representative(s). The committee will contact the national office representative once the written appeal has been received. Both sides will be able to provide written explanations and supporting evidence to defend their individual side.
 - c. A decision will be rendered in a timely manner. The decision of the national office representative shall be final and cannot be appealed.
 - d. No elimination session may occur before a ruling is made by the national office.
 - e. If the appeal is successful, any student(s) involved will receive the appropriate rank as if the evidence challenge was never called into question.
 - f. At the National Tournament, the appeal will go directly to the Rules Adjudication Panel, and accepted procedures and practices will be followed.

7.5. Penalties for Evidence Violations in Congressional Debate

- A. If the parliamentarian determines that an entry has violated one of the rules listed in 7.1(A-D, F-H) (oral citation, written citation, indication of parts of card read or not read, use of private communication), the parliamentarian must notify the judge(s) of the violation. The judge(s) and parliamentarian may at their discretion disregard the evidence, diminish the credibility given to the evidence, take the violation into account (solely or partially) in the ranking of chamber participants, or take no action. These offenses are considered minor and a parliamentarian sanction is the only prescribed penalty.
- B. If a debater(s) commits an evidence violation of “distortion” (7.2.A.), uses “nonexistent evidence” (7.2.B.), uses a “straw argument” (7.2.C.) or the use of “ellipses” (7.1.E.) such action will result in the debater(s) committing the evidence violation not being ranked by the judge(s) and parliamentarian. These offenses are considered major and censure by the parliamentarian would be applied.
- C. Evidence infractions violate the Code of Honor. Depending on the severity, an offense may result in the notification of said offense to the contestant’s high school administration and chapter advisor, loss of all District and/or National Tournament merit points, including trophy and sweepstakes points for the offending student(s), and/or revocation of Association membership. These decisions would be left to the NSDA national office, and not the individual tabulation committee.

7.6. Tournament Adjustments in Congressional Debate

- A. Under no circumstance will a tournament or part of a tournament be re-run because of a violation of these rules.
- B. In the case of censure, all ranks and decisions made prior to the start of the round being protested stand and no revision of past session ranks will take place. Penalties listed in 7.4. will be applied.
- C. When a session has been held between the session being appealed and a final decision regarding the protest, the result of that session will be recorded as follows:

1. If the protest is upheld, all ranks and scores will remain as recorded. The evidence violation would apply only to the session in which it occurred and not affect prior or subsequent sessions.
2. If the appeal is upheld, the judge and/or parliamentarian will restore any ranks and scores that were earned by that debater.

Original Oratory

1. **Purpose:** The general purpose of the speech is to persuade. Any other purpose such as to inform or entertain shall be secondary.
2. **Contest:** This contest comprises only memorized orations actually composed by the contestants and not used by them during a previous contest season. No visual aids are permitted.
3. **Subject:** Any appropriate subject may be used, but the orator must be truthful. Any non-factual reference, especially a personal one, must be so identified.
4. **Length:** The time limit in Original Oratory is ten minutes with a 30-second “grace period.” If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
5. **Quotation:** Not more than 150 words of the oration may be direct quotation from any other speech or writing and such quotations must be identified in a printed copy of the oration supplied prior to registration. Extensive paraphrasing from other sources is prohibited.
6. **Script:** The orator's script must identify the quoted materials, state the number of quoted words, include a work cited page in APA or MLA format, and both the orator and the coach must attest by signature that the oration is the original work of the contestant. It is the responsibility of the contestant to have a script ready upon request should the speech be challenged. At the National Tournament, all quarterfinalists in OO are required to turn in a printed, typed copy of their manuscript, including a works cited page, to the ombudsperson before noon on the third day of competition.
7. **Re-Use:** A student may not use an oration the student used in district or national competition in any previous contest year.

At the Fall 2016 Board of Directors Meeting, the Board voted to make Informative Speaking (INF) and Program Oral Interpretation (POI) main events at the district and national tournaments.

Informative Speaking

1. **Purpose:** An informative speech is an original speech designed to explain, define, describe, or illustrate a particular subject. The general purpose of the speech is for the audience to gain understanding and/or knowledge of a topic. Any other purpose such as to entertain or to convince shall be secondary. The use of audio/visual aids is optional. (See # 4 on Aids.)
2. **Contest:** This contest comprises only memorized speeches composed by the contestants and not used by them during a previous contest season.
3. **Subject:** Effective speeches provide new information or perspectives on a topic, including those that are widely known. The responsibility for choosing a worthwhile topic rests with the contestant. A fabricated topic may not be used. Any non-factual reference, including a personal reference, must be so identified.
4. **Aids:** Audio/visual aids may or may not be used to supplement and reinforce the message. If used, the audio/visual aids should enhance or support the message rather than distract from the overall effectiveness of the presentation. During the presentation, no electronic equipment is permitted. Electronic equipment is defined as any object requiring an electrical cord, battery, or solar power to operate it (projectors, cell phones, radios, iPads, computers, etc.). The use of live animals or any additional people as visual aids is not allowed during the speech. Items of dress put on and/or removed for illustration during the course of the presentation are considered costumes and may not be part of the contestant’s presentation. Visual aids may not violate policies as dictated by local and state law (weapons, drugs, etc.) Contestants may not distribute items to the judges or audience before, during, or after the round. This includes but is not limited to food, objects, handouts, flyers, and promotional merchandise. The host

school is not responsible for providing any facilities, equipment, including tables, chairs, or easels, or assistance in a contestant's use of visual aids. In order to facilitate the video recording of the final round at the National Tournament, one table will be provided for use by the contestants. This provision is only for the final round. Expedient set up and take down of aids is expected. If a visual aid displays published pictorial material, the source must be included in the work-cited page but does not need to be cited orally.

5. **Length:** The time limit is 10 minutes with a 30-second "grace period." If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge's discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
6. **Quotation:** Not more than 150 words of the speech may be direct quotation and such quotations must be identified orally and in a printed copy of the speech supplied prior to registration.
7. **Script:** Manuscripts must be available at all district tournament contests in the event of a protest. However, it shall be the choice of each individual District Committee whether or not to require these materials be submitted prior to the district contest. The script must identify the quoted materials, state the number of quoted words, include a work-cited page in APA or MLA format, and both the speaker and the coach must attest by signature that the speech is the original work of the contestant. At the National Tournament, all quarterfinalists in OO are required to turn in a printed, typed copy of their manuscript, including a works cited page, to the ombudsperson before noon on the third day of competition.
8. **Re-Use:** A student may not use an informative speech the student used in district or national competition in any previous contest year.

Program Oral Interpretation

1. **Purpose:** POI is a program of oral interpretation of thematically-linked selections chosen from two or three genres: prose, poetry, drama (plays). At least two pieces of literature that represent at least two separate genres must be used. Unlike the other interpretation events, Program Oral Interpretation may use multiple sources for the program. The title or author of all selections must be verbally identified in either the introduction and/or transitional phrases. The title may identify the primary source (e.g., book, anthology, journal, magazine, newspaper, approved website, etc.) or the specific title within the primary source (e.g., a poem, a play, a short story, a journal/magazine article, a newspaper article, etc.). If more than one author is attributed to the source, at a minimum, the primary author should be verbally cited. A Works Cited of all sources must be available to tournament officials upon request. Competitors are encouraged to devote approximately equal times to each of the genres used in the program. This distinction pertains to these two or three genres as a whole, not types of literature within a genre (such as fiction/nonfiction). Prose expresses thought through language recorded in sentences and paragraphs: fiction (short stories, novels) and non-fiction (articles, essays, journals, biographies). Poetry is writing which expresses ideas, experience, or emotion through the creative arrangement of words according to their sound, their rhythm, their meaning. Poetry may rely on verse and stanza form.
2. **Contest:** The use of a manuscript during the performance is required. Common practices include the use of a binder or folder. Reading from a book or magazine is not permitted. The intact manuscript may be used by the contestant as a prop, so long as it is in the contestant's control by remaining in contact with the body at all times. No costumes or props other than the manuscript are permitted. Pictures, graphics, and/or illustrations are considered a visual aid, even if included in the original manuscript, and may not be displayed. The contestant must address the script; however, introduction and transitional material may be memorized.
3. **Length:** The time limit is 10 minutes with a 30-second "grace period." If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge's discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.

4. **Publication Rules:** All literature performed must meet the publication rules of the Association.
5. **Adaptations** to material may only be used for the purpose of transition. Any word changes (to eliminate profane language) and/or additions (for transition) must be indicated clearly in ink. Failure to clearly indicate the addition of words will be subject to disqualification. Changes to the script may only be used for the purpose of transition or to eliminate profane language. The voice of a script may not be changed. For example, changing "She moved to California when she was 13" to "I moved to California when I was 13" is not permitted. Combining small fractions of sentences or singular words to create humorous or dramatic dialogue, scenes, moments, and/or plot lines not intended in the original literature is prohibited. For example, it is not permitted to take one word from page 13 (e.g. home), a phrase from page 211 (e.g. ran away from), and a name, (e.g. Tyler) from page 59 to create dialogue between characters or events that do not exist in the script. Example: adding "Tyler ran away from home." when this did not occur and was not said in the script is not permitted. Transitions only may be used to clarify the logical sequence of ideas. They are not to be used for the purpose of embellishing the humorous or dramatic effect of the literature.

Interpretation

This includes categories of individual (solo) performance of dramatic (serious) and humorous literature, as well as duo performance of either emotive appeal, with selections drawn from published, printed: novels, short stories, plays, poetry, or other printed, published works, PDFs, e-books, as well as limited online and recorded works as provided for in the rules below.

1. **Divisions.** Contests are conducted in Dramatic, Humorous, Duo, and Program Oral Interpretation. See additional rules for the supplemental interpretation events of Poetry, Prose, and Storytelling.
2. **Length:** The time limit in Interpretation Main Events (Dramatic, Humorous, Duo, and Program Oral Interpretation) is ten minutes with a 30-second "grace period." If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge's discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
3. **Material:** Selections used in the oral interpretation main events of Dramatic, Humorous, and Duo Interpretation must be cuttings from a single work of literature (one short story, play, or novel), unless poetry is used, in which case cuttings may come from one or more poems from a single source. If the source is an anthology collection of short stories, plays, or novels, each selection of literature is independent and only one selection can be used, even if it is from the same author. If the source is an anthology which includes poetry, multiple poems may be used from this single source by one or a variety of authors. Unlike the other oral interpretation main events, Program Oral Interpretation may use multiple sources for the program. Song lyrics may be used if the performer has an original, hard copy of the lyrics such as sheet music or a CD jacket or if they can be found from online sources that meet the digital source rules below. See specific rules for Program Oral Interpretation and Supplemental interpretation events.

Note: In 2020, the Board of Directors voted to pilot the following new rules regarding what sources for material may be used in Interpretation events, including removal of the requirement that digital sources must be found on the Approved Websites List.

Any source material is permitted as long as it meets the standards outlined below:

A. Original source material must not be written by the competitor who is performing it.

B. Original source material must be publicly accessible throughout the duration of the tournament. Digital printed publications such as web pages and PDFs retrieved or purchased from web pages are permitted as long as the web page is publicly accessible throughout the duration of the tournament. Digital unprinted publications such as videos, audio files, and films are permitted as long as the original source is publicly accessible throughout the duration of the tournament and the competitor can obtain an official transcript of the original source.

1. **For print publications** such as novels, short stories, plays, or poetry, the original source is the physical book or e-book. Photocopies of original literature are not acceptable. Presenting the physical book or e-book is sufficient to prove that a printed publication is publicly accessible.

2. **For digital printed publications** such as web pages, original source material is no longer required to come from online publishing sources listed on the NSDA Approved Websites List. The original source must be publicly accessible for viewing or purchase by a simple internet search or by a URL not requiring passwords or access codes. Competitors must also present a printed manuscript to be used in the case of a protest, but presenting a printed copy of a website is not alone sufficient to prove that a digital printed publication is publicly accessible.
3. **PDFs** are permitted as long as the website from which the PDF is retrieved or purchased is publicly accessible for viewing or purchase by a simple internet search or by a URL not requiring passwords or access codes. Competitors must also present a printed copy of the PDF to be used in the case of a protest, but presenting a printed copy of the PDF is not alone sufficient to prove that a PDF is publicly accessible.
4. **For digital unprinted publications** such as videos, audio files, and films, the original source must be publicly accessible for viewing or purchase by a simple internet search or by a URL not requiring passwords or access codes. Competitors must also present a printed official transcript of the original source to be used in the case of a protest, but presenting an official transcript is not alone sufficient to prove that the original source is publicly accessible. An official transcript is one approved by the original source's producer, licensing agent, or copyright holder. As long as approval has been granted, an official transcript may be obtained through the aforementioned parties or through an official transcription service such as TranscribeMe, Scribie, or iScribed, which use non-automated, manual transcription.

C. Source Verification: It is the affirmative duty of each coach and each student entered in Interpretation contests to determine absolutely that the cutting being performed meets all rules for material. Interp source material must be available at all district tournament contests in the event of a protest. However, it shall be the choice of each individual District Committee whether or not to require these materials be submitted prior to the district contest. At the National Tournament, all quarterfinalists are required to turn in the following items to the ombudsperson by noon on the third day of competition unless officially notified otherwise by the National Tournament director. Any contestant failing to produce the following items to the ombudsperson by the aforementioned deadline will not qualify for the semifinal rounds of competition.

New guidelines for script turn-in will updated prior to the 2021 National Tournament.

- 1) The original published source of any selection used must be immediately available at the tournament. When requested by tournament officials, access to the source material upon demand, either in electronic or print form, must be presented.
 - a. For print publications, the original source is the physical book. Photocopies of original literature are not acceptable.
 - b. For PDFs, an original, unaltered PDF via flash drive, email, or on an electronic device (e.g., laptop) must be presented. Manipulation of a PDF script outside the scope of the rules will be subject to disqualification.
 - c. PDF publications from an online source that meets the above standards and e-books are permitted. Competitors may turn in an e-book via flashdrive, email, or e-reader. For e-books, an original, unaltered e-pub or other recognized e-book format via flash drive or email must be presented; however, as some e-book formats are exclusive to their specific apps or electronic readers, students must provide the required technology and/or internet access to verify the material performed for tournament officials.
 - d. For a digital publication, a printed manuscript will be turned in as the original source. Only the printed manuscript shall be considered adequate proof of authenticity.
 - i. The material the competitor performs must presently appear on the website if questions arise in competition. The website and online version of the digital publication need to be available for comparison if challenged. Online access is the fundamental responsibility of tournament officials and/or individual filing the protest. NOTE: If tournament officials cannot gain online access and the above requirements have been met, the piece is considered legal for use.
 - ii. Manuscript items to be printed directly from the screen for digital printed materials:
 - a. The first page in the website (the home page)
 - b. All other linked pages needed to navigate to the literary text selected for competition shall be

printed out and the link must be highlighted in the manuscript

- c. All web pages upon which the cutting appears
 - iii. Each page must have printed in the header and/or footer including:
 - a. Date the page was printed
 - b. Web address
 - 2) A photocopy or printed screenshot of every page of the original source from which any line of the cutting was taken. The photocopy will be kept for evaluation during the semifinal round.
 - a. Pages are to be placed in the order in which they are performed (e.g., if text from one page is used more than once within the cutting, that page should be copied again with those words highlighted and re-inserted where it is used in the cutting). Students are not required to photocopy or print pages that are not used in their cutting.
 - b. All words used from the script should be highlighted (any words/lines not used should be left unmarked).
 - c. Any word changes (to eliminate profane language) and/or additions (for transition) must be indicated clearly in ink. Failure to clearly indicate the addition of words will be subject to disqualification. Changes to the script may only be used for the purpose of transition or to eliminate profane language. Transitions may be used to clarify the logical sequence of ideas. They are not to be used for the purpose of embellishing the humorous or dramatic effect of the literature.
 - 3) A printed, typed copy of the cutting. This must be the final cutting that the student is using for the tournament, and it must match the copy of the cutting uploaded during registration.
 - 4) Quarterfinalists in POI, OO, and INFO must also turn in a works cited page of all sources used. Please note that competitors in POI must turn in original sources and photocopies for every source used.
5. **Performance:** The presentation may not use physical objects or costuming. During the presentation, the contestant/team must name the author and the book or magazine from which the cutting was made. Additionally:
- A. **Adaptations** to material may only be used for the purpose of transition. Any word changes (to eliminate profane language) and/or additions (for transition) must be indicated clearly in ink. Failure to clearly indicate the addition of words will be subject to disqualification. Changes to the script may only be used for the purpose of transition or to eliminate profane language. The voice of a script may not be changed. For example, changing “She moved to California when she was 13” to “I moved to California when I was 13” is not permitted. Combining small fractions of sentences or singular words to create humorous or dramatic dialogue, scenes, moments, and/or plot lines not intended in the original literature is prohibited. For example, it is not permitted to take one word from page 13 (e.g. home), a phrase from page 211 (e.g. ran away from), and a name, (e.g. Tyler) from page 59 to create dialogue between characters or events that do not exist in the script. Example: adding “Tyler ran away from home.” when this did not occur and was not said in the script is not permitted. Transitions only may be used to clarify the logical sequence of ideas. They are not to be used for the purpose of embellishing the humorous or dramatic effect of the literature.
 - B. Humorous, Dramatic, and Duo Interpretation selections must be presented from memory. Program Oral Interpretation must use a manuscript.
 - C. In Duo Interpretation, each of the two performers may play one or more characters so long as performance responsibility in the cutting remains as balanced as possible.
 - D. Monologues, prose, and poetry selections are acceptable in Dramatic, Humorous, and Program Oral Interpretation. In Duo Interpretation, if the selection is prose or poetry and contains narration, either or both of the performers may present the narration.
 - E. **Artistic Plagiarism:** Videos of previous final round performances are intended to provide educational examples for coaches and students. They are not intended to serve as a model to directly imitate or duplicate in performance. The wholesale impersonation of final round performances is strongly discouraged.
6. **Focus:** In Dramatic, Humorous, and Program Oral Interpretation, use of focal points and/or direct contact with the audience should be determined by the requirements of the literature being interpreted. In Duo Interpretation, focus may be direct during the introduction [the performers may look at each other] but must be indirect [off-stage] during

the performance itself.

7. **Re-Use:** A student may not use a cutting from a work of literature the student used in National Speech & Debate Association district or national competition in any previous contest year. A student entered in two events may not use the same selection of literature in both events.
8. **Suggested Websites List:** The NSDA will maintain a list of websites as a resource for assisting coaches and students with finding materials for use in competition. Students are no longer required to use only digital sources found on this list. The list can be found at www.speechanddebate.org/suggested-source-material-for-interpretation-events/.

Extemporaneous Speaking

- Divisions:** Two divisions of Extemporaneous Speaking will be held at the district and national level:
 - United States Division:** Questions will cover U.S. domestic and U.S. foreign policy.
 - International Division:** Questions will cover the domestic affairs of foreign countries and the foreign affairs of all countries, including the United States.
- Topics:** The district chair will obtain a list of questions phrased for contest use and based on subjects discussed in periodicals during the current school year. The contents of the list must not be disclosed except as contestants draw questions. A new subject area will be used for each round with no duplication of questions between the divisions.
- Entry:** At the National Tournament, no student is allowed to enter both divisions in a single contest year. Each district has the autonomy to determine whether double entry in Extemporaneous Speaking events is allowed. The decision of the District Committee is final.
- Drawing:** Thirty minutes before the contest is to begin, the first speaker draws three questions, choose one, and return the other two. The other contestants draw in like manner, in the order of speaking, at intervals of seven minutes. The entire list of questions for that round must be used for each entry in each section. A contestant drawing a question on which they have spoken previously in the tournament must return it and draw again.
- Preparation:** As soon as a question is chosen, the contestant will prepare a speech without consultation and without references to prepared notes. Students may consult published books, magazines, newspapers and journals or articles, provided:
 - They are originals or copies of whole pages.
 - Provided those originals or copies are uncut.
 - There is no written material on that original or copy other than citation information.
 - Topical index without annotation may be present.

No other material will be allowed in the Extemp prep room other than stated above. Extemp speeches, handbooks, briefs and outlines are prohibited from the Extemp prep room. Underlining or highlighting in Extemp will be allowed if done in only one color on each article or copy. **Please see rules concerning Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Extemporaneous Speaking.** Printed copies of information from online computer services may be used. Electronically retrieved evidence used in any Association Extemp competition must conform to the citation standard of the Modern Language Association [consult the *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (7th edition)* or <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/05/>].

- Notes:** Contestants may make notes during the preparation time, but the use of notes, cards, briefs or other aids is prohibited during the speech.
- Time:** The time limit in both Extemporaneous Speaking events is seven minutes with a 30-second “grace period. “If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
- Recuse:** Contestants may not leave the preparation area until dismissed by the Extemp proctor. Consultation with any person other than the Extemp proctor between the time of drawing and time of speaking is prohibited.
- Cross-Examination:** Each district has the autonomy to determine whether cross-examination will be used in the final round of Extemporaneous Speaking events at the district tournament. The National Tournament will utilize an open-cross examination period of two minutes for both the semifinal and final rounds. If cross-examination is used, the district must use the National Tournament final round format. The decision of the District Committee is final.
Procedure: Each speaker shall be assigned a speaker order position. Drawing shall take place at 12-minute intervals. Thirty minutes after speaker first has drawn, speakers first and last shall enter the contest room. Speaker first shall give a speech and speaker last shall listen and may take notes. At the conclusion of speaker first's speech, speaker last shall question speaker first for two minutes. Speaker last shall return to the prep room and speaker first shall stay and

question speaker second. Speaker second will question speaker third, etc. Unless it is unavoidable, students from the same school shall not cross-examine one another. Speaker order should be adjusted accordingly.

10. **Observation:** Students in Extemporaneous Speaking are encouraged, but not required, to stay and watch the remaining speakers after they deliver their speech. Students who are double entered may be able to observe as time permits.

PREVIOUS GUIDELINES for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Extemporaneous Speaking

These rules will no longer be used at the National Tournament beginning in 2020. If the district tournament is held in person, districts may choose to use these guidelines, provided 60 days advance notice is given to the district. If a district tournament does not state otherwise, the New Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Extemporaneous Speaking will govern their contest.

The use of laptop computers in Extemporaneous Speaking is permitted.

1. Extemporaneous Speaking contestants may make use of electronic retrieval devices to store and to retrieve their subject files at tournaments (district or national). Students can retrieve extemporaneous files to read, but cannot write speeches or organize their thoughts on the computers. **This rule in no way prevents students from still utilizing traditional paper copy files to enable the competitor to successfully compete in Extemporaneous Speaking. The Association takes no position on which form of file storage is preferable for use at tournaments (district or national).**
2. The use of electronic retrieval devices at the district competition will be the autonomous decision of each individual district committee.
3. Electronic retrieval devices are defined as laptop computers, netbooks, iPads, or other portable electronic retrieval equipment. Secondary devices such as flash drives or external hard drives are allowed as well. **Cell phones or smart phones are prohibited from being used while preparing or before speaking at tournaments (district or national).**
4. **Source Materials:** Students may consult published books, periodical articles, newspaper articles, think tank articles, government reports or journal articles saved on their electronic retrieval device **or present in hard copy form** provided:
 - a. There are no notations made within or on the saved article other than citation information.
 - b. Any highlighting or underlining of the articles is done in only one color within each article. Bolding, italicizing, or any other manipulation of the original text of sources (other than highlighting or underlining as previously stipulated) is prohibited.
5. No other source materials will be allowed in the Extemporaneous prep room other than stated above. Pre-written Extemporaneous speeches, handbooks, briefs or outlines are prohibited from the prep room, **whether stored electronically or present in hard copy form.**
6. **Power Source:** Power plugs or outlets may not be used in the prep room at any time. All computers used in the prep room must be battery operated at all times.
7. Competitors are responsible for making certain their electronic retrieval devices are fully charged at the start of each competition day and for proper power management ensuring that their device remains functional throughout the competition day. Contestants may not use external power sources in the prep room, such as wall outlets and/or extension cords.
8. **Internet:** Extemporaneous Speaking contestants shall not access the internet or communicate electronically with any other individual while in the prep room at any Association tournament (district or national). All computers must comply with the following provisions:
 - a. Computers equipped with removable wireless cards must have the cards removed before the beginning of any round of competition. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disengage the equipment.
 - b. Computers with built-in wireless capability may be used only if the wireless capability is disabled. It is the responsibility of the contestant to disable the equipment.

- c. Wired connections (Ethernet or phone) during rounds of competition are not permitted.
 - d. Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information from any source (coaches or assistants included) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Internet access, use of e-mail, instant messaging, or other means of receiving information from sources inside or outside of the competition room are prohibited.
 - e. **Penalty:** Contestants found to have violated provisions i through iii above will be ranked last in the round and receive zero points. Contestants found to have violated provision iv (above) will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all round credits and points. At district tournaments, the district committee will make the final decision concerning disqualification. In case of a serious dispute or critical question, the acting tournament referee (representing the national office) may be contacted for a ruling.
9. **Liability:** Extemporaneous Speaking competitors accept full responsibility for the safety and security of their electronic retrieval devices throughout the entire course of any Association tournament (district or national). *The Association may put stickers and/or tape on computers to ensure they are not opened or used, or to ensure appropriate owners take their own machines. The Association does not assume any liability for the computers. Students are welcome to use Kensington locks or other such devices to secure their computers in the prep room. Students, parents, and coaches should be aware that the students are bringing and using the computers at their own risk. The Association is not responsible for lost, stolen, or broken computers.*
10. **File Monitoring:** The Association retains the right to view and search any electronic retrieval devices to ensure compliance with any and all rules at any Association tournament (district or national).
11. Devices should be muted in the prep room. Contestants should not play games or engage in other distracting activities on their electronic devices in the prep room. Tournament officials may ask a student to power-off the device if it becomes distracting.
12. Students from the same school may share computers during preparation. However, communication among contestants during preparation time is strictly prohibited.



Contestants with laptops are responsible for providing sufficient battery power. No electrical power will be supplied by the tournament, and contestants may not plug in to outlets in the Extemp prep area.

NEW GUIDELINES for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Extemporaneous Speaking

These rules will be used at the National Tournament beginning in 2020. These rules are required for any district tournament whose debate events are held online. If a district tournament does not state otherwise, these guidelines will govern their contest.

- A. **Preparation:** As soon as a question is chosen, the contestant will prepare a speech without consultation and without references to prepared notes. Students may consult published books, magazines, newspapers and journals or articles, including internet enabled devices either used in the draw or those materials published from internet sources, provided:
1. They are originals or copies of whole pages.
 2. Provided those originals or copies are uncut.
 3. There is no written material on that original or copy other than citation information.
 4. Topical index without annotation may be present.

5. Files stored either on a computer or electronic device hard drive or cloud storage system. All files in this format must meet the same guidelines as printed sources.
 6. Active research from the internet during the round that meets the established criteria found in the “Guidelines for Use of Internet Enabled Devices.”
- B. No other material will be allowed in the Extemp prep room other than stated above. Extemp speeches, handbooks, briefs and outlines, including those stored on cloud storage systems or published on websites created for that purpose, are prohibited from the Extemp prep room. Students may not use the internet to gain help from coaches, other students, or any person, such that it would prevent the speech from being the original work of the competitor. Students are prohibited from accessing outlines and speeches that have been written prior to their draw time. Underlining or highlighting in Extemp will be allowed if done in only one color on each article or copy. **Electronic device use must comply with the “Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Debate Events.”** Printed copies of information from online computer services may be used. Electronically retrieved evidence used in any Association Extemp competition must conform to the same citation standards as evidence used in debate events as described on p. 27 of the Unified Manual.

Supplemental Event Rules

Extemporaneous Commentary

1. **Topics:** The tournament director shall obtain a list of topics phrased for contest use, based on subjects announced on the Association’s website on May 1. The contents of the list shall not be disclosed except as contestants draw topics therefrom.
2. **Drawing:** Twenty minutes before the round is to begin, the first speaker shall draw three topics, choose one, and return the other two. The other contestants shall draw in like manner, in the order of speaking, at intervals of six minutes. The same list of topics shall be used for the drawing by each section. A different topic area will be chosen each round.
3. **Preparation:** As soon as a topic is chosen, the contestant shall withdraw and prepare a speech without consultation and without references to prepared notes. Students may consult published books, magazines, newspapers and journals or articles therefrom, provided:
 - a. They are originals or photocopies of originals.
 - b. Original articles or copies are intact and uncut.
 - c. No written material is on originals or copies.
 - d. Topical index without annotation is allowed.

No other material shall be allowed in the Commentary prep room other than stated above. Speeches, handbooks, briefs, and outlines shall be barred from the prep room. Underlining or highlighting will be allowed if done in only one color on each article or copy. Source citations of such materials must meet MLA standards.

Use of Internet-Enabled Devices at Nationals: The use of internet-enabled devices is permitted in Extemporaneous Commentary at the National Tournament. Device use must comply with the “New Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Extemporaneous Speaking.”

4. **Recusal:** A contestant may not leave the prep area without first checking out with the proctor.
5. **Notes:** No notes are allowed during presentation.
6. **Time:** The maximum time limit is 5 minutes with a 30-second “grace period.” If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
7. **Presentation:** The commentary **must** be delivered seated behind a table or desk.

Prose and Poetry

1. **Prose:** Prose expresses thought through language recorded in sentences and paragraphs: fiction (short stories, novels) and non-fiction (articles, essays, journals, biographies).
2. **Poetry:** Poetry is writing which expresses ideas, experience, or emotion through the creative arrangement of words according to their sound, their rhythm, their meaning. Poetry may rely on verse and stanza form.
3. **Selections: Only published, printed works may be used, unless the works meet the Interpretation Rules (p. 17-18) for PDFs, e-books, and online material.** No plays or other dramatic materials may be used. In Supplemental Prose, if the source is an anthology collection of short stories or novels, each selection of literature is independent and only one selection can be used, even if it is from the same author. In Supplemental Poetry, selections must be cuttings from a single source. If an anthology collection of poems is used as the single source, the cutting may incorporate multiple poems by an author or a variety of authors.

4. **Reuse:** In the events of Supplemental Prose and Poetry, a student may not use the same source they used in the main events of Duo, Dramatic, Humorous, or Program Oral Interpretation or Supplemental Prose or Poetry at any district or national Association tournament. In the event of Supplemental Poetry, if the source is an anthology collection of poems, the same anthology may be used; however, the same poems performed in a previous district or national Association tournament in the main events of Duo, Dramatic, Humorous, Program Oral Interpretation, or Supplemental Poetry, may not be used. In the event of Supplemental Prose, if the source is an anthology collection of short stories or novels, the same anthology may be used; however, the same selection performed in a previous district or national Association tournament in the main events of Duo, Dramatic, Humorous, Program Oral Interpretation, or Supplemental Prose, may not be used. See general interpretation rules for additional guidance.
5. **Time:** The maximum time limit is 5 minutes with a 30-second “grace period.” If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
6. **Presentation:** Performances must be from a manuscript (which may be in a folder). Reading from a book or magazine is not permitted.

Extemporaneous Debate

1. **Resolutions:** Tournament officials will post the resolution that will be debated for each round 30 minutes prior to the start of flight A.
2. **Sides:** Contestants will be assigned sides by the tab room.
3. **Evidence:** Students may conduct research prior to the debate and use authoritative references within their speeches, but are not required to do so. Students may use the internet to conduct research between the posting of the topic and the start of the debate. If using authoritative sources, students are expected to act in accordance with the Association’s “Evidence Rules for Policy, Public Forum, and Lincoln-Douglas Debate.”
4. **Expectations of Debaters:** Contestants must debate the topic that was assigned for the debate round. Students may use materials they create during the preparation time before their rounds, including but not limited to research they have completed, pre-written blocks, and flows. Contestants should directly clash with their opposition in the rebuttal speeches and provide clear organizational schemes throughout the debate.
5. **Expectations of Judges:** Judges should decide the round as it is debated, not based on their personal beliefs.
6. **Structure of the Round:** All speeches are two minutes in length and all speech times are protected; a speaker may not be interrupted by the other speaker or by the judge. The Proposition debater must affirm the resolution by presenting and defending a sufficient case for that resolution. The Opposition debater must oppose the resolution and/or the Proposition debater’s case.

Proposition Constructive	2 Minutes
Cross-Examination of Proposition	1 Minute
Opposition Constructive	2 Minutes
Cross-Examination of Opposition	1 Minute
Mandatory Prep Time	1 Minute
Proposition Rebuttal	2 Minutes
Opposition Rebuttal	2 Minutes
Mandatory Prep Time	1 Minute
Proposition Rebuttal	2 Minutes
Opposition Rebuttal	2 Minutes

7. **Decisions:** At the conclusion of the round, the judge(s) will determine which debater won the round. Judges will not make any oral or written comments to the debaters. Ballots will not be returned to the debaters.

Expository

1. **Purpose:** Expository speeches are original compositions of the contestant. The Expository speech is a speech to inform, not a performance. It should describe, clarify, illustrate, or define an object, idea, concept, or process. A fabricated topic/subject may not be used. In Expository, a student may not use any portion of their original oration or informative speech entered at any district or national Association tournament.
2. **Time:** The maximum time limit is 5 minutes with a 30-second “grace period.” If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.
3. **Aids:** No note cards, audio and/or visual aids are allowed. NO animals or other person(s) may be used as aids or aides. Items of dress put on and removed during the course of the presentation are considered visual aids and may not be part of the contestant's presentation.

Impromptu

1. **Topics:** Topics will include proverbs, abstract words, events, quotations, and famous people.
2. **Drawing:** A judge in each section/room shall be provided an envelope containing a uniform set of topics, with a different subject area used for each round. Once the first speaker is called, the other speakers shall leave the room, and wait outside the door. Each speaker will draw three topics, choose one, and return the other two to the envelope.
3. **Preparation and Delivery:** The speaker has seven minutes in which to prepare a response and present a speech without consultation of prepared notes. Students may consult published books, magazines, newspapers and journals or articles therefrom, provided:
 - a. They are originals or photocopies of originals.
 - b. That original article or copy is intact and uncut.
 - c. There is no written material on original or copy.
 - d. Topical index without annotation is allowed.
4. No other material shall be allowed in the room other than stated above. Speeches, handbooks, briefs, and outlines shall be barred. Underlining or highlighting in materials will be allowed if done in one color on each article or copy. No electronic retrieval device may be used, but printed materials from online computer services may be used.
5. **Recuse:** Once a speaker has spoken, they may listen to other speakers in that round.
6. **Notes:** No notes shall be used during presentation.
7. **Time:** The maximum time limit is 7 minutes with a 30-second “grace period,” which includes both preparation *and* speaking. If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge’s discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.

Storytelling

1. A single published, printed story, anecdote, tale, myth, or legend must be *retold* without notes or props. Any theme/topic area may be used.
2. **Time:** The maximum time limit is 5 minutes with a 30-second “grace period.” If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student has gone beyond the grace period. Should a student go beyond the grace period, the

student may not be ranked 1st. There is no other prescribed penalty for going over the grace period. The ranking is up to each individual judge's discretion. Judges who choose to time are to use accurate (stopwatch function) timing devices. No minimum time is mandated.

3. The student may not tell a story they have used previously in any Association tournaments (district or national).
4. The delivery must be extempore, not read. No book or script may be used. The story may be delivered standing or seated.
5. Gestures, pantomime and characterization, may be used with restraint but the focus must be on the narrative.
6. The retelling must be true to the original tale. The contestant may *not* add original material or materially change the content of the story.

USA World Schools Debate Invitational

World Schools Debate features a dynamic format combining the concepts of “prepared” topics with “impromptu” topics, encouraging debaters to focus on specified issues rather than debate theory or procedural arguments. This highly interactive style of debate allows debaters to engage each other, even during speeches. This challenging format requires good teamwork and in-depth quality argumentation.

Please consult the **2020-2021 USA World Schools Debate Invitational Manual** for official debate rules, procedures, and protocols governing this event.

SECTION 3: District Tournament Operations Manual

The National Speech & Debate Association is committed to providing every student with the opportunity to qualify for the National Tournament in a fair and impartial manner. When running the district tournament, due diligence must be made to ensure fairness and avoid any perception of impropriety. The Board of Directors has established and approved these procedures for all district tournaments. The Executive Director must approve specific exceptions to these rules in writing. Each competitive event is governed by the rules established in the Event Rules Manual. During each tournament, an ombudsperson is available through the national office to adjudicate disputes regarding these rules. Please contact the national office to identify who your ombudsperson will be as well as to clarify any of the rules or procedures regarding district tournament operations.

For questions not answered here, please contact the national office at info@speechanddebate.org or call (920) 748-6206.

Note: In 2020, the Board of Directors voted to make the Congressional Debate pilot qualification rules the permanent set of rules governing districts. During the 2020-2021 school year, the NSDA will continue to pilot an alternative district qualification system for speech and debate featuring streamlined rules that, among other changes, eliminate the traditional up/down system. District tournaments may choose to use the pilot rules, provided 60 days advance notice is given to the district. Districts may opt in to run the pilot debate method and/or pilot speech method. Districts may choose to run one, both, or none of these pilot methods. To opt in, district chairs will select that they will run the pilot(s) on their “District Dates Form” on Tabroom.com by November 30, 2020. Please refer to the separate document titled “District Tournament Pilot Speech and Debate Manual” for additional information. You can also visit www.speechanddebate.org/pilot-district-qualification-method to learn more. The pilot qualification rules in speech and debate will permanently become the sole set of rules governing district tournaments in 2021-2022.

Planning the District Tournament

The district chair, in consultation with the District Committee and members of the district, will determine the date, time, and place of the district contest. This information and any changes to it must be reported to the national office immediately.

Guidelines for Scheduling

- If any part of the district tournament series will occur before December 31, the District Committee must officially register all tournament dates with the national office by **October 31** of the competition season. If all parts of the district tournament series will occur after January 1, the District Committee must officially register all tournament dates with the national office by **November 30** of the competition season.
- **A district tournament may not be held after May 1. No part of a district contest may begin on or after May 1.**
- The date should be determined after considering the interscholastic calendar so as to avoid conflict with state contests, major school events, and college entrance examinations, if possible.
- The dates or host locations are made by a vote of the chapter schools or the District Committee, rather than by the chair alone.
- If necessary, multiple weeks or weekends may be used.
- Site logistics (room access, judges, and cooperative hosts) should be prioritized over a centralized location or rotation.
- Non-district qualifying contests may be held at the same location or at the same time as the district qualifying contests. The discretion to create additional competition opportunities is the autonomous decision of the District Committee. However, any additions may not result in the limiting access of competitors to the district competition participation.
- No round may start after 9:30 p.m. (Extemp round after 9:45 p.m.) unless it is the final day of the tournament.
- At least three rounds must be held in all contests.

Online Registration and Tabulation: Tabroom.com or SpeechWire

All NSDA districts will be required to use either Tabroom.com or SpeechWire for the registration and tabulation of their NSDA district tournament, including Congress. The selected software must be used for all events of the district tournament series, e.g. a district is not permitted to use Tabroom.com for debate and SpeechWire for speech. Results from tournaments that do not use the permitted software will not be accepted.

Tournament Roles and Responsibilities

Tournament Officials

- **District Chair:** The chair exercises general supervision over the tournament. The chair may or may not work one of the other specified tournament roles. The chair should be available for consultation and give assistance where necessary. The chair must have a mastery of this manual as well as understand each part of the tournament process.
- **District Committee Member:** As individuals, committee members should take major assignments in tournament operations. As a committee, they adjudicate disputes, protests, and interpretations of rules. If a committee member's school is involved in a dispute, another party appointed by the committee may serve in this capacity.
- **District Coaches:** The chair and committee should work to make the operation of the tournament a community experience. Distributing leadership beyond just the committee would assist in this endeavor.

Suggested Tournament Roles

- **Registration Coordinator:** oversees the on-site registration process, accepts outstanding payments from schools, and communicates with tab staff regarding dropped entries.

- **Ballot Collectors:** (two or three individuals) collect ballots after a judge adjudicates a round. They should check over the entire ballot to ensure it's filled out properly, is easy to read for the tab station, and appears to be a constructive ballot that will help students.
- **Ballot Sorters:** oversee the scanning/copying and stuffing or posting of ballots for schools to see their judge feedback and results after the tournament.
- **Debate Coordinators and Assistants:** oversee the pairing of rounds, entering of results, and judge assignments for one or more of the following: Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Public Forum Debate, Policy Debate, Big Questions Debate, and World Schools Debate.
- **Individual Events Coordinator and Assistants:** oversee the pairing of rounds, entering of results, and judge assignments for one or more of the following: Original Oratory, Dramatic Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, Duo Interpretation, Program Oral Interpretation, Informative Speaking, United States Extemporaneous Speaking, and International Extemporaneous Speaking.
- **Congress Coordinators and Assistants:** oversee the pairing of sessions, entering of results, and judge assignments for Congressional Debate.
- **Judge Training:** checks in volunteer or hired judges, explains events, offers supplemental materials, and ensures judges are prepared and informed. This role could be fulfilled on site or through an online training in advance.
- **Logistics Coordinator:** hosts the tournament, oversees hospitality, and is responsible for competition spaces.
- **Sweepstakes Coordinator and Assistant:** If your tournament offers sweepstakes awards, these individuals can calculate the winners. They will take your parameters (rules/formula) and then create an excel spreadsheet to keep track of the information. Alternatively, they may be responsible for pulling the relevant reports from an approved software that calculates sweepstakes.
- **Double Entry/Qualifier Auditor:** If your tournament allows for double entry, this individual can calculate qualifiers based off the Single Entry Letter of Intent.
- **Extemp Prep Coordinator and Assistant:** oversee the Extemp prep/draw process and work to ensure students are preparing within the guidelines of the rules governing the tournament.
- **Auditors:** After every round, two people should check the work of the tab stations. They should check to be sure the wins/losses, points, ranks, etc. were entered properly into the tabulation software.
- **Tab Room Director:** oversees the entire tabulation room, helps answer questions, is aware of the master schedule and checks in with tab stations to ensure they're on pace, ensures the audits are done properly, and makes changes as necessary based upon circumstances of the tournament.
- **New Coach Liaison:** serves as a resource for coaches attending districts for the first time; answers questions.

NOTE: The district chair and committee may determine that additional personnel are necessary for the administration of the tournament and assign additional roles, accordingly.

Standards for Holding a District Qualifying Tournament

District Eligibility

1. **Minimum Schools Requirement:** Any district that attained at least 12 *charter* chapters with paid membership, 20 chapters of **any type** with paid membership, 200 new members, or over 700 new degrees in the prior school year is allowed to hold a district qualifying tournament series. If a district does not meet this minimum requirement, it may

not hold a tournament series unless it is on a pre-approved growth plan due to realignment or a district split.

However, schools in the district may petition to attend a qualifying tournament in a contiguous district. Schools must attend the entire district tournament series (inclusive of debate, speech and congress) in their own district.

2. **Minimum Entries Requirement:** If a particular speech or debate event has fewer than four entries, regardless of the district’s qualification level, no qualifiers are allowed in that event. An entry must participate in at least one round (or in the case of Congressional Debate, must give at least one speech) in order to count as an entry.
3. **Minimum School Entry Requirement:** In order to qualify entries in a speech or debate event to the National Tournament, a minimum of two schools must have entries that participate in the event. (See Congressional Debate Exception below.)
4. **Congressional Debate Exception:** The number of Senate and House qualifiers is independent of all other district tournament benchmark standards.

A. Senate

A district with eight (8) or more schools represented in the **Senate** will qualify two (2) senators to the National Senate. If fewer than eight (8) schools are represented, **no Senate may be seated**; however, a district may still conduct a House with sufficient entries.

B. House of Representatives

A minimum of 16 students must be represented in the House. Refer to the chart below to determine number of **House** chambers, final round requirements, and advancement to the National House (note that the number of students in the far left column is based on *participation*—speaking or presiding at least once).

National Tournament Qualification Requirements for House

Participating Students	Qualifiers
16-29	2
30-58	4
59-87	6
88-116	7
117-145	8
146+	9

Non-qualifying (non-District Congress) Houses may also be held for regular merit points. No more than nine (9) students from a district may qualify to the National House of Representatives.

Contestants qualify to the National House of Representatives according to the number of actual participants in each chamber (number of students giving at least one speech). No district shall state or imply that if a student qualified in a previous event, that student may not enter the District Congress or imply that a student previously qualified cannot qualify for the National Congress.

Establishing Chamber Sizes

A district must have a minimum of 16 competitors to seat a House of Representatives. Districts may choose their chamber size within the approved range. For a district tournament held online, chambers must be between 8 and 15 students. For in-person district tournament events, chambers must be between 8 and 29 students. This applies to preliminary chambers and elimination round chambers.

For more information, please consult the “Running the District Congressional Debate Tournament » National Qualification” section of this manual.

National Qualification Levels

Note: These are the revised entry requirements for the online 2021 National Tournament ONLY.

National Qualification: Level 1

- 1.1 Qualification Level 1 is reserved for districts on a growth plan due to realignment or district creation. A district that meets the minimum schools and entries requirements is allowed **two entries** to the National Tournament per speech and debate event, as long as the event meets the four-entry minimum. Also, for Level 1 districts:
- 1.1.1 If there are at least **16 entries in an event**, that event is allowed 3 qualifiers.
 - 1.1.2 If there are at least **32 entries in an event**, that event is allowed 4 qualifiers.

National Qualification: Level 2

- 2.1 A district meeting the minimum district standard in the previous school year is allowed **two** entries to the National Tournament per speech and debate event, as long the event meets the four-entry minimum:
- 2.1.1 Maintain **12** or more **charter** chapters with paid membership in the previous school year.
 - 2.1.2 Maintain **20** or more chapters of any type with paid membership in the previous school year.
 - 2.1.3 **200** new individual student memberships as a district in the previous school year.
 - 2.1.4 **700** or more new degrees from schools with paid membership during the previous school year.
- 2.2 If the district qualifies for Level 2 under one of the above criteria, that district may:
- 2.2.1 Earn a third qualifier in any event with **10 entries**.
 - 2.2.2 Earn a fourth qualifier in any event with **20 entries**.

National Qualification: Level 3

- 3.1 A district that meets the minimum district standard in the previous school year is allowed **four entries** to the National Tournament in **every** speech and debate event as long as at least **10 entries** in each event compete in at least one round; if that minimum is not met by a particular event, only two entries shall be granted in that event:
- 3.1.1 **24** or more charter chapters with paid membership in the previous school year.
 - 3.1.2 **40** or more chapters of any type with paid membership in the previous school year.
 - 3.1.3 **400** new individual student memberships as a district in the previous school year.
 - 3.1.4 **1400** or more new degrees from schools with paid membership during the previous school year.

National Qualifying Level	Qualifiers to the National Tournament for 2021 ONLY – Entries Required per Event		
	2 Qualifiers	3 Qualifiers	4 Qualifiers
Level 1	4 entries	16 entries	32 entries
Level 2	4 entries	10 entries	20 entries
Level 3	4 entries	N/A	10 entries

As of 2019-2020, “entries” refers to both partner and solo entries in the district tournament.

Supplemental Event Entry for 2021 National Tournament

For the 2021 National Tournament only, every member school that participates in the district tournament series will have the opportunity to enter up to two non-qualifying students in supplemental events at the online 2021 National Tournament. These students must have attended the district tournament but not earned qualification in any event. This applies to every school that participated in the district tournament, regardless of whether they qualified students to the National Tournament, and it only applies to the 2021 National Tournament. If a student is chosen as one of the two non-qualifying students for their school that enters in supplemental events and then moves up from an alternate slot to qualify in a main event, their school may move an additional non-qualifying student into supplemental events.

Auto-Qualification

In any given year at the National Tournament, any student who places in the top 14 in any main event (or top 4 of Big Questions or top 8 of World Schools Debate), has not completed more than six semesters of high school, and is still enrolled in high school (as a student in good standing) may enter the following year’s National Tournament in the same solo event or in the same team event with the same partner. The district will permit an auto-qualified student to participate in the district contest and to double enter as specified by the district’s uniform double-entry policies. No rule regarding double entry may be violated by auto-qualification. The entry must indicate acceptance of the auto-qualification through their *Single Entry Letter of Intent* prior to its district competition. The district chair should notify the national office of acceptance of the auto-qualification in reporting district results. A student who accepts auto-qualification may double-enter based on rules above but must sign the single letter of intent, which is binding, in favor of the event of their auto-qualification. If the entry signs the single letter of intent and rejects auto-qualification, the results of the district contest are binding.

NOTE: An entry that accepts auto-qualification is above and beyond the number of qualifiers a district may earn as per the Level 1-3 requirements above, whether or not the entry participates in the current year’s district tournament series. However, an auto-qualifier may participate and help a district meet its quota requirements.

Registering for the District Tournament

The district chair must notify chapter schools of tournament dates and locations in a timely manner as well as communicate requirements for entry. Each school is responsible for ensuring all rules of entry are met prior to arriving at the tournament site.

School Eligibility and Entry Limits

An entry is defined as a registered unit in any event. In a partnership event (Policy Debate, Public Forum Debate, or Duo Interpretation), each team is one entry. A student who is double entered counts as two entries. Two students in a partnership event who both double enter (in solo events) are counted as three entries.

1. **Allotment:** The number of entries a school is permitted to enter is based upon the number of **paid** members and degrees on record with the national office prior to the district tournament entry deadline set by the District Committee. Each registration deadline must be set to begin no earlier than seven days (168 hours) prior and end no later than one day (24 hours) prior to on-site registration of the event. Districts must establish their entry deadlines for all events in their district tournament series at least 60 days prior to the start of series. If multiple dates are used, allotment is assessed prior to each contest, subtracting entries that may have been used in a prior contest. Current school strength can be found on the School Profile page of the Association website. Please refer to the *High School Unified Manual* to determine how members and degrees are calculated. (The following entry limits were revised in 2016-2017 to account for the additions of POI and INF as main events.) To download our helpful guide for understanding your team's strength and why it matters, visit www.speechanddebate.org/what-is-strength.

Members and Degrees (Strength)	Speech, Lincoln-Douglas, Policy, and Public Forum Entries Allowed
1-15	4
16-20	6
21-30	10
31-40	12
41-50	15
51-60	16
61-70	18
71-80	21
81-90	23
91-100	24
101-120	27
121-140	29
141-160	32
161-180	33
181-200	34
201-230	35
231-260	37
261-300	38
301-350	39
351-400	40
401-500	42
501-600	43
601 +	44

Members and Degrees (Strength)	Senate Entries Allowed	House Entries Allowed
1-20	2	2
21-35	2	3
36-55	2	4
56-75	2	5
76-100	2	6
101-150	2	7
151-200	2	8
201-250	2	9
251-300	2	10
301-350	2	11
351-400	2	12
401 +	2	13

View a team's strength on the School Profile page:

The screenshot shows the 'School Profile' page on the NSDA website. On the left is a navigation menu with sections for 'Reports', 'Schools', and 'Quick Links'. The 'Schools' section is active, and 'School Profile' is selected. The main content area displays various school information fields. The 'Strength' field is highlighted with a red arrow and shows a value of 108. Other fields include Primary Advisor, School Level, District, NSDA #, NCES #, Active, Resource Package, Charter, Autobill 25+ pts, Balance, Degrees This Year, and Degrees Last Year.

2. **Entry Limit per Event:** Each school may enter up to four entries in each event. Congress uses a separate formula for entry limits. See the Senate/House chart above under “Allotment.”
3. **Penalty for Excess Entry:** The District Committee must not permit excess entry. If a school enters in excess of its allotment, it forfeits all coaching credit points and all sweepstakes points for the entire tournament as well as a penalty of ten trophy points. If the excess entries create additional qualifiers, the District may face penalties resulting in loss of qualifiers.
4. **Bonus Entries:** Any school that registers two entries in every category that actually compete (by participating in at least one round) in the district tournament will be permitted to register two additional entries in the tournament. However, not more than four entries are permitted in each event.
5. **Registration:** Tournament entry must be completed online using The Joy of Tournaments or Tabroom.com—including downloading and printing the official form, obtaining necessary signatures, and submitting it to the district chair. Registration must be completed prior to the district tournament entry deadline set by the District Committee.
 - A. The district may choose to impose a late fee of \$5 per day, or \$5 per entry, whichever is less.
 - B. All NSDA districts may allow substitutions with eligible student competitors up to the conclusion of the on-site registration.
 - C. Any substitutions in district entries after the close of registration must be approved by the district chair.
 - D. The district chair will accept incomplete registrations and notify the school that their registration is incomplete. If registration remains incomplete at the start of the contest, the affected students will be ineligible to participate.
 - E. All school fees and outstanding invoices must be paid prior to the beginning of the tournament. The district chair receives a list of outstanding balances prior to the tournament and should communicate this information to each school. The chair will accept payment at the time of registration, which will be sent to the national office along with other required tournament information. If outstanding fees are not paid prior to the start of the contest, the school and its students are ineligible to participate. District chairs must call a tournament official before allowing an unpaid school to compete or its results will be invalid.

Student Eligibility and Requirements

1. **National Speech & Debate Association Membership:** Only Association **paid** members in good standing are permitted to participate in the district tournament. It is the affirmative duty of each coach to provide proof of Association membership and proof of website registration for each new student member entered in the district contest. The District Committee must disqualify any non-member student from competition. Beginning with the 2014-2015 school year, only students officially registered as a member user on the organization website (www.speechanddebate.org) may compete in district competition. Further, only students who are registered will count toward a school’s allotment.
 - A. Students must be paid members prior to the district tournament entry deadline set by the District Committee. All necessary fees must be submitted to the national office by this deadline.
 - B. A student may not have attended a secondary school more than nine semesters and must meet the age/eligibility requirements of their state activities association.
 - C. **Students must be officially registered as a member user with a valid, unique email address on the organization website.**
 - D. **Students must have a minimum of 25 merit points, at least 10 of which were gained in interscholastic contests.**
2. **Community Standards:** Prior to registering online for the district contest, all coaches are required to confirm the following statement: “I certify that we, the coach(es), student(s), administrator(s) directly affiliated with our NSDA chapter, have agreed that the student performance(s) reflect(s) our school standards in terms of subject matter, language, and use of gesture.”
3. **Double Entry Policy**

- A. No student may double enter at the National Tournament. Therefore, a *Single Entry Letter of Intent* must be filed with the district chair indicating the event in which the student will compete at the National Tournament, should they qualify. This letter must be on file before the student competes in the second event.
- B. The District Committee may limit entry to one event in the district tournament. The district may choose to permit double entry under the following guidelines:
 - 1) **Congressional Debate Exception:** Students who double enter within the speech and debate district tournament are still eligible to compete in the District Congress.
 - 2) **No Triple Entry:** The District Committee is allowed autonomy in terms of its double entry policy. However, triple entry is not permitted unless one of the events is Congressional Debate and/or Big Questions. Big Questions does not count against a student's entry limits, so a student may enter two main events, Congressional Debate, and Big Questions, schedule permitting. A student who enters more than two of the following events will forfeit National Tournament entry, district points, and trophy points: Humorous Interpretation, Dramatic Interpretation, Duo Interpretation, Program Oral Interpretation, Informative Speaking, Original Oratory, United States Extemporaneous Speaking, International Extemporaneous Speaking, Policy Debate, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, and Public Forum Debate. No student may triple enter the immediate aforementioned events even if portions of the tournament occur on different dates or different times of the year or if they have failed to qualify in a previous event.
 - 3) **Qualifying in a Partnership Event:** If a student qualifies in a partnership event (Public Forum Debate, Policy Debate, or Duo Interpretation) and an individual event, the student must attend the National Tournament in the partnership event.
 - 4) **Partnership Events:** Students may only enter one partnership debate event (Policy Debate or Public Forum). Students may enter in one partnership debate event as partners and in Duo Interpretation as the same partnership. A student may not enter a partnership debate event and a Duo Interpretation with different partners **unless the two events are held on different weekends (see exceptions below)**.
 - 5) **Partnership Event Exception:** If two students qualify for the National Tournament in a partnership event and both individuals also qualify for the National Tournament in their respective individual events, the students may choose to enter the National Tournament in their individual events if indicated on their *Single Entry Letter of Intent*. If two students enter the district tournament in a partnership debate event and in Duo Interpretation (as the same partners) in which the two events occur on the same weekend, the students must choose one of the team events and both indicate the same preference on their respective *Single Entry Letter of Intent* prior to the beginning of the tournament in which the partnership would double qualify. If the partner debate event and the duo event do not occur on the same weekend, the school may forfeit its alternate position that resulted from the first competition, allowing new partnerships to be created. If the school wishes for the alternate status to be retained from the first competition, the same partnership has to be used when entering the next competition. If the first competition resulted in a qualification for nationals, those students are ineligible to enter a team event with different partners.
 - 6) **Individual Events:** A student who is double entered in two individual events must submit a *Single Entry Letter of Intent* indicating the event in which they will compete at the National Tournament, prior to the beginning of the tournament in which the individual would double qualify.
 - 7) **Denial of entry:** No student will be denied entry into an event or denied participation in the district tournament based on previous National Tournament qualification or performance unless that student is attempting to violate the above rules or has failed to submit a *Single Entry Letter of Intent*.
 - 8) **Penalty:** Violation of the above rules will result in disqualification from National Tournament entry.

3. Orations and Literary Material

- A. In interpretive events (Dramatic, Humorous, Duo, and Program Oral Interpretation), the same selection of literature entered at on-site registration should be used for the duration of the tournament.

- B. Oratory manuscripts must be available at all district tournament contests in the event of a protest. However, it shall be the choice of each individual District Committee whether or not to require these materials be submitted *prior* to the district contest. The script must identify quoted materials, state the number of quoted words, include a work cited page in APA or MLA format, and both the orator and the coach must attest by signature that the oration is the original work of the contestant.
 - C. All materials used are expected to meet the standards in the *High School Unified Manual*.
4. **Penalties:** An ineligible participant or one who uses ineligible material will not earn credit points, points toward tournament trophies, tournament awards, or National Tournament entry. A student who competes in the wrong contest section or against the wrong opponent, at no fault of their opponent or the tournament officials, will automatically receive last in the round or a loss for that round.

Online District Tournament Requirements

The following rules apply to any district tournaments that are held online. If there are any conflicts between the Online District Tournament Requirements and the rest of the District Tournament Operations Manual, refer to the Online District Tournament Requirements and reach out to the national office for assistance.

Online Requirement

All district tournaments in 2020-2021 must be held online unless special dispensation is received by the Executive Director for outstanding circumstances.

Rules for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices

The New Guidelines Surrounding Use of Internet-Enabled Devices for debate, Congress, and Extemp will be used at all 2020-2021 district tournaments that are held online. District tournaments held in person may choose whether to use the new or previous rules. The New Guidelines Surrounding Use of Internet-Enabled Devices for debate, Congress, and Extemp will also be used at the 2021 National Tournament.

Online Tournament Platforms and Software

Districts will be given autonomy over the online video conferencing platform they use to run their online tournament. All districts will still be required to use Tabroom.com or SpeechWire for the registration and tabulation of their tournament. SpeechWire only runs the pilot qualification rules. Districts will be responsible for any cost of an online video conferencing platform they choose to utilize.

Judge Instruction

Judges of all online district competitions must be given the following instruction. We recommend that tournaments put this language on the top of their online ballots.

“We are all influenced by implicit bias, or the stereotypes that unconsciously affect our decisions. When judging, our implicit biases negatively impact traditionally marginalized and disenfranchised students. Before writing comments or making a decision, please take a moment to reflect on any biases that may impact your decision making.

Please remember that the video quality of a student’s performance or speech may be impacted by lighting, internet, access to equipment, and other family members’ presence in the home. To ensure a more equitable experience for our participants, please be sure your decision-making process and comments are related only to the content and quality of the presentation or speech itself.”

Speech Events

Districts have the option to run their speech events asynchronously or synchronously. The exceptions are United States and International Extemporaneous Speaking, both of which must have their 30 minutes of preparation held live. Our recommendation is that districts attempt to hold their speech district tournaments synchronously if possible. Aside from Extemp and Duo Interpretation, districts must hold all of their speech events the same way; if a district does asynchronous speech, all speech events must be held asynchronously. For safety reasons, Duo Interpretation may be held asynchronously even if all other speech events are held live. Districts may choose to do a hybrid model of synchronous and asynchronous events as long as it is consistent across all events, with the exception of Extemp and Duo. For example, a district could require that all speech preliminary rounds are asynchronous and all speech elimination rounds are synchronous.

Students competing in speech events must follow these rules, used at the National Tournament, during asynchronous or synchronous performances. Rulings (answering questions or hearing protests) about this language will be made by the District Committee:

“Competitors may not use green screens, virtual backdrops, on-screen text, or professional equipment enhancements such as professional lighting kits or professional grade camera recording and audio devices during their performance in any event. Professional equipment includes items like softboxes or an auditorium’s lighting system; use of these items is not permitted. Backdrops of a solid color with no special markings may be used by competitors and judges.”

Asynchronous Speech Requirements

Students competing in asynchronous events must follow these rules, used at the National Tournament, while recording their performances. Rulings (answering questions or hearing protests) about this language will be made by the District Committee.

“Submissions or recordings may not be edited using any software; all submissions must be non-stop footage of the entire performance done through the permitted submission platform. The camera being used must remain stationary throughout the entire performance, and no zooming or panning is permitted. Other individuals may be present while filming, but audience interaction (laughing, applause, etc.) must not be included in the performance.”

If a district does speech asynchronously, they may create their own procedures for the following items. Procedures should be consistent across all speech events and communicated well in advance of their event. Districts are encouraged to consider issues of equity while creating their procedures, recognizing that students have different access to technology, quiet spaces, and internet:

- How students should record their performance. The recording platform used for the 2020 National Tournament (speeches.cloud) is an option that is available through Priten Shah at Classrooms.Cloud for a price.
- How students submit their performance, e.g. tabulation softwares may have features that allow coaches to put a link to student performances in their registration, students may upload their recording to a google form, etc.
- Timelines for students to submit their performances.
- Duration of a recording, i.e. whether the same student performance is judged throughout the entire tournament or whether students have the chance to upload a new recording at any point in the event.
- Judging procedure, e.g. you may choose to have judges gather with performers in a live video conferencing room so they can watch recorded performances together (like mains at the National Tournament), you can have judges adjudicate performances on their own time (like supps at the National Tournament), etc.

Duo Interpretation

Regardless of whether Duo Interpretation is held synchronously or asynchronously, districts must only allow one type of Duo to be performed at a district tournament. Districts may choose one of three options to hold Duo:

1. Synchronous competition where students perform live together in the same room
2. Asynchronous recordings where students perform live together in the same room
3. Asynchronous recordings where students submit split screen videos

For example, a district may not hold Duo asynchronously and allow some entries to submit split screen videos and other entries to perform together. District Committees should choose an option that is in line with the best interest of the students in their district.

Extemporaneous Speaking

Extemporaneous Speaking preparation must be held live; students must have 30 minutes to prepare a speech on a topic they just learned. After the 30 minutes of prep, students may either give their speeches live to a judge or record speeches to be judged asynchronously. We encourage districts to explore different options for holding Extemp draw live online and to choose the option that works best for them.

Debate Events (PF, LD, CX, BQ)

Debate events must be held live. Districts may conduct a coin flip where necessary in whatever manner they deem best; some tabulation softwares like Tabroom.com offer an automated coin flip option. As long as NSDA evidence rules are followed, districts may suggest different methods for evidence sharing throughout a debate, though no specific method may be mandated.

In partner events, partners may either compete together in the same room or from two different locations. Partners may share a device or use two separate devices. We recommend that all competitors follow local guidelines for social distancing at the time of the tournament.

Students competing in debate events must follow these rules. Rulings (answering questions or hearing protests) about this language will be made by the District Committee:

“Competitors may not use green screens, virtual backdrops, on-screen text, or professional equipment enhancements such as professional lighting kits or professional grade camera recording and audio devices during their performance in any event. Professional equipment includes items like softboxes or an auditorium’s lighting system; use of these items is not permitted. Backdrops of a solid color with no special markings may be used by competitors and judges.”

Running the District Debate Tournament

The following rules apply to Lincoln-Douglas, Policy, Public Forum, and Big Questions Debate events at the district tournament. The district tournament is a double elimination contest. Entries who receive their second loss are eliminated from the tournament.

General Rules and Instructions

1. **Starting Times:** No debate is valid if started after 9:30 p.m. unless it is the final day of the tournament.
2. **Minimum Rounds:** At least three rounds must be held in all contests.
3. **Number of Judges:** One or three judges may be used in the first two debate contest rounds (**even if there are eight entries or less**), as determined by the District Committee. When eight or fewer debate entries remain, three judges must be used. Any odd number of three or greater may be used for debate elimination and final rounds. Once multiple judges have been used, it is essential that the same number or higher be used for all subsequent rounds. All sections within the same event must use the same number of judges. College-age judges are permitted at the discretion of the District Committee. Current high school students may not judge any portion of the district tournament series.
4. **Fines:** If a judge fails to fulfill a judging assignment, a fine may be assessed at the discretion of the District Committee.
5. **Protest of Judges:** Judges assigned by the tournament committee are final unless protested before the beginning of the tournament. If a judge is added to the pool after the tournament begins, any protest must be made prior to the round in which that individual is assigned to judge. If protested, the District Committee will hear the protest, and its decision is final. If a member of the committee is involved in the protest, they should be recused.
6. **Judge Strikes:** The District Committee may permit a judge strike policy at the district tournament.
 - A. Districts are encouraged to solicit opinions of all schools in the district when determining whether a strike system will be used, and if so, what type of system. The decision of the District Committee is final.
 - B. If a District Committee chooses to implement a judge strike system, the chair must submit a complete description of the proposed strike procedure to the national office for the approval. The description must be approved at least seven days prior to the beginning of the tournament. Strike policy wordings should be sent to director@speechanddebate.org.
 - C. The system used must be maintained throughout the entire district tournament.
7. **Computer Usage:** Permission to use laptop computers in any event shall be the autonomous decision of the District Committee. Granting usage subjects debaters to the guidelines contained in the rules section of this manual.
8. **Forfeits:** Judges should notify the District Committee of a student who arrives to their round more than 15 minutes after the posted start time of the round. If there are multiple judges in the round, all must agree that the student was more than 15 minutes late. Debaters who are 15 minutes late forfeit the round, but the District Committee may waive the penalty. For a speech competitor, the District Committee may choose to drop each judge score in the round by two ranks. The judge(s) should not adjust the student's ranks themselves. The District Committee may waive the penalty.
9. **Disqualification:** In the case of a disqualification, all previous decisions will stand and no revision of decisions will occur **unless dictated by a specific protest procedure (e.g., evidence violation)**.
10. **Harassment and Discrimination.** Harassment and discrimination in any National Speech & Debate Association event will not be permitted. All district tournaments must follow the NSDA Harassment & Discrimination Policy. All districts are encouraged to create an Equity Office at their district tournament to respond to reported violations of this policy.
11. **Scouting:** Scouting is strongly discouraged.
12. **Disputes:** The District Committee or tournament committee appointed by it has the full power to adjudicate disputes or interpretation of rules but may not change the rules. The District Committee is authorized to determine how a rule is to be interpreted or applied in a specific situation. In case of a serious dispute or critical question of procedure, which the District Committee cannot resolve, the national office or acting tournament referee must be phoned for a ruling. Please consult the national office to determine the referee for your event.

Absolute Pairing Priorities

The following seven pairing priorities are absolute and control the pairing procedures described below:

1. Draw a bye if one is required. Draw the bye first, before pairing any other rounds.
 - See the “Drawing a Bye” section on p. 66.
2. Do not pair a school against itself unless they are:
 - A. The only two remaining undefeated entries, or 3 of 4 undefeated entries, or 4 of 5 undefeated entries.
 - B. The last two once-defeated entries.
 - C. The last two of three once-defeated entries and the other entry draws the bye.
 - D. A majority of the once-defeated after the bye is drawn and after the undefeated bracket has been paired.
3. Do not pair entries that have met before in the tournament.
 - *Exception:* Two entries who have met previously may meet again to avoid the same school meeting, or they may meet again if all remaining teams in that bracket have previously met.
4. Do not break brackets at any time. Undefeated entries are in one bracket and once-defeated entries are in another bracket. If there are an odd number of undefeated entries, then and only then, should a once-defeated be drawn up to meet an undefeated entry.
 - *Draw from the teams who are “due” the opposite side of the undefeated opponent they will face. In Public Forum, draw from all eligible undefeated teams.*
5. Entries in Policy and Lincoln-Douglas Debate (not Public Forum) who have debated an unequal number of affirmative and negative rounds are considered *due* the side they have debated the least. Side constraints cannot violate the priorities listed above that are substantially more important. When an entry has debated an equal number of affirmative and negative rounds, the team is considered eligible for either side in the next round. Side alteration from the previous round is **not a priority** and should not be considered in pairing. In Public Forum, no entry is *due* a side at any time.
6. During a specific round’s pairing procedure, once an entry has appropriately been drawn up to the undefeated bracket or has drawn the bye, that entry is no longer considered a part of the once-defeated bracket and **should not be considered** when pairing the once-defeated bracket. Never re-pull an entry from the once-defeated bracket once an entry has correctly been drawn up, even if that particular pull up creates a priority conflict in the once-defeated bracket.
7. In every Public Forum debate, sides will be determined by a coin flip between the teams, even if the teams have previously met.

Pairing Rounds One and Two

Both Tabroom.com and The Joy of Tournaments software are designed to randomly create preliminary round pairings for rounds one and two to meet the following constraints:

1. Seeding is not permitted in the preliminary rounds.
2. Unless the small number of entries or the random drawing of byes makes it unavoidable, no team should meet another team from its school, and no school should meet another school more than once.
3. In Policy and Lincoln-Douglas Debate, each entry should be assigned one affirmative and one negative round unless it draws a bye.
4. If necessary, a bye should be drawn but no school may receive two byes in rounds one and two.

*If preliminary rounds are manually assigned by cards, these constraints must be met.

It is the affirmative duty of tabulation staff to audit Tabroom.com and SpeechWire pairings to determine all pairing rules were followed.

Pairing Subsequent Rounds

An entry is an independent unit and will be paired and assigned sides based upon its own record. The opponents debated or sides debated by other teams from its school are irrelevant and must not be considered when pairing or assigning sides.

A. Drawing a Bye

1. All entries eligible for a bye must be included in the drawing of a bye.
2. Until three entries remain or drawing for a national qualifier, byes will first be drawn from entries losing to an entry who is still undefeated. If no entries have lost to an undefeated or the entries losing to an undefeated have also drawn a bye, a blind draw will take place among all once-defeated teams who have not drawn a bye.
3. No entry will have more than one bye until three entries remain. When three entries remain, the bye must go to the undefeated even if the entry has previously received a bye. If no entries are undefeated, draw the bye from all entries who have not previously drawn a bye.
4. An entry may not refuse a bye.

B. Pairing the Undefeated Bracket

The undefeated bracket takes priority over the once-defeated bracket once any eligible bye has been drawn. Once this bracket has been paired correctly based on the *Absolute Pairing Priorities* (above), it must not be adjusted or changed to eliminate conflicts in the once-defeated bracket.

NOTE: If a once-defeated entry is pulled up to create an Absolute Pairing Priorities conflict in the UNDEFEATED bracket and there are entries in the once-defeated bracket that can be drawn up to avoid this conflict, a new entry should be pulled up.

1. Pair undefeated entries against undefeated entries. *When viewing pairings on Joy of Tournaments, use the "Show Seeding" option to ensure that the undefeated entries are paired against undefeated entries.*
2. In Lincoln-Douglas and Policy Debate, ensure that Joy of Tournaments has properly paired the entries to ensure side equalization. Side alteration is never a priority, so this warning must be ignored.
 - A. If pairing manually, place cards of entries with more affirmative rounds (due negative in the next round), in a pile to the right. Place cards of the entries with more negative rounds (due affirmative in the next round) in a pile to the left. All entries who have an equal number of rounds (due either affirmative or negative) should be placed in a separate pile. If the piles are unequal, randomly draw from the pile of equal sides to create equal piles.
 - B. If there are an odd number of undefeated entries, draw up a once-defeated entry who is due to uphold the opposite side of the undefeated entry.
 - C. Shuffle and lay out cards of entries due affirmative into a column on the left side of the table. Shuffle and place the cards of the negative entries in a column to the right of the affirmative column, ensuring that the Absolute Pairing Priorities are met.
3. In Public Forum Debate, ensure that Joy of Tournaments has paired brackets properly and no absolute priority has been violated. Side alteration and equalization warnings must be ignored.
 - A. If pairing manually, shuffle all of the cards for the undefeated bracket and lay half in a column on the left and the remaining in a column on the right. If there are an odd number of undefeated teams, draw from the pile of eligible once-defeated teams.

C. Pairing the Once-Defeated Bracket

1. If necessary, check to see if the software selected a once-defeated entry to meet an undefeated. Unless absolutely unavoidable, ensure that the pull up into the undefeated bracket did not violate the Absolute Pairing Priorities.
2. At this point, the undefeated bracket is final and should not be altered for any reason. When using the software, be sure not to move an entry into or out of the undefeated bracket.
3. Follow the rules from the undefeated bracket for Lincoln-Douglas and Policy Debate as described in #2 above and for Public Forum in #3 above.

D. Determining National Qualifiers

1. If a district is eligible to send only one entry to the National Tournament, the qualifier is the final round winner.
2. If a district is eligible to send two entries:
 - A. The last two remaining entries are the qualifiers.
 - B. If three teams remain, one will draw a bye (which must go to the undefeated if there is one or to an entry who has not previously drawn a bye) and the other two entries debate. The bye and the winner are the qualifiers.
3. If a district is eligible to send three entries:
 - A. The last three remaining entries are the qualifiers.
 - B. If four entries remain and one is undefeated, all four entries will debate.
 - 1) If the undefeated loses, then three entries remain and are the qualifiers.
 - 2) If the undefeated wins, it and the other winning entry qualify. The two entries who lost to the qualifiers will debate to determine the third qualifier.
 - C. If four entries remain and there are no undefeated entries, all entries debate, and the two winners are two of the qualifiers. The two losing entries debate again to determine the third qualifier.
 - D. If five entries remain, a bye goes to the undefeated. If there is no undefeated entry, draw a bye from all entries who have not previously drawn a bye. The four remaining entries debate each other. The bye and the two winners are the qualifiers.
4. If a district is eligible to send four entries:
 - A. The last four remaining entries are the qualifiers.
 - B. If five entries remain, a bye goes to the undefeated and the other four entries debate each other. An undefeated entry should only receive the bye if it is the sole undefeated entry remaining. The bye and the two winners are three of the qualifiers. The two losing entries debate again to determine the fourth qualifier.
 - C. If six entries remain, draw two byes. Byes first go to undefeated entries. If one undefeated entry remains, that undefeated entry receives a bye and qualifies. Then, a bye is drawn from the remaining once-defeated entries who have not already received a bye, and that entry qualifies. The remaining four entries debate each other. The two byes and the two winners are the four qualifiers.
 - D. If seven entries remain, a bye goes to the undefeated and the remaining six debate each other. The bye and the three winners are the qualifiers.

E. Determining Alternates

A list of 14 alternates must be determined in events with 30 entries or more. In events with 29 entries or fewer, no entry that finishes in the bottom half of the field may be listed as an alternate. Alternates are determined by the most number of rounds debated. Byes and forfeit wins are counted as rounds debated. Ties must be broken in the following order:

1. The result of a head-to-head debate between the entries, if they met in the tournament.
2. Total ballots. The number of ballots for a bye equals the number of judges in the round where the bye occurred.
3. A run-off round between the entries.

Running the District Congressional Debate Tournament

Note: These are the pilot Congressional Debate qualification rules that have gone into effect permanently for district tournaments beginning in 2020-2021.

General Rules and Instructions

- 1. Qualifier Numbers.** The number of Senate and House qualifiers is independent of all other district tournament benchmark standards.
 - a. Senate**

A district with **six (6)** or more schools represented in the **Senate** will qualify two (2) senators to the National Senate. If fewer than **six (6)** schools are represented, *no Senate may be seated*. **Note: This is a change for the 2021 district tournament series only.**
 - b. House of Representatives**

A district must have a minimum of 16 competitors to seat a House of Representatives. Refer to the chart below to determine number of **House** chambers and advancement to the National House (note that the number of students in the far left column is based on *participation*—speaking or presiding at least once):

National Tournament Qualification Requirements for House

<i>Participating Students</i>	<i>Qualifiers</i>
16-29	2
30-58	4
59-87	6
88-116	7
117-145	8
146+	9

Non-qualifying (non-District Congress) Houses may also be held for regular merit points. No more than nine (9) students from a district may qualify to the National House of Representatives.

Contestants qualify to the National House of Representatives according to the number of actual participants in each chamber (number of students giving at least one speech). No district shall state or imply that if a student qualified in a previous event, that student may not enter the District Congress or imply that a student previously qualified cannot qualify for the National Congress.

2. Establishing Chamber Sizes. A district must have a minimum of 16 competitors to seat a House of Representatives. Districts may choose their chamber size within the approved range. For a district tournament held online, chambers must be between 8 and 15 students. For in-person district tournament events, chambers must be between 8 and 29 students. This applies to preliminary chambers and elimination round chambers.

3. Legislation. Chapters are encouraged to submit at least two bills or resolutions no later than 24 days prior to the scheduled Congress. All legislation presented shall meet Association formatting criteria (see rules section) and must be the original work of students from the submitting school. Non-original work shall not be considered for the agenda. It shall be the affirmative duty of each school submitting legislation to ensure their materials are original.

- A. The District Committee shall attempt to accept at least one bill or resolution from each school submitting bills or resolutions, provided the legislation is submitted by the deadline.
- B. At least 14 days before the official Congress date, the district chair should send to each participating school a copy of not fewer than six bills or resolutions, which shall constitute the agenda for each chamber per day.
- C. If the District Committee allows for a suspension of the rules, bills or resolutions not submitted may be considered only after the district's officially established legislative agenda has been considered (debated).
- D. A District Committee may deny bills or resolutions from being offered from the floor at the District Congress.

4. Time Allowance and Sessions. A district must offer at least two rounds, one of which must be a final round. If a district has only one chamber in a division (Senate or House), the scores from all rounds shall cumulatively determine placement and advancement to the National Tournament; a final round is not required. When planning the schedule, each round must include at least ten minutes per student in a chamber. For example, a round with 20 students in each chamber must be at least 200 minutes long. However, if there are 25 or more students in a chamber, the district may choose to hold four hour rounds instead. Additional time should be planned for breaks/meals. Each round includes:

- A. Election of a presiding officer
- B. New seating chart (necessary accommodations for students with special needs may be made)
- C. Resetting of precedence/recency
- D. New legislation that has not been debated in a previous session at that tournament

5. District Congress Officials

- A. The District Committee will determine the manner in which judges are procured: whether from participating schools, or from the community (such as local legislators, legislative staff, attorneys, law students, civic organization members, chamber of commerce professionals, etc.). **Unaffiliated judges and parliamentarians are required.** College-age judges are permitted at the discretion of the District Committee. Current high school students may not judge any portion of the district tournament series.
- B. A parliamentarian supervises each chamber and remains throughout all preliminary sessions: to call roll and ensure students are in assigned seats, to monitor timekeeping by the presiding officer, to intervene in case a student officer becomes too deeply involved in parliamentary rules, to correct gross errors in procedure, to record session start and end times, and to record actions taken. Ordinarily one should remain in the background, but step forward firmly when one's presence is required. The purpose of Congress is to debate legislation; the parliamentarian ensures this is done. They will holistically rank all participants at the end of the round (or end of the last preliminary round), with the top 8 serving as a judge rank, and all ranks serving as a final tie break.
- C. Scorers: In addition to the parliamentarian, at least two scorers must be used for each session in each chamber, **and those scorers must not be affiliated with students in that chamber.**
 - i. For each round, scorers:
 - 1. Rate 1-8 points per speech, considering answers to questions
 - 2. Rate 4-8 points per full hour of presiding (fractions of an hour are not scored)
 - 3. Rank their 8 most preferred legislators (which may include POs)
 - 4. Assign up to eight (8) points per speech, considering answers to questions in the awarding of points.
 - ii. No more than 40 points may be awarded a day per student. A total of the average of the scorer panel's points for each speech and complete hour of presiding shall be recorded.

6. Protests. Judges assigned by the tournament committee shall be final unless protested before the tournament has begun. If a judge(s) is added to the judge pool after the tournament has begun, any protests must be made prior to the session in which that individual(s) is assigned to judge. If protested, the District Committee shall hear the protest, and its decision shall be final. Members of the District Committee involved in the protest should recuse themselves.

7. Setting up the District Congress.

- A. Rooms must allow for all contestants to be seated appropriately as to be seen by the presiding officer, with no barriers between.

- B. Obtain needed materials/supplies for presiding officers and parliamentarians: gavels (optional; may be ordered at store.speechanddebate.org), timers/stopwatches, Table of Parliamentary Motions, amendment forms, and recency charts.

8. Disqualification. In the case of a disqualification of a contestant in a district tournament series event, all previous scores, ranks, and decisions of other contestants stand and no revision of past sessions will take place.

9. Harassment and Discrimination. Harassment and discrimination in any National Speech & Debate Association event will not be permitted. All district tournaments must follow the NSDA Harassment & Discrimination Policy. All districts are encouraged to create an Equity Office at their district tournament to respond to reported violations of this policy.

10. Petitions. Protests of District Committee decisions may be filed, *in writing*, with the Executive Director who shall issue a decision. The director's decision may be appealed to the Board of Directors, whose decision shall be final.

Assigning Students to Chambers

1. The District Committee may choose to either allow coaches to select which chamber their students will compete in or randomly place students in each chamber using approved software. Chamber size within each division is consistent and no more than 29 contestants.
2. Once chamber assignments are made, only replacing an absent student with an alternate is allowed, and no changes shall be made once a chamber has convened.
3. Seating charts should be generated and printed facing toward the back for both the presiding officer and parliamentarian. Seating charts should be printed facing toward the front for each scorer.

Tabulation

Tabulating Ranks

Scorer and parliamentarian ranks are inputted (software automatically considers non-ranked students as ranks of 9 and uses higher parliamentarian ranks as tie-breaks only). Each individual chamber is tabulated independent of others. Legislators with the lowest cumulative rank total advance to the next level of competition, employing the following tiebreakers:

1. Judges' preference (or students' preference for the student rank option below)
2. Reciprocal fractions
3. Adjusted cumulative rank total after dropping highest and lowest ranks
4. Reciprocals of adjusted cumulative rank total
5. Rank by the parliamentarian (ranking first to last)

Student Rank Option

Districts have the option of allowing student cumulative rank totals (not student preferential redistribution of ballots) to determine national qualifiers. If a district exercises this option, it must do so for both Senate and House. After judge cumulative rank totals from elimination rounds have determined the top eight students in the chamber, students shall rank order their preference next to each student's name. Each individual rank for all participating students will be inputted, to determine the lowest cumulative rank total. If a student completes a ballot incorrectly (duplicate or missing rank), it must be discarded, and shall not count in tabulation.

Qualifiers and Alternates

Qualifiers are determined by rank total from the final round only. The top contestants, up to 14th place in each chamber, are qualifiers and alternates in order of finish. Alternates may attend if qualifiers withdraw before June 1, regardless of whether or not the qualifier has entered the tournament. After June 1, alternates can only replace qualifiers that have been officially entered into the tournament. No alternate (who is replacing an officially entered qualifier) may enter the National Tournament after 4:00 p.m. on registration day of the National Tournament. National Tournament alternates are determined as follows:

1. Alternates are first determined by order of placement, whether by rank total from the final round by judges or by students.
2. If student ranking was used and additional alternates are necessary beyond those ranked by the students, the original judge rank total from finals, using appropriate tiebreakers through the parliamentarian's rank, shall be used.

Running the District Speech Tournament

Unlike debate events, the speech portion of the tournament presents the district with an opportunity to autonomously determine how to run its contest within a range of variations. When choosing a system, be certain that all rules for that particular system are followed.

The Up/Down Method mimics the debate portion of the tournament by creating a double elimination system for speech events. Half the contestants actually competing are marked *up* in each section. Three are marked *up* in a section of five and seven. Four may be marked *up* in a section of seven if an unbreakable triple tie occurs for second place or a triple tie occurs for second or third (see below). Five are never marked *up*. If an entry is ranked down twice, it is eliminated from competition. Only one judge is required in the first two preliminary rounds. (Three judges may be used, but if you do so, you cannot go back to using only one.) Three judges must be used in each subsequent round, and only three judges may be used in the final round (when the number of entries remaining is seven or fewer).

The California Plan uses a more traditional speech tournament approach to determining the qualifiers. The number of preliminary rounds is predetermined based upon the number of entries in the event. Either two or three judges may be used in the preliminary rounds, three judges in the semifinal round, and five judges in the final round.

NOTE: The district must decide in advance whether it will use the Up/Down Method or the California Plan. If choosing the California Plan, it must determine whether it will use two or three judges in each preliminary round. The number of judges may not change from event to event or round to round. No hybridization is permitted. College-age judges are permitted at the discretion of the District Committee. Current high school students may not judge any portion of the district tournament series.

General Rules and Instructions

1. **Starting Times:** No round may start after 9:30 p.m. (Extemp after 9:45 p.m.) unless it is the final day of the tournament.
2. **Minimum Rounds:** At least three rounds must be held in all contests.
3. **Harassment and Discrimination.** Harassment and discrimination in any National Speech & Debate Association event will not be permitted. All district tournaments must follow the NSDA Harassment & Discrimination Policy. All districts are encouraged to create an Equity Office at their district tournament to respond to reported violations of this policy.
4. **Speech Rules Infractions**

Districts whose committee members have completed the [training video](#) may choose to use the Speech Rule Infractions options that are used at the National Tournament. This allows District Committees to determine consequences for rule infractions in speech based on the circumstance and magnitude of the infraction. The following options are listed progressively according to their level of severity. Each may be utilized independently.

 - A. **Level 1:** Issue a warning with the instruction to correct the infraction for the next round. If not corrected, the competitor will be penalized accordingly.
 - B. **Level 2:** Cannot receive a rank of 1 from any judge in the round. All competitors' scores will be re-adjusted accordingly (e.g., over the grace period, etc.).
 - C. **Level 3:** Drop 2 ranks from all judges in the round (e.g., 1 to 3, 2 to 4, etc.). All competitors' scores will be re-adjusted accordingly.
 - D. **Level 4:** Change ranks to last or a loss from all judges in round. All competitors' scores will be re-adjusted accordingly. (e.g., a student competes in the wrong contest section or against the wrong opponent at no fault of their opponent or tournament officials, failing to disconnect from the internet during extemporaneous preparation events, etc.).
 - E. **Level 5:** Disqualify the entry. All competitors' scores will be re-adjusted accordingly. (e.g., plagiarism, exceeding transitional material guidelines, using non-existent evidence in extemporaneous preparation events,

misrepresenting the content of the script submitted with what is actually presented in the round, using internet to communicate with outside sources during extemporaneous preparation events, etc.). If an entry is disqualified, one or more of the following may happen:

1. If in a final round, any placings or points earned by that student will be vacated. All competitors ranked lower than the disqualified competitor will be moved up one placement in that round. If multiple violations in the same event have occurred, competitors will be advanced accordingly. If the violation is discovered during the semifinal round, the offending competitor will be ranked last in the semifinal round. If the student still qualifies for the final round with that ranking, their place in the final round will be vacated, and the next place competitor will be placed in the final round. If re-ranking is necessary, it is only applicable to the round in which the violation occurred, not previous rounds in the tournament.
2. If the violation occurs in a final round and the violation would result in a new champion, the championship will be vacated. Potential scholarships may be forfeited.
3. All coaching points earned for all of the school/chapter's competitors for the entire tournament will be removed.
4. The offending school/chapter may lose up to four entry slots for the next year's district tournament. The school/chapter will not be eligible for any bonus entries for the district tournament.
5. All rounds in which the competitor participated will not be included in the count toward eligibility for School of Excellence and Bruno E. Jacob awards.
6. The contestant's high school administration and chapter advisor may be notified of the violation of the Honor Code.
7. The offending student(s) may have their Association membership revoked.

The Up/Down Model

Sectioning in the Up/Down Model

Once Tabroom.com or The Joy of Tournaments software has sectioned the preliminary rounds, the tabulation room should ensure the following parameters are met. Each student is guaranteed two preliminary rounds of competition. *It is the affirmative duty of the tabulation staff to audit Tabroom.com and The Joy of Tournaments pairings to determine that all pairing/sectioning rules are followed.*

Sectioning

Entries in each event should be divided as equally as possible into as many sections as required. The minimum number of entries in a section is four; maximum is eight, **acceptable only under extreme circumstances**. A section with six entries is ideal, while seven or eight should be avoided. Seeding is not permitted in sectioning either of the first two rounds. An entry who receives at least one *up* in the first two preliminary rounds is eligible to continue competing until it receives two *downs*.

In subsequent rounds, the total of each entry's ranks will determine its seed. Entries should be sectioned to prevent the highest seeds from meeting in each subsequent round. A serpentine (or snaking) distribution should be used.

Moving Entries from Sections

Entries are to be moved only to avoid (as much as possible) the following, in order of priority:

1. Two entries from the same school in a section.
2. Two interpretation entries with the same title in a section.
3. Having the same speakers compete against each other a second time.

Speaker Order

Speaker order should be varied from one round to the next. Entries are guaranteed a variation in speaker position unless it is impossible to provide variation based upon the number of previous rounds, the other pairing priorities, or unavoidable tournament circumstances. In this case, the optimal pairing is one that does not replicate the previous round's speaker position and minimizes the number of repeated speaker positions.

NOTE: Tabroom.com and The Joy of Tournaments highlights in red entries whose sectioning constraints have not been met. Therefore, the least possible red highlighting is the optimal pairing.

Double entered contestants should be scheduled to appear early in one event and late in the second event. If an Extemporaneous speaker is double entered, the speaker should be scheduled early in Extemp and later in the second event.

In Extemporaneous Speaking events, unless it is unavoidable, students from the same school shall not cross-examine one another. Speaker order should be adjusted accordingly.

Balance of Power

After the first two preliminary rounds, an optimal pairing is one that balances the power the sections. To determine the power of a section, add the total ranks of each entry. The sum of each section should be as close to equal as possible. If they are not, move entries from one section to another using the *Moving Entries from Sections* paragraph above. When the number of contestants in each section is unequal, use the average power to balance.

When in conflict, cumulative rank totals are more important than *ups* when balancing sections.

Changing Ranks

Record all ranks of six and seven as fives except in the final round. Never break ties by using original ranks except in the final round. In the final round, ranks of six and seven will be counted.

Scoring Ties

In general, a tie is not to be broken except to avoid marking *up* more than half the entries in a section. In that scenario, the tie is broken to determine the up/down for that round only. Ties are preserved when determining cumulative scores.

- **EXCEPTIONS:** Three are marked up in a section of five. Four may be marked up in a section of seven if an unbreakable triple tie occurs for second place or a triple tie occurs for second or third. Fives are never up.

Simple Ties: If a simple two-way tie must be broken, use judge's preference to determine which entry receives the higher place. If unbreakable by judge's preference, use reciprocal fractions. If still unbroken, both students receive the higher place. In a simple tie, both entries receive the place for which they tied. A place is to be skipped and placing continues as usual.

Triple Ties: A triple tie shall only be broken to avoid marking more than three *up* in a section of four or five, or more than four in a section of seven. To break a triple tie, judge's ranks must be converted to reciprocal fractions. In a triple tie, all three entries receive the middle place. One place is to be skipped, and remaining places continue as usual (e.g., if three entries tie for first, all receive second place, and the next entry receives fourth).

Unbreakable Triple Tie: In a triple tie where all entries have identical ranks, the tie is unbreakable. All are to be given the same middle place for which they tie and given an *up* if that number is in the upper half of a section or third in a section of seven.

Final Round

The final round occurs when seven or fewer entries remain. Three and only three judges are to be used in the final round (requirements are different for the California Plan; see the next section).

Determining National Qualifiers and Alternates

Final placement is determined by adding placements of each preliminary round and the three judges' ranks in the final round. Low final round total breaks a tie. The 14 alternates are determined in the following order ('semifinals' refers to the round immediately preceding the final round):

1. Final round placement as described above.
2. Total cumulative round ranks through semifinals.
3. If tied, determine the winner of a head-to-head competition in semifinals.
4. If the entries did not meet in semifinals or are still tied, count the number of ones, using all judge ranks, through semifinals.
5. If still tied, count the number of twos, using all judge ranks, through semifinals.

The California Plan

In 2009, the Board of Directors approved a streamlined process for using the California Plan in running district speech contests. The district may select to use two judges or three judges in each preliminary round but must apply this decision consistently throughout the tournament and across all events.

Planning Preliminary Rounds

New as of 2016-2017: When using the California Plan, District Committees in speech events with 14 or fewer entries may determine to hold two preliminary rounds of competition.

Two Judge System: If using two judges in preliminary rounds, the number of rounds in each event is determined by the number of actual participants in the event at the beginning of round one, based on the following table:

Number of Entries	Minimum Number of Preliminary Rounds
14 or fewer	2
24 or fewer	3
42 or fewer	4
43 or more	5

Three Judge System: If using three judges in the preliminary rounds, the number of preliminary rounds in each event is determined by the number of actual participants in the event at the beginning of round one, based on the following table:

Number of Entries	Minimum Number of Preliminary Rounds
14 or fewer	2
24 or fewer	3
42 or fewer	4
43 or more	5

Preset Preliminary Round

Round One: The first round of each event will be preset using a random draw. Two or three judges must be used in each preliminary round. The number of judges must be the same in every preliminary round and the same for each event. Entries are to be changed from one section only to another to avoid the following in the precedence listed:

1. Entries from the same school in the same section.
2. (If possible) Entries with the same selection in the same section.

Only sections of five, six, or seven are permitted.

Speaking Order: In preliminary rounds, speaking order should be varied. Each entry should receive a top, middle, and bottom speaker order, not to be repeated in preliminary rounds unless unavoidable.

1. In the semifinal round, speaking position is determined by blind draw.
2. In the final round, speaking order is determined by blind draw. However, an entry should not receive the same speaking order it had in the semifinals.

Double Entries: Accommodate double entries by permitting entries to speak early in one event and later in another; however, it is not necessary to place entries in the first or last position.

Rankings: Each judge will rank entries from one as the best to seven as the worst. Whenever a judge has marked an entry lower than fifth, such rank will be changed to fifth before tabulation begins. However, after a sixth or seventh rank has been tabulated as a five and a tie occurs between entries for a rank in the round, the six and seven is used to determine the judges' preference.

Definitions of terms

- *Composite re-rank:* Sum the individual judge ranks for each entry and list the entry in order of their respective totals. The entry with the lowest cumulative score would be re-ranked first, second-most as second, and so on.
- *Adjusted rank:* In sections of six or seven, each judge will rank entries through the sixth and seventh placing. The tabulation staff will adjust each rank of six or seven to a five for the purpose of creating the composite re-rank. This is the only instance when the adjusted rank is used.
- *Actual rank:* Rank the judge gave the entry, counting sixes and sevens.

Scoring: Add judges’ ranks and re-rank entries in each section based on the cumulative score.

Breaking Ties with Two Judges

In the event of a two-way tie, both entries are awarded the higher placing rank.

Example A

Speaker	Judge 1	Judge 2	Sum of ranks	Composite Re-rank
1	3	4	7	3
2	7(5)	5	10	6
3	2	1	3	1
4	4	6 (5)	9	5
5	1	2	3	1
6	6 (5)	3	8	4
7	5	7 (5)	10	6

In the event of a three-way tie, entries are awarded a tied, middle rank. In the event of a four-way tie, entries are awarded an upper-middle rank (in a four-way tie for first, all entries would be ranked second). A composite re-rank may not be higher than 5.

Example B

Speaker	Judge 1	Judge 2	Sum of ranks	Composite Re-rank
1	6 (5)	5	10	5
2	5	6 (5)	10	5
3	4	4	8	4
4	1	3	4	2
5	3	1	4	2
6	2	2	4	2

Breaking Ties with Three Judges

In the event of a two-way tie, the tie will be broken by judges’ preference.

In the event of a three- or four-way tie, the entries are awarded the better middle position for which the speakers are tied. For other entries in the section, eliminate the next position after the tie ranking. In Example C (below), the next ranking in the round would be fourth.

Example C

Speaker	Judge 1	Judge 2	Judge 3	Sum of ranks	Composite Re-rank
1	1	2	3	6	2
2	2	3	1	6	2
3	3	1	2	6	2

Powered Preliminary Rounds

Round two and subsequent rounds must be determined after the results are recorded from the previous round.

Seeding: The entry's seeding is determined by the sum of its composite re-ranks from previous rounds.

Sectioning Powered Rounds: Place entries in sections, by their seeding, in a serpentine or snaking pattern. Begin with the first seed in section one and continue to place seeds in separate sections until placing an entry in the last available section. Place the next seeded entry in the next available section and continue to place entries in separate sections as indicated in Example D. Where ties in seeding occur, randomly place the equal seeds in subsequent separate sections.

Example D

Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4
1st Seed -->	2nd Seed -->	3rd Seed -->	4th Seed ♦
8th Seed ♦	7th Seed <--	6th Seed <--	5th Seed <--
9th Seed -->	10th Seed -->	11th Seed -->	12th Seed

Altering Contestant Placement in Sections

Entries are to be moved from sections only under the following conditions:

1. To avoid an imbalance of schools. The higher seeded entry from a school must remain in the original section. The lower seeded entry (Entry B) from the same school must be placed in the next available section in the snaking pattern until school balance occurs. The next seeded entry (Entry C) is placed in Entry B's original location.
2. If placement of Entry B results in a school imbalance, place Entry B in the next available section in the snaking order until school balance occurs. If a school conflict is unavoidable, place the entry in the original seeding location. The next seeded entry (Entry C) is placed in Entry B's original location.
3. To balance power, entries may be moved from a suboptimal pairing to an optimal pairing if it does not result in entries with the lowest composite ranks (equal to the number of sections in the round) meeting each other or an imbalance of schools. The balance of power is determined by the sum of the composite ranks in each section if sections have the same number of entries. If uneven sections exist, power is determined by the average of the composite ranks in each section.

New as of 2016-2017: When using the California Plan, District Committees in speech events with 14 or fewer entries are not required to hold a semifinal round and students may advance directly to the final round.

Determining Semifinal Qualifiers

Twelve entries will be selected to participate in the semifinal round on the basis of lowest cumulative score of composite re-ranks from the entry's preliminary rounds.

Breaking Semifinal Ties: If the cumulative score of composite re-ranks brings the total number of qualifiers to more than 12, determine the qualifiers in the following order of precedence:

1. If the entries are still tied, the entry with the most number of ones, twos, etc., in composite ranks advances.
2. If the entries are still tied, the entry with the lowest sum of actual ranks advances.
3. If the entries are still tied, the entry with the most number of ones, twos, etc., in actual ranks advances.
4. If the entries are still tied, include those tied in the semifinals.

Pairing the Semifinal Round

NOTE: Three judges must be used in the semifinal round in each event.

1. Speaker order is determined by blind draw.
2. Use the same procedure outlined in "Powered Preliminary Rounds."
3. No accommodation will be made to separate entries from the same school in a section where they are required to meet by the previous rules as outlined in "Powered Preliminary Rounds."

4. Accommodate double entries by permitting entries to speak early in one event and later in another, however, it is not necessary to place entries in the first or last position.

Determining Final Round Qualifiers

Add composite preliminary round re-ranks and each judge's ballot in the semifinal round to determine six qualifiers for the final round.

**In the case of uneven semifinal sections, count sevens as sixes unless a tie occurs.*

Breaking Final Round Ties: If the number of final round qualifiers exceeds six, use the following tiebreakers in order of precedence:

1. If tied entries met in the semifinal round, determine judges' preference in the semifinal round.
2. If still tied, advance the entry with the lowest total from semifinal ballots alone.
3. If still tied, advance the entry with the greatest number of ones, twos, etc., from the semifinal ballots.
4. If still tied, advance the entry with the lowest total of adjusted, actual preliminary round ranks and semifinal ranks.
5. If still tied, advance the entry with the greatest number of ones, twos, etc., from all composite re-ranks and semifinal round ranks.
6. If still tied, include those tied entries in the final round.

Pairing the Final Round

NOTE: Five judges must be used in the final round. If a district chooses to use seven judges in the finals, the high and the low scores must be excluded when determining the National Qualifier.

1. Speaker order is determined by blind draw but must not be the same as the semifinal round speaking position.
2. No accommodation will be made to separate entries from the same school in the speaker order.
3. Reverse accommodations for double entered entries from any accommodation made in the semifinal round.

Determining National Qualifiers

Entries qualifying for the National Tournament are selected by determining the lowest total of preliminary composite re-ranks, added to three semifinal ranks, added to five final ranks. If a tie exists among qualifiers or alternates, determine final placement by using the following tiebreakers in order of precedence:

1. The cumulative score of final round judges only.
2. Judges' preference in the final round only.
3. Greatest number of ones, twos, etc., in the final round only.
4. If still tied, repeat steps 1 through 3 by adding the semifinal scores.
5. If still tied, add the actual ranks from preliminary rounds to semifinal ranks and to final ranks, to determine placement.

Sweepstakes Awards

Overall District Sweepstakes Plaque

Overview:

1. A school must actively participate in both debate and speech with at least three entries in each area. Congressional Debate is not currently included in calculation of the **overall** District Sweepstakes Plaque.
2. Top five speech and top five debate entries per school will count towards its sweepstakes calculation.
3. Team events (Public Forum, Policy, Duo) count as one entry.
4. Tie breakers:
 - A. Add the 6th speech and the 6th debate entry per school.
 - B. Greatest number of 1sts, 2nds, 3rds, etc.
 - C. Add the 7th speech and the 7th debate entry per school.
 - D. Add the 8th speech and the 8th debate entry per school.
5. Tiebreakers described in the *District Tournament Operations Manual* will be used to determine places. If ties cannot be broken, both students will receive the points for the highest place in which they tie.
6. 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place sweepstakes finishes should be awarded in each district.

Point Schedule Per Event - Points are allocated based on *actual entries* for qualification rather than any district bonus.

	Category A Event ≤ 37 entries Team event ≤ 29 entries		Category B Event = 38-57 entries Team event = 30-49 entries		Category C Event ≥ 58 entries Team event ≥ 50 entries	
	1 or 2 qualifiers		3 qualifiers		4 qualifiers	
	Speech	Debate	Speech	Debate	Speech	Debate
1st Place	6	7	7	8	8	9
2nd Place	5	6	6	7	7	8
3rd Place	4	5	5	6	6	7
4th Place	3	4	4	5	5	6
5th Place	2	3	3	4	4	5
6th Place	1	2	2	3	3	4

Example:

	Team A		Team B	
PF 2 Qualifiers	1 st Place	12 points	2 nd Place	6 points
DUO	3 rd Place			
Policy 2 Qualifiers	2 nd Place	10 points	5 th Place	3 points
LD 3 Qualifiers	4 th Place	5 points		
IX 2 Qualifiers	6 th Place	1 point	2 nd Place	5 points
USX 2 Qualifiers	4 th Place	4 points		
DI 2 Qualifiers	6 th Place		1 st Place	6 points
HI 2 Qualifiers			2 nd Place	5 points
OO 2 Qualifiers			1 st Place	10 points
			3 rd Place	
	Team A Total:	32 points	Team B Total:	35 points

Congress, Debate, and Speech Sweepstakes Awards

In addition to an overall District Sweepstakes Plaque, awards will be given for the three distinct divisions at the district tournament: Congress, Debate, and Speech. Each of these areas functions essentially different and are often held on different days/weekends. This also allows schools whose programs focus in one or two of the areas to still have a chance at earning some type of squad award.

A school's top eight *placing* speech, top six debate, and top five congress entries will count toward calculation in each area, respectively.

Computing the sweepstakes award for Speech and the award for Debate functions in the same manner as those two areas are figured for the overall sweepstakes award (see schedule for awarding sweepstakes points on the previous page).

In Congress, each of a school's top five students who place in their respective Senate and House chambers will receive points based on the schedule to the right. If a preliminary and a final session are held, only the final session will count.

Program Oral Interpretation and Informative Speaking count toward the Speech Sweepstakes Award.

	Congress
1st Place	8
2nd Place	7
3rd Place	6
4th Place	5
5th Place	4
6th Place	3

District Cumulative Sweepstakes Award

Rounds for all student entries accumulate from year to year and a District Tournament Trophy is awarded for one-year possession to the school participating in the present tournament whose total is highest at the conclusion of the tournament. Its record will be set back to zero and the records for other schools carried forward to the next year. The trophy will become the permanent possession of the school winning it three (3) times. A tie will be broken in favor of the school whose students were in the largest number of rounds in the present tournament. If still tied, the trophy will be awarded to the school with the highest total of Association merit points earned at the present tournament. Program Oral Interpretation and Informative Speaking count toward the Cumulative Sweepstakes Award.

Reporting to the National Office

The district chair is required to submit several reports to the national office within 48 hours of the completion of the district tournament. Please do not submit materials not requested here. Note that if your district uses SpeechWire to tabulate your tournaments, **the district chair must work with SpeechWire support to manually upload the data file to Tabroom.com after the completion of your district tournament series.**

Tabroom.com Districts:

1. Any **fees** due to the National Speech & Debate Association collected at the tournament. These should be sent immediately after each portion of tournament.
2. Review the Qualifiers and Alternates Report under the Results tab. Tabroom.com will generate this for all events. It is the affirmative duty of the chair to ensure that the qualifiers and alternates listed on this page are accurate, but a paper copy does not need to be submitted to the national office.
3. If your district had auto-qualifiers, mail or scan and email their **Single Entry Letter of Intent** forms to info@speechanddebate.org. Since coaches on Tabroom.com filled out event preferences for double entered students during the online registration process, chairs only need to collect paper copies of the Single Entry forms from auto-qualifiers. These should be sent at the conclusion of your tournament series, not after each portion.

SpeechWire Districts:

1. Any **fees** due to the National Speech & Debate Association collected at the tournament. These should be sent immediately after each portion of tournament.
2. Review the qualifiers and alternates reported by SpeechWire. It is the affirmative duty of the chair to ensure that the qualifiers and alternates are accurate before they are uploaded to Tabroom.com. Uploads of tournament results should occur after the entirety of the district tournament has been completed, not after each portion of the tournament.
3. All **Single Entry Letter of Intent** forms. These should be mailed or scanned and emailed to info@speechanddebate.org at the conclusion of your tournament series, not after each portion.
4. **Work with SpeechWire support to upload the SpeechWire data file to Tabroom** by logging into Tabroom, selecting the name of your district tournament, and following the steps listed on the page. Uploads of tournament results should occur after the entirety of the district tournament has been completed, not after each portion of the tournament.

District Tournament Audit Procedures

The required method of tabulating the district tournament is to use the approved tournament software on a computer.

At the completion of each round, the District Committee will produce an audit sheet. That sheet will be compared to the ballots for each round to determine that the ballots have been accurately tabulated. If mistakes have been made, the results will be evaluated and corrected.

Once events are tabulated, the District Committee must audit or check the results of rounds in two ways:

1. The audit will be conducted by an Audit Committee appointed by the District Committee.
2. Ballots and the audit sheet will be made public so that head coaches or their designees may take responsibility for the audit.

District Committees are strongly encouraged to make the tabulation process as transparent as possible.

Before the tournament, one coach per school in attendance should be designated to receive ballots and audit sheets that are made available at the conclusion of each round audit. Online ballots, if used, should be published to coaches after each round audit. If a district is not auditing results and/or providing the audit to a coach representative, the coach representative should file a protest to the Committee, citing this procedural violation. If a protest is filed, the District Committee is required to contact the tournament ombudsperson for a ruling.

If coaches believe errors in tabulation have occurred, they must first address the issue with the District Committee in a *timely fashion*. If the tournament is still in progress, the protest should be lodged within one round of the audit being available to coaches.

The audit for the final round results must be made available before the awards assembly. No protests regarding tabulation will be permitted after the awards assembly.

The national qualifiers determined by the national office will be official. If the District Committee erroneously identifies and announces that a student has qualified for the National Tournament, that student will not keep that qualification spot for the National Tournament.

District Tournament Rules and Penalties

In addition to pairing/sectioning protocols outlined above, the district tournament series has specific rules and policies that must be followed in order to ensure that qualification to the National Tournament is valid.

It is the affirmative duty of the District Committee to ensure all rules and procedures in this manual are followed. Failure to adhere to these rules may invalidate tournament results.

Equitable Tournament Practices

- Equity is a core value of the National Speech & Debate Association. As such, District Committees are expected to read through the [Inclusive Tournament Checklist](#) and implement relevant methods for making their tournaments as safe, welcoming, and inclusive as possible.
- All District Committees must adhere to and make public the [NSDA Harassment and Discrimination Policy](#).
- District Committees must use the following language on top of all ballots used at the district tournament:
“We are all influenced by implicit bias, or the stereotypes that unconsciously affect our decisions. When judging, our implicit biases negatively impact traditionally marginalized and disenfranchised students. Before writing comments or making a decision, please take a moment to reflect on any biases that may impact your decision making.”
If a district tournament is held online, ballots must also include this language:
“Please remember that the video quality of a student’s performance or speech may be impacted by lighting, internet, access to equipment, and other family members’ presence in the home. To ensure a more equitable experience for our participants, please be sure your decision-making process and comments are related only to the content and quality of the presentation or speech itself.”
- District Committees are encouraged to share the free judge training course and free cultural competency course materials found [here](#), created in partnership with NFHS, with all tournament judges.
- District Committees are encouraged to create an Equity Office to hear inquiries and reports related to the Harassment and Discrimination Policy.

Protest Adjudication

The members of the District Committee present shall have full power to adjudicate any protest, dispute, or interpretation of the rules. Protests must be filed in writing and must include:

- Name of the school advisor or authorized adult representative(s) filing protest and school, city, state. To file a protest, the advisor or adult representative must be on site. School advisors may appoint one or more adult representatives who are permitted to file protests in case the advisor is absent or incapable of filing a protest due to a tournament-related commitment. Authorized adult representatives must be approved by the school’s administration and explicitly appointed prior to the tournament.
- Code of person/team being protested.
- Round being protested.
- Section /room and speaker number of person/team being protested.
- Specific infraction being protested described with supporting detail.
- Signature of protesting coach.

After the infraction has been observed/discovered, **the protest must be filed in a timely manner**. A timely manner is defined as within one hour of the end of the round in which the infraction occurred, unless a specific rule specifies otherwise.

If the district chair and/or committee are unclear as to how a rule should be interpreted or the penalty for a rule, please contact the district tournament referee assigned to the district by the national office.

This enumeration does not imply that other tournament rules may be violated.

Debate Events

1. **Start Time:** No debate may begin after 9:30 p.m. unless it is the final day of the tournament.
Penalty: No official winner of that event and no national qualifier.
2. **Minimum Rounds:** At least three rounds must be held in speech and debate events. Congressional Debate must include at least five hours of floor debate for a one-day Congress, eight hours of floor debate for a two-day Congress, and three hours of debate for a final session.
Penalty: No official winner of that event and no national qualifier.
3. **Judges:** One or three judges may be used in the first two debate rounds. When eight or fewer entries remain, three judges must be used. Any odd number of judges greater than or equal to three may be used for debate elimination and final rounds. Once multiple judges have been used, the same number or higher must be used in all subsequent rounds. All sections within the same event must use the same the same number of judges. At least three judges per session must be used in Congressional Debate.
Penalty: No official winner of that event and no national qualifier.
4. **Electronic Device Usage:** Permission to use electronic devices in any event **at an in-person district tournament** shall be the autonomous decision of the District Committee. Granting usage subjects debaters to the Guidelines for Use of Internet-Enabled Devices found in the Unified Manual.

Speech Events

1. **Start Time:** No speech round may begin after 9:30 p.m. (Extemp round after 9:45 p.m.) unless it is the final day of the tournament.
Penalty: No official winner of that event and no national qualifier.
2. **Minimum Rounds:** Three rounds must be held in all speech events.
Penalty: No official winner of that event and no national qualifier.
3. **Final Round:** No more than seven contestants may participate in the final round.
Penalty: No official winner of that event and no national qualifier.
4. **Judges:** The district must use the appropriate number of judges for the type of system.
 - Up/Down: After the first two rounds three judges must be used.
 - Two-judge California: Two judges must be used in each preliminary round, three judges must be used in the semifinal round, and five judges must be used in the final round.
 - Three-judge California: Three judges must be used in each preliminary round, three judges must be used in the semifinal round, and five judges must be used in the final round.*Penalty: No official winner of that event and no national qualifier.*

Judge Instructions and Guidelines

General Instructions

- All judges are to report to their assigned rooms at least five minutes before the time the contest round is scheduled to begin.
- Each judge's ballot is to be secured from contest official and returned immediately following each round.
- Read the instructions on the ballot.
- Do not confer with other judges.
- Judges should not interrupt the flow of debates or contests in any way. They are silent evaluators and should not reveal their decision.
- College-age judges are permitted at the discretion of the District Committee. Current high school students may not judge any portion of the district tournament series.

Statement on Conflicts of Interest in Judging

Fair competition requires not merely the absence of impropriety but also the absence of the *appearance* of impropriety. A conflict of interest is a relationship that might reasonably be thought to bias a judge toward or against a competitor. Such relationships may themselves be quite innocent, but they could reasonably be thought to compromise a judge's impartiality.

A judge **must** recuse themselves from judging a student under the following conditions:

1. The judge and the student may be perceived to have a competitive or financial agreement that may bias the judge's impartial evaluation of the round. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - A. The student attends a school (or a collaboration of schools) that the judge attended, coached for, or competed with. **NOTE:** Two potential exceptions to this guideline would be that if a designated committee or ombudsperson felt that enough time has passed since that judge's attendance at the school to resolve concerns of impropriety. In addition, if both coaches felt comfortable with a judge that graduated from a school of one of the competitors, the tab room may allow that judge placement.
 - B. The judge has a paid or unpaid coaching, consulting, or judging relationship with the student or school during the same academic year. **NOTE:** Serving a tournament-hired judge does not constitute a conflict of interest.
 - C. The judge has received or provided expressed or implied offers to provide future coaching, consulting, or judging to a school or student.
 - D. The judge has provided exclusive pre-round preparation to a student either before or during a tournament through any method including electronically, verbally, or through the transfer of resources. **NOTE:** Sharing of information does not constitute preparation, but the discussion of strategies, arguments, evidence, etc., would constitute preparation. If such preparation is provided during a tournament, the judge should immediately (before pairings are released) recuse themselves from judging the student they prepared for the rest of the tournament. If practice rounds before or during the tournament has occurred between schools that a judge is fulfilling obligations for and could potentially judge, that would be defined as preparation and all parties should consider that a conflict.
2. The judge and the student may be perceived to have a personal or social arrangement that may bias the judge's impartial evaluation of the round. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - A. The judge and the student may be perceived to have had a personal relationship that may bias the judge's impartial evaluation of the round.
 - B. The judge and the student are or have been in a familial, physical, or emotional relationship.
 - C. The judge and the student have communications of a personal nature over email, telephone, or the internet including social networking sites that goes beyond causal exchanges. For example, communications that are

extensive and/or repetitive may create a conflict. Judges who socialize with the student outside of the competition arena are considered to have established a personal or social relationship with that student.

3. The judge does not believe they are able to fairly and impartially adjudicate a competition involving a particular student for whatever reason.

Judges may **choose** to recuse themselves from adjudicating a student under the following conditions. (If these conditions exist, it is the affirmative duty of the judge to make such information publicly available prior to the round beginning.)

1. The judge shares transportation and/or lodging with the student's team on a regular basis.
2. The judge has a personal, financial, or familial relationship with the student's coach or member of the student's family.
3. The judge is an administrator of, currently employed by, or anticipates employment from a forensic-related enterprise with whom a financial or advisory relationship exists or is sought with the student. **NOTE:** These guidelines do not prohibit lab leaders/institute staff from judging their lab students; however, if those lab leaders maintain consistent contact with those students and/or engage in personal relationships with them, they should recuse themselves from judging those specific individuals.

The expectation of competitors, judges, and coaches is to engage in the highest levels of professionalism and integrity. While the responsibility is on judges to aide transparency, the responsibility exists for coaches and student competitors as well. It is the affirmative duty of all coaches and debaters to assist efforts in transparency. No decisions will be modified as a result of disclosed information.

District Team for USA World Schools Debate Invitational

All Association districts are allowed to qualify up to two teams of three to five students using the procedures outlined below. The deadline for the district chair to officially name a team is May 1. Each district must provide a full-time judge for each team available for the entirety of the competition. Districts that do not provide a full-time judge for each team will not be permitted to enter.

Note: For the 2021 National Tournament only, districts are allowed to qualify up to THREE teams of three to five students using the procedures outlined below.

Methods to Select the World Schools District Team

Teams are comprised of three to five members from each district opting to participate. After the entire district tournament series (speech, debate, Congress) is complete, any student who competed at districts would be eligible for participation on the World Schools District Team. The established criteria of the district should be made available to all coaches attending the district tournament. This could be done via the tournament invitation or through an email announcement.

A district has two options for selecting its members:

Option A – Districts may invite alternates to be on the team. To provide an objective method of selecting the team members, districts would do the following:

- Invite the highest point earners that are senior, 1st alternates to serve on the team.
- If a student turns down the opportunity, go to the next name on the list of senior, 1st alternates by merit points.
- If you get through all senior, 1st alternates, then go to senior, 2nd alternates by merit points.
- Keep working through the senior alternates (3rd, 4th, 5th, etc.). If there are no seniors left, go to junior, 1st alternates by merit points, then sophomores, and then freshmen.

Option B – Any district participant would be given the opportunity to apply for consideration. The district would select a committee to examine the applications and make decisions to field the team. The selection committee may consist of **current** coaches, retired coaches, community members, administrators, and more. Selection committee members should recuse themselves from scoring their own student applicants. In addition to the above criteria suggested in option A, the selection committee might also consider additional criteria, but are not bound to them:

- Give preference to applicants who are from schools that did not qualify to the National Tournament.
- Give preference to applicants from schools with fewer than three entries.
- Give preference to new schools to the district.
- Give preference to schools with new coaches in the district.

Note: If your state association prevents hybrid teams, a district may select entries all from one school to enable a participating team to attend Nationals.

Additionally, the application process could consist of a qualifying World Schools Debate tournament to determine which teams will attend Nationals. All participants must compete or have competed in another event at their district tournament.

Students do not have to be a non-qualifying entry from districts to be selected to compete for the district World Schools Debate team. Students who attend the district tournament and qualify in a main event for the National Tournament may forgo their qualification and participate in the USA World Schools Debate Invitational, if they are selected for the team by their district and have preferred it on the Single Letter of Intent prior to the District Tournament Series.

Coach of the World Schools District Team

The coach of the district team could be selected by the District Committee. This person would be the main point of contact between the national office and the district team.

District Qualification Process for Big Questions Debate

For additional information about debate rules and access to resources and judge training, visit the Big Questions website at www.NSDABigQuestions.org.

Entries/Qualification Process

- The top-placing student at each district's Big Questions division will qualify to the National Tournament.
- District chairs must elect to hold a Big Questions national qualifying event on the Tabroom.com District Dates form.
- Districts will not be eligible to receive a sub-grant for hosting a Big Questions event.
- Big Questions entries will not count toward a school's district entry limits.
- The district Big Questions division may be held in conjunction with the district tournament or as a stand-alone event on a separate date as long as it occurs before May 1. The district event must meet the following requirements:
 - Minimum of 10 high school competitors.
 - All students must compete as individuals.
 - All competitors must be NSDA members and eligible to compete in the district tournament series.
 - More than one school in attendance.
 - The event must be organized through or with the permission of the district chair.
 - The event will follow the tabulation method chosen by the District Committee for all other debate events. This includes the double down method or the pilot method.
 - The top-placing student will not be eligible to compete at the National Tournament if they have qualified in a main event. Students may choose to attend the National Tournament in Big Questions instead of World Schools Debate.
 - If the Big Questions district event is held before the district's main National Qualifying tournament, the top-placing student's name may be withdrawn and replaced with an alternate's if the top-placing student qualifies in another event.
- Only entries composed of individual debaters may compete at Nationals.
- Each qualifier must provide a full-time judge for the entirety of the competition at the National Tournament. Students who do not provide a full-time judge will not be permitted to enter.



2020-2021

SECTION 4: National Tournament Operations Manual

The National Speech & Debate Tournament is the largest academic competition in the world. To attend, students must place among the top competitors at one of the Association's district tournaments. The National Speech & Debate Association is committed to providing every student a fair and impartial competition experience. All rules established in the Events Rules Manual guide the specific rules for each event. This document provides the specific procedures established by the Board of Directors. Tournament ombudspersons are available to answer questions and field protests regarding infraction of rules herein enumerated.

For questions not answered here, please contact the national office at info@speechanddebate.org or call (920) 748-6206.

Because everything is new for the online 2021 National Tournament, there are no highlights.

Entry Requirements

Official Notice: All schools must register ONLINE for the National Speech & Debate Tournament at nationals.tabroom.com. You must read all information below before beginning online registration. Please direct all questions to the national office by calling (920) 748-6206 or by emailing info@speechanddebate.org.

REMINDER: The NSDA no longer accepts mailed scripts or speeches. Advisors must UPLOAD the digital files during online registration instead.

Instructions for Registering

- 1) **Registration:** National Tournament registration is available online beginning **March 1**. Although the entire registration process does not have to be completed in one sitting, coaches must complete the online process (including printing out ALL designated paperwork to collect/upload required signatures) and mail ALL appropriate fees to the national office before the entry is considered official.
- 2) **Community Standards:** Prior to registering online for the National Tournament, all coaches are required to confirm the following statement: "I certify that we, the coach(es), student(s), administrator(s) directly affiliated with our NSDA chapter, have agreed that the student performance(s) reflect(s) our school standards in terms of subject matter, language, and use of gesture."
- 3) **Supervision:** To compete in the National Tournament, each student must be supervised by an adult approved by the principal. The adult supervisor must be the student's coach, a school district faculty member or administrator, or the child's own parent(s). Coaches from other school districts may not be the adult supervisor without prior written permission of both school district superintendents submitted to the NSDA before the entry will be accepted.
- 4) **Fees:** Payment must accompany your registration materials. The entry fee in main events has been lowered to \$75 per student for this online competition year. See below:

Policy, Public Forum, or Duo Entry	\$150 per entry
Speech, Lincoln-Douglas, or Congress Entry	\$75 per entry
World Schools District Team	\$75 per student
Big Questions Debate	\$75 per student
Supplemental Events <i>Expository, Prepared Prompt, Poetry, Prepared Commentary, Storytelling, Prose, Pro Con Challenge, Original Spoken Word Poetry, or Extemporaneous Debate</i>	\$25 for each event entered <i>No entry limits; students may enter as many events as they wish. Students may enter in both supplemental speech and Extemporaneous Debate.</i>

A refund in full is available upon cancellation in writing received by the national office before May 15, and 50% upon cancellation before May 22. No refunds thereafter.

- 5) **Deadline:** The **ENTIRE** online entry **MUST** be completed and required payment postmarked via certified mail by **May 15**. Only registrations complete with respect to every essential item will be accepted. Late or incomplete entries and each entry lacking signatures or payment in full will be subject to a \$200 late fee, or denial of entry. **Alternates will be notified of available vacant slots starting May 15. Alternates have seven (7) days to commit to entry once notified, or they will forfeit their qualification.** Deadline for registration of alternates is May 22.
- 6) **Congressional Debate:** District chairs are encouraged to **UPLOAD** one or two items of legislation (preferably, one bill and one resolution) by April 1. The district chair must verify that the submitted legislation is the original work of the student(s) in their district or risk various penalties (see page 108). Legislation is reviewed to ensure it adheres to Association guidelines, and blindly vetted by a committee who rates and selects legislation from a variety of geographic regions. **The national docket will be released on the Association's website by May 10.** Judges interested in adjudicating Congress should select "prefer Congress" and/or "Qualified Parliamentarian" in their National Tournament registration. **Note:** Service as a parliamentarian is only a two-day commitment.

- 7) **Original Oratory and Informative Speaking:** Entrants must **UPLOAD a copy of their manuscript and works cited page during online registration, signed by the contestant and the coach**, certifying the speech is the student's original work. **Note:** No more than 150 words may be quoted from other sources. Extensive paraphrasing from other sources is prohibited. **The document MUST include a complete work cited page in MLA or APA format.** Something must be uploaded in the Nationals registration system by the May 15 deadline, but script uploads may be edited and completed by June 14.
- a. **Interpretation (HI, DI, Duo, and POI):** Entrants must **UPLOAD** the typed copy of their cutting with any word omissions or additions identified in ink **AND** the highlighted manuscript of the original source use during online registration. The photocopy of the original source includes the cover, publication page, and all original pages in the order in which they are performed with spoken words highlighted and additions or deletions clearly marked. All POI entries must include a works cited page with their upload. There will be no collection of original source documents, nor will there be an additional script turn-in process for quarterfinalists. Something must be uploaded in the Nationals registration system by the May 15 deadline, but script uploads may be edited and completed by June 13.
- 8) **No Double Entry:** A contestant may enter only one main event category. The exception is students entered in Duo Interpretation. Students who qualify in Duo may enter both the live and split-screen divisions of Duo.
- 9) **Supplemental Event Entry:** **For the 2021 National Tournament only, every member school that participates in the district tournament series will have the opportunity to enter up to two non-qualifying students in supplemental events at the online 2021 National Tournament. These students must have attended the district tournament but not earned qualification in any event. This applies to every school that participated in the district tournament, regardless of whether they qualified students to the National Tournament, and it only applies to the 2021 National Tournament.** Students may pre-register for in as many supplemental events as they wish. There are no entry limits in supplemental events; students may pre-register in both supplemental speech events and Extemporaneous Debate. There is a pre-registration fee of \$25 per event. All students entering supplemental events are required to pre-register with the national office before May 15. Re-registration for Extemp Debate will take place online through Tabroom.com on Wednesday during the National Tournament. In Extemp Debate, coaches will verify that their students are eligible and will participate in the event. If a student chooses not to compete after re-registration in Extemp Debate has been confirmed, the school will be assessed a drop fee. There is no re-registration process for supplemental speech events; adding a link to a student's video in Tabroom.com counts as re-registering a student in supplemental speech events.
- 10) **World Schools Debate:** All NSDA districts are allowed to qualify **up to three teams** of three to five students using the procedures outlined in the *High School Unified Manual*. The deadline for the district chair to officially name a team is May 15. The entry fee is \$75 per. Each district must provide a full-time judge per team available for the entirety of the competition. Districts that do not provide a full-time judge per team will not be permitted to enter. **Note: For the 2021 National Tournament, each district is allowed to qualify up to THREE teams to the National Tournament.**
- 11) **Big Questions Debate:** All NSDA districts are allowed to qualify **one entry** using the procedures outlined in the *High School Unified Manual* as long as the event occurs before May 1. Only entries composed of individual debaters may compete at Nationals. The cost of entry is \$75 per student. Each district must provide a full-time judge for each entry available for the entirety of the competition.
- 12) **"Entry Release Forms":** Once you've printed and obtained signatures for ALL students competing, please **UPLOAD** these forms as part of online registration. **DO NOT** mail these forms.
- 13) **Mailing:** Send the required registration materials and fees via certified mail **postmarked** no later than May 15, to: **National Speech & Debate Association, 401 Railroad Place, West Des Moines, IA 50265-4730.** *NOTE: Nothing needs to be mailed except payment if paying by check.*
- 14) **Order Nationals T-Shirts:** Purchase Nationals t-shirts to commemorate the online 2021 National Tournament! T-shirts may be pre-ordered in your school's Tabroom.com online registration OR by visiting

www.speechanddebate.org/store by May 15. T-shirts will be mailed to the address provided in your school's Tabroom.com registration free of charge.

- 15) **Judging Information:** All judges must be available to judge every round of the day they are assigned. All judges are eligible to judge supplemental events regardless of main event assignment.
- A. **Minimum Judge Requirement Per School:** Each school is required to cover a minimum of two judge days with a judge as a condition for entry to the National Tournament. Schools that do not furnish a judge will be assessed a minimum penalty of \$700.
 - B. **Judge Eligibility:** One judge may cover a maximum of 3 days of judging. Judges must have graduated or left high school before July 31, 2019 or earlier. Judges must have a Tabroom.com account before they may be registered. Ineligible judges being entered into the judging pool will result in a penalty of \$700 per ineligible judge.
 - C. **Policy Debate:** 2 days per entry. A school with one team registered owes 2 days, two teams owes 4 days, 3 teams owes 6 days, etc. Policy Debate judge days may not be bought out; schools must provide qualified judges to cover their obligation. All Policy Debate judges must complete a paradigm card through the Tabroom.com Nationals registration system by May 1. A judge registered in the Policy Debate pool should plan to be available Monday through Thursday. Each judge will be notified which of these days they are judging the week prior to the tournament.
 - D. **Public Forum Debate:** A school with one team entered owes 2 days. A school with two teams entered owes 3 days. A school with three teams entered owes 4 days. A school with four teams entered owes 5 days. Public Forum Debate judge days may not be bought out; schools must provide qualified judges to cover their obligation. A judge registered in the Public Forum Debate pool should plan to be available Monday through Thursday. Each judge will be notified which of these days they are judging the week prior to the tournament.
 - E. **Lincoln-Douglas Debate:** A school with one entry owes 2 days. A school with two entries owes 3 days. A school with three entries owes 4 days. A school with four entries owes 5 days. Lincoln-Douglas Debate judge days may not be bought out; schools must provide qualified judges to cover their obligation. All Lincoln-Douglas Debate judges must complete a paradigm card through the Tabroom.com Nationals registration system by May 1. A judge registered in the Lincoln-Douglas Debate pool should plan to be available Monday through Thursday. Each judge will be notified which of these days they are judging the week prior to the tournament.
 - F. **Speech:** Each speech entry (including each entry of Duo if double-entered) accrues one day of judging owed. A school with one entry owes 1 day, two entries owes 2 days, three entries owes 3 days, etc. Speech judge days may be bought out for \$120 per day. A judge registered in the Speech pool should plan to be available Monday through Wednesday. Each judge will be notified which of these days they are judging the week prior to the tournament.
 - G. **Congressional Debate:** Each Congress entry accrues one day of judging owed. A school with one entry owes 1 day, two entries owes 2 days, three entries owes 3 days, etc. Congress judge days may be bought out for \$120 per day. A judge covering one day of a Congress obligation should expect to judge two sessions. Judges who prefer to judge Congress should mark it as their preference in the Nationals registration system. A judge registered in the Congressional Debate pool should plan to be available Monday through Thursday. Each judge will be notified which of these days they are judging the week prior to the tournament.
 - H. **World Schools Debate:** Each district team must supply one full-time judge per team that is available for the entirety of the tournament from Monday through Thursday. This judge may not be bought out.
 - I. **Big Questions Debate:** Each school with an entry must supply one full-time judge that is available for the entirety of the tournament from Monday through Thursday. This judge may not be bought out.
 - J. **Supplemental Events:** A school that pre-registers 1-2 entries owes one day. A school that pre-registers 3-4 entries owes 2 days. A school that pre-registers 5-6 entries owes 3 days. A school that pre-registers 7-8 judges owes 4 days, etc. One student entered in three events counts as three distinct entries. Supplemental judge days may be bought out for \$120 per day. Each judge will be notified which of these days they are judging the week prior to the tournament.
 - K. **Judge Bond:** Each school must post a judge bond of \$200. This bond is in addition to entry fees and judge fees. If all judges from a school complete all judging assignments, including semifinal round judging assignments, the \$200 will be returned by July 31 in the form of a check MAILED to the school or issued as a

school credit. You can log in to your Tabroom.com account to view your selection (mailed check or school credit). No judge bonds will be returned in cash and no checks will be returned at the tournament. If a check is not requested during the registration process, a credit will be issued automatically, if due. Failure to report for a judging assignment or pooling assignment will forfeit your judge bond of \$200 for the first round missed, and a \$100 per judge per round penalty will be assessed thereafter. A school will not be permitted to gain membership or compete the following year unless all outstanding fees have been paid. Note: to ensure financial security and appropriate auditing practices, judge bonds will no longer be returned at the national tournament.

General Rules

Eligibility and Qualification

1. **Events:** The tournament shall consist of main event contests in Policy Debate, Public Forum Debate, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Congressional Debate–Senate, Congressional Debate–House of Representatives, International Extemporaneous Speaking, United States Extemporaneous Speaking, Original Oratory, Informative Speaking, Dramatic Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, Live Duo Interpretation, Split-Screen Duo Interpretation, Program Oral Interpretation, and World Schools Debate. Supplemental contests may be conducted. Fees and judging requirements are established each year by the Board of Directors.
2. **Qualification:** National qualification shall be determined by district National Qualification Levels enumerated in the *District Tournament Operations Manual*.
3. **Auto-Qualification:** In any given year at the National Tournament, any student who places in the top 14 in any main event, top 8 of World Schools debate, or top 4 in Big Questions Debate, has not completed more than six semesters of high school, and is still enrolled in high school (as a student in good standing) may enter the following year's National Tournament in the same solo event or in the same team event with the same partner. The district will permit an auto-qualified student to participate in the district contest and to double enter as specified by the district's uniform double-entry policies. No rule regarding double entry may be violated by auto-qualification. The entry must indicate acceptance of the auto-qualification through their *Single Entry Letter of Intent* prior to its district competition. The district chair should notify the national office of acceptance of the auto-qualification in reporting district results. A student who accepts auto-qualification may double-enter based on rules above but must sign the single letter of intent, which is binding, in favor of the event of their auto-qualification. If the entry signs the single letter of intent and rejects auto-qualification, the results of the district contest are binding.
4. **Double Qualification:** A student may not qualify for, or enter in, more than one main event. The exception is students entered in Duo Interpretation. Students who qualify in Duo may enter both the live and split-screen divisions of Duo.
5. **Alternates:** If qualifier(s) do not register for the National Tournament by the established and published deadline date, alternate(s) may, in order of finish at the district tournament, register and attend the tournament. The top 14 contestants (teams) in order of finish in each event at the district tournament shall be designated as qualifiers and/or alternates.
6. **Eligibility:** Any student who has attended a secondary school more than nine semesters cannot be entered into the National Tournament. Any student who is not an Association member cannot be entered into the National Tournament. No student may participate in the National Tournament who has not met the age and eligibility requirement of their state activities association. If a student has already qualified to come to the National Tournament before they graduate, they will be allowed to attend the National Tournament, but no student may return from college and participate in a district tournament. Graduation is defined as the receiving of a diploma or its equivalent, or notice of a passing GED test score.

Overarching Competition Rules

1. **Round Zero:** All entries in main speech and main debate events must be present for a round zero on their first days of competition. There will be a round zero for both divisions of Duo. This is a mandatory practice round that will be

judged, scored, and NSDA point-earning. It will not affect results for the main tournament. In Congress, there is a mandatory opening meeting.

2. **Attendance/Forfeit:** All debate events (CON, PF, LD, CX, WSD, BQ, Extemp Debate) and all live speech events (main speech excluding split-screen Duo) require student attendance. Supplemental speech events do not require student attendance. A contestant who does not appear at the scheduled time shall be marked last. A debate team more than 15 minutes late shall forfeit the decision. All forfeits should be communicated to tournament officials, not marked by the judge. The Rules Adjudication Panel may waive these penalties for valid reasons.
3. If a student/team competes in the wrong contest section or against the wrong opponent, at no fault of their opponent or the tournament officials, that student/team will automatically receive last or will receive a loss for that particular round.
4. **Backdrops and Technology:** Competitors may not use green screens, virtual backgrounds, or on-screen text. Professional equipment enhancements may not be used. Professional equipment includes professional lighting kits, professional grade camera recording and audio devices, and softboxes. Students are welcome to perform on their school's auditorium stage, but the use of stage lighting is not permitted. Lavalier microphones and ring lights are permitted. Backdrops of a solid color with no special markings may be used by competitors and judges.
5. **Tabroom.com Account:** Every judge and competitor in the National Tournament is required to create a Tabroom.com account. No student or judge will be able to compete in the tournament without a Tabroom.com account with valid contact (phone/email) information.
6. **Observers:** No virtual in-round observers will be permitted in any round. Because the tournament is only accessible via login information received by tournament competitors and judges, observers will not be able to access competition space. Any unauthorized persons will be immediately removed from that competition room by tournament officials.
7. **Recording Rounds:** Participants and judges are prohibited from recording any rounds.
8. **Judges:** Main event preliminary debates and speech events shall be judged by two judges; elimination rounds by three judges; semifinals by five. World Schools Debate will have one judge in preliminary debates. **In final rounds of debate, any odd number 9 or greater judges will be assigned by the tournament director in consultation with the local host and Board of Directors. In final rounds of speech events, at least 13 judges will be assigned by the tournament director in consultation with the local host and Board of Directors, with a minimum of one high and low rank dropped to allow for 11 final round ballots to be counted. Judges must have graduated or left high school before July 31, 2019 or earlier to be eligible. Ineligible judges' schools will incur a \$700 fine.** The first ballot missed by a judge from a school will result in the loss of the judge bond. A \$100 per judge per round penalty is assessed when a judge misses each subsequent judging assignment. Judges assigned by the tournament committee shall be final unless protested in writing for cause.
9. **Judge Process:** Judges who are obligated to judge on a particular day will check in prior to each round that day in the judge pooling room. Judges must show up to the pooling room prior to each round that day even if they were not assigned to a round. Roll will be called, and any judge not present will incur a fine for their school. The first time a judge fails to be present for judge pooling, their school will lose their judge bond. For each subsequent round a judge fails to be present for judge pooling, a \$100 per judge per round penalty is assessed. Judges assigned by the tournament committee shall be final unless protested in writing for cause.
10. **Internet Rules:** Review the "Guidelines for Use of Internet Enabled Devices" in debate, Congress, and Extemp. These guidelines permitting the use of internet will be used at the 2021 National Tournament. The internet rules for debate do not apply to World Schools Debate.
11. **Protests:** Protests are filed using the online protest form. The form includes:
 - a. Name of the school advisor or authorized adult representative(s) filing protest and school, city, state. To file a protest, the advisor or adult representative must be on site. School advisors may appoint one or more adult representatives who are permitted to file protests in case the advisor is absent or incapable of filing a

protest due to a tournament-related commitment. Authorized adult representatives must be approved by the school's administration and explicitly appointed prior to the tournament.

- b. Code of person/team being protested.
- c. Round being protested.
- d. Section/room and speaker number of person/team being protested.
- e. Specific infraction being protested described with supporting detail.

After the infraction has been observed/discovered, the protest must be filed in a timely manner. After filing a protest, the coach must report to the Rules Adjudication Panel holding room. For coaches initiating protests, **decisions of the Rules Adjudication Panel are final**. Coaches may not appeal the decision of the Rules Adjudication Panel. If a perceived violation occurs in a subsequent round, another protest may be filed.

12. **Disqualification:** In case of a disqualification of a contestant in the National Tournament, all previous ranks and decisions of other contestants stand and no revision of past round ranks will take place.
13. **Cumulative Trophy Points:** Each time a student appears in a debate or a main event contest, their school shall receive one trophy point. Trophy points shall accumulate from year to year, and the participating school with the largest total at the conclusion of each tournament shall receive the Bruno E. Jacob award sponsored by Pi Kappa Delta.
14. **Interpretation Material:** The interpretation cutting performed in the first round of competition must be used throughout the entirety of the tournament in that event (DI, HI, Duo, POI, Prose, Poetry, Storytelling). If a main event (DI, HI, Duo, POI) cutting is changed between the date it is submitted online and registration, a new cutting must be reported and submitted to the national office prior to the end of registration.
15. **Harassment and Discrimination Policy:** The National Speech & Debate Association is committed to providing its participants, judges, coaches, and staff the opportunity to pursue excellence in their endeavors. This opportunity can exist only when each member of our community is assured an atmosphere of mutual respect. The NSDA prohibits all forms of harassment and discrimination. Accordingly, all forms of harassment and discrimination, whether written or oral, based on race, color, religion, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, marital status, citizenship, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or any other characteristic protected by any applicable federal, state, or local law are prohibited, whether committed by participants, judges, coaches, or observers. Individuals who are found to have violated this policy will be subject to the full range of sanctions, up to and including removal from the tournament premises.
16. **Tournament Adjustments:**
 - a. Under no circumstance shall a tournament or part of a tournament be re-run because of a violation of these rules.
 - b. In the case of a disqualification of a contestant, all previous ranks and decisions of other contestants stand and no revision of past round ranks will take place.
17. **Tabulation Errors:** If a tab room error in speech events at the National Tournament results in a contestant being incorrectly eliminated from the tournament, that contestant will be reinstated to the tournament at the earliest possible time once the error has been discovered. If the final round is completed, the contestant will be placed at a point one round beyond their elimination. Any awards that might have been earned at that point will be given. If a tab room error prevents contestants from participating in the final round because of a tab room error in the semifinal round, their final placement will be based on their accumulated ranks prior to the final round. If a tab room error at the National Tournament results in an announcement at the awards assembly of an incorrect placement in an event, no contestant's place will be lowered. Contestants whose ranks justify a higher position will be awarded the correct place and award. Ties may result.
18. **Merit Points:**
 - a. In preliminary rounds:
 - i. Main debate events with 2 judges: Win (2 judges) = 10 pts.; Split (1-1) = 8 pts.; Loss (0-2) = 7 pts.
 - ii. Main debate events with 1 judge: Win = 10 pts; Loss = 7 pts.
 - iii. Speech:
two judge totals of 2 or 3 = 10 pts.; 4 or 5 = 9 pts.; 6 or 7 = 8 pts.; 8 or 9 = 7 pts.; 10+ = 6 pts.

b. In elimination rounds:

i. Debate: Win = 10 pts.; Loss = 7 pts.

ii. Events	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th/7th
Speech	10	9	8	7	6
Supplemental	6	5	4	3	2

c. In Congress: average of points awarded by official scorers, on a scale of 3-9 points per speech and complete hour of presiding.

d. Bonus: (to national winners): 1st = 15 pts.; 2nd = 10 pts.; 3rd = 5 pts.

Tournament Procedures for Debate Events

The following rules apply to Public Forum, Lincoln-Douglas, and Policy Debate events.

General Rules and Instructions

- School Consent Form:** Every school that has students in a partner or team event that plan to compete in the same physical room must upload proof that their school administration is aware that entries will be competing in the same room and that you are complying with the school's safety requirements. A Consent Form with language will be provided on Tabroom.com for your school to sign off on. On Tabroom.com, coaches can upload a signed copy of the form or a screenshot of an email where the administrator approves the language on this form. Students will not be permitted to compete in the same room unless this form is uploaded; competing in the same room without this form is grounds for disqualification.
- Preparation Time:** Main event rules from the Unified Manual, beginning on p. 23, will be used with the following changes:
 - Policy Debate preparation time will be 8 minutes per team.
 - Public Forum Debate preparation time will be 4 minutes per team. Note: Summary speeches are 3 minutes.
 - Lincoln-Douglas Debate preparation time will be 5 minutes per debater.
 - Big Questions Debate preparation time will be 4 minutes per debater.
- Entries:** An entry is defined as a team of two Policy or Public Forum debaters, or an individual Lincoln-Douglas debater. No substitution is allowed.
- Codes:** Entries are identified by a random alphanumerical code.
- Round Check In Time:** Thirty minutes prior to each round start time, students and judges must report to their online competition room. This time will be used to report any missing participants, resolve any technology issues, and create an email chain if applicable. In flighted debate events (BQ, PF, LD), students from both flights must check in to their online competition room 30 minutes prior to the first flight's start time. Judges will give flight 2 debaters a time to return to the online competition room with their video and microphone off.
- Partner to Partner Communication:** Partners may communicate during the round using whatever means they deem appropriate, e.g., phone call, instant messaging, etc.
- Outside Assistance:** Receiving outside assistance from any non-participant in the round, including coaches, teammates, and family members, is strictly prohibited.
- Advancement/Elimination:** Entries are guaranteed six preliminary rounds; those who have won 8 or more ballots compete in rounds 7 and 8. Beginning with round 7, an entry is eliminated as soon as it loses two debates.
- Prompting Philosophy:** Oral prompting, except time signals, either by the speaker's colleague or by any other person while the debater has the floor, is discouraged, though not prohibited, and may be penalized by some judges. Debaters may, however, refer to their notes and materials and may consult with their teammate while they do not have the floor or during Public Forum Grand Crossfire.
- Timing:** Timekeepers are an option but not required. If no timekeeper is used, debaters may time for their partners or the judge may keep time. See rules for each event, particular to preparation time.
- Reading Case and/or Plan:** An entry may decide, when asked by the opponent entry for a copy of their case and/or plan, whether or not to provide it; if the team refuses they will not be penalized in any way. Entries must share evidence if requested; review the Evidence Rules in the *High School Event Rules Manual*.
- Oral Critiques:** No debate ballot may be submitted without a written reason for decision. Oral commentary is not considered a substitute for the written ballot. The Association strongly discourages judges from disclosing decisions in the preliminary round of competition. Comments made by a judge (orally or written) should be constructive and professional.

13. Judges:

1. Two computer-assigned judges will be used in all preliminary rounds; three judges in elim rounds prior to semifinals. World Schools Debate will have one judge in preliminary rounds.
2. In semifinals, five judges are assigned who have been nominated for semifinals by the district chairs. The semifinal is any round that may result in the finalists being determined upon its conclusion.
3. In the final round, any odd number 9 or greater judges will be assigned by the tournament director in consultation with the local host and Board of Directors.

14. Conflicts: Contestants in any debate event who are about to be judged by someone who has taught them at any time must report that fact immediately to the ombudsperson. Failure to comply may result in disqualification. Judges **must** recuse themselves from judging a student under the following conditions:

1. The judge and the student may be perceived to have a competitive or financial agreement that may bias the judge's impartial evaluation of the round. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - A. The student attends a school (or a collaboration of schools) that the judge attended, coached for, or competed with. **NOTE:** Two potential exceptions to this guideline would be that if the Rules Adjudication Panel felt that enough time has passed since that judge's attendance at the school to resolve concerns of impropriety. In addition, if both coaches felt comfortable with a judge that graduated from a school of one of the competitors, the tab room may allow that judge placement.
 - B. The judge has a paid or unpaid coaching, consulting, or judging relationship with the student or school during the same academic year. **NOTE:** Serving a tournament-hired judge does not constitute a conflict of interest.
 - C. The judge has received or provided expressed or implied offers to provide future coaching, consulting, or judging to a school or student.
 - D. The judge has provided exclusive pre-round preparation to a student either before or during a tournament through any method including electronically, verbally, or through the transfer of resources. **NOTE:** Sharing of information does not constitute preparation but the discussion of strategies, arguments, evidence, etc., would constitute preparation. If such preparation is provided during a tournament, the judge should immediately (before pairings are released) recuse themselves from judging the student they prepared for the rest of the tournament. If practice rounds before or during the tournament has occurred between schools that a judge is fulfilling obligations for and could potentially judge, that would be defined as preparation and all parties should consider that a conflict.
2. The judge and the student may be perceived to have a personal or social arrangement that may bias the judge's impartial evaluation of the round. Examples include but are not limited to:
 - A. The judge and the student may be perceived to have had a personal relationship that may bias the judge's impartial evaluation of the round.
 - B. The judge and the student are or have been in a familial, physical, or emotional relationship.
 - C. The judge and the student have communications of a personal nature over email, telephone, or the internet including social networking sites that goes beyond causal exchanges. For example, communications that are extensive and/or repetitive may create a conflict. Judges who socialize with the student outside of the competition arena are considered to have established a personal or social relationship with that student.
3. The judge does not believe they are able to fairly and impartially adjudicate a competition involving a particular student for whatever reason.

Judges may **choose** to recuse themselves from adjudicating a student under the following conditions. (If these conditions exist, it is the affirmative duty of the judge to make such information publicly available prior to the round beginning.)

1. The judge shares transportation and/or lodging with the student's team on a regular basis.
2. The judge has a personal, financial, or familial relationship with the student's coach or member of the student's family.

3. The judge is an administrator of, currently employed by, or anticipates employment from a forensic-related enterprise with whom a financial or advisory relationship exists or is sought with the student. **NOTE:** While these guidelines do not prohibit lab leaders/institute staff from judging their lab students. However, if those lab leaders maintain consistent contact with those students and/or engage in personal relationships with them, they should recuse themselves from judging those specific individuals.

The expectation of competitors, judges, and coaches is to engage in the highest levels of professionalism and integrity. While the responsibility is on judges to aide transparency, the responsibility exists for coaches and student competitors as well. It is the affirmative duty of all coaches and debaters to assist efforts in transparency. No decisions will be modified as a result of disclosed information.

15. **Scouting:** Scouting is strongly discouraged.

Protocol for States with Seven or More Districts

Beginning with the 2017-2018 school year: For the purposes of better facilitating pairing and judge placement procedures at the National Tournament, any state that has seven (7) or more NSDA districts will be as evenly divided as possible into two separate groups. The districts will be divided by the national office based on geographic location and district size equalization.

Debate Pairing Instructions

I. Pairing Priorities

These take absolute precedence over pairing methods. Priorities are more important than side alternation.

- A. The first priority is the drawing of byes.
- B. The second priority is to avoid the pairing of teams from the same school.
- C. The third priority is to avoid the pairing of teams who have met previously in the tournament, except to avoid the pairing of teams from the same school.
- D. The fourth priority is to avoid the pairing of teams from the same state except to avoid pairing teams from the same school or teams who met earlier (waived after round 11).

II. Drawing of Byes

- A. Once a bye has been correctly drawn, it cannot be changed.
- B. All teams eligible for a bye must be included in the drawing.
- C. Until three teams remain, byes shall first be drawn from teams losing to a team still undefeated. If no remaining teams have lost to undefeateds or if team(s) losing to an undefeated have had previous bye(s), a blind draw shall take place among once defeated team(s) which have had no bye.
- D. When only 3 teams remain and only one is undefeated, that team must get the bye, even if it has had a previous bye.
- E. No team may refuse a bye.

III. Steps in Pairing

When pairing debate rounds at the National Tournament, the following order of business should be followed unless they violate the pairing priorities above.

- A. The first step is the drawing of byes.
- B. The second step is the pairing of undefeated teams.
- C. The third step is the selection of a once-defeated team to meet an undefeated team, if necessary.
- D. The fourth step is the pairing of once-undefeated teams.

IV. Pairing of Guaranteed Rounds

- A. A preset schedule for the first six preliminary rounds of the National Tournament will be prepared by computer.
- B. Each team shall uphold three affirmatives and three negatives unless byed, except Public Forum rounds that always flip to determine sides.

- C. Byes, if necessary, are to be selected at random. No school or team may receive more than one bye in the six guaranteed rounds.

V. Qualification for Elimination Rounds

- A. Each debate in the six preliminary rounds will be judged by two judges.
- B. Each team will count ballots cast in its favor [byes count as two ballots; receiving a forfeit win counts as two ballots].
- C. Any team who wins eight ballots or more qualifies for elimination rounds 7 and 8.

VI. Rounds 7 and 8

- A. The qualifying teams shall begin rounds 7 and 8 with a clear record (0-0). Each team shall be affirmative in one round and negative in the other, unless byed.
- B. Pairings shall be made at random, but:
 - 1. No team shall be paired against its own school.
 - 2. Teams who have met previously shall not be paired.
 - 3. Teams from the same state shall not be paired.
- C. After round 8, those teams losing both rounds 7 and 8 are eliminated. The remaining teams continue until losing a second time or reaching the final round.
- D. No team shall be eliminated before losing twice or losing the final round.

VII. Pairing Methods for Subsequent Rounds

Philosophy: A team is an independent unit and shall be paired and assigned sides based upon its own record. The opponents debated, sides debated, or byes drawn by other teams from its school are irrelevant and must NOT be used when pairing or assigning sides.

- A. Pairing the Undefeated Bracket
 - 1. Pair undefeated teams against undefeated teams.
 - 2. Teams should alternate sides, if possible; however, alternation of sides is not one of the core priorities.
 - 3. Pairing procedure in Lincoln-Douglas and Policy Debate:
 - a. The computer will first pair the undefeated bracket, alternating sides where possible.
 - b. If there is an odd number of undefeated teams, one randomly-chosen once-defeated team who is due to uphold side opposite the odd undefeated team will be assigned to that round. If this pairing creates a conflict in pairing priorities, the computer will randomly choose a different once-defeated team who is due the appropriate side.
 - c. If there are no once-defeated teams who are due to uphold the side opposite the odd undefeated team, a randomly-chosen once-defeated team who is not due will be assigned to the round. If this pairing creates a conflict in pairing priorities, the computer will randomly choose a different once-defeated team.
 - d. Teams who have debated an unequal number of affirmative and negative debates **are considered due** the side in which they have participated in the least, these side constraints **CANNOT** violate the priorities listed above in pairing priority rule I which are substantially more important. When a team has debated an equal number of affirmative and negative debates, the team is considered eligible for either side in the next round, and side alternation from the previous round is **NOT A PRIORITY** and should not be considered in pairing.
 - 4. Pairing *Procedure in Public Forum Debate*: The computer will first pair the undefeated bracket. If there is an odd number of undefeated teams, it will assign a randomly-chosen team from the once-defeated bracket to that round.
 - 5. Teams from the same school shall not be paired in the undefeated bracket unless,
 - a. They are the last two undefeated teams, or
 - b. The last three undefeated teams, or
 - c. Three of the last four undefeated teams, or

- d. A majority of the undefeated teams (after a bye, if any,) has been drawn.
- B. *Pairing the Once-Defeated Bracket.*
 1. Pair once-defeated teams (except that one once-defeated team may be drawn to meet an undefeated) against once defeated teams.
 2. Teams should alternate sides, if possible.
 3. Pairing Procedure in Lincoln-Douglas and Policy Debate:
 - a. The computer will randomly pair the remaining once-defeated teams. The computer will attempt to give teams the side they are due to uphold.
 - b. If there is an uneven number of teams due to debate one side, the computer will randomly choose teams not to uphold the side they are due.
 - c. Every effort should be made to adhere to pairing priorities as listed in Section I.
 4. Pairing Procedure in Public Forum Debate: The computer will randomly pair the once defeated bracket.
 5. **Teams** who have met previously should not be paired unless too few teams remain. Too few teams shall be deemed to remain when no combination of pairings can be constructed where all teams are meeting for the first time without leaving the bracket.
 6. Teams from the same school shall not be paired unless,
 - a. They are the last two once-defeated teams, or
 - b. They are the last 3 once-defeated teams.
 - c. Two of the last three once-defeated teams and other team draws a bye.
 - d. Three of the last 4 once-defeated teams, or
 - e. Three of the last 5 once defeated teams and one of the other two teams draws a bye.

VIII. Assignment of Sides

Sides are assigned in Policy and Lincoln-Douglas Debate. Each team operates as an independent unit. Side assignments are NOT based on sides debated by other teams from its school. *Side assignment is less important than other pairing priorities.*

- A. Side alternation is not a priority. However, in the prelim rounds each team **should** debate an equal number of rounds as the affirmative and negative team. A bye can create an unequal number. Also, in rounds 7 and 8, each debate must debate each side once.
- B. No team should be assigned to debate three times in succession on the same side unless *pairing priorities* force this to happen. Priority D is waived after round 11.
- C. If **teams** meet a second time, they must reverse sides.
- D. If **teams** meet a third time:
 1. If both have had an unequal number of "affirmatives" and "negatives" and the less debated sides are opposite, each shall be assigned the less debated side.
 2. If one team has an uneven number of "affirmatives" and "negatives," and the other team an equal number, the team with the uneven number shall be assigned its less debated side and the other assigned the opposite side.
 3. If both teams have an equal number of "affirmatives" and "negatives" and are, therefore, due to uphold the same side, or if both teams have an unequal number, and both have debated more on the same side and less on the other, then sides shall be assigned by blind draw.

Note: Sides are not assigned in Public Forum Debate. Every round is a flip round.

IX. Elimination and Final Round

- A. Beginning with round 7, double elimination shall be in effect until there are two teams remaining.
- B. When two teams remain, they shall be assigned to a final round. The decision of that round shall determine the national debate champion.
- C. Determining 3rd - 14th place:
 1. Placement shall be determined by the most number of rounds. Byes and forfeit wins count as rounds debated.

2. When contestants are eliminated in the same round, placement shall be determined by total ballot count throughout the elimination rounds. Byes shall count as many ballots as judges in each debate in the round where the bye occurred. Forfeits shall not count toward ballot count.
3. If still tied, placement shall be determined by total ballot count throughout the preliminary rounds. Byes shall count as many ballots as judges in each debate in the round where the bye occurred. Forfeits shall not count toward ballot count.
4. If still tied, placement shall be determined by the winner of a previous meeting between the two teams in the elimination rounds.
5. If the tied teams did not meet in the elimination rounds, placement shall be determined by the winner of previous meeting in the preliminary rounds, if one of the teams won both ballots.
6. If still tied, both contestants will receive the same placement and the same award.

XI. Tabulation of Speaker Points (Policy Debate and Lincoln-Douglas Debate only)

- A. Each ballot is to be recorded. If ballots are submitted with incomplete information, every attempt should be made to get information in order to complete ballot tabulations. Averages will be used if ballots remain incomplete.
- B. Determination of the top speakers shall proceed as follows:
 1. Drop high and low ballots from 12 total ballots of 6 preliminary rounds.
 2. Add up total speaker points from the remaining ballots of the guaranteed rounds (10 ballots).
- C. Tie-breaking procedures:
 1. Use total speaker points (12 ballots)
 2. Drop a second set of high-low ballots (8 ballots).
 3. The debater on the team advancing the furthest in the tournament.

Tournament Procedures for Main Speech Events

General Rules and Instructions

1. **Codes:** Entries are identified by a random alphanumerical code.
2. **Judges:**
 - a. Two computer-assigned judges will be used in all preliminary rounds; three judges will be used in elimination rounds prior to semifinals.
 - b. In semifinals, five judges are assigned who have been nominated for semifinals by district chairs.
 - c. In the final round, at least 13 judges will be assigned by the tournament director in consultation with the local host and Board of Directors. A minimum of one high and low rank will be dropped to allow for eleven ballots to be counted for the final round.
3. **Scripts:** Competitors in Interpretation events, Original Oratory, and Informative Speaking must upload appropriate materials during Nationals registration, found in the “Instructions for Registering” section above. It shall be the affirmative duty of each coach and each student entered to determine absolutely that the cutting or manuscript being performed meets Association rules.
4. **Live Performances:** Main speech event preliminary and elimination rounds will be held live with mandatory attendance with the exception of Split-Screen Duo. Split-Screen Duo will be held with asynchronous recordings and live judging; student attendance is welcome but not required in Split-Screen Duo.
5. **Backup Recordings:** Every competitor will have the opportunity to submit a link to a recording of their performance on Tabroom.com by June 1. This recording will be used as a backup in case a student is unable to perform live due to unresolvable technical difficulties during a round.
 - a. If a competitor experiences technical difficulty which dramatically impacts the judges’ ability to evaluate the first attempted run of the performance in a round, the competitor will be given a total of 20 minutes of tech solution time (the equivalent of two performances) to resolve the technical issues and perform again.
 - b. If it is not possible to resolve technical issues in that time, tournament officials will provide a link to that student’s pre-recorded video (if uploaded) for the judges and other competitors in that round to watch. If a student did not provide a backup video, the student will be ranked last in the round.
 - c. A student may use their backup video an unlimited number of times during the preliminary rounds and early elimination rounds.
 - d. In the rounds of 30, semis, and finals, the backup video may not be used, though the time to resolve technical issues will be extended to 30 minutes before a forfeit is issued.
6. **Recording Rules for Main Speech Backup Video Submission:** If any entry chooses to submit a backup recording (not required), the following rules pertain to that recording:
 - a. Recording links must be added to Tabroom.com by June 1.
 - b. Students may record their performance using any video recording site or software available to them (Zoom, Quicktime, camera or video app on a computer, etc.). Then, they will upload their recording to a site that creates a link to the video (YouTube, Google Drive, Vimeo, etc.).
 - c. Coaches will collect links to the students’ video recordings and copy/paste them into the student’s entry in their Nationals Tabroom.com registration.
 - d. Coaches and students should be mindful of privacy. These links will be accessible to judges and other students in the tournament. We recommend that coaches create a private team account to submit videos without students’ identifying information. For example, an “XYZ Speech Team” YouTube channel with unlisted videos or a Google drive account under the school’s name.
 - e. Coaches should double check that permissions on the video are appropriately set to allow anyone with the link to view it. After coaches paste the link in Tabroom, they should click the blue and white button to confirm that the link works.
 - f. Professional equipment enhancements may not be used. Professional equipment includes professional lighting kits, professional grade camera recording and audio devices, and softboxes. Students are welcome

to film their recording on their school's auditorium stage, but the use of stage lighting is not permitted. Lavalier microphones and ring lights are permitted.

- g. Recordings may not be edited using any software; all submissions must be non-stop footage of the entire performance.
- h. Students recording split-screen Duos may not record their performances separately and edit them together.
- i. Students may not trim a recording, even to remove the seconds that they walk to and from the recording device to push start/stop.
- j. The length of the recording must not exceed the time limit with the grace period.
- k. Competitors may not use green screens, virtual backgrounds, or on-screen text.
- l. The camera being used must remain stationary throughout the entire performance, and no zooming or panning is permitted.
- m. The camera must remain on throughout the duration of the performance; a student may not turn off their video at any point during their recording.
- n. The use of lighting tricks like shadow puppets are not permitted.
- o. Students may move closer to and further from the camera to simulate zooming, though the camera must remain stationary.
- p. Students may cover the camera with their hands or body.
- q. Students may move out of frame during the recording.
- r. Other individuals may be present while filming, but audience interaction (laughing, applause, etc.) must not be included in the performance.
- s. Competitors may determine how close or distant the camera is set up in order to maximize both verbal and nonverbal communication.
- t. If possible, it is recommended that students and judges remove items that may be distracting in the background. Backdrops of a solid color with no special markings may be used by competitors and judges.
- u. There will be no audit of uploads by NSDA staff; competitors are responsible for their own video.

7. Duo Interpretation: There will be two divisions of Duo Interpretation: Live Duo and Split-Screen Duo. Duo qualifiers may register in one or both of the two Duo divisions. Double-entered Duos will have the entry fees and judging obligations of two Duo entries. Double-entered teams may only advance to the semifinals of one Duo division. If a team is due to advance in the semis of both divisions, the coach contact in Tabroom will choose which division their team will advance in. Students entered in one Duo division may switch to the other Duo division without penalty through June 1.

- a. **Live Duo:** Partners in the live Duo division must perform within a single camera shot; live split-screen Duos will not be permitted.
 - i. Duo teams are expected to adhere to their school and local government safety protocols and requirements at all times. It is the fundamental responsibility of all sponsoring school administrations, coaches, parents of the performers, and competing students to ensure this compliance. To meet safety requirements, students may use protective measures such as face coverings and/or partitions while competing. Judges will be instructed that the use or lack of use of protective measures is NOT to impact their rankings.
 - ii. Every school that has an entry in the live Duo division must upload proof that their school administration is aware that entries will be competing in the same room and that you are complying with the school's safety requirements. A Consent Form with language will be provided on Tabroom.com for your school to sign off on. On Tabroom.com, coaches can upload a signed copy of the form or a screenshot of an email where the administrator approves the language on this form. Students will not be permitted to compete in live Duo unless this form is uploaded.
 - iii. Students may record a backup video of their performance to be used in the case of unresolvable technical difficulties during their live round. The backup video must feature the students performing within a single camera shot; split-screen Duo recordings may not be used as a backup.
 - iv. The attendance requirement, recording rules for the backup video, and procedures for using a backup recording in place of live performance will follow the same rules as the live main speech

events. Coaches will submit a link to the backup video through their school's Tabroom.com registration.

- b. **Split-Screen Duo:** Competitors will submit one split-screen recording of their performance. This one recording will be judged throughout preliminary rounds, elimination rounds, and finals.
- i. Judging will be completed live. All students whose performance recording is being played are welcome to attend each round, but are not required. Students will not be penalized if they do not attend the round. This is only true of the split-screen Duo division; attendance in all other main speech divisions is required.
 - ii. Like the 2020 National Tournament, videos will be uploaded to the competition room. Thirty minutes prior to each round, students who wish to attend and judges will report to their room. Judges will introduce the codes of the first videos listed on the page and ask others in the room to mute themselves and watch the video on their own. They will do the same thing for each video in the room.
 - iii. **Recording Rules for Split-Screen Duo:**
 1. Entries in the asynchronous Duo division will upload a split-screen recording of their performance through the Split-Screen Duo Submission Google Form. Split-screen Duo is the only event in which recordings will be captured via Google form rather than a link put into Tabroom. The original file must be uploaded to the Google form, not a link.
 2. Recording files must be no longer than 10 minutes and 30 seconds in length and no larger than 250 MB. MP4, MOV, WEBM, 3GPP, 3GPP2, FLV, WMV, and MPEG files will be accepted.
 3. Videos for Duo can be recorded on the platform of students' choice. Meeting platforms such as Zoom have proven to have the capability to create the side by side split screens and video file necessary for submission.
 4. Each partner MUST record their portion of the Duo from a different room (via a separate window) than their partner. This rule also applies to Duos who share the same residence.
 5. Students recording split-screen Duos may not record their performances separately and edit them together.
 6. Professional equipment enhancements may not be used. Professional equipment includes professional lighting kits, professional grade camera recording and audio devices, and softboxes. Students are welcome to film their recording on their school's auditorium stage, but the use of stage lighting is not permitted. Lavalier microphones and ring lights are permitted.
 7. Recordings may not be edited using any software; all submissions must be non-stop footage of the entire performance.
 8. Students may not trim a recording, even to remove the seconds that they walk to and from the recording device to push start/stop.
 9. The length of the recording must not exceed the time limit with the grace period.
 10. Competitors may not use green screens, virtual backgrounds, or on-screen text.
 11. The camera being used must remain stationary throughout the entire performance, and no zooming or panning is permitted.
 12. The camera must remain on throughout the duration of the performance; a student may not turn off their video at any point during their recording.
 13. The use of lighting tricks like shadow puppets are not permitted.
 14. Students may move closer to and further from the camera to simulate zooming, though the camera must remain stationary.
 15. Students may cover the camera with their hands or body.
 16. Students may move out of frame during the recording.
 17. Other individuals may be present while filming, but audience interaction (laughing, applause, etc.) must not be included in the performance.
 18. Competitors may determine how close or distant the camera is set up in order to maximize both verbal and nonverbal communication.

19. If possible, it is recommended that students and judges remove items that may be distracting in the background. Backdrops of a solid color with no special markings may be used by competitors and judges.

8. Extemporaneous Speaking: USX and IX will be performed live. In the semifinal and final rounds, speakers will observe the next speaker and cross-examine them for up to two minutes after their speech.

9. Extemp Draw Procedure: Prep rooms will be split by speaker order. Competitors will use the automatic draw system to select a question. They will prep with cameras on and microphones off. The proctor will send them to their competition rooms after prep concludes.

10. Time Signals: Competitors should be prepared to time themselves. Time signals will not be grounds for protest.

Speech Sectioning Instructions

I. Guaranteed Preliminary Rounds

Students in main event speech are guaranteed five rounds of preset preliminary rounds.

Sectioning: Guaranteed rounds will be randomly paired by computer:

1. *Pairings:* No student is placed in a section with another student from their same school, Association district, or state.
2. *Opposition:* Each student will meet different opposition in each round.
3. *Order:* Each student will be assigned a different speaker position each round.

II. Elimination Rounds:

A. Elimination Process:

1. After round 5, each main event will be reduced to the top 60 contestants determined on the basis of low total ranks in the six preliminary rounds. Ties will be broken using the priority system. (See rule VII.)
2. The top 60 contestants in each individual event will be guaranteed competition through round 7.
3. At the conclusion of round 7, each individual event will be reduced to the top thirty contestants determined by the total of judge ballots in rounds 6 and **7 only**. Ties will be broken using the priority system.
4. The top 30 contestants in each individual event will be guaranteed competition through round 9. Rounds 8 and 9 shall be known as the quarterfinals.
5. At the conclusion of round 9, each individual event will be reduced to the top 14 contestants determined by the total of judge ballots in rounds 6-9 *only*. Ties will be broken using the priority system.
6. The top 14 contestants in each individual event will be guaranteed competition through round 11. Rounds 10 and 11 shall be known as the semifinals.
7. At the conclusion of round 11, each individual event will be reduced to the top six contestants determined by the total of judge ballots in rounds 6-11. Ties will be broken on the basis of the priority system.
8. The top six contestants in each individual event will compete in the final round.
9. At the conclusion of the final round, the final placement of contestants will be determined on the basis of the low cumulative total of all judge ballots in rounds 6-11 plus eleven ballots from the final round after dropping at least one high and low rank for each contestant in the final round only.

B. Paneling:

A	B	C	D	E
1	2	3	4	5
10	9	8	7	6
11	12	13	14	15
20	19	18	17	16
21	22	23	24	25

1. *Number*: The number of panels in each event shall be as follows:

30	29	28	27	26
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 - a. Rounds 6 and 7: 10 panels of six contestants each.
 - b. Rounds 8 and 9: five panels of six contestants each.
 - c. Rounds 10 and 11: two panels of seven contestants each.
 - d. Round 12: one panel of six contestants
2. *Procedures*: Total each speaker's ranks. Then organize the contestants in order from low total to high total. Determine the number of panels. Section contestants in a back and forth (weave) pattern.
Example 1 – 5 panels (1 has the lowest total, 30 the highest total)

3. *Balance*: Pairing in the elimination rounds shall be balanced. The sum of contestant ranks in each section shall be equal or be close to equal.
4. *Adjustment*: Contestants should be changed from one panel to another to avoid (in the precedence listed):
 - a. Contestants from the same school in the same panel.
 - b. Contestants from the same district in the same panel (through octafinals).
 - c. Contestants with the lowest cumulative ranks total in the same panel.
 - d. Contestants who have competed against each other in preceding rounds.
 In later rounds, some of these conditions become unavoidable; however, each and every one should be avoided whenever possible.

III. Speaking Order

- A. *Philosophy*: Speaking order for contestants should be varied throughout the tournament.
 1. In the five guaranteed rounds, no contestant should be given a speaking position twice.
 2. In *all* elimination rounds speaking positions should be varied. A speaker should not repeat a speaking position until it becomes unavoidable.
- B. *Procedure*: To determine speaking order, total the speaker's positions in previous rounds on each speaker's card, and then arrange the cards in each section high to low. The higher numbers will speak in the top half of the round, and the lower numbers will speak in the bottom half. Adjust the cards within the framework so that a student speaks in a new position, if possible.

Example 2:

Speaker	Position				Total	Comment	Position Rd. 5
	Rd. 1	Rd. 2	Rd. 3	Rd. 4			
A	1	3	5	2	11	Low total; never 7	7
B	4	1	7	3	15	Never 5	5
C	2	6	7	4	19	High total; never 1	1
D	7	1	6	2	16	2nd high; never 3	3
E	5	3	2	4	14	Never 6	6
F	6	2	5	2	15	Never 4	4
G	3	7	4	1	15	Never 2	2

Note that G, F, B, have same total, yet speak 2, 4, 5 as adjustments are made to give them a new position.

- C. *Priority*: New positions for several speakers takes priority over exact high to low placement order.

Example 3:

Speaker	Position			Total	Comment	Position Rd. 4
	Rd. 1	Rd. 2	Rd. 3			
A	2	5	3	10	2nd highest; has been 2, 3	4
B	3	2	4	9	Middle; never 5	5
C	4	1	4	9	Never 3	3
D	4	3	1	8	Low; but never 2	2
E	6	3	2	11	High; never 1	1

- D. In Extemporaneous Speaking events, unless it is unavoidable, students from the same school shall not cross-examine one another. Speaker order should be adjusted accordingly.
- E. Speaking order in the final round of speech events shall be determined by random placement.

IV. Elimination Round Selection

- A. *Round 6 Selection:* On a low cumulative basis, totaling the 10 judges' ballots in the five preliminary, rounds 6 and 7 shall be composed of the top 102 contestants divided into 17 panels of six each. If ties in cumulative scores bring the number to over 102, the priority system shall break ties:
1. Greatest number of firsts, then seconds, then thirds, etc., in an individual judge's rankings.
 2. If ties cannot be resolved by the above method, those tied shall be included in elim rounds 8 and 9.
- B. *Round 8 Selection:* Using only the individual judge's ballots from rounds 6 and 7, round 8 shall be composed of the top 60 contestants divided into 10 panels of six each. If ties in cumulative scores bring the number to over 60, the following procedure shall be employed.
1. In a two-way tie if the participants have met, the tie is resolved in favor of the winner. If there is a multiple tie or the opponents have not met, then
 2. Greatest number of judges' firsts, seconds, thirds, etc., in elimination rounds only.
 3. Greatest number of firsts, seconds, thirds, etc., in elimination round re-rankings.
 4. If still tied, both (all) participate.
- C. *Round 10 Selection:* Using only the individual judge's ballots from rounds 8 and 9, round 10 shall be composed of the top thirty contestants divided into five panels of six each. If ties in cumulative scores bring the number to over thirty, the following procedure shall be employed.
1. In a two-way tie if the participants have met, the tie is resolved in favor of the winner. If there is a multiple tie or the opponents have not met, then
 2. Greatest number of judges' firsts, seconds, thirds, etc., in elimination rounds only.
 3. Greatest number of firsts, seconds, thirds, etc., in elimination round re-rankings.
 4. If still tied, both (all) participate.
- D. *Round 12 – Semifinalist Selection:* On a low cumulative basis, considering the individual judge's ballots from rounds 6-11, rounds 12 and 13 (semifinals) shall be composed of the top fourteen contestants divided into two panels of seven each. If ties in cumulative scores bring the number to over 14, the procedure used above (for determining round 9 contestants) shall be employed.
- E. *Finalist Selection:* The final round shall be composed of the top six contestants selected on a low cumulative basis, adding the three judges' ranks in each round 7-10, and the five judges in rounds 12 and 13 (22 numbers). If ties bring the number over six, the following shall be considered in the order listed to break ties:
1. Low cumulative judges' ballots counted in rounds 12 and 13 only (speakers need not have been in the same panels).
 2. Greatest number of firsts in both semis.
 3. Greatest number of individual judge's firsts, seconds, etc., awarded in *all* elim rounds.
 4. If ties cannot be resolved by the above methods, those tied are to be included in the finals.
- F. *Final Score:* The winner in each event shall be determined on the basis of low total cumulative score, counting the individual judges' ranks in rounds 6-11 and the ranks of all judges in rounds 12 and 13, and eleven individual judge's ranks in the final round, after dropping at least one high and one low rank for each contestant in the final round. IN ALL ROUNDS, ACTUAL JUDGES' RANKS SHALL BE RECORDED AND ADDED.

Speaker	Rd. 7 Ranks	Rd. 8 Ranks	Rd. 9 Ranks	Rd. 10 Ranks	Rd. 11 Ranks	Rd. 12 Ranks
A	1 2 3	1 4 1	1 5 2	1 1 1	1 5 2 2 1	2 3 2 1 4
B	1 1 1	2 2 2	3 3 3	2 4 3	3 1 1 4 2	1 1 3 2 2

C	2 3 3	1 1 1	1 2 2	2 1 1	2 2 3 1 5	3 2 1 4 1
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F. Breaking Ties in

Final Scores: If ties exist, the following shall be considered in order listed to break ties:

- Low total in the final round only, after dropping high and low ranks for each speaker.
- Judges' preference in the final round only, after dropping high and low ranks for each speaker.
- Low total of all ranks in the final round.
- Greatest number of firsts in the final round only.
- Judges preference or reciprocals from all final round judges.
- If ties still exist, duplicate awards will be given.

Speaker	Judge Ranks													Cumulative Total
A	(1)	4	1	3	3	1	2	1	2	2	(5)	3	2	70
B	4	(5)	2	2	2	3	(1)	2	3	5	2	2	3	77
C	2	3	3	1	(1)	2	(5)	2	4	1	1	4	5	70

* Two high and two low ranks dropped. Speakers A and C tie at 70 cumulative total. Speaker A wins with 24 in the final round. Speaker C has 28.

V. Ties in Elimination Rounds

A. *Two-Way Ties:* Two-way ties shall be broken in elim rounds (see example at right).

Speaker	Judge 1	Judge 2	Judge 3	Cume	Place
A	1*	3	2*	6	1st
B	2	1*	3	6	2nd

Speaker A is preferred by two of the three judges.

B. *Three- and Four-Way Ties:* Three- or four-way ties shall not be broken in any panel (see example below).

Each contestant involved in a three- or four-way tie in a panel shall be awarded the better middle position for which the speakers are tied. For other contestants in the panel, eliminate the next position(s) after the tie ranking.

Speaker	Judge 1	Judge 2	Judge 3	Cume	Place
A	1	2	3	6	2nd
B	2	3	1	6	2nd
C	3	1	2	6	2nd

The next rank in the round would be fourth.

Speaker	Judge 1	Judge 2	Judge 3	Cume	Place
A	1	3	4	8	2nd
B	2	5	1	8	2nd
C	3	2	3	8	2nd
D	5	1	2	8	2nd

VI. Tabulation of Results

A. In Preliminary rounds:

After each round, the two judges' ranks for each student in that round should be recorded in the computer.

B. In Elimination rounds:

All judges will use online ballots through Tabroom.com. The computer will then total the judges' decisions and give a rank to each contestant, low cumulative ranking first, etc.

VII. Speech Rules Infractions

Rules infractions at the National Tournament will result in consequences based on the circumstance and magnitude of the infraction. The following options are listed progressively according to their level of severity. Each may be utilized independently.

- Level 1:* Issue a warning with the instruction to correct the infraction for the next round. If not corrected, the competitor will be penalized accordingly.
- Level 2:* Cannot receive a rank of 1 from any judge in the round. All competitors' scores will be re-adjusted accordingly (e.g., over the grace period, etc.).

- C. *Level 3:* Drop 2 ranks from all judges in the round (e.g., 1 to 3, 2 to 4, etc.). All competitors' scores will be re-adjusted accordingly.
- D. *Level 4:* Change ranks to last or a loss from all judges in round. All competitors' scores will be re-adjusted accordingly. (e.g., a student competes in the wrong contest section or against the wrong opponent at no fault of their opponent or tournament officials, etc.).
- E. *Level 5:* Disqualify the entry. All competitors' scores will be re-adjusted accordingly. (e.g., plagiarism, exceeding transitional material guidelines, using non-existent evidence in extemporaneous preparation events, misrepresenting the content of the script submitted with what is actually presented in the round, using internet to communicate with outside sources during extemporaneous preparation events, etc.). If an entry is disqualified, one or more of the following may happen:
 1. If in a final round, any placings or points earned by that student will be vacated. All competitors ranked lower than the disqualified competitor will be moved up one placement in that round. If multiple violations in the same event have occurred, competitors will be advanced accordingly. If the violation is discovered during the semifinal round, the offending competitor will be ranked last in the semifinal round. If the student still qualifies for the final round with that ranking, their place in the final round will be vacated, and the next place competitor will be placed in the final round. If re-ranking is necessary, it is only applicable to the round in which the violation occurred, not previous rounds in the tournament.
 2. If the violation occurs in a final round and the violation would result in a new champion, the championship will be vacated. Potential scholarships may be forfeited.
 3. All coaching points earned for all of the school/chapter's competitors for the entire tournament will be removed.
 4. The offending school/chapter may lose up to four entry slots for the next year's district tournament. The school/chapter will not be eligible for any bonus entries for the district tournament.
 5. All rounds in which the competitor participated will not be included in the count toward eligibility for School of Excellence and Bruno E. Jacob awards.
 6. The contestant's high school administration and chapter advisor may be notified of the violation of the Honor Code.
 7. The offending student(s) may have their Association membership revoked.

VIII. National Tournament Audit Procedures

- A. The national office will perform an audit of all semifinal round speech to confirm that no egregious violations of the rules has occurred. An auditor will follow along during each performance, as well as capture an audio recording of the round. Their role is to observe, listen, and make notations as needed. They are not there to be a test of perfect script memorization, but rather, to record any overt concerns such as written material being added to scripts to enhance the performance. The auditor will not lodge protests, make any adjudications, or share their concerns with anyone but the members of the Rules Adjudication Panel; they will simply report any concerns for consideration. The Rules Adjudication Panel will collect any information from the auditor and determine if further action needs to be taken. In Extemporaneous Speaking, auditors will record and check source citations. In Original Oratory and Informative Speaking, auditors will record source information and observe visual aids if applicable.
- B. There will be no separate script turn-in process for quarterfinalists. Materials used for the audit will be uploaded in the National Tournament registration system prior to the first day of competition.

National Congressional Debate Procedures

I. National Legislation

- A. Each district can submit one or two items of legislation, preferably one bill and one resolution. The district chair must verify that the submitted legislation is the original work of the student(s) in their district. Submitting legislation that is not the original work of those students will be considered a violation of the Code of Honor and will be subject to penalty which may include: removal of legislation from the national docket, loss of Honor Society membership, forfeiture of entry at the National Tournament for the offending student, loss of entries to future district tournament for the offending school, and/or loss of future entry slots to the National Tournament for the district.
- B. The National Office will review the legislation and select one item to be considered by a national committee of coaches.
- C. District identity will be kept blind from the committee, but legislation will be grouped in five geographic regions of a balanced number of Association districts to ensure geographic diversity.
- D. The committee will rate each bill and resolution, and rank within each geographic region. The top eight ranked legislation, plus the next highest rated legislation overall will advance to a docket of 40 items, to be ranked again by the committee.
- E. The top 16 items ranked by the committee will comprise the elimination round dockets for the National Tournament. Eight items will compose the House quarterfinal and Senate semifinal docket, and the other eight will compose the House semifinal docket.
- F. The next 15-ranked items will comprise the docket for preliminary sessions.
- G. Legislation for the final session will be written by appointees designated by the Executive Director to avoid duplication of topics and a balance of debatable issues.

II. **Opening Assembly** – includes the Pledge of Allegiance and Oath of Office, and general announcements. All times are printed in the National Tournament Book. All participants and officials are expected to adhere to start and end times, accordingly.

III. **Preliminary Chambers** – in the Senate and House of Representatives, there are chambers of approximately 10-15 students each.

- A. Preliminary rounds are split into three sessions of about 2.5 hours apiece; each session:
 1. Begins with electing a presiding officer.
 2. Features a new seating chart, with necessary accommodations made for students with special needs.
 3. Resets precedence and recency.
 4. Begins with debate on new legislation not debated in a previous session.
- B. A parliamentarian will be assigned to a chamber for all preliminary sessions. Parliamentarians call their chambers to order and will:
 1. Announce they shall remain in the background but will not hesitate to step forward firmly when their presence is required. They will impress upon members of their chambers that their purpose is to debate legislation; no misuse of the parliamentary procedure will be tolerated. They will announce that in questions of procedure, priority is as follows:
 - a. Association rules and procedures.
 - b. Rulings by the tournament director's designee, who will consult *Robert's Rules of Order* and other Association officials if necessary.
 - c. The parliamentarian may not add guidelines or suggestions that are not approved by Association rules and/or the tournament director's designee.
 2. When each session begins, conduct a single-ballot election for presiding officer. Unless one candidate receives a majority of votes cast, the person with the fewest votes is dropped. If combined votes of the two lowest candidates do not equal votes of the next lowest candidate, both are eliminated. Once a candidate receives a majority, they will serve for the session immediately following the election and receives an engraved gavel. Note: a student may run for presiding officer each session, but once they are elected and serve, they may not be considered for future preliminary sessions unless no other student wishes to serve.

3. Once elected, the presiding officer will conduct business of the chamber. At the beginning of session 1, the chamber will establish an agenda, either by caucusing committees who will propose agendas, or by nominating an agenda from the floor. Tournament staff may debrief the first session presiding officers while chambers determine agendas.
 4. While chambers determine agendas, tournament staff will debrief the first session presiding officers, including sharing the preset recency for speeches and questioning.
 5. Parliamentarians should familiarize themselves with Association rules and procedures (furnished with chamber materials) and become acquainted with names of students in the chamber as placed on the seating chart.
 6. Since different districts and leagues use their own rules, legislators frequently believe local rules are synonymous with national rules. The parliamentarian must be well versed with the *national* rules and willing to consult tournament staff when necessary. They must be firm but fair at all times.
 7. Ensure that each session, the chamber reaches as close to 2.5 hours of floor debate as possible (not counting recesses or presiding officer elections).
 8. Ensure proper speech times: up to three minutes for speaking. Direct questioning will be used for all rounds. The presiding officer will recognize questioners for a cross-examination period of no more than 30 seconds according to the preset questioning recency.
 9. Ensure the precedence/recency chart is reset for each new session using the preset recency supplied by tournament officials. Contestants should keep a record of how many speeches they have given and may confirm with the parliamentarian.
 10. Keep a record of all amendments, proposed and passed, using amendment forms.
 11. Keep a list of speakers and the total number of speeches each gives, making notes of the strengths and weaknesses of each, but without consulting scorers. At the end of the preliminary session, parliamentarians will preferentially *rank all* of the students, with the top eight ranks tabulated with the other judges' as part of the cumulative rank total.
- C. Two scorers are assigned each session in rotation between sessions to various chambers. They will:
1. Award three (3) to nine (9) points per speech without consulting each another regarding their evaluation. A speaker's *answers* during the questioning period *should* weigh in the scorers' evaluation.
 2. Award the presiding officer three (3) to nine (9) points per complete hour of service.
 3. Rank their eight (8) more preferred students in each session they evaluate.
- D. There should be little consultation between Congress officials concerning the chamber when it is in session. The parliamentarian *should* consult with scorers to confirm the number of speeches actually given by each student.
- E. Debate on legislation shall commence as follows:
1. The district congressperson shall have the right to open debate on their district's legislation; however, they may relinquish this right to the chamber.
 2. Any amendment must be presented to the presiding officer in writing on the appropriate form before being moved and presented. In consultation with the parliamentarian, the amendment will be ruled either germane or dilatory. Any legislator may seek the floor to defend or oppose the amendment, recognized in order according to precedence/recency.
- F. After each preliminary session, the presiding officer (PO) will be presented a gavel and must either agree or decline to serve as a PO if they advance to semifinals. This choice, once made in writing on the official form, is binding, and a PO who has agreed to further service may not withdraw until that round of service has been completed.
- G. At the end of the preliminary session, the top students in each chamber will advance. Each chamber will advance an equal number of students such that the total number of semifinalists does not exceed 60.
1. At the end of each scorer's and parliamentarian's judging commitment, they will rank their eight (8) most preferred students in the chamber; the parliamentarian also will complete a ballot ranking all students in the chamber. Students with the lowest cumulative rank total will advance to the next level of competition. Ties will be broken in order of the following priorities:

- a. Judges' preference
- b. Reciprocal fractions
- c. Adjusted cumulative rank total after dropping highest and lowest ranks
- d. Judges' preference of adjusted cumulative rank total
- e. Reciprocals of adjusted cumulative rank total
- f. Rank by the parliamentarian

IV. **Quarterfinal and Semifinal Sessions** – The quarterfinal House sessions consist of around 10 chambers of approximately 12 contestants each. The semifinal sessions in the House consist of around 4 chambers of approximately 10 contestants in each. The semifinal sessions in the Senate consist of around 4 chambers of approximately 12 contestants each.

- A. Students are assigned to chambers in the priority listed:
 1. Seed (mathematical progression; “snaking”)
 2. Avoid district conflict
 3. Equal distribution of presiding officer nominees.
 4. Equal state distribution.
- B. Three scorers and one parliamentarian will be assigned to each chamber.
- C. The quarterfinal and semifinal rounds are split into two sessions of 2.5 hours apiece; each session:
 1. Begins with electing a presiding officer.
 2. Features a new seating chart, with necessary accommodations made for students with special needs.
 3. Resets precedence and recency.
 4. Begins with debate on new legislation not debated in a previous session.
- D. Only preliminary session presiding officers may be considered as candidates for presiding the quarterfinal, semifinal, and final sessions.
 1. A student may decline nomination in writing at any time, but once they do so, they may not be considered for presiding officer in later sessions. Once a student agrees to nomination, they must serve in the next level of advancement, if designated.
 2. The top four presiding officer candidates will advance in nomination for the next level of presiding, using a priority system as follows:
 - a. Points awarded *for presiding* in the preliminary session.
 - b. Cumulative rank total.
 - c. Adjusted cumulative rank total.
 - d. Parliamentarian's ballot.
- E. At the beginning of each quarterfinal and semifinal session, conduct a single-ballot election for presiding officer from among the candidates supplied by tournament staff, following the same procedures as in the preliminary session (II.B.2). In the event there is no student in a chamber wishing and/or eligible to preside, an adult official will be assigned to preside. The winner receives an engraved gavel. There is no longer an audition period.
- F. At the end of the House quarterfinal session, the top four legislators in each chamber advance to the semifinal House session. At the end of the semifinal session of the House and Senate, the top three legislators in each chamber advance to the final session:
 1. At the end of each scorer's and parliamentarian's judging commitment, they will rank their eight (8) most preferred legislators in the chamber; the parliamentarian also will complete a ballot ranking all legislators in the chamber. Legislators with the lowest cumulative rank total will advance to the next level of competition. Ties will be broken in order of the following priorities:
 - a. Judges' preference
 - b. Reciprocal fractions
 - c. Adjusted cumulative rank total after dropping highest and lowest ranks
 - d. Judges' preference of adjusted cumulative rank total
 - e. Reciprocals of adjusted cumulative rank total
 - f. Rank by the parliamentarian

2. Students not advancing to the final session may claim a Senator Karl E. Mundt Medallion during Bond Checkout.

V. **Final Session**

- A. Eight (8) scorers and one parliamentarian will be assigned to each chamber.
- B. Presiding officer nominees will be selected from those that served as a presiding officer in the semifinal session, with the same caveats enumerated in III.D.1. The top four will be placed on the list of nominees, based on the following criteria:
 1. Points awarded in the semifinal session *for presiding*.
 2. Points awarded in the preliminary session *for presiding*.
 3. Semifinal cumulative rank total.
 4. Adjusted semifinal cumulative rank total.
 5. Parliamentarian's ballot in the semifinal round.
- C. At the beginning of the final session, conduct a single-ballot election for presiding officer from among the candidates supplied by tournament staff, following the same procedures as in the preliminary session (II.B.2). This year, there is no audition period. These students will be named *Speaker of the House* and *President of the Senate*. These students will be recognized at the awards assembly and each presented a two-foot presentation gavel, engraved accordingly.
 1. The final session presiding officer is eligible to be ranked among the speakers in the session.
 2. All speeches given by the four presiding officer candidates will be scored, and merit points shall be recorded, accordingly. The elected presiding officer also will receive points for presiding, per hour, following the election. Auditioning time shall not count toward merit points.
- D. Final Ranking:
 1. At the end of each session, scorer's will rank their top eight (8), and at the end of the segment, parliamentarian's will rank all members, with their top 8 counting towards initial ranking. Final placement will be determined by adding up all of the ranks and determining the order based upon the lowest cumulative rank. Ties will be broken in the following priorities:
 - a. Judges' preference
 - b. Reciprocal fractions
 - c. Adjusted cumulative rank total after dropping highest and lowest ranks
 - d. Reciprocals of adjusted cumulative rank total
 - e. Rank by the parliamentarian
 2. All final session participants receive the Senator John C. Stennis Medallion.

VI. **Leadership Award:** At the end of the preliminary session, the quarterfinal House session, the semifinal session, and the final session, the students in each chamber shall preferentially rank a number of students in the chamber. The student who advances to the final round in the Senate and in the House with the lowest cumulative rank total will earn the leadership bowl, with ties broken:

- A. Dropping the highest and lowest ranks
- B. Reciprocal fractions
- C. Most first place ranks
- D. Placement by the judges, with any applicable tie-breakers factored

VII. **Trophies and Awards**

- A. Each presiding officer will receive a gavel.
- B. Non-advancing semifinalists will receive the Senator Karl E. Mundt Medallions.
- C. All final session contestants will receive the Senator John C. Stennis Medallions.
- D. Contestants finishing 7th through 14th will be recognized with a trophy following the conclusion of the Public Forum final round.
- E. Contestants finishing 1st through 6th will be recognized with a trophy at the Awards Ceremony.

- F. *Karl E. Mundt National Congress Trophy* – This honor (awarded since the first National Congress in Wooster, Ohio, in 1938) is presented each year to the school represented at that year’s National Congress whose students have accumulated the most participation points, awarded as follows:
1. One point for each session (finals counts as two sessions, since it is so long)
 2. Two points for advancing, or for being elected presiding officer in a session
 3. Three points for placing 4th, 5th, or 6th
 4. Four points for placing 2nd or 3rd place
 5. Five points for the national champion in the Senate and House
 6. Upon earning this award, a school’s total resets to zero

Supplemental Event Procedures

Supplemental Events

1. **Re-registration:** Contestants eliminated from competition in any event before Thursday of the National Tournament may re-register in Extemporaneous Debate. There is no re-registration for supplemental speech events as judging will occur before and concurrently with main event competition.
2. **Entry Limits:** Students may be registered for as many supplemental events as they wish. There are no entry limits. Students may be entered in both supplemental speech events and Extemporaneous Debate.
3. **Advancement to Finals:** A student will not be eligible to advance to the finals of supplemental speech events if they advance to the quarterfinal round of main events. Everyone in supplemental speech events must save the original file of their performance (the file that they upload into a site to generate a link, like a Zoom file). Quarterfinalists in supplemental speech events will need to upload the original file to a Google form. If we do not have your original file submitted by the end of semifinals, students will not move on to the finals.
4. **Events:** All events will be held asynchronously with one video recording being judged through preliminary and elimination rounds. Expository, Poetry, Storytelling, Prose, Prepared Prompt Speaking (revised Impromptu), Prepared Extemporaneous Commentary (revised Extemporaneous Commentary), Pro Con Challenge, Original Spoken Word Poetry, and Extemporaneous Debate will be held as supplemental events. Event rules from the Unified Manual will be used, with the following clarifications:
 - a. **Prepared Extemporaneous Commentary:** Students will find a list of potential topics at speechanddebate.org/topics on May 1. They will select one prompt from the official list, prepare a speech, and submit it through the recording process. Preparation time should not be recorded; only the speech should be filmed and submitted. Recordings must be no longer than 5 minutes and 30 seconds. No notes are allowed during presentation, and the commentary must be delivered seated behind a table or desk. Judges will be instructed to judge Prepared Extemp Commentary the same way they would Extemp Commentary.
 - b. **Prepared Prompt Speaking:** Students will find a list of potential topics at speechanddebate.org/topics on May 1. They will select one prompt from the official list, prepare a speech, and submit it through the recording process. Preparation time should not be recorded; only the speech should be filmed and submitted. Recordings should be no longer than 5 minutes and 30 seconds in length. No notes shall be used during presentation. Judges will be instructed to judge Prepared Prompt Speaking the same way they would Impromptu.
 - c. **Pro Con Challenge:** Students will select the National Tournament topic for CX, LD, or PF or a piece of legislation in the Congressional Debate Docket and write a 3-5 minute affirmative speech and a 3-5 minute negative speech on that topic. They will read both of those speeches within a time limit of 10 minutes and 30 seconds. The affirmative and negative speeches must be on the same topic, and students may read from pre-written text during the speech; speeches should not be memorized. Students may take recorded “prep time” in between speeches to pull up files or take a short break, but their two speeches must be submitted as one recording that is no longer than 10 minutes and 30 seconds. Judges will evaluate the structure, arguments, evidence, and speaking abilities of each competitor and rank them against each other.
 - d. **Original Spoken Word Poetry:** Students will write and perform original poetry. Original Spoken Word Poetry is poetry written for performance to express ideas, experience, or emotion through the creative arrangement of words according to their sound, their rhythm, their meaning. The maximum time limit is 5 minutes with a 30-second grace period. The delivery must be memorized, and no book or script may be used. No more than 150 words of the original poetry may be direct quotation from any other speech or writing.
5. **Supplemental Speech Recording Rules:**
 - a. Recording links must be added to Tabroom.com by June 1.

- b. Students may record their performance using any video recording site or software available to them (Zoom, Quicktime, camera or video app on a computer, etc.). Then, they will upload their recording to a site that creates a link to the video (YouTube, Google Drive, Vimeo, etc.).
 - c. Coaches will collect links to the students' video recordings and copy/paste them into the student's entry in their Nationals Tabroom.com registration.
 - d. Coaches and students should be mindful of privacy. These links will be accessible to judges and other students in the tournament. We recommend that coaches create a private team account to submit videos without students' identifying information. For example, an "XYZ Speech Team" YouTube channel with unlisted videos or a Google drive account under the school's name.
 - e. Coaches should double check that permissions on the video are appropriately set to allow anyone with the link to view it. After coaches paste the link in Tabroom, they should click the blue and white button to confirm that the link works.
 - f. Professional equipment enhancements may not be used. Professional equipment includes professional lighting kits, professional grade camera recording and audio devices, and softboxes. Students are welcome to film their recording on their school's auditorium stage, but the use of stage lighting is not permitted. Lavalier microphones and ring lights are permitted.
 - g. Recordings may not be edited using any software; all submissions must be non-stop footage of the entire performance.
 - h. Students recording split-screen Duos may not record their performances separately and edit them together.
 - i. Students may not trim a recording, even to remove the seconds that they walk to and from the recording device to push start/stop.
 - j. The length of the recording must not exceed the time limit with the grace period.
 - k. Competitors may not use green screens, virtual backgrounds, or on-screen text.
 - l. The camera being used must remain stationary throughout the entire performance, and no zooming or panning is permitted.
 - m. The camera must remain on throughout the duration of the performance; a student may not turn off their video at any point during their recording.
 - n. The use of lighting tricks like shadow puppets are not permitted.
 - o. Students may move closer to and further from the camera to simulate zooming, though the camera must remain stationary.
 - p. Students may cover the camera with their hands or body.
 - q. Students may move out of frame during the recording.
 - r. Other individuals may be present while filming, but audience interaction (laughing, applause, etc.) must not be included in the performance.
 - s. Competitors may determine how close or distant the camera is set up in order to maximize both verbal and nonverbal communication.
 - t. If possible, it is recommended that students and judges remove items that may be distracting in the background. Backdrops of a solid color with no special markings may be used by competitors and judges.
6. **Extemporaneous Debate Procedure:** Extemp Debate will be held live with four guaranteed preset rounds. Competitors will learn the topic through Tabroom.com text and email notification. After the first four rounds, competition will continue with students with less than two losses as a double down and out competition.
7. **Extemporaneous Debate Re-Registration:** Re-registration for Extemporaneous Debate will occur all day on Wednesday, June 16, through Tabroom.com. Coaches will verify that their students are eligible and will participate in

the event. If a student chooses not to compete after re-registration has been confirmed, the school will be assessed a drop fee. Any student not advancing to competition on Thursday is eligible to re-register for Extemp Debate.

Sectioning and Tabulation

1. Preliminary Rounds: Four preset rounds of sections of 5, 6, or 7 will be evaluated by a single judge. All ranks above 6 will be truncated to 6 in preliminary rounds.

2. Octafinals: After preliminary rounds, students will be ranked in order based on the following factors:

- a. Lowest cumulative ranks
- b. Highest reciprocals
- c. Lowest opponent ranks
- d. Highest total points

The number of students that break to octafinals will be based on wherever there is a clean break in ranks (preferable) or reciprocals that puts as close to 60 competitors in the octafinal round as possible. No more than 70 will break to octafinals; if needed in order to break less than 70, highest total points will act as the tiebreaker. Three judges will evaluate each section in the octafinals. All ranks above 6 will be truncated to 6 in preliminary rounds.

3. Quarterfinals: After octafinals, the remaining students will be ranked in order based on the following factors:

- a. Lowest cumulative ranks from octafinals and prelim rounds dropping the highest rank
- b. Highest reciprocals of ranks from octafinals and prelim rounds dropping the highest rank
- c. Lowest cumulative ranks from octafinals
- d. Judges preference from octafinals
- e. If entries are still tied, both will advance.

The top 30 entries will break to the quarterfinal round. Three judges will evaluate each section. All ranks above 6 will be truncated to 6 in preliminary rounds.

4. Semifinals: After quarterfinals, the remaining students will be ranked in order based on the following factors:

- a. Lowest cumulative ranks from elims
- b. Highest reciprocals of elim ranks
- c. Lowest cumulative ranks from quarterfinals
- d. Judges preference from quarterfinals
- e. If entries are still tied, both will advance

The top 14 entries will break to the semifinal round. Five judges will evaluate each section.

5. Finals: Seven judges will evaluate the final round. The final round shall be composed of the top six contestants from semifinals, based on the following factors:

- a. Lowest cumulative ranks from elims
- b. Highest reciprocals of elim ranks
- c. Lowest cumulative ranks from semifinals
- d. Judges preference from semifinals
- e. Lowest cumulative ranks from elims dropping the highest and the lowest ranks
- f. Highest reciprocals of elim ranks dropping the highest and the lowest ranks
- g. Continue dropping the highest and lowest ranks to determine lowest cumulative elim ranks, then highest reciprocals of elim ranks, until the tie is broken.

6. Determining final round placement:

Finalists shall be ranked based on:

- a. Lowest cumulative ranks from elims
- b. Lowest cumulative ranks from finals
- c. Judges preference from finals
- d. Lowest cumulative ranks from elims dropping the highest and the lowest ranks
- e. Lowest cumulative ranks from elims dropping two highest and two lowest ranks

Extemporaneous Debate

Determining 3rd through 14th place in Extemporaneous Debate:

If ties exist in determining placings, the following shall be considered in the order listed to break ties:

- a. Placement shall be determined by the most number of rounds. Byes and forfeit wins count as rounds debated.
- b. When contestants are eliminated in the same round, placement shall be determined by total ballot count throughout all rounds. Byes shall count as many ballots as judges in each debate in the round where the bye occurred. Forfeits shall not count toward ballot count.
- c. If still tied, placement shall be determined by total ballot count from rounds 6 to round eliminated. Byes shall count as many ballots as judges in each debate in the round where the bye occurred. Forfeits shall not count toward ballot count.
- d. If still tied, placement shall be determined by the winner of a previous meeting between the two debaters in any round.
- e. If still tied, both contestants will receive the same placement and the same award.

World Schools Debate Procedures: USWSDI

Basic Overview

Please consult the *2020-2021 USA World Schools Debate Invitational Manual* for official debate rules, procedures, and protocols governing this event.

The World Schools event will consist of six (6) preliminary rounds of competition. After prelims, up to 64 teams with a record of 4-2 or better will be eligible to break to elimination rounds. In the case that fewer than 64 teams have 4 wins or more, a partial triple octafinals will be held with byes going to the highest seeds in ascending order. No teams with less than 4 wins in the preliminary rounds will be eligible for elimination rounds. A single elimination bracket will determine a champion.

All judges and competitors will be required to attend a two-hour event training on Sunday (registration day).

Entries

- World Schools teams are comprised of three to five students. The cost of entry is \$75 per student (or \$50 per student for teams staying WITHIN the National Tournament hotel block).
- The cost of travel and lodging is the responsibility of the participants.
- Each NSDA district may enter **up to two teams** to the National Tournament, provided they offer a second judge to cover the commitment for the second team. **Note: For the 2021 National Tournament, each district may enter up to THREE teams.**
- Guest nations may enter teams, as well. See www.speechanddebate.org/nationals for details.

Judges

- Each team must furnish one judge. The judge may not be entered into any other judging pool at the National Speech & Debate Tournament.
- There are no hired judges available.
- Judges must attend judge training on Sunday.

Motions

- There will be a mixture of prepared and impromptu motions for the competition.
- Prepared motions will be announced by May 1.

Participation in Supplemental Events

- Teams who do not advance to the Thursday single-elimination rounds are eligible to enter in supplemental events if pre-registered. Coaches must re-register online on Wednesday.

Big Questions Capstone Event Logistics

For additional information about debate rules and access to resources and judge training, visit the Big Questions website at NSDABigQuestions.org.

Entries

- The top-placing student at each district’s Big Questions division will be invited to participate at Nationals. (For details, refer to the “District Qualification Process for Big Questions Debate” in the “District Tournament Operations Manual” section of this manual.)
- Only entries composed of individual debaters may compete at Nationals. The cost of entry is \$75 per student.

Judges

- Each district must provide a full-time judge for each entry available for the entirety of the competition. The judge may not be entered into any other judging pool at the National Speech & Debate Tournament.
- There are no hired judges available.

Topic

- Students will debate the 2020-2021 topic, *Resolved: Mathematics was discovered, not invented*.

Participation in Supplemental Events

- Students who are eliminated from competition on Wednesday are eligible to enter in supplemental events if pre-registered. Coaches must re-register online through Tabroom.com.

Big Questions Debate Procedures

1. **Eligibility:** The top placing student at each district’s Big Questions division will be invited to participate at the National Tournament. Only entries composed of individual debaters may compete at Nationals.
2. **Rules:** Rules in the Big Questions format manual will be used, with one clarification: Big Questions debaters will receive 4 minutes of prep time.
3. **Judges:** Each district must provide a full-time judge for each entry available for the entirety of the competition. That judge may not be entered into any other judging pool at the National Tournament.
4. **Sectioning and Tabulation:**
 - a. **Preliminary Rounds:** All debaters are guaranteed six preliminary rounds with one judge. The first two rounds are preset. The following four rounds are power-matched using the SOP (Seed + Opp Seed) method. All pairing and tabulation is done in Tabroom.com. Sides are pre-assigned, and if possible, each debater will debate three affirmative rounds and three negative rounds. Judges will assign a win and loss (no ties permitted) and speaker points on a 30 point scale.
 - b. **Pairing Preset Rounds:** Preset rounds are paired with the following priorities in order:
 - i. Avoid two entries debating each other more than once
 - ii. Avoid any entry debating on the same side of the topic more than once
 - iii. Avoid any entry drawing a bye (due to uneven numbers) more than once
 - c. **Pairing Powermatched Rounds:**
 - i. After round 2, entries are seeded by the following:
 1. Highest number of rounds won

2. Highest total speaker points with highest and lowest scores dropped
 3. Highest total speaker points
 4. Lowest average opponent seed
 5. Coin flip
- ii. Debates are assigned within brackets. All entries with the same win count are grouped in the same bracket.
 - iii. Entries will be pulled up to a bracket with a higher win count if the number of entries due one side is uneven or to avoid scheduling a debate between entries who have previously debated. The pull up should not force a debate between entries that have previously debated. The pull up should come from the nearest bracket possible and have the highest average opponent seeding in that bracket. Entries may be pulled up more than once.
 - iv. Within each bracket, the computer will schedule entries according to the following priorities:
 1. Avoid entries debating more than once
 2. Avoid any entry debating on the same side as the previous round in sidelocked rounds
 3. Pair entries so that the entry with the lowest SOP (Seed + Opp Seed) score debates the entry with the highest SOP score.
- d. **Breaking to Elimination Rounds:** Entries will be ranked by the computer based on the same seeding rules used for powermatching. All competitors with four or more wins in the preliminary rounds will advance to a single elimination round bracket. The best seeded entry debates the worst seed, the second best debates the second worst, etc. If the number is not a power of two, then the top seeded debaters are given byes until the bracket is complete. Debaters will use the Tabroom.com coin flip in any debate where the entries have not previously debated. If entries have previously debated, they should debate on the opposite sides of the topic from the previous round.
- e. **Elimination Rounds:** Each elimination round will have a minimum of a three judge panel. Brackets may not be broken to avoid same-school debates. Coaches of debaters in same school debates may either decide who advances without a debate, or elect to hold a debate as normal. The winner of the majority of ballots in each debate advances, while their opponent is eliminated.

National Tournament Awards

Team Awards

Pi Kappa Delta/Bruno E. Jacob Trophy

Each time a student appears in a main event round, their school shall receive one trophy point. Trophy points shall accumulate from year to year and the participating school with the largest total at the conclusion of each tournament shall receive the Bruno E. Jacob Award, sponsored by Pi Kappa Delta.

School Awards

Coaches who believe their team has qualified for one of the following School Awards (see next page) may visit the bud room on Friday to view a list of qualified schools. One coach from each qualified school should attend the National Awards Assembly Friday evening to accept the award on behalf of their school.

Formula for Determining School Awards

Speech

Round 7/8	6 points	
Round 9/10	+ 4 points	(Total 10)
Round 11/12	+ 4 points	(Total 14)
Round 13	+ 6 points	(Total 20)

Debate

Round 7/8	6 points	
Rounds 9 through 12	+ 2 points per round	(Total up to 14)
Top 6 Place Winner	+ 6 points	(Total 20)

Congress

Semifinalist	6 points	
Finalist	+ 14 points	(Total 20)

Schools of Outstanding Distinction

Top 10 schools after combining both debate and speech points (must score points in both divisions).

Speech Schools of Excellence

Top 20 schools in total speech points that did not win a School of Outstanding Distinction Award.

Debate Schools of Excellence

Top 20 schools in total debate points that did not win a School of Outstanding Distinction award.

Speech Schools of Honor

Top 21-40 schools in total speech points that did not win a School of Outstanding Distinction award.

Debate Schools of Honor

Top 21-40 schools in total debate points that did not win a School of Outstanding Distinction award.

Outstanding School Achievement

School administrators of the top six individuals or teams in each main event will be sent an Outstanding School Achievement plaque within two weeks of the end of the National Tournament. The plaques will be personalized with students' names, school, event, place, and year.

Individual Awards

1. Main speech event contestants eliminated after rounds 8 and 10 (excluding Top 14) may claim plaques.
2. Main debate event contestants eliminated after round 8 (excluding Top 14) may claim plaques.
3. Congressional Debate contestants in the final session receive a Stennis Medallion at the Congressional Banquet; presiding officers receive award gavels in chambers; Congress semifinalists may claim a Senator Karl E. Mundt medals.
4. Supplemental event contestants eliminated in the semifinal round (non-advancing semifinalists) may claim plaques.
5. The students earning the most merit points in Debate and in Speech during the current year's National Tournament will receive national recognition.
6. The winners of the final United States Extemporaneous Speaking, International Extemporaneous Speaking, and Original Oratory round will each receive a President's Bowl. The winners of the final round in Humorous, Dramatic, and Duo Interpretation will each receive an Interp Bowl. The final round bowl for Duo will be named in honor of Sandra Silvers.
7. The top 14 main event contestants and top 6 supplemental event finalists are awarded trophies.
8. In Policy Debate and Lincoln-Douglas, the top 14 debaters based upon preliminary round speaker points (dropping high and low) will receive speaker awards. The Phyllis Flory Barton Trophy will be presented to the top speaker in Policy Debate. The LD top speaker awards will be presented in memory of Tina Wang. The Dale Lauder McCall Trophy will be presented to the top speaker in Lincoln-Douglas Debate.

APPENDIX A: Debate Event Time Limits

Policy Debate	
Affirmative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Negative Cross Examines Affirmative	3 minutes
Negative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Affirmative Cross Examines Negative	3 minutes
Affirmative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Negative Cross Examines Affirmative	3 minutes
Negative Constructive Speech	8 minutes
Affirmative Cross Examines Negative	3 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes
<i>Prep time, per team</i>	8 minutes

Lincoln-Douglas Debate	
Affirmative Constructive	6 Minutes
Negative Cross Examination	3 Minutes
Negative Constructive	7 Minutes
Affirmative Cross Examination	3 Minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	4 Minutes
Negative Rebuttal	6 Minutes
Affirmative Rebuttal	3 Minutes
Prep Time, per debater	4 Minutes

Public Forum Debate	
First Speaker - Team A	4 Minutes
First Speaker - Team B	4 Minutes
Crossfire	3 Minutes
Second Speaker - Team A	4 Minutes
Second Speaker - Team B	4 Minutes
Crossfire	3 Minutes
Summary - First Speaker - Team A	3 Minutes
Summary - First Speaker - Team B	3 Minutes
Grand Crossfire	3 Minutes
Final Focus - Second Speaker - Team A	2 Minutes
Final Focus - Second Speaker - Team B	2 Minutes
<i>Prep Time, per team</i>	3 Minutes

Congressional Debate – applies to each new legislation	
Sponsor Speech	3 Minutes
Questioning of Sponsor	2 Minutes
First Negative Speech	3 Minutes
Questioning of First Negative	2 Minutes
<i>All subsequent speeches</i>	3 Minutes/each
<i>Questioning of all subsequent speakers</i>	1 Minute/each

Extemporaneous Debate	
Proposition Constructive	2 Minutes
Cross-Examination of Proposition	1 Minute
Opposition Constructive	2 Minutes
Cross-Examination of Opposition	1 Minute
<i>Mandatory Prep Time</i>	1 Minute
Proposition Rebuttal	2 Minutes
Opposition Rebuttal	2 Minutes
<i>Mandatory Prep Time</i>	1 Minute
Proposition Rebuttal	2 Minutes

World Schools Debate	
Proposition Team Speaker 1	8 Minutes
Opposition Team Speaker 1	8 Minutes
Proposition Team Speaker 2	8 Minutes
Opposition Team Speaker 2	8 Minutes
Proposition Team Speaker 3	8 Minutes
Opposition Team Speaker 3	8 Minutes
Opposition Rebuttal	4 Minutes
Proposition Rebuttal	4 Minutes

APPENDIX B: Speech Event Time Limits

<i>Event</i>	<i>Preparation Period</i>	<i>Maximum Time</i>	<i>“Grace Period”</i>
Extemporaneous Speaking	30 minutes	7 minutes	30 seconds
Original Oratory		10 minutes	30 seconds
Dramatic Interpretation		10 minutes	30 seconds
Humorous Interpretation		10 minutes	30 seconds
Duo Interpretation		10 minutes	30 seconds
Informative Speaking		10 minutes	30 seconds
Program Oral Interpretation		10 minutes	30 seconds
Extemp Commentary	20 minutes	5 minutes	30 seconds
Expository		5 minutes	30 seconds
Poetry or Prose		5 minutes	30 seconds
Impromptu	7 minutes to prepare <i>and</i> speak		30 seconds
Storytelling		5 minutes	30 seconds

APPENDIX C: Casebook Questions

The following casebook questions were adopted at the 2016 Spring Board Meeting to help clarify the evidence rules in Lincoln-Douglas, Public Forum, and Policy Debate.

Question: A team/individual reads evidence in a round that comes from a) a purchased handbook, b) the Open Evidence Project sponsored by the NDCA, or c) a debate institute evidence packet. The other team calls for the original source of their evidence. The team/individual a) shows the original page from the handbook, b) shows either the original electronic or printed version of the OEP download or shows the webpage from which the evidence was procured, or c) shows the electronic or printed version of the institute evidence. Is this sufficient proof for the original source?

Answer: Yes. The team/individual has met the burden of demonstrating the original source of the evidence. However, if the team/individual uses any of these sources, they are still responsible for the validity of the evidence.

Question: A team calls for the original source of evidence read by a team/individual. What are the choices that the challenged individual/team has to produce the original source?

Answer: The team/individual may provide the original source of evidence in several acceptable ways:

1. The original source in an electronic or print version
2. Printed photocopies of the original source
3. Online versions of the original source that can be accessed at the conclusion of the round
4. The full text of the evidence from the original source with a full citation that can then be used to get the original source

Question: A team/individual reads evidence from a book. The opposing team asks to see the original source of the book. Must the team/individual produce the actual book as the original source?

Answer: If evidence is quoted from a book, the debater is not expected to carry the entire book with them. Instead, they would be required to have either a printed or electronic copy of the page on which the evidence appears, the page preceding, and the page following the evidence in question.

Question: A team/individual uses a “straw argument” (defined as a hypothetical statement made by an author which is later disproven by the same author which is used by the team/individual as the real position of the author). May that team/individual use such an argument?

Answer: Debaters may use a “straw argument” if they explicitly cite, when the argument is first presented, that it is a straw argument and the author does not draw this conclusion.

Question: A team/individual reads a philosophy text, agrees with one or more arguments advanced by the author, but disagrees with the author on what conclusions those arguments best justify. Is this an acceptable use of this evidence?

Answer: If the team/individual clearly establishes that it is their analysis, the conclusion of the author is not being altered, and therefore, would be an acceptable use of evidence.

Question: A team/individual reads a piece of evidence in the round. The opposing team/individual claims that the team/individual has removed the word “not” from the evidence and is, therefore, misrepresenting the evidence. The team/individual making the claim does not have a copy of the original source to substantiate their claim. Is this a legitimate and substantive challenge?

Answer: The challenge is not a substantive one. The team making the challenge must have evidence that the team they are challenging has misrepresented the evidence. They must provide the original source as described in Question #2. Failure to do so would render the challenge illegitimate.

Question: A team/individual uses a narrative to describe a condition on which arguments are based. The opposing team/individual claims that narratives are a violation of the evidence rules. Is this a legitimate violation claim?

Answer: The definition of evidence does not restrict sources that can be cited by debaters. Nontraditional or nonacademic sources may be used to support claims. The definition is not intended to limit the range of material debaters can rely upon to support their arguments in rounds, nor does it merely define the types of material to which the rules apply. It does not favor traditional academic sources at the expense of organic intellectualism and other nontraditional sources. The judge’s discretion may be used to determine the validity of the evidence and claim.

Question: The team/individual reads only the name and year of the source when presenting evidence. Is this adequate to allow for the finding of a source?

Answer: Reading only the name and year of the source is a commonly accepted cite format. This format can often determine the most basic level of validity/credibility from a quoted cite. The full cite information has to be available if there is a question.

Question: A team/individual reads evidence by the same author from two different works by that author. May the team/individual only use the author’s name or must they again cite author name and year as required for oral citation?

Answer: Since the team/individual has used two different works, both would need to be cited separately. Failure to do so would be a violation of the oral citation requirement.

Question: Common academic practices require the use of the either MLA or APA citation when doing academic work. Why aren’t our evidence guidelines following those same requirements?

Answer: MLA and/or APA requirements are not consistent with traditional expectations for various forms of debate. Teams/individuals should adhere to the requirements listed in the NSDA guidelines.

Question: A team/individual paraphrases an author in the following manner(s): 1) In referring to the author’s work/concept, the team/individual uses the specific author’s name; 2) In referring to the general theory, the team/individual refers to the concept/work in general terms without specific reference to a specific author or person. What are the evidence citation requirements?

Answer: In the first instance, the team/individual should be held to the same evidence citation standards as if they had actually read evidence from that author/person. In the second circumstance, they are using the “general understanding” concept and would not be required to offer a full source citation. However, they are still accountable for the accuracy and validity of the claim they are making.

Question: A team/individual uses “ellipses” in evidence by doing the following: 1) The team/individual uses evidence from the same paragraph of a work, but uses the first part of the paragraph as one piece of evidence and the last part of the paragraph as a second piece, omitting the sentence(s) between the two parts of the paragraph; 2) The team/individual paraphrases the evidence they are citing, omitting parts of the evidence they are paraphrasing. Are these violations of the evidence guidelines?

Answer: In both instances, the team/individual must be able to produce the original source of the evidence that would include the entire language of the quoted material being used. Failure to do so would be a violation of the evidence guidelines.

Question: A team/individual is charged with not having read particular parts of evidence that they claimed to have read. How is that dispute to be resolved?

Answer: The team must give some clear oral cue as to the end of the piece of evidence they have read and clearly indicate in the written text the portions of the evidence that have been read. If the judge determines that these standards have not been met, then they may render their decision accordingly. If they choose to ignore the challenge and fail to follow prescribed procedures, then that decision may be appealed to the tournament committee.

Question: A team/individual uses private correspondence as evidence in a round. Is such correspondence allowed to be used in that manner?

Answer: Teams/individuals may not use private correspondence as evidence. The reasons are many. First, other teams do not have the same access to the evidence that the team/individual might have. Corroboration and verifying the authenticity of the evidence/correspondence is difficult, as well. For academic reasons, teams/individuals may be encouraged to contact sources of evidence directly. However, they should do so only for their own education and ability to better explain publically accessible evidence by that author/person.

Question: A team/individual challenges the evidence used or presented by their opponent. The judge determines that the challenge is legitimate and an evidence violation has occurred. What should the judge do at this point?

Answer: In most cases the rules are very clear. In most cases, the team/individual is given a loss with no speaker points awarded (if applicable). The judge(s) should then note on the ballot the reason for the loss and the lack of speaker points. Judge education may need to take place to assist judges in such situations. Unless the judge has misinterpreted or failed to follow a rule, their decision is final and binding. It may not be appealed.

Question: A team/individual issues an evidence challenge by 1) merely questioning the validity of the evidence with little or no explanation or support; 2) producing the original source indicating that the opposing team has violated one or more of the evidence requirements. Are these legitimate evidence challenges?

Answer: The second challenge is indeed legitimate and should be considered by the judge and/or tabulation committee. The first is not a legitimate challenge. If such a challenge is offered, the judge has two choices. They may choose to merely ignore the challenge and proceed with the round. They may also choose to pause the round, and ask the team making the challenge if they would like to issue a formal challenge, with the understanding being that the round would then be over once the challenge had been decided. The team would then choose to either proceed or make the formal challenge. Challenging teams must meet particular criteria. The challenging of evidence is a serious charge and should not be taken lightly.

Question: A team/individual questions the legitimacy of evidence in the round, but does not issue a formal evidence challenge. Once the decision is made, and the team/individual finds out that they have lost the round (or believes that they have lost the round), they choose to file a protest with the tab room. Is this considered to be a legitimate evidence challenge?

Answer: Any team or individual may protest the legitimacy of evidence at the completion of a round. However, the allegation must meet the same burdens as if the challenge were made in the round. Failure to meet any of the burdens required would render the challenge moot. The tabulation committee would follow the same procedures as a judge would in the round to determine if the allegation is legitimate. The same consequences would apply as if the judge were rendering the same decision.

Question: A team/individual makes a formal allegation that a team/individual has distorted evidence, which could result in a loss for that team. The team/individual being charged now makes a counter allegation that the team/individual is using non-existent evidence. How should the judge(s) proceed in this situation?

Answer: The judge(s) should address each allegation separately and in the order in which they were presented. In this case, the judge(s) should address the allegation of distorted evidence first. If the allegation is found to be legitimate, the judge(s) would give the loss to the team found to have violated the evidence rules. If the allegation had no merit, the judge(s) would give the loss to the team making the allegation. The judge(s) would then address the second allegation. The same procedures would be followed. If the allegation had no merit, the judge(s) would now be affirming the previously awarded win. If the allegation had merit, the judge(s) would then give each team a loss in the round. Subsequent penalties (7.3.B) would then apply to both teams.

Question: A team/individual makes a formal allegation that a team/individual has distorted evidence. The team being accused does not respond, but allows the judge to render a decision. The judge upholds the allegation and votes against the team/individual accused of distorting evidence. Once the ballot has been turned in, the team/individual and/or their coach file a protest of the round, alleging that their opponent has violated the evidence rules. What should the tabulation committee do at this point?

Answer: The allegation must be treated just as any other post round protest should be handled. The persons protesting must do so within the prescribed time frame, with the same requirements to bring the protest. The team/individual being protested has the right to respond. The tabulation committee would then rule in the same manner they would with any other protest. If they choose to deny the protest, the decision in the round would stand. If they decide that a violation has occurred, both teams/individuals would be given a loss in the round, depending on the violation that had occurred.

APPENDIX D: Congress Evidence Challenge Form

To be submitted to the Parliamentarian for consideration within 20 minutes of the close of the session. *(Please PRINT.)*

Student:		Code:	
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School:		State:	
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Please detail the specific piece of evidence that you are challenging, including any cited source information and where in the speech the evidence was used.

Please explain your reasoning and/or proof for challenging this piece of evidence. Please include whether you are in possession of the source and can produce it upon request.

I understand that alleging a violation without merit or to be found inaccurate could lead to a censure by the parliamentarian.

Student's Signature:	
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Coach's Name:	
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Supervising Adult's Name:	
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APPENDIX E: Change Log

This section highlights revisions made to this document. Overarching modifications are indicated by a change in the second digit (e.g., 2.1.0), while minor edits or revisions to the current document are indicated by a change in the third digit (e.g., 2.0.1). The following are updates to the original versions.

Editor's Note: For quick reference throughout this document, new changes for the current year are highlighted in yellow. Other recent changes made within the past one or two years remain highlighted in gray.

SECTION 1: High School Chapter Manual Updates

Date	Version	Change Description
01/31/2011	2.0.2	Point recording chart for non-ranked evaluation in speech events added; chart for service point recording added; conversation of ranks vs. points in Congressional Debate added. Added graphics to clarify the individual application/enrollment process.
09/15/2011	2.0.3	Release for the 2011-12 school year. District committee information updated to reflect abolishment of the alternate position, as well as online voting. Minor document formatting.
01/05/2012	2.0.4	Stipulation added that candidates for district committee members must be active coaches (affiliated with a school) in the district. Congressional Debate point recording conversation table added for when 6-pt. scoring is not used. Reference to automatic point recording added.
02/24/2012	2.0.5	Clarified that only <u>one</u> score can be entered per round for interscholastic competition (p. 4-5). Speech ranks are averaged for panels, except for final rounds, where the overall tournament placement is used. Note added on quick reference. Added rule prohibiting retroactive point recording for service speaking projects beyond one year prior. Clarified that changes to online points database records must be submitted by the chapter advisor of record. Added information about the new Student Service Citations.
01/07/2013	2.0.6	Clarified changes in Recording Merit Points, including non-competitive/service points.
12/10/2013	2.1.0	Noted change to quarterly <i>Rostrum</i> publication cycle. A minimum of four schools must be present at a tournament for Association merit points to be earned in all events. Added new procedures for Student Website Registration. Updated the National Qualification Levels, which replace the red, yellow, green status system previously in place.
8/22/2014	3.0.0	Updated branding to reflect the organization's name change (National Forensic League to National Speech & Debate Association). Updated website and email contact information throughout: www.speechanddebate.org / info@speechanddebate.org . Updated procedures for Student Website Registration.

11/17/2015	2016.0.0	<p>Release for the 2015-2016 school year:</p> <p>Adapted formatting to create unified manual—content combined with <i>High School Event Rules Manual</i>, <i>District Tournament Operations Manual</i>, and <i>National Tournament Operations Manual</i>.</p> <p>Added notice about school-based membership for 2016-2017.</p> <p>No district will be allowed to split into two districts unless they establish 40 chapters for two consecutive years.</p>
10/19/2016	2017.0.0	<p>Release for the 2016-2017 school year:</p> <p>Clarified student website registration procedures with the launch of the Association’s new website.</p> <p>With the passing of the Constitutional Referendum in April 2016, each active member school shall have one vote in district and national matters.</p>
02/13/2017	2017.1.0	Added the Coaches Code of Ethics, adopted in December 2016.
01/08/2018	2018.0.0	<p>Release for the 2017-2018 school year:</p> <p>Student membership begins upon payment of the enrollment fee. High school students no longer need to earn 25 points first to be considered a member.</p> <p>Adopted more inclusive language within the student Code of Honor.</p> <p>Updated the frequency of <i>Rostrum</i> magazine, which is now mailed five times per year with the addition of the <i>Nationals Chronicle</i> tournament edition in mid-August.</p> <p>Clarified the procedures used annually in determining the Leading Chapter Award for each district.</p>
10/01/2018	2019.0.0	<p>Release for the 2018-2019 school year:</p> <p>Renamed the service citation award for coaches after Don Crabtree. The honor will now be referred to as the Don Crabtree Distinguished Service Award.</p>
2/12/2019	2019.3.2	Clarified that participants in Girls/Boys State may earn up to 24 total points if they are a candidate for an elected position.
5/6/2019	2019.4.0	<p>Updated the District Committee election procedure to reflect the ranked voting and requirement that individuals on the ballot are affiliated with an active school.</p> <p>Clarified that in POI, keeping the manuscript in the contestant’s control means keeping the manuscript in contact with the body at all times.</p> <p>Reorganized the “Source Verification” requirements for Interpretation events and clarified that Original Oratory and Informative Speaking quarterfinalists will turn in their manuscripts and works cited pages at the National Tournament.</p>
10/05/2020	2021.0.0	<p>Release for the 2020-2021 school year:</p> <p>Changed the student service point system that allows coaches autonomy to determine the merit of events and reduces the number of people in a required audience.</p> <p>Policy Debate preparation time is eight minutes per team.</p> <p>Points may not be entered for graduated seniors after July 15 of their graduation year.</p> <p>Clarified that four schools must be present for points to be awarded for any event.</p> <p>Students may only receive points for one asynchronous competition per day.</p> <p>Suggest that tournament hosts use the Inclusive Tournament Checklist.</p>
11/10/2020	2021.0.1	The NSDA is piloting a rule for 2020-2021 that allows students to earn up to 75 merit points for intrasquad and intersquad competitions that do not have the required four schools

		<p>participating. Tabulation software and the NSDA site will not regulate this; it will be the affirmative duty of coaches to ensure what is posted is in line with this rule.</p> <p>All districts in 2020-2021 must be online unless they receive special dispensation from the Executive Director.</p> <p>Clarified that districts may do asynchronous Duo at their district tournament even if the rest of their speech events are held live.</p> <p>Clarified that districts may do a hybrid synchronous/asynchronous speech model at their district tournament as long as it is consistent among speech events, with the exception of Duo and Extemp.</p>
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SECTION 2: High School Event Rules Manual Updates

Date	Version	Change Description
11/17/2015	2016.0.0	<p>Release for the 2015-2016 school year:</p> <p>Adapted formatting to create unified manual—content combined with <i>High School Chapter Manual</i>, <i>District Tournament Operations Manual</i>, and <i>National Tournament Operations Manual</i>.</p> <p>Added pilot event rules for Informative Speaking and Program Oral Interpretation.</p>
10/19/2016	2017.0.0	<p>Release for the 2016-2017 school year:</p> <p>Updated the rules for Informative Speaking and Program Oral Interpretation, which were adopted as official main events beginning in 2016-2017.</p> <p>Updated the rules for Interpretation events regarding online publishing sources: PDF downloads, e-books, and websites with editorial review.</p> <p>Clarified the source verification rules in Interpretation events.</p> <p>Clarified the transitions rule in Interpretation events.</p> <p>Modified the Website Approval Submission Process for online publishing sources.</p> <p>Updated the rules for Prose/Poetry to reflect use of PDFs, e-books, and online material.</p> <p>In Original Oratory, the general purpose of the speech is to persuade. Any other purpose such as to inform or entertain shall be secondary.</p> <p>Adopted casebook questions for clarifying evidence rules in debate (see Appendix C).</p> <p>Added pilot evidence rules for Congressional Debate.</p> <p>Added provisions for direct questioning in Congressional Debate.</p> <p>Added the Congress Evidence Challenge Form (see Appendix D).</p>
02/13/2017	2017.1.0	<p>Updated the Informative Speaking rules for parity with other event rules: “A student may not use an informative speech the student used in district or national competition in any previous contest year.”</p>
01/08/2018	2018.0.0	<p>Release for the 2017-2018 school year:</p> <p>Clarified that distribution of items before, during, or after a round of Informative Speaking is prohibited.</p> <p>Noted that one table will be provided for use by the contestants during the National Tournament final round in Informative Speaking.</p>

		<p>Added language about the proper identification of sources in Program Oral Interpretation (POI).</p> <p>Clarified manuscript use in Prose and Poetry to bring these rules into alignment with manuscript use in Program Oral Interpretation.</p> <p>Updated the Prose and Poetry rules to better define anthology and re-use of material.</p> <p>Officially adopted the 2016-2017 piloted evidence rules in Congressional Debate.</p> <p>Extended the pilot for district questioning in Congressional Debate.</p>
10/01/2018	2019.0.0	<p>Release for the 2018-2019 school year:</p> <p>Updated pilot language about laptop use in Policy, Lincoln-Douglas, Public Forum, Congressional Debate, and Extemporaneous Speaking.</p> <p>Clarified that, in POI, even visual aids found within the manuscript itself may not be shown to the audience during a performance.</p>
01/03/2019	2019.3.1	<p>Updated pronoun usage to gender inclusive “they” instead of “he/she.”</p>
02/18/2019	2019.3.3	<p>Changed oral citation requirement for POI so that the title or author for all selections must be verbally identified.</p> <p>Clarified that the title cited in a POI may be the primary source or the specific title within the primary source.</p> <p>Added a requirement that a Words Cited for POI sources must be available to tournament officials upon request.</p>
09/05/2019	2020.0.0	<p>Release for the 2019-2020 school year:</p> <p>Added the new term limits and organizational structure for members of the Board of Directors</p> <p>Updated language to reflect the integration of middle school students into the NSDA Honor Society</p> <p>Added the Public Forum pilot rules about adding one minute to the summary speeches and preparation time</p> <p>Added the Congress pilot rule about limiting time for debate per item of legislation</p> <p>Changed the national qualification levels requirements</p> <p>Changed the definition of “active” status to “paid member”</p> <p>Added the ability for District Committees to penalize a student in speech who is 15 minutes late for their round</p> <p>Added the ability for a District Committee to appoint a member</p> <p>Clarified the ability to use anthologies in Supplemental Prose and Supplemental Poetry</p> <p>Updated the number of service citations a coach receives per item</p>
09/30/2020	2021.0.0	<p>Release for the 2020-2021 school year:</p> <p>Policy Debate preparation time is eight minutes per team.</p> <p>Public Forum preparation time and summary speech times were both permanently increased by one minute.</p> <p>The New Guidelines for the Use of Internet-Enabled Devices in Debate, Congress, and Extemp events are now the default rules that govern district contests. They are required for any</p>

		<p>online district event. The Previous Guidelines for Laptop Use may be used for in-person districts if explicitly stated 60 days in advance of the district contest.</p> <p>The debate evidence rules also apply to Big Questions.</p> <p>The Board of Directors is piloting new rules regarding what sources may be used in Interpretation events, including removal of the requirement that digital sources be found on the Approved Websites List.</p> <p>Clarified how original sources may be adapted for competition.</p>
02/15/2021	2021.1.2	Updated the Code of Honor

SECTION 3: District Tournament Operations Manual Updates

Date	Version	Change Description
12/01/2011	4.0.0	<p>In interpretive events (DI, HI, Duo), the same selection of literature entered at on-site registration should be used for the duration of the tournament.</p> <p>Congressional Debate judges affiliated with a particular school must not judge a student from that school.</p>
01/16/2012	4.0.2	<p>Added reminder to district tournament officials to check all judge/parliamentarian ballots in Congressional Debate <i>before</i> tabulation begins to ensure that names are completed correctly.</p> <p>Added clarification of rules for discarding student ballots that are completed incorrectly for tabulation of student ranks in Congressional Debate.</p> <p>Clarified that chairs using Joy of Tournaments software must still send a signed copy of the Qualifiers and Alternates form following the district tournament.</p>
12/06/2012	5.0.0	<p>All references to the former website have been updated.</p> <p>Added new, uniform district standards for qualifying to Nationals.</p> <p>Reminder that Congress judges may not personally know students in the chamber.</p> <p>Added new rule that speaker recognition by student presiding officers may not be tied to previous recognition of students asking questions, moving motions, or longest standing/standing time.</p> <p>Noted that legislation by each district for the National Tournament must be submitted online via the Points Application.</p> <p>Added new rules pertaining to online sources for literary material for interpretation. Please note that merely finding material from an approved site does not make it legal; it must also meet the criteria outlined in that section.</p>
01/04/2012	5.0.1	<p>Revised name of the District Cumulative Sweeps Award to more accurately describe it, since the award used to be a trophy, and is now a plaque. Also, clarified tournament entry form requirements.</p>
02/28/2013	5.0.2	<p>Revised Absolute Pairing Priorities for debate to clarify that entries from a school should not be paired against each other, unless they are the only two remaining undefeated entries, or 3 of 4 undefeated entries, or 4 of 5 undefeated entries. Previously the rule said two or a majority of undefeated entries, which implied that if 2 of 3 are from the same school, they could be paired against one another, which was not the intention of that rule.</p> <p>Added a table to clarify district qualifying levels.</p>
03/06/2013	5.0.3	<p>Clarified rules for published in print as well as online sources for Interp material.</p>

12/02/2013	6.0.0	<p>Added minimum school entry requirement.</p> <p>Outlined website registration requirement for new student members.</p> <p>Clarified the “Partnership Event Exception” explanation.</p> <p>Added pilot “Evidence in Debate Rules,” which were optional in 2013-2014.</p> <p>Clarified procedures regarding district tournament Interp source material and Oratory manuscript submissions.</p> <p>Added disclaimer about final round video performances.</p> <p>Updated the list of Approved Websites for online sources of literary material.</p> <p>Clarified observation of other Extemporaneous Speaking competitors.</p>
09/24/2014	7.0.0	<p>Updated branding to reflect the organization’s name change (National Forensic League to National Speech & Debate Association).</p> <p>Updated website and email contact information throughout: www.speechanddebate.org / info@speechanddebate.org.</p> <p>Added revised standards for evidence in debate, which tournaments could choose to pilot in 2014-2015. Coaches are encouraged to check with local tournament officials to see which set of rules will be used in their area.</p> <p>Clarified rules pertaining to the “grace period” in speech events.</p>
11/17/2015	2016.0.0	<p>Release for the 2015-2016 school year:</p> <p>Adapted formatting to create unified manual—content combined with <i>High School Chapter Manual</i>, <i>District Tournament Operations Manual</i>, and <i>National Tournament Operations Manual</i>.</p> <p>Clarified that a district tournament may not be held after May 1, 2016. No part of a district contest may begin on or after May 1, 2016.</p> <p>Added pilot events for 2015-2016: Informative Speaking and Program Oral Interpretation.</p> <p>Added the section entitled “District Audit Procedures.”</p> <p>Clarified that a list of 14 alternates must be determined in events with 30 entries or more. In events with 29 entries or fewer, no entry that finishes in the bottom half of the field may be listed as an alternate.</p>
02/03/2016	2016.1.0	<p>In World Schools Debate, each Association district is allowed to qualify ONE team of three to five students. Districts will not be allowed a second team.</p>
10/19/2016	2017.0.0	<p>Release for the 2016-2017 school year:</p> <p>Adopted required community standards statement that coaches must affirm prior to District and National Tournament competition.</p> <p>As new main events, Program Oral Interpretation and Informative Speaking count toward the Speech Sweepstakes Award and Cumulative Sweepstakes Award.</p> <p>Adjusted the district entry quota formula in light of POI and INF.</p> <p>When using the California Plan, District Committees in speech events with 14 or fewer entries may determine to hold two preliminary rounds of competition.</p> <p>When using the California Plan, District Committees in speech events with 14 or fewer entries are not required to hold a semifinal round and students may advance directly to the final round.</p>

		In World Schools Debate, each Association district may enter up to two teams to the National Tournament, provided they offer a second judge to cover the commitment for the second team.
12/02/2016	2017.0.1	Removed the principal signature requirement for district tournament registration.
02/13/2017	2017.1.0	Outlined the district qualification procedures for Big Questions Debates.
01/08/2018	2018.0.0	<p>Release for the 2017-2018 school year:</p> <p>Beginning with the 2017-2018 competition year, all NSDA districts will be required to use either The Joy of Tournaments or Tabroom.com system for the registration of their NSDA district tournament. Beginning with the 2018-2019 competition year, all NSDA districts will be required to use either Tabroom.com or The Joy of Tournaments for the registration and tabulation of their NSDA district tournament.</p> <p>Eliminated the mandatory seven-day (168 hour) district tournament entry deadline to allow each District Committee to determine an appropriate district tournament entry deadline for each event in their competition series.</p> <p>Removed the college-age semester restrictions for judging at the district tournament. As a reminder, current high school students may <u>not</u> judge any portion of the district tournament series.</p> <p>Removed the Congressional Debate tiebreaker procedure involving judges' preference of adjusted cumulative rank total (or student's preference for the student rank option). It is no longer used at the National Tournament, and this change brings the district tournament rules into alignment for tabulation purposes.</p> <p>District chairs must verify that Congressional Debate legislation submitted to the national office for consideration is the original work of the student(s) in their district.</p>
10/01/2018	2019.0.0	<p>Release for the 2018-2019 school year:</p> <p>Removed the restriction that prohibits the hosting of non-qualifying tournaments alongside the district tournament series (such as a novice division).</p> <p>Eliminated the language about the district chair not serving any other role but general supervision at the district tournament.</p> <p>During the 2018-2019 school year, the NSDA will pilot an alternative district qualification system featuring streamlined rules that, among other changes, eliminate the traditional up/down system. Districts that wish to pilot the new rules for speech and/or debate will have the opportunity to indicate that when submitting district dates. Please refer to the separate manual titled, "District Tournament Pilot Speech and Debate Manual."</p>
11/30/2018	2019.1.0	<p>Made district language consistent with updated rules and the requirement that districts must use approved tabulation software.</p> <p>Added a link to our guide on understanding your team's strength and why it matters.</p> <p>Updated pronoun usage throughout to gender inclusive "they" instead of "he/she."</p>
12/06/2018	2019.2.0	Updated the district qualification procedures for Big Questions.
01/02/2019	2019.3.0	Clarified that districts may hold a qualifying World Schools Debate tournament to determine the teams that will attend Nationals.
02/12/2019	2019.3.2	Clarified the materials that districts need to send to the national office after the conclusion of their district tournament series.
09/05/2019	2020.0.0	<p>Release for the 2019-2020 school year:</p> <p>Changed the national qualification levels requirements.</p>

		Added the ability for District Committees to penalize a student in speech who is 15 minutes late for their round.
01/02/2020	2020.1.0	Clarified that in the up/down debate model, an undefeated only receives a bye if it is the sole undefeated remaining. Changed that the Parliamentarian must rank all students in the round to serve as a tiebreaker. Clarified that Big Questions does not count against the triple entry policy at districts.
10/07/2020	2021.0.0	Release for the 2020-2021 school year: The pilot Congress rules are now the permanent rules governing district tournaments beginning in 2020-2021. The pilot speech and debate rules will go into effect as the permanent rules governing district tournaments beginning in 2021-2022. Changed the chamber size requirements. District Committees who have completed the training may use Alternate Penalties for Speech Infractions at their district tournament. Added additional requirements for any district tournament held online. Added requirements that district tournaments utilize the NSDA Harassment and Discrimination Policy. Encouraged districts to utilize the Inclusive Tournament Checklist. Added that schools may appoint an in-person adult representative to file protests on a school's behalf.
01/05/2021	2021.1.0	Updated the district qualification entry requirements for 2021 only. Added new rule for 2021 only that schools may enter up to two non-qualifying students in supplemental events at the National Tournament. Each district may qualify up to three World Schools Debate entries for the 2021 National Tournament only. Changed the requirement from 8 schools to 6 schools to seat a Senate.

SECTION 4: National Tournament Operations Manual

Date	Version	Change Description
05/24/2012	2012.0.0	Release for the 2012 National Tournament. New for 2012: Auto-qualification extended from top 6 to top 14 students in each main event from the previous year's National Tournament. Regarding protests, only the accused may appeal the decision of the ombudsperson. The complainant may not appeal, but may protest subsequent rounds. For interpretation material, the cutting performed in the first round of competition must be used throughout the entirety of the tournament in that event. Speech event points unified (previously, points earned in Interp. events were less than in speech events). In Congressional Debate, the final round seating chart will be generated by computer (rather than drawn by random number at the beginning of the session). Also, speeches given by

		presiding officer candidates will be scored with merit points, but auditioning periods for presiding will not be scored.
03/28/2013	2013.0.0	<p>Release for the 2013 National Tournament. New for 2013:</p> <p>Added Congressional Debate to Debate Evidence Rules and penalties.</p> <p>New Congressional Debate speaker recognition rule, disallowing “activity,” and “longest standing”/“standing time” added.</p> <p>In Congressional Debate, the semifinal session presiding officer audition period has been cut to allow equivalent presiding time during the two separate sessions for the separate judge panels.</p> <p>New rules for online source material and verification in Interpretation.</p> <p>New rules for Impromptu added. There no longer will be a separate prep room; students will have a combined seven minutes to both prepare and speak in the same room with the judge.</p>
05/31/2013	2013.1.0	<p>Clarified the number of judges in final rounds; and in speech, dropping at least one high and one low rank to ensure eleven.</p> <p>Clarified speaking order for final rounds of speech events.</p>
06/06/2013	2013.1.1	When the previous update was released, the sentence pertaining to college-age judges was erroneously omitted. It has been placed back, with additional clarification.
06/11/2013	2013.1.2	Clarified the number of Representatives that break in the House.
06/19/2013	2013.1.3	Corrected the reference bullet point on Impromptu time limit, referencing time to prepare <i>and</i> speak.
05/01/2014	2014.0.0	<p>Release for the 2014 National Tournament. New for 2014:</p> <p>Updated “Instructions for Registering.” Coaches must UPLOAD digital files of Interp and Oratory scripts during online registration rather than mailing hard copies to the national office.</p> <p>Clarified tie-breaking procedures for Supplemental Speech and Extemporaneous Debate.</p> <p>Updated web link to list of Approved Websites for Digital (Online) Publishing Sources.</p> <p>New rules for Extemporaneous Debate added. Due to the extemporaneous nature of this supplemental debate event, debate topics will not be released in advance, instead requiring a 30-minute prep period.</p>
06/10/2014	2014.1.0	<p>Clarified the number of contestants in each Congress semifinal chamber. This adjustment allows the tournament director to adjust for available space and varying contestant fields.</p> <p>Updated the formula and description of the School Awards given out at the National Tournament.</p>
09/24/2014	2015.0.0	<p>Release for the 2015 National Tournament. New for 2015:</p> <p>Adjusted the National Tournament entry fees.</p> <p>Changed the judging requirement owed per supplemental event pre-registration.</p> <p>Changed the judging requirement owed per consolation event pre-registration.</p> <p>Adjusted the per round-hired judge fee.</p> <p>Clarified rules pertaining to the “grace period” in speech events.</p>

11/17/2015	2016.0.0	<p>Release for the 2016 National Tournament. New for 2016:</p> <p>Adapted formatting to create unified manual—content combined with <i>High School Chapter Manual</i>, <i>District Tournament Operations Manual</i>, and <i>National Tournament Operations Manual</i>.</p> <p>Added pilot events for 2015-2016: Informative Speaking and Program Oral Interpretation.</p> <p>Entrants in INF and POI must UPLOAD a copy of their speech during online registration.</p> <p>Clarified final ranking in the Final Session of Congressional Debate.</p> <p>Clarified the number of final round judges to be used in Supplemental and Consolation Events.</p>
02/03/2016	2016.1.0	<p>In World Schools Debate, each Association district is allowed to qualify ONE team of three to five students. Districts will not be allowed a second team.</p>
06/04/2016	2016.1.1	<p>Updated the names of main event speech final round bowls to reflect current sponsorship.</p>
10/19/2016	2017.0.0	<p>Release for the 2016-2017 school year:</p> <p>Adopted required community standards statement that coaches must affirm prior to District and National Tournament registration.</p> <p>Added new main events for 2016-2017: Informative Speaking and Program Oral Interpretation.</p> <p>In World Schools Debate, each Association district may enter up to two teams to the National Tournament, provided they offer a second judge to cover the commitment for the second team.</p> <p>Outlined National Tournament Audit Procedures.</p>
02/13/2017	2017.1.0	<p>Updated the mailing address for the national office: 401 Railroad Place, West Des Moines, IA 50265-4730.</p> <p>Advisors now have the option to indicate how they would like their judge bond applied during online registration. All judge bonds must be claimed by July 31, 2017. If you do not claim your bond at the tournament or by July 31, it will be applied as school credit.</p> <p>Clarified that all POI entries must include a works cited page with their script upload during online tournament registration.</p> <p>Added an overview of logistics for the Big Questions Capstone Event, which will be held in conjunction with the National Tournament.</p> <p>Signed “Participant Release Forms” should be uploaded during online tournament registration, NOT mailed.</p> <p>Outlined prescribed penalties for Speech Rules Violations, adopted in December 2016.</p>
01/08/2018	2018.0.0	<p>Release for the 2017-2018 school year:</p> <p>Updated the 2018 National Tournament entry fees. Those teams that elect to stay within the National Tournament hotel block will save \$25 per entry fee per student.</p> <p>Beginning with the 2018 National Tournament, re-registration for supplemental and consolation events will take place online. Coaches will verify that their students are eligible and will participate in the event. If a student chooses to not compete after re-registration has been confirmed, the school will be assessed a drop fee.</p>

		<p>Updated contestant sectioning and judge placement protocols for states with seven or more districts.</p> <p>Codified the reinstatement of speech contestants at various points of the tournament when those students are eliminated at the fault of the tournament.</p>
06/08/2018	2018.1.0	Clarified that the use of laptop computers is permitted in Extemporaneous Commentary at the National Tournament. Laptop use must comply with the “Guidelines for Laptop Use in Extemporaneous Speaking.”
10/01/2018	2019.0.0	Release for the 2018-2019 school year
5/6/2019	2019.4.0	<p>Updated the NSDA Harassment and Discrimination Policy</p> <p>A range of penalty options were created to better address varying levels of rules infractions I speech events at the National Tournament. These penalty options will be piloted at the 2019 National Tournament and administered by the Rules Adjudication Panel.</p> <p>At the 2019 National Tournament, there will be a quarterfinal round in the House. Updated the National Congressional Debate Procedures, schedule, and formula for school awards to account for the new House quarterfinal.</p> <p>Changed the role of the ombudsperson. The ombudsperson will provide tournament information, help resolve problems, and facilitate script turn-in. All formal protests will be handled by a Rules Adjudication Committee. Decisions of the Rules Adjudication Committee are final and may not be appealed.</p> <p>Clarified the materials that quarterfinalists in Interp, Original Oratory, and Informative Speaking must turn in to the ombudsperson to qualify for the semifinal round.</p> <p>Updated the pairing procedures for debate to accommodate for the use of a computer tabulation system.</p> <p>Registration for the National Tournament opens online on March 1.</p> <p>Judge bond checks will be mailed to the school or applied as credit to the school’s NSDA account by July 31. Log in to Tabroom.com to view how you selected you would like the bond returned.</p>
2/11/2020	2020.1.1	<p>Added the registration requirements and entry patterns for supplemental events at the 2020 National Tournament.</p> <p>Clarified that “entries” refers to both partner and solo entries in the table that describes the number of entries necessary to gain additional national qualifiers at districts.</p>
10/07/2020	2021.0.0	<p>Release for the 2020-2021 school year:</p> <p>Added changes from the 2020 Online National Tournament Manual, including the new LD speaker awards, new judge requirements, and new supplemental tournament structure.</p>
01/05/2021	2021.1.0	<p>Added the 2021 rule that schools may choose to enter two non-qualifying students in supplemental events.</p> <p>Adjusted entry fee for supplemental events.</p>
02/15/2021	2021.2.1	Updated to accommodate 2021 Online National Tournament rules.

Questions?

We’re here to help! Email us at info@speechanddebate.org or call (920) 748-6206. You may also find more information online at www.speechanddebate.org.