



Chair: Jess Cerchiaro
Committee Members: Paul Beer, Ben Edwards, Lauren Hess, Alison McBee, Matt Smeltzer

Dear NSDA Coaches:

Our NSDA District Tournament is approaching in just a few short weeks! This tournament will determine who will represent the Pittsburgh District at the NSDA National Tournament in Richmond, VA in June 2026.

Registration on tabroom.com is now open. Please read this letter and review rules and regulations carefully. Please note that there are additional registration requirements that may be different from our weekly local tournaments. It is imperative that you follow all directions and complete your registration fully, including the upload of any documents required.

DATES & DEADLINES

District Speech & Debate:

March 14, 2026 at Ingomar Middle School (Wexford, PA)
Registration (entries, judges, etc) due March 12th at 8:00 pm

District Congress

March 28, 2026 at Seton La Salle High School
Legislation should be submitted online by March 16th
Registration (entries, judges, etc) due March 26th at 8:00 pm

REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

Remember that while you are required to enter some information about pieces, school consent, and single letters of intent online, you still need to print those items that are marked "Print." Bring the printed material to the tournament on Saturday, March 14.

- ✓ ***School Consent Form*** – Print & sign (coach signature) for each date
- ✓ ***Single Entry Letters of Intent*** – Complete selection online AND download & print form
- ✓ ***Speech Entries:***
 - Interps: enter piece title & author online with registration
 - POI: enter pieces, titles, & bibliography online
 - OO/Info: enter title and subject area online; bring printed copy of speech with signature page that includes the statement "This is the original work of the student" and is signed by the student and coach.
- ✓ Check your ***NSDA balance*** – students must have paid membership one week prior to compete; all national dues must be paid and you must not have a negative balance on your account
- ✓ Be sure you have paid your ***local Pittsburgh District dues*** of \$40 – check with Jess Cerchiaro if you are unsure if this has been received

JUDGING QUOTA

The judging quota is 1 for 2 entries in debate, 1 for 5 entries in speech, and 1 for 6 entries in congress. There are no judges for hire.

ENTRY FEES

\$6 per student (\$12 per team: duo, policy, PF)

EXTEMP TOPICS

Extemp topic areas to be used on March 14 are: *(topics are provided by NSDA and the numbers below are irrelevant/do not indicate round order, etc)*

USX Topics

1. Politics
2. Business & Economics
3. Supreme Court & Legal Issues
4. Health, Education & Social Issues
5. Energy & Environment
6. Foreign Policy & National Security

IX Topics

1. Africa
2. Asia
3. Europe
4. Southwest Asia
5. Americas
6. Energy & Environment

CONGRESS LEGISLATION

Congress legislation is due on Tabroom by **Monday, March 16**. Please note that you need separate legislation for the House and the Senate!! Full packets of legislation will be posted on Tabroom by Saturday, March 21. *Note this is during the PHSSL State Tournament; every effort will be made to post earlier.*

WORLD SCHOOLS DEBATE

The World Schools Debate team selection process will be similar to last year. An email outlining the process and due dates will be sent to all coaches soon.

IMPORTANT NOTES & REMINDERS:

1. In all events, we will follow the method that is described in the district manual; please check the NSDA site for the official [manual](#).
NOTE: Our district was approved to use just one judge in policy rounds, in the hopes of increasing participation. Our district was not approved to use an alternate tiebreaker method for debate rounds, so debate rounds will be paired as stated in the manual. Our district will NOT be piloting the use of a note card in extemp – NO note card is permitted.
2. The judging quota is high in both speech and debate. If you cannot supply the judges, do not supply the contestants. We want your students to compete, but in order for us to

have a successful tournament, we need you to provide your judges. There are no judges for hire BUT there are some schools that are not NSDA members. Seek them out to see if they can help you meet your quota. Remember, hiring judges from the bigger schools (NA and USC, I think you will agree), does not help the tournament move more smoothly.

3. Honor your commitment to have students participate in districts once you register them.
4. Don't wait until the tournament day to point out that a student's speech may not meet NSDA rules. If you have a reason to question the selection of any student, please address these questions to the District Committee immediately.
5. An adult must accompany any team attending a district tournament.
6. Remember that your judges are expected to stay the entire time and judge all the events that are assigned to them. THERE IS NO SWITCHING ASSIGNMENTS. When your students are eliminated, that does not mean that your judges are done. Also, please ask your judges to not report to the tab room to ask if they may leave. If judges are excused, we will post this.
7. Double entry is permitted between all events; however, students may only enter one partnership event District tournament weekend. Cross entry in Duo, PF, and Policy will be automatically forbidden on the same weekend. Please remember to complete and submit a Single Entry Letter of Intent if you are double entering students
8. If a school enters two students in each contest category, they may enter two additional students, regardless of their chapter strength, but totaling no more than FOUR entries in each category.
9. In addition to the district committee there are a few coaches that will be assisting with the running of the qualifiers. Please check the Tournament Assignments section which will be posted on Tabroom closer to the date of the competition. If you are assisting, please do not count yourself as a judge.
10. We are accepting nominations for District People of the Year Awards. More details coming soon.
11. The World Schools Debate team selection process will be similar to last year. An email outlining the process and due dates will be sent to all coaches soon.
12. NSDA is offering a "Last Chance Qualifier" for those who do not qualify at the District Tournament. Details can be found on tabroom.com (search "last chance qualifier").

Thanks for being part of the National Speech and Debate Association!
Your District Committee