



Dear Coaches:

The District Committee looks forward to welcoming you and your team to the Chesapeake District Tournament, the qualifying tournament for the National Speech and Debate Association National Tournament.

**The District Tournament** will be held April 18th at Marriotts Ridge High School. **Nationals** will be in person in Richmond VA June 14-19, 2026.

The Chesapeake District tournament features competition in speech, debate, big questions, and congress events. Policy debate, public forum debate, Lincoln-Douglas debate, international extemporaneous speaking and United States extemporaneous speaking. Informative speaking, original oratory, duo interpretation, dramatic interpretation, humorous interpretation, and program oral interpretation will be held **April 18th 2026**.

**Congressional debate** is unique in that it is taking place **Saturday April 18th 2026 (in person) and Sunday (online- if needed) April 19th** on NSDA Campus.

Big Questions will be held **on Saturday April 18th 2026**.

Debate events will use the March [NSDA topics](#).

**Public Forum: Resolved: The United States should eliminate the President's authority to deploy military forces abroad without Congressional approval.**

**LD: Resolved: The United States military ought to abide by the principle of non-intervention.**

**CX: Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its exploration and/or development of the Arctic.**

To enhance the educational aspect of the tournament, **electronic ballots with critiques will be provided in all rounds in all events.**

At the conclusion of the tournament, in addition to announcing the qualifiers, the district will award the District Student of the Year, Alumnus of the Year, Communicator of the Year, Volunteer of the Year, Coach of the Year, Administrator of the Year, and New Coach of the Year. Information on nominations is contained in this packet.

Please read the information in these pages carefully (even if you have attended Districts many times before), as this tournament is different than many others that you may be accustomed to attending. ([LINK](#))

If you have any questions, you can reach Patrick Daniels, District Chair at [patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us](mailto:patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us).

Sincerely,  
Patrick Daniels Chair NSDA Chesapeake

**Eligibility:**

Schools must be registered members of the National Speech and Debate Association to enter this tournament (to join NSDA, visit [www.speechanddebate.org](http://www.speechanddebate.org)). All students must also be paid members of the National Speech and Debate Association, have an online account at [www.speechanddebate.org](http://www.speechanddebate.org), and hold at least the Degree of Merit (25 points).

**Entries:**

Schools may enter up to four entries in each speech or debate event, up to two entries in congress Senate, and as many congress House entries as permitted. A school's total number of entries for the tournament, and congress House entries, are based on the school's total NSDA degrees *on record seven days before the tournament* (see page 66 of the High School Manual, (<https://www.speechanddebate.org/high-school-unified-manual/>))

Since entry numbers are dependent on total degrees, please make sure that you enter any backlogged student points into the system as soon as possible, but certainly before March 19th!

**Supervision Requirement:**

All schools participating in the District Tournament must have a supervising adult who will be reachable for the duration of the tournament. Unattended students will not be allowed to compete. All students from a school should know who the supervising adult is, and the supervising adult should know what students from the school are in attendance, and how to contact their parents if the need arises.

For more help on registering on Tabroom.com, visit:

<https://www.speechanddebate.org/tabroom-districts-registration/>

All students entering more than one event must complete the Single Entry Letter of Intent form (<https://www.speechanddebate.org/wp-content/uploads/District-Tournament-Single-Entry-Letter-of-Intent.pdf>). Coaches should submit completed forms by Sunday 3/20 to [patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us](mailto:patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us).

## **Judging Requirements:**

LD, PF, POLICY: 1 judge per every 2 entries (or fraction thereof)

SPEECH: 1 judge per every 4 entries (or fraction thereof)

CONGRESS: 1 judge per school

BIG QUESTIONS: 1 judge per school

Since this tournament is the qualifier for the prestigious NSDA National Tournament, our students expect and deserve to be judged by experienced people. The district committee must insist that ALL judges who attend the tournament are properly trained and have some experience with their assigned area. Please DO NOT register novice judges, or you will be asked to replace them or pay a hired judge fee.

When registering judges, please list any alternate events that the judge is qualified to listen to (PF, LD, Policy, Speech, Congress) in the notes field.

Hired judges may be purchased at the cost of \$150, subject to availability. Entries not covered by judges will automatically be billed for hired judges when registration closes on 4/3 at 8:00 PM. If no judges are available, you may be required to drop entries. Please reach out to let us know what your plan is as soon as possible.

You must notify all of your judges that all judges are obligated for the duration of their respective events. Early departures prolong an already long day for everyone, and will be subject to a nuisance fee unless the judge is replaced. If one of your judges can't stay the entire day, please register an additional judge to fill in the gap (i.e. judge one works from 8:00-2:00 and judge two works from 2:00-finish). Please make note of this when registering online. No ballots will be released to a school that has accrued nuisance fines until those fines are paid in full.

## **Multiple Entry Rules:**

Triple entry is permitted, if one of those events is Congressional Debate or Big Questions. Otherwise, double entry is permitted. A student may enter at most one event from pattern A, at most two events from pattern B, and at most one event from pattern C.

Pattern A: Policy debate, public forum debate, Lincoln-Douglas debate, international extemp, United States extemp

Pattern B: Duo interp, original oratory, dramatic interp, humorous interp, informative speaking, program oral interp

Pattern C: Congressional debate

If a student enters a partnered debate event and duo, then the partnership must be the same for both events.

All students entering more than one event must complete the Single Entry Letter of Intent form (<https://www.speechanddebate.org/district-tournament-single-entry-letter-of-intent/>). Coaches should submit completed forms by Saturday April 3 (or bring them to the tournament) to [patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us](mailto:patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us).

### **Debate Topics:**

Debate events will use the April [NSDA topics](#).

**Public Forum: Resolved: The United States should eliminate the President's authority to deploy military forces abroad without Congressional approval.**

**LD: Resolved: The United States military ought to abide by the principle of non-intervention.**

**CX: Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its exploration and/or development of the Arctic.**

### **National Qualification:**

If entry numbers are adequate (at least 10 entries), the top three entries in each speech and debate event will qualify to the NSDA National Tournament. Otherwise, if there are at least 4 entries in a speech or debate event, the top two entries will qualify. In Congress, the top 2 entries in each chamber will qualify.

### **Debate Procedure:**

The tournament will use the up/down system as described in the Unified Manual. An entry that accrues two losses is eliminated from the competition. It is not possible to know in advance how many rounds will be required to determine the qualifiers; that depends on the number of entries and the distribution of wins and losses.

In partnered 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.

<https://www.speechanddebate.org/high-school-unified-manual/>

### **Congress Procedure:**

The tournament will use the procedure as described in the Unified Manual. Depending on the size of the tournament. There will be one three-hour round, breaking to a three-hour final round, with judge cumulative rank totals determining the breaks and the qualifiers. Student ranking will not be used.

Every school participating should make every effort to submit at least one piece of legislation emailed to [BCFLstudentcongress@gmail.com](mailto:BCFLstudentcongress@gmail.com) and [patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us](mailto:patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us)

Current bills

<https://www.speechanddebate.org/high-school-unified-manual/>

## **Speech Procedure**

The tournament will use the pilot procedure as described in the Unified Manual. All entries will compete in three rounds; if there are eight or more entries in an event, the top entries will advance to a fourth and final round. Speech will be LIVE (on NSDA Campus) !!!! We do want to acknowledge that if a student loses power/internet or has technical difficulties during the day that we will have a recording link to replace that round. This could function as a one time replacement; akin to the 10 minute tech time exception offered in the Debate events. The recording does not replace the synchronous participation.

## **HS Unified Manual**

If a final round is required in either international extemp or domestic extemp, that round will feature cross-examination.

## **Online Platforms**

The final session of Congress District Tournament and Big Questions (IF NEEDED) will be using Tabroom.com with NSDA Campus. All live debate and extemp rounds will occur on NSDA Campus.

Student NSDA Campus how-to video: [NSDA Campus Instructions for Students](#)

Judge NSDA Campus how-to video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xOFxYV2BZN0>

General tech / internet / recording / live events tips: [COMPETITOR TIPS](#)

Additional information will be provided as the tournament gets closer!

### **Tentative Schedule**

We will accelerate where possible! PF and LD rounds will be single-flighted.

#### **SATURDAY April 18th**

7:30-8:00AM Registration  
8:15 AM Opening Meeting for Students and Judges  
8:45 AM Extemp Draw Round 1, Policy Round 1, PF / LD Round 1  
9:15 AM IE, IX and USX Round 1  
10:15 AM PF and LD Round 2  
10:45 AM Extemp Draw Round 2  
11:00 AM Policy Round 2  
11:15 AM IE, IX and USX Round 2  
11:45 AM PF and LD Round 3  
1:00 PM Extemp Draw Round 3  
1:30 PM IE, IX and USX Round 3, Policy Round 3, PF and LD Round 4  
3:00 PM Asynchronous Speech Final Round Ballots Due  
3:15 PM PF and LD Round 5  
3:30 PM Extemp Draw Final Round  
3:45 PM Policy Round 4  
4:00 PM IE, IX and USX Final Round (with Cross-Ex)  
5:00 PM PF and LD Round 6  
6:00 PM Policy Round 5 (if needed)  
6:30 PM PF and LD Round 7 (if needed)  
8:00 PM Awards Ceremony

#### **SUNDAY April 19th - IF NEEDED**

10:00-10:15 AM Registration / Load the Digital Bus  
10:15 AM Opening Meeting for Students and Judges  
10:30-130PM Congress Finals

Updates to the schedule, and links for the opening meetings and registration, will be provided closer to the date of the tournament.

### **Fees**

**\$30** per duo, public forum, or policy debate entry

**\$20** per entry in other events

**\$175 per hired judge**

The separate **\$30 school registration fee.**

All fees (which include any unpaid invoices from NSDA) are due at registration and must be paid before students are permitted to compete. The NSDA is very particular about this and this regulation will be strictly enforced. Checks should be made payable to "Chesapeake NSDA District".

### *Example Registration*

Sunshine HS has 36 NSDA degrees, which allows it 12 speech/debate, 4 Student Congress House and 2 Student Congress Senate entries at the District Tournament. It registers 2 policy debate teams, 4 House and 2 Senate entries, and 2 OO and 2 DI entries. Sunshine also registers 1 congress judge, 1 policy judge, and 1 speech judge. Tournament fees would be as follows—

\$40 policy debate entry fees + \$60 congress entry fees + \$40 speech entry fees = \$140 tournament fees

Specific payment instructions will be provided as we get closer to the tournament.

### **Congress Legislation**

Congress bills and resolutions should be submitted to the district committee by Saturday, March 4th. Bills will be uploaded to the Tabroom web site shortly thereafter. The district committee reserves the right to publish unsponsored legislation or previously debated local league bills if needed to fill out the docket.

Legislation should be emailed to [BCFLstudentcongress@gmail.com](mailto:BCFLstudentcongress@gmail.com) and [patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us](mailto:patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us).

### **District Awards**

The Chesapeake District will announce several district-wide special awards at the awards ceremony. Coaches are invited to submit nominations. All nominations for all awards must be **received by Sunday April 12th**. Nominations received after the deadline will be considered for 2027, if applicable.

### *District Student of the Year*

The **District Student of the Year Award** (which in the Chesapeake District is named for former NSDA President William Woods Tate Jr.), is presented to a graduating senior in each district who best represents the tenets of the Association's Code of Honor: integrity, respect, humility, leadership, and service. Nominees must also demonstrate strong academic credentials and a commitment to the speech and debate community. Each year, six students who win the district award are selected as finalists for the William Woods Tate, Jr., National Student of the Year award. Nominations may be submitted at: <https://www.speechanddebate.org/student-of-the-year-nomination-form/>

### *District Alumni Achievement Award*

The **District Alumni Achievement Award** showcases a speech and debate alumni from the district who has utilized their speech and debate talents to achieve success for themselves and the speech and debate community. Email nominations to [patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us](mailto:patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us)

### *District Communicator of the Year Award*

The **District Communicator of the Year Award** showcases an individual who utilizes their speech and debate talents in ways that profoundly impact the lives of others. Email nominations to [patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us](mailto:patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us)

### *District Administrator of the Year Award*

The **District Administrator of the Year Award** recognizes an outstanding high school administrator who has succeeded in providing high-quality opportunities for students in speech and debate programming as well as demonstrating exemplary contributions to the profession. Nominations may be submitted at: <https://www.speechanddebate.org/high-school-administrator-nomination-form/>

### *District Volunteer of the Year Award*

The **District Volunteer of the Year Award** recognizes an individual who has given extraordinary time and talents to the mission of meaningfully involving more students in speech and debate. Email nominations to [patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us](mailto:patrick.daniels@baltimorecitycollege.us).

### *District New Coach of the Year Award*

The **District New Coach of the Year Award** recognizes an exemplary high school coach who is in their first year of NSDA membership. Nominations may be submitted at: <https://www.speechanddebate.org/new-coach-of-the-year-nomination-form/>

### *District Coach of the Year Award*

The **District Coach of the Year Award** honors a high school coach who exhibits outstanding leadership and commitment to speech and debate activities. Nominations may be submitted at: <https://www.speechanddebate.org/high-school-coach-of-the-year-nomination-form/>

## **NSDA 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.