

Leadership

Competition Rules Board May Meeting Minutes

May 7, 2024

The NSDA Competition Rules Board members held their virtual meeting May 7, 2024. In attendance were President Pam Cady Wycoff, Vice President Dr. Tommie Lindsey, Jr., Byron Arthur, David Huston, Adam Jacobi, Jennifer Jerome, Renee Motter, and Jay Rye.

President Wycoff called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

COMPETITION RULES

Scouting Rule

Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Lindsey:

“Lay this on the table to have the Competition and Rules Leadership Committee take up how to incorporate scouting expectations in the code of conduct.”

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

Currently, the *High School Unified Manual* states that “scouting is strongly discouraged.” The Competition Rules Board assessed a member-submitted proposal to change the scouting rule to clarify whether schools should be penalized for scouting. The group agreed that it is difficult to create a blanket rule regarding scouting because there are instances in which scouting is encouraged for educational purposes, and instances in which scouting is used to intimidate or unfairly advantage better-resourced teams. The Competition Rules Board tabled this item and charged the new Competition and Rules Leadership Committee with determining how scouting expectations can be removed from the competition rules and incorporated into the existing Expectations of Conduct.

Update on Strategic Plan Goals from 2023-2024

The Director of Competition and Events shared an update on progress related to the 2023-2024 competition rules strategic plan objectives. This update described ongoing work related to judge accreditation, mapping competitive speech and debate events to educational standards, and the Last-Chance Qualifier and supplemental event opportunities for non-National Tournament qualifiers. The Competition Rules Board reviewed and shared feedback regarding progress on these objectives.

Strategic Realignment Discussion

The NSDA continues to work through the strategic realignment process with the goal of creating a framework for our future that will define the unique role of the NSDA in service to the speech and debate field while putting the mission and values of the NSDA at its core. The Competition Rules Board discussed realignment recommendations related to creating novice opportunities and supporting non-competitive, community-building events for speech and debate participants.

National Tournament Adjudication Process

In preparation for the 2024 National Tournament, the Competition Rules Board reviewed and discussed responsibilities and procedures related to adjudication of protests at the 2024 National Tournament. The Competition Rules Board reviewed the range of penalties for rule violations, analyzed previous National Tournament protests, and discussed potential adjudication scenarios for the 2024 National Tournament.

Competition and Rules Leadership Committee Onboarding

By August 1, 2024, the NSDA will implement a new Competition and Rules Leadership Committee to serve as a standing committee as part of the Office of the Executive Director. This committee of speech and debate coaches and other members of various speech and debate communities will serve as a decision-making body dedicated to issues that focus on NSDA competitions and rules. The committee will be empowered to establish policies governing NSDA competition rules and event procedures. The Competition Rules Board will continue to discuss strategies for effectively onboarding new Competition and Rules Leadership Committee members.

Equity Pause

The Competition Rules Board used the [NSDA Equity Lens](#) to reflect on the nature of their meeting deliberations and whether their decisions and decision-making processes are transparent, accountable, and reflect the organization's core value of equity.


Adjourn

Moved by Lindsey, seconded by Jerome:

“Adjourn.”

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

In closing, President Wycoff thanked the Competition Rules Board members and Director of Competition and Events Lauren Burdt for their leadership and dedication to adjudicating issues and practices on behalf of the membership.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m. Tuesday. 

QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? IDEAS?

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