

# Leadership



## Competition and Rules Leadership Committee November Meeting Minutes

November 12, 2024

The NSDA Competition and Rules Leadership Committee held their virtual meeting November 12, 2024. In attendance were Byron Arthur, Jamelle Brown, Lori Crews, James Harris, David Huston, Adam Jacobi, Kerry Konda, Kim Lenger, Xavier Liu, Renee Motter, Jay Rye, George Tennison, Elisabeth Venetiou, Chase Williams, and David Yastremski.

*The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m.*

### DEBATE PARADIGMS AT THE NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

#### Moved by Rye, seconded by Williams:

“Require judges in Public Forum to complete a paradigm questionnaire and judges in World Schools to complete an experience-based profile prior to judging at the 2026 National Tournament.”

**Passed: 15-0** (Arthur, Brown, Crews, Harris, Huston, Jacobi, Konda, Lenger, Liu, Motter, Rye, Tennison, Venetiou, Williams, Yastremski)

Currently, the Association requires judges in Lincoln-Douglas and Policy Debate to complete a paradigm questionnaire before the National Tournament. These questionnaires ask about a judge’s experience, preferences, and paradigmatic approach to judging rounds in each event. The Competition and Rules Leadership Committee assessed member-submitted proposals to require that World Schools and Public Forum judges complete similar questionnaires before judging at the National Tournament. The committee voted to require that Public Forum judges complete a paradigm questionnaire similar to Lincoln-Douglas and Policy judges to allow competitors in Public Forum to

have the option to adapt to their judging audience, especially given the wide range of Public Forum styles represented at the National Tournament. The group also voted to require that World Schools judges complete a profile questionnaire that asks judges about their experience judging World Schools and other events, as World Schools judges at the National Tournament have varying degrees of experience with the newer event. Due to the extensive Tabroom.com coding needed to implement new judging questionnaires, these requirements will go into effect at the 2026 National Tournament.

### ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN EXTEMP

In 2023, the Competition Rules Board created rules surrounding what use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) is permitted in debate, Congress, Extemp, and Public Address. In 2024, additional rules regarding how AI can be used in Interp events were created. The guiding philosophy behind these rules was that an outright ban was difficult to enforce and ran contrary to the educational goals of speech and debate, but that artificial intelligence should not be used to write speeches in events like Extemp in which speeches must be the original work of the competitor. The Competition and Rules Leadership Committee considered a member-submitted proposal to ban the use of AI in Extemp. The group reaffirmed the desire to teach students responsible use of AI and shared concerns related to the practicality of a ban. Further discussion on this issue and its implications for our activities will continue given this evolving technology, changing school district policies, and a potential upcoming change to Extemp rules and the use of a note card.

## NATIONAL TOURNAMENT AFFORDABILITY

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The Competition and Rules Leadership Committee began a discussion of potential strategies to reduce the cost of the National Tournament for participants. The committee considered whether it is desirable to shorten the tournament schedule to reduce schools' hotel and meal costs by eliminating Sunday activities, running longer competition days, and/or shortening the final round schedule by running finals simultaneously. The discussion centered around whether it was possible to meaningfully shorten the schedule for schools while also maintaining competitive integrity and the atmosphere of celebration that attracts schools to the tournament. A Competition and Rules Leadership subcommittee has been formed to continue this discussion into 2025. That subcommittee will also discuss whether the National Tournament moving to a small rotation of host cities can reduce costs through the predictability it creates for participants and the Association's ability to negotiate lower fees in longer-term contracts.

## EQUITY PAUSE

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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

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**Moved by Jacobi, seconded by Brown:**

"Adjourn."

**Passed: 15-0** (Arthur, Brown, Crews, Harris, Huston, Jacobi, Konda, Lenger, Liu, Motter, Rye, Tennison, Venetiou, Williams, Yastremski)

*The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m. Tuesday.* 

**QUESTIONS? CONCERNS? IDEAS?**

We want to hear from you! Send your feedback to [lauren.burdt@speechanddebate.org](mailto:lauren.burdt@speechanddebate.org).