

passing GED test score. Students who compete for a post-secondary institution while they are in high school are ineligible to compete at the district and National Tournament.

## Overarching Competition Rules

1. **Forfeit:** A contestant who does not appear at the scheduled time to speak shall be marked last. A debate team more than 15 minutes late shall forfeit the decision. The Rules Protest Panel may waive these penalties for valid reasons.
2. 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.
3. **Tabroom.com Account:** Every participant and attendee at 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.
4. **Judges:** Main event preliminary debates and speech events shall be judged by two judges; elimination rounds by three judges; semifinals by five. World Schools and Big Questions 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, 2023 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.
5. **Judge Process:** Judges who are obligated to judge on a particular day should remain available for each round that day. Judges may wait in the judge pooling room or check Tabroom.com to determine if they have been assigned a round to judge; however, judges must not rely on Tabroom.com notifications and should check their Tabroom.com account or with the judge pooling room to ensure they do not have an assignment. The first time a judge fails to show up to a round on time, their school will lose their judge bond. For each subsequent round a judge fails to be present for a round, a \$100 per judge per round penalty is assessed. Judges assigned by the tournament committee shall be final unless protested in writing for cause.
6. **Ballot Feedback:** At the National Tournament, judges are required to leave written feedback on online ballots.

7. **Internet Rules:** Review the [Current Guidelines for Use of Internet Enabled Devices](#) in debate, Congress, and Extemp. These guidelines permitting the use of internet will be used at the National Tournament. The internet rules for debate do not apply to World Schools Debate.
8. **Generative Artificial Intelligence:** At the 2025 National Tournament, in events in which speeches must be the original created work of a competitor (OO, INF, IX, USX, SW, EXC, IMP, EXP) students are prohibited from quoting or paraphrasing text directly from generative AI sources. Generative AI should *not be cited as a source*. The exception is that a student delivering a speech about the topic of AI may quote AI to illustrate their points about AI, in accordance with existing quoted word limits. While generative AI may be used to guide students to articles, ideas, and sources, the original source of any quoted or paraphrased evidence must be available if requested.
- In debate events, generative AI should *not be cited as a source*; while generative AI may be used to guide students to articles, ideas, and sources, the original source of any quoted or paraphrased evidence must be available if requested.
- In Interpretation events, students are prohibited from performing material created by generative AI sources. Generative AI should *not be used as a source of material*; while generative AI may be used to guide students to articles, ideas, and material, the original source of any material that is performed must be available if requested.
9. **Video/Audio Recording:** No recording (audio or visual) of rounds is allowed at the National Speech and Debate Tournament without the written consent of the Association.
10. **Protests:** Protests are filed using the online protest form. The form includes:
- 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.
- 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 Protest Panel holding room. For coaches initiating protests, **decisions of the Rules Protest Panel are final**. Coaches may not appeal the decision of the Rules Protest Panel. If a perceived violation occurs in a subsequent round, another protest may be filed.

11. The National Tournament Director and Adjudication Panels may reduce the prescribed penalty for a rule violation in speech and debate based on the severity of the infraction.
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