

**PHSSL EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING  
BLOOMSBURG UNIVERSITY  
ZOOM MEETING  
6/21/2023  
Meeting: 9:00 AM**

**ADDENDUM:**

**An explanation of the starred items in the agenda, with reference to the impacted documents when appropriate.**

**ADMINISTRATIVE BUSINESS:**

**1. Review constitutional changes necessary to reflect the recent changes in the PHSSL Leadership Structure (Beth)\***

Section C5.2 needs to be modified to reflect the recent change in the leadership structure.

i. Currently it reads:

Section C5.2 The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Executive Board. The Executive Director will preside at all meetings of the Executive Board and will administer the affairs of the League

ii. Suggested modification

Section C5.2 The Executive Director shall be appointed by the Executive Board for a term of five years. At least 90 days prior to the end of the 5-year term, the PHSSL Executive Board will meet to evaluate both 1) the current director serving a subsequent term, and 2) any new prospective candidates for the role of Executive Director. If the current Executive Director elects to not serve a subsequent term, they should provide notice prior to the meeting. This position is At-Will and subject to termination by either party at any time. There is no limit on the number of subsequent or total terms that an Executive Director may serve.

The Executive Director will preside at all meetings of the Executive Board and will administer the affairs of the League..

Section C5.6 needs to be modified to reflect recent changes in the leadership structure:

i. Currently it reads

Section C5.6 The Board shall appoint three individuals to fill the roles of Board Treasurer, Board Secretary, and Technical Adviser. Each of these shall be an elected executive board member appointed by a majority vote of the executive committee at a regularly scheduled meeting. Each of these may be removed for any reason by a majority vote of the executive committee at a regularly scheduled meeting.

ii. Suggested modification

Section C5.6 The Board shall appoint four individuals to fill the roles of Board Treasurer, Board Secretary, Technical Adviser, and Site Director. The Board Treasurer, Board Secretary, and Technical Adviser shall be an elected board member appointed by a majority vote of the executive committee at a regularly

scheduled meeting. Each of these may be removed for any reason by a majority vote of the executive committee at a regularly scheduled meeting. The Site Director shall be any individual selected from the community at large with direct contacts to the site where the State Tournament is scheduled to be held.

Thus we would need to add to the constitution section C5.6D

Suggested add

D. Site Director This individual will provide ongoing oversight of all aspects of the State Tournament. The Executive Director and Recording Secretary facilitate day-to-day management of the organization's other activities, distinct and apart from the oversight role of the Site Director.

#### DUTIES

1. The Site Director will reserve the site space, and will liaise with the appropriate officials of the host university, as necessary. This will include arranging for security, parking, maintenance, and internet connectivity.
2. Liaise with the Executive Director and the Tournament Director concerning available rooms at the tournament site(s). The list of rooms will be forwarded to the Tournament Director so that rooms can be placed into the tournament software. In addition to competition rooms, space will be provided for the tabulation staff and the judges' lounge and for general meetings such as registration, opening assemblies and awards presentations.
3. Liaise with the Executive Director and the League Secretary concerning tournament meals for competitors, judges, and staff.
4. Arrange for the purchase of awards for the State Tournament.

Section C8.6 needs to be modified to reflect the recent change in leadership.

i. Currently it reads

Section C8.6 The State Tournament shall be conducted by the Executive Director and the Executive Board members.

ii. Suggested modification:

Section C8.6 The State Tournament shall be conducted by the Executive Director, the Site Director, and the Executive Board members.

## **2. Raising Entry Fees at States (Ben)**

Based on rising food costs for judges and inflation in general, the entry fee should be increased to \$20/entry.

PRO: It's still much lower than almost any other tournament of its size and it reflects changes in inflation nationwide. We haven't raised it in a very long time and we haven't had in-person States in a long time, so now we have a good benchmark to use for planning future tournaments. Larger programs are footing most of the bill and are bringing the most judges.

CON: It makes attendance marginally less appealing to small programs

## **3. Clarification about Drop Fees (Beth)**

i. **Current statements** - for impromptu, news, extemp debate

1. Section B16.1 (17.1, 19.1) Each school is permitted to enter one student in the state tournament in impromptu speaking. No charge for name changes in Impromptu. A \$50.00 nuisance fee will be assessed for drops. ? Question - Is this drop fee in effect for all events? Should that statement be added to the bylaws for all events or dropped from imp, news, extemp debate? Is it enough that it is in the Standing Rules? Do people read the standing rules?

**ii. Current statement** (in standing rules)

1. S21. NUISANCE FEE A nuisance fee of \$50.00 will be assessed per entry dropped after 4:00 PM the Tuesday prior to the State Tournament. No charge for name changes in Impromptu, Radio Announcing and Student Congress.

Clarification needed for documents.

4.. Procedure for Electing a District Chair and/or Committee

5. Digital Submission of Membership Forms (Beth)

**6 .Eliminate *The Communicator*; Move to Communication by Email and Website (Lisa, Beth)**

i. All items previously published in *The Communicator* shall be available online on the PHSSL website. In addition to material on the website, frequent and periodic announcements and reminders shall be sent to the membership by email.

ii. IF THIS PASSES, the only items that need to be changed in the bylaws are Sections B7.4 and B8.4 and in the appendix labeled Hall of Fame To-Do List. These would be modified to read “;on the website.”

iii. In the District Standing Rules D13.2

“The topic areas will be announced in the Communicator.” changed to “on the website” The reference in the chairs checklist would need to be changed as well.

**7. Clarify How Tabroom.com Has Impacted the Reporting of District Qualifiers (Beth)\***

are we still required to send in the district report? the district summary report? the district sweepstakes form?

i. This is in reference to the constitution which reads

Section C8.3 Upon completion of the District tournaments, the District Chairperson shall submit a report to the Executive Director, listing participants, winners and state qualifiers. The report shall be signed by the District Chairperson.

## **TOURNAMENT CONCERNS:**

### **JUDGES**

**8. Align judge hires in debate.**

i. Current statements in bylaws and in SSR say no judges hired in Cross-Ex, Parli,

- LD. In bylaws, also no judges hired in ExDeb.
- ii. Suggestion: Align judge hires in SSR and bylaws (ExDeb)
- iii. Suggestion: Add PF to both SSR and bylaws

### **9. Require debate judges to complete judge paradigms on Tabroom (Ben)**

PRO: This practice is easy with Tabroom and it would also save time in rounds so the judges wouldn't be pressured to talk about their paradigms if they are uncomfortable doing so. It also helps students better prepare for a high-stakes round.

CON: Some people won't do a good job/do it at all, another technology obstacle for judges. But, the worst that would happen is they just do what they do now in round.

State Standing Rules ADD #11. Debate judges must have a paradigm entered on Tabroom.com

### **10. Require judges to complete the NFHS Cultural Competency Certification (Ben)\***

PRO: Kids deserve it and we need to do everything we can to protect vulnerable kids.

CON: Some competitors and judges will disagree politically with the message of the training and we may face backlash for requiring/recommending this.

Enforcement/access to technology might be challenging.

## **SITE/SCHEDULE**

### **11. Site 4/Schedule 2 & 3**

**Set up spaces for event judge meetings for all events (Ben)\***

**Meetings for Competitors AND judges or just for judges? (Dave)\***

**Event-specific Q&A after judge meetings (Dave, Ben)\***

“Last year, we had a meeting for Parliamentary debate after the general debate judges' meeting and it allowed kids from across the state to get their questions answered and understand the norms of the event. It didn't affect the start time for the event and we had fewer issues than previous years with different areas having different norms and varying levels of being up-to-date on rule changes. I propose we do this for all events or perhaps do it for interp/extemp/comm/persuasive and informative/each debate/each supplemental”

## **AWARDS**

### **12. Awards #1**

Sweepstakes -- take the top 10 (or whatever number) best entries

or -- school size, not tournament attendance - something other than this past year (Beth, Ben)\*

### *Sweepstakes divisions by school size instead of tournament attendees*

With three divisions, counting all entries is a fair way to show which large school, which medium-sized school, and which small school performed the best at states as a team that year. However, I feel that the size of the school rather than the team present at PHSSL States should be considered when making these divisions. I propose that our three divisions are over 1000+ Students enrolled would be considered large, 500-999 would be considered Medium, and <500 would be considered small.

Pro: 1) Logic and transparency. The Board knows that the current system is decided blindly using numbers, but it is not transparent to the membership at large. These numerical barriers are logical to the casual observer and easily explained to those outside the community. 2) Appropriateness/What does a champion mean? Some schools do a lot with very small student populations and should be rewarded for that. Personally, I would rather see a tiny school with a large program be honored than a huge school with a medium-sized program. 3) No gaming the system. Even though teams don't know the barriers that the Board has set until after the tournament begins, they can look at the number of participants that was the barrier for each level in past years and try to game the system to be a larger small or medium school; this plan eliminates that ability and encourages participation at the State Tournament.

Con: A lot of small programs are borderless schools and they might be given an advantage over community schools in the Small School Division, which is a similar problem that PIAA faces for sports.

EXAMPLE: MERCER HS.. Mercer was considered a Medium school in 2023, but has an incredibly small student population (368) at a community school compared to the teams that placed in the Top 3 for Medium Schools with 10 entries who had populations of 866, 2194, and 1064, two of which were borderless. Mercer still managed to finish 4th. The small school champion has 1053 students enrolled. Mercer should not be punished for maintaining a great program and making the most of its very small student population.

State Standing Rules 226B

B. A 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place overall sweepstakes award will be presented to schools in three divisions (Small School, Medium School, Large School) depending on the *size of the enrolled student body at each school. Large schools are considered grade 9-12 high schools with 1000+ students enrolled, Medium Schools 500-999, and Small Schools <500.*

### **13. Awards #3 and #4**

#### **Revising Sweepstakes Calculations**

#3 Sweeps rules for supp events -- since they are so small these days, should we still be taking half? or should we look at something with a qualifying statement - e.g. if an event has more than 30 entries, then use the formula times half; events with 30 entries or fewer, multiply by 1 (Beth, Will Caugherty, Ben)

#4 Add supps events to Debate and Speech sweepstakes as well as the Overall. (Presently they only contribute to overall sweepstakes) (Dave)

S26. A. The formulas for determining sweepstakes at the State Tournament shall be as follows:

1. Speech events: Size of field minus over rank based in Speech Prelims (WE HAVEN'T DONE THIS IN YEARS), multiplied by 1 Events to be counted: Prose, Poetry, Informative, Persuasive, Extemporaneous Speaking, Commentary, Humorous Interpretation, Dramatic Interpretation, Duo Interpretation
2. Debate events: Size of field minus overall rank based on Debate Prelims, multiplied by 1 Events to be counted: Cross-Examination Debate, Lincoln Douglas Debate, Public Forum Debate, Parliamentary Debate, Senate
3. Auto-qualifying events: Size of field minus overall rank based on Final Placement, multiplied by .5 Events to be counted: Impromptu, News Broadcasting, House, Extemporaneous Debate
4. One Act Play competition

The current system rewards large categories, which certainly has its benefits. Small categories require a lot of work as well, and some teams allocate their teams to win sweeps and put students in larger events which makes the small events—like policy debate and potentially POI—smaller.

#### **14. Awards #5**

##### **Medals for non-advancing octofinalists in debate (Ben)\***

State Standing Rules: S26.D, Plaques will be awarded to all speech finalists, to all debate OCTOFINALISTS, quarterfinalists, semifinalists and finalists, and to the top 6 congress finishers. Medals will be awarded to all speech semifinalists and quarter finalists, and to all non-ranking congress super session finalists.

Pro: If we give medals to semi-finalists in speech, we should give them to non-advancing octofinalists in debate because they broke at States and deserve recognition consistent with everyone else. Takes the same amount of time at awards

Con: A few more medals cost money. We haven't done it before, so people might not know what to expect.

### **GENERAL TOURNAMENT ISSUES:**

#### **15. Formalize a rule on drops in partnered events**

Rule Update for Competitors in Partner Events Who Qualify for PHSSL State Championships but One Partner Must Withdraw in Extenuating Circumstances  
PHSSL does not currently have a formal rule in place for how to treat a student in a partner event whose partner must withdraw in an extenuating circumstance. At least twice in the last two years, students whose partner was not able to attend the tournament (in one instance, because the partner was injured in a car accident days before PHSSLs) have been re-registered in supplemental events (Extemp Debate, News Broadcasting, etc.). This re-registration has occurred on an informal, case-by-case basis up until now. Formalizing this existing practice as a rule would provide clarity for schools that are not in close contact with the PHSSL board and would give peace of mind to students in circumstances where,

overnight, their ability to compete at PHSSLs is thrown into jeopardy due to events outside their control.

Proposed Changes:

1. Students in partner events whose partner must withdraw in extenuating circumstances (e.g., a death in the family, partner is hospitalized or injured, partner dies) will be allowed to re-register in a supplemental event.
2. This re-registration would be in addition to, not in place of, the school's existing supplemental spots.
3. If the students in the partner event automatically qualified at the district-level competition (i.e., there are no alternates in the district who could take their place), then the team will be allowed to replace that student with a team member who did not compete at the PHSSL district qualifier.

Evidence:

1. This practice is already in use. One policy debater was injured in a car accident days before PHSSLs 2023, and his partner was allowed to re-register in Extemporaneous Debate in addition to the school's other entry in Extemporaneous Debate.
2. This also occurred in a similar circumstance ahead of the 2022 State Championships.
3. All re-registration requests would need to be approved by the PHSSL tournament director to ensure there is valid reason to allow for the switch.

Benefits: Formalizing this pre-existing practice as a rule would give coaches, parents, and students in partner events peace of mind. Should an extenuating circumstance occur – a time of intense stress for all involved – having this practice formally in place as a clear alternative would give coaches, parents and students an option. Additionally, this eliminates the unfortunate consequence of the current rule – that students whose partners must drop in extenuating circumstances are effectively being punished for events outside of their control.

Proposed change 3), regarding automatic qualifiers, would prevent the district from being stripped of one of its two representative teams for the same reasons and ensure the district is properly represented at the state championship.

Challenges: The insistence on extenuating circumstances is key to this rule being effectively implemented and preventing abuse. This proposed rule would not apply in situations where a partner no longer wants to compete, the partners are feuding, if one competitor has a cold or minor seasonal illness, one partner has a conflicting commitment, or any other run of the mill reason why a student may not compete a tournament.

Proposed change 3), regarding automatic qualifiers, would only apply in similar circumstances described above. Additionally, by not allowing any student who competed at the district level but did not advance to serve as a replacement, this avoids creating incentives for students who automatically qualified to be replaced with other teammates who did not otherwise qualify for the state championship, or for schools to purposefully register less experienced students in an event where students are expected to automatically qualify with the hope of swapping them out for more experienced students who did not advance at the qualifier.

Changes to Official Documents:

#### D19. Alternate Qualifiers to State Tournament

Add Subsection B: the coach should notify the Executive Director, who upon confirmation of the extenuating circumstances will re-register the withdrawn student's partner in a supplemental event. This registration would be in addition to, not in place of, the school's pre-existing entry in that supplemental event if they have one.

Add Subsection C: If a student who has qualified to the State Tournament in a partner event must withdraw in extenuating circumstances, and there are no district alternates available (i.e., the team "automatically qualified"), then the Coach should notify the Executive Director and the withdrawn student may be replaced with another competitor who did not compete at the District Tournament in any event.

### **16. Allow for digital submission of persuasive and informative speeches (Beth)\***

#### i. Current statement

1. B9.6 is Persuasive, B10.6 is Informative -- changes apply to both sections.

2. Section B9.6 On the entry blank, the coach will vouch that the persuasive speech is an original preparation of the student. Plagiarism and extensive paraphrasing are strictly prohibited. Prior to each PHSSL tournament the student must send a copy of the speech, a bibliography and a cover sheet, signed by the student and the coach declaring this is an original speech. If at the tournament (District or State) another coach thinks it is plagiarism, it is up to that coach to provide proof of his/her statement. These speeches will be held by the Tournament Committee in case of a challenge. If at the tournament, another coach thinks there was plagiarism, it is up to that coach to provide proof of his/her statement.

#### ii. Suggested Modification

1. Section B9.6 On the entry blank, The coach will vouch that the persuasive speech is an original preparation of the student. Plagiarism and extensive paraphrasing are strictly prohibited. Prior to each PHSSL tournament the student must send a copy of the speech, a bibliography and a cover sheet, signed by the student and the coach declaring this is an original speech. The submissions for districts may be soft or hard copies, at the discretion of the district chair. Submissions to the state tournament must be digital. If at the tournament (District or State) another coach thinks it is plagiarism, it is up to that coach to provide proof of his/her statement. These speeches will be held by the Tournament Committee in case of a challenge. If at the tournament, another coach thinks there was plagiarism, it is up to that coach to provide proof of his/her statement.

1. ALSO is listed in S12 - suggest the same change.

### **17 Adjust State Standing Rules for Swing Teams (Beth)\***

#### i. Current statement

1. S24. SWING TEAMS/DEBATERS The swing team/debater for each of the debate events will be supplied by the school of the winner at the previous state championship. If the school of last year's 1st place winner cannot provide a swing entry, the 2nd place school will be asked to

provide one and so on. This swing entry will compete in all preliminary rounds and be eligible for the elimination rounds. If not used in the tournament, these students may enter Radio Announcing, Impromptu, or Student Congress. However, a student may NOT be seated in the House of Student Congress in which another student from the same school is seated. Fees are waived for swing entries.

- ii. Suggested adjustment: Change “radio” to “News Broadcasting”;
- iii. Suggested adjustment - Add extemp debate?

## **EVENT ISSUES:**

### **18. Disclosure in debate events (Beth, Ben, John Hollihan, Mike DePasquale)**

Align policy debate with other debates in terms of decision reveals  
Current statements in bylaws

- i. Section B2.9 Judges may not reveal decisions. (policy only)
- ii. Section S20A.10 Judges may not reveal decisions in any event.

Suggestion

Remove the statement (this statement is not in PF, LD, Parli, Ex Deb)  
from policy in the Bylaws and from State Standing Rules

### **19. Evidence rules in debate; Sharing and the Definition of Reasonable (Jack Schaaf, Ben)\***

*Evidence in Debate (Sharing and the definition of "reasonable")*

Rounds are taking too long due to excessive calls for evidence and students are taking liberties with source material (cutting/combining cards/etc.. It's important in an academic competition to practice source integrity and prepare students for the standards of proof expected at the collegiate level and beyond. Also, students are prepping while calling for cards, so it should be expressly forbidden.

Bylaws Section B2.12/B4.7/B5.7/ Students have ONE MINUTE (changed from 30 seconds) ~~or what is deemed reasonable by judges outside of prep time~~ to produce all COMPLETE requested evidence, then prep time starts for the opposing team. Otherwise, prep time will not be deducted for either team during the exchange of evidence. Evidence that cannot be produced at that point leads to an automatic loss of the round PER PHSSL EVIDENCE RULES IF THE OPPOSING TEAM CALLS FOR A “FORMAL EVIDENCE CHALLENGE” WHICH MAY NOT BE DONE AFTER THE COMPLETION OF THE ROUND

<https://www.speechanddebate.org/debate-evidence-guide/>. STUDENTS MAY NOT PREP during the exchange of evidence.

PRO: Students will have full cards at the ready that are easily accessible when requested and should be able to have a clear expectation of what is expected before they walk into a round. It's already a rule, it's just not really been used or enforced.

CON: Newer and smaller programs might be overwhelmed early in the season, so we might encourage tournament directors to be a little lenient until people get used to new norms.

## **20. Proposal for evidence sharing in debate (John Hollihan)\***

### **Proposal for evidence sharing in debate events**

Evidence sharing refers to the practice of debaters giving their evidence, cards, and citations to their opponents. The norm in policy debate is to send (usually via email) all evidence that is read to opponents before a speech is given; only evidence needs to be sent. However, this standard proves challenging, and in some instances impossible, for other debate events. Despite these challenges, the regulations and rules for evidence sharing and evidence challenges must be addressed to promote academic integrity and to discourage wasting time in round searching for evidence.

#### **Examples:**

- Email chains are the most common method in which policy debaters share evidence. If debaters are comfortable doing so, they can send their entire case to their opponents.
- 2023 NCFL Nationals: The ballots on Tabroom included a new feature to easily share evidence by creating a “room” that the judges and debaters could access from the website.
- Other websites, like SpeechDrop.net, create a “room” with a special access code that allows easy upload and download of case files during a debate.

#### **Benefits:**

- Evidence sharing promotes academic integrity and discourages plagiarism.
- Adjusting the time in which a debater must produce a piece of evidence from 30 seconds to 1 minute allows for the necessary time to share the evidence while also resolving any minor tech issues that would be strained by the 30 second limit.

#### **Challenges & Considerations:**

- There should be some standard for students to have their evidence ready before a round begins. Judges and coaches should encourage students to have all evidence pulled up in a document or web browser before a round. See note re: evidence challenges.

#### **Proposed Document Changes:**

##### *PHSSL Bylaws*

- Section B2.12 – Change “30 seconds” to “1 minute.”

##### *Standing Rules of District Procedure*

- Section D.12, “Debate Evidence Rules” – Change “30 seconds” to “1 minute.”

#### **Re: formal evidence challenges**

Formal evidence challenges occur when one debater/debate team believes that their opponents fabricated, falsified, and/or misrepresented a piece of evidence. When they call for a formal challenge, the debate immediately ends, and it is at the judge’s discretion on whether the challenge was valid. If the challenger is wrong, they lose the debate; if the challenger is correct, they win the debate. From my perspective in

policy debate, formal evidence challenges were extremely rare and were often discouraged due to the ease and transparency of evidence sharing. To prevent an extreme prevalence of challenges, I believe that coaches must encourage their students to have their evidence readily available at the beginning of the round. For example, all articles could be pulled up in a web browser window. Alternatively, all cited paragraphs of an article/essay (i.e., a card) could be in a separate Word document, ready to show opponents. Coaches and district leaders should encourage debaters to have a single location for their evidence to be readily available.

## **21. Parli – language in handbook (Ben)**

### *Parli Handbook Under “Motions”*

Also, the language that follows “This House” is important to the style of debate that is expected.

- “Should” implies more of a Lincoln-Douglas-style resolution where competitors are welcome to include a value and value criterion in their framing of debate
- “Believes” implies a Cross-X-style debate where the teams are welcome to include a “plan” to solve a problem in the real world.
- “Will/Is/No keyword following” implies a Public Forum-style fact-based debate that looks generally looks at the status quo and its impacts, on balance.
- ADD “REGRETS” which implies that This House rejects something rather than embracing it.

*Points of Order Revision* - There needs to be a step in between a point of clarification/information (a question about content) and a point of order (something that stops the debate because a debater has introduced new evidence that stops a debate (similar to an evidence challenge)). I propose this be called a "point of procedure" that would allow a team to state a rules/procedure violation that helps maintain the educational value of the debate. For example, if a team runs a topicality as the GOV team--which shouldn't happen--the OPP could call a "point of procedure" and the integrity of the debate could be maintained.

### *Parli Handbook under "Interruptions"*

ADD NEW\*\*\*Point of Procedure\*\*\* - Stand, be recognized, and state a rules/procedure violation that helps maintain the educational value of the debate. For example, if a team runs a topicality as the GOV team--which shouldn't happen--the OPP could call a "point of procedure" and the integrity of the debate could be maintained without stopping the debate. The judge would view a Point of Procedure the same way as any other argument made during the round.

## **22. Parli – Bylaws Clarification (Ben)\***

Bylaws B6.5.C

ADD NEW A Point of Procedure may be called and may become part of the debate if a rules violation occurs that negatively affects the ability to maintain educational debate and can be easily corrected by the teams participating.

*This House revision*

Bylaws B6.2

“This House” shall be defined as the people in the room, the United States Federal Government, the United Nations, a developed country, or a developing country in the present.

ADD State government, local government (city, county, etc.), or any House made obvious by the resolution.

“I’m not sure what happened to this, but we specified "non-specific" for developed, developing countries in past years to make the wording match the intent of the Board.”

### **23. Evidence in Parli (Ben)**

Bylaws ADD B6.13

A. Debaters should primarily rely on logic and general knowledge.

B. Debaters should not rely heavily on published sources during the round. Judges should enforce this rule by giving a claim supported by a citation the same weight as they would give a claim not supported by a citation.

Pro: Parli should be more about logic and argumentation than hard evidence. It’s an accepted practice by the National Parliamentary Debate League. It helps smaller teams because they won’t lose the advantage to a heavily researched trove of information that a larger team could put together in advance

Con: It makes the verification of evidence more difficult, but I feel that if this goes into practice, students will run fewer arguments based upon hard evidence anyway.

### **24. Add disqualification if material is used again (Lisa, Beth)\***

i. Current statement

S12. INDIVIDUAL EVENTS - MATERIALS

Speeches and readings for PHSSL State Tournament may not have been used in competition by the student prior to the current academic year.

ii. Suggested modification

S12. INDIVIDUAL EVENTS –

MATERIALS Speeches and readings for PHSSLDistrict and State Tournaments may not have been used in competition by the student prior to the current academic year.

Any competitor(s) violating this rule will be automatically disqualified.

iii. Should this also be in bylaws? Would have to be repeated in most individual event sections.

### **25. Add to guidelines – judge’s discretion for kneeling, falling down, etc. (Lisa)**

i. Current section reads: (below is DI, HI is section 14.5)

Section B13.5 The interpreter should project the character and action before him/her in the direction of the audience. Any movement, e.g. kneeling, falling down, lying down, which demonstrates acting rather than interpretation is prohibited. The contestant may sing up to 30 seconds when singing is part of the original scene. All forms of scenery, set, props, costumes, makeup, etc., are prohibited. Using “properties” means manipulating articles of clothing or objects to enhance the performance.

## **26. Movement of the feet should be disallowed in Prose and Poetry (Paul Beer)\***

NCFL states that movement “should not” occur in these events. NSDA forbids it. Adding movement to a beginner-friendly and reading-based event discards the point of it being those things. Plenty of students already transfer their prose and poetry directly to DI once they feel comfortable, so let’s make sure we keep these events distinctly separated. If movement is allowed in Prose, then it is essentially just DI with the addition of a binder prop. Standing in place for Prose & Poetry strengthens the event and makes a clarification that will result in less protests and confusion.

**Benefits:** For lay judges, keeping up with 3 or 4 differing sets of rules is impossible. Less DQs and less protests will make for a more functional State Tournament.

**Challenges:** State Tournament is less “beginner friendly,” but this being a true challenge may be a matter of opinion.

B11.4 and B12.4 - Add “Movement of the feet, except to denote an Introduction, is not permitted.”

The rules regarding Prose and Poetry would remain valid if ever combined to Oral Interp.

## **27. Move the Drama Festival to a Virtual Format (Jess)**

### ***PHSSL Drama Festival Proposal***

The PHSSL Drama Festival is an arm of the PHSSL Organization with a regional and state one act/short play competition for high school students from member schools. Participation in the Drama Festival has been limited. Even prior to COVID, few schools took part. Post-COVID has not seen much growth, with the collapse to two regions in 2022. With the lack of participation, this committee is proposing the elimination of the drama festival from PHSSL OR major changes to the structure .

### ***Evidence:***

2022-2023 - 7 schools (8 shows) registered, 4 from the west (North Allegheny, North Catholic, OLSH - 2 plays, Trinity) and 3 from the east (Danville, Shikellamy, Towanda).  
2021-2022 - virtual - 7 schools; 4 from west (North Allegheny, North Catholic, Trinity, West Allegheny), 3 from the east (Danville, Shikellamy, Towanda)

2020-2021 - virtual - 6 schools (7 shows); 4 from the west (North Allegheny - 2 plays, North Catholic, OLSH, Trinity) and 2 from the east (Shikellamy, Towanda)

2019-2020 - 9 schools; 4 from west (North Allegheny, North Catholic, OLSH, West Allegheny); 5 from east/central (Athens, Danville, Holy Redeemer, Shikellamy, Towanda)

2018-2019 - 10 schools in regionals (4 west, 3 central, 3 east); 6 at states (2 from each)

2017-2018 - 8 schools in regionals; 3 west (North Allegheny, OLSH, West Allegheny), 5 from east/central (Benton, Danville, Sayre, Shikellamy, Towanda)

***Challenges:***

-the time required to hold the event (2 hours per show) can be limiting at the regional (and state if numbers remain at a place where no regionals are held) level - both for scheduling space and judge time

-some of the schools participating in the past do not currently participate in any other speech and debate activities (Athens, Benton, Sayre)

-changeover in coaching staff at several west-area schools has impacted participation

-the event is so vastly different from the other PHSSL speech and debate events it is not something that many coaches want to or can add to their responsibilities (time required to prepare, competition dates overlap with other key tournaments, resources needed)

-travel to Bloomsburg twice a year is difficult for some programs

***Benefits:***

-a way to recognize high school theater in the state

***Proposed changes:***

1. Make the Drama Festival virtual - both regionals and states

1. Regionals

1. School must obtain rights to record

1. Show will be judged by a panel of 3 judges who will watch all recordings

1. Shows must be completed by December 10

1. Filming must show set up and tear down and must be a stationary camera

1. States

1. School must obtain rights to record - must use the same recording that they used for regionals

1. Shows would be judged by a panel of 5 judges from across the state, who will watch all recordings

2. Recordings of state-qualifying shows would be shared with all regional participants

1. Tabulation shall be run on an online ballot using Tabroom.com software

1. Registration for the State tournament must take place by January 10.

1. Judges will have 2 weeks from receipt of ballot to complete ranks and comments.

1. 4-8 students will be selected to All State Cast. Each judge should nominate 4 students for All State Cast. The judge panel will then rank the list of nominees from all 4 judges to determine the All State Cast.

## 28. STATE DRAMA FESTIVAL COORDINATOR

2. Appoint a State Drama Festival Coordinator
  1. Responsibilities would include:
    1. Securing panel of 5 judges
    2. Setting up tournament on tabroom.com
      1. Assisting the regional coordinators if necessary (including setting up regional tournaments on tabroom.com)
    1. Working with the Site Coordinator to provide trophies and awards, all to be presented at the State Tournament

### *Changes to official documents for #14 and #15*

#### Bylaws

B.20.3 - add line "Schools must obtain legal rights to record the play."

B.20.5 -can be eliminated

B.20.6 - can be eliminated

B.20.8 - Add line: Regional and state tournament must use tabroom.com for judging/tabulation; switch exec director to State Drama Festival Coordinator secures state judges to State Drama Festival Coordinator secures state judges

B.20.10B - we should announce (and have been) announcing winners at the drama festival - need to note how we will notify winners of virtual tournament

\*B.20.11 - should be reviewed regardless of above proposal - Need to clarify a number of entries that warrant a split to 2 regions (a move to 4 regions is already listed)

Constitution - already says "handbook is part of constitution.

Drama Handbook (should this change to B.20 to match bylaws doc?)

B.18.2 - need to adjust - says 2 per region - but what if there are only 2 regions

B.18.5 - eliminate

B.18.6 - eliminate everything up to highlighted (talks about host school providing lighting, etc) highlighted section talks about having to have a crew - keep info about what makes up a crew

B.18.7 - update to match B.20.8 from bylaws

B.18.10b - adjust to match B.20.10b/rewrite

B.18.12 - update to be clear this talks about sweepstakes - ALSO is this supposed to be 4 points per play or 4 points total? (so for example, we should have had 8 points last year since we had 2 plays - I can't remember what we were given...)

B.18.13 - should we quantify this or allow it to remain that the # in all state cast are judge discretion

B.18.14 - should this be part of the constitution??

Need to update additional pages of the drama handbook to better reflect the current state of the contest - eliminate duplicate forms, eliminate paper forms and move registration to tabroom.com - would need tournament on tabroom.com to be open for an extended period of time (for regionals - to allow people to upload videos as ready from September through Dec. 10)

**29. Create a Festival Director, similar to the State Tournament Director, to run the Festival (Jess)\***

Proposal to add the position of State Drama Festival Coordinator - this position will manage the State portion of the competition, ensuring tabulation takes place on tabroom.com, and will assist regional festivals as needed

Please see the above proposal for details about this position.

**30. Formal statement about ChatGPT and other AI programs added to tech policy (Ben, Beth)\***

A committee of interested individuals should be formed to study the impact of generative AI in PHSSL throughout the next calendar year and will present a report at the Summer Executive Board Meeting in 2024. In the meantime, the following should be added as a guide for competition in 2023-24.

Second suggestion – rather than a committee, vote now.

ADD to State Standing Rules S25/District Standing Rules (from NSDA): Generative artificial intelligence should not be cited as a source; while something like ChatGPT 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. Students are prohibited from quoting or paraphrasing text directly from generative AI sources like ChatGPT in events in which speeches must be the original created work of a competitor.

Pro: AI Is changing the world and we need to do the best we can to maintain the value of the activity as it develops

Con: None that I can think of.

**31. Visual aids should be disallowed in Persuasive Speaking (Paul Beer)\***

No student that I have seen in Persuasive at States has used notes or visual aids, ever. No national level organization allows visual aids in these events. Let's stop a problem before one starts. Imagine a State Tournament where one school found this rule and sends their student in Persuasive with an amazing set of boards and gets either a. A wrongful DQ because judges assume there's no boards allowed or b. They win because they found what is essentially a loophole and strengthened their performance in a way everyone else assumed they weren't allowed to do.

**Benefits:** For lay judges, keeping up with 3 or 4 differing sets of rules is impossible. Less DQs and less protests will make for a more functionable State Tournament.

**Challenges:** State Tournament is less “beginner friendly,” but this being a true challenge may be a matter of opinion.

B9.7 - change to “Notes and visual aids may not be used.”

**32. Notes should not be allowed in Extemp and Commentary (Paul Beer)\*(possibly with #6)**

Notes detract from the purpose of EXT and COM; to create a speaker that is well-versed in political topic areas enough to speak on them with confidence. Notes give a competitive advantage to speakers who choose to use them and may speak better because of them, compared to someone who has prepared for the actual purpose of the event. Impromptu disallows notes, so the more competitive versions of Impromptu (COM & EXT) should also disallow notes.

**Benefits:** For lay judges, keeping up with 3 or 4 differing sets of rules is impossible. Less DQs and less protests will make for a more functional State Tournament.

**Challenges:** State Tournament is less “beginner friendly,” but this being a true challenge may be a matter of opinion.

B7.3 - eliminate “Up to 50 words of notes may be used.” Add “Notes are not permitted.”

B8.3 - eliminate “Up to 50 words of notes may be used.” Add “Notes are not permitted.”

**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER**

**33. Section C8.4 of the Constitution needs to be modified to include the bid system. (Beth)\***

i. Currently it reads

Section C8.4 No student will qualify for the State Tournament unless that student has participated in the District Tournament (except News Broadcasting, Student Congress: House, Extemp Debate, and Impromptu Speaking). No refund of fees shall be made upon failure to appear at the tournament.

ii. Suggested modification:

Section C8.4 Students can only qualify to the State Tournament by earning state-approved bids or by participating in the District Tournament (except News Broadcasting, Student Congress, House, Extemp Debate, and Impromptu Speaking). No refund of fees shall be made upon failure to appear at the tournament.

**34. Adjust bylaws for impromptu to match the recent rule changes. (Beth)**

i. Current statement -

1. Section B16.6 The student must bring the topic slip to the judge, or a

copy of the topic written by the prep room judge.

ii. Suggested modification

1. Drop Section B16.6

**35. Adjust Bylaws to match State Standing Rules (Beth)**

i. Current statement in SSR

1. S23. GRACE PERIODS In all individual events, a grace period of thirty (30) seconds over the event time limits is permitted without penalty. If a student is more than thirty (30) seconds overtime, that student may not be ranked first in the round. Excessive time violations should be penalized more harshly.

### 36. Proposal - POI

**Proposal:** Add POI (Program of Oral Interpretation) to the list of tournament competition events at PHSSL on a temporary basis (At least a year or two) to see how it is embraced by PHSSL members. Benefits, Challenges, and need can be re-evaluated at a future board meeting to make a more finalized decision.

The proposal is for adding POI to PHSSL events without compromising, removing, or in place of current competition events.

**Definition:** Program Oral Interpretation relies on the performer's ability to portray a wide range of characters and literature all held together under a common theme. (Quick google search)

(From Speech Wire)-

**Event Description:** Using a combination of Prose, Poetry and Drama, students construct a program up to ten minutes in length using at least two out of the three genres. With a spotlight on argumentation and performative range, Program Oral Interpretation focuses on a student's ability to combine multiple genres of literature centered around a single theme. No props or costumes may be used except for the manuscript. Performances also include an introduction written by the student to contextualize the performance and state the titles and authors used in the program.

**Reasons for proposal:** According to several people reaching out regarding the Face of PHSSL survey, emails, interested parties, etc., POI was listed as being one of the categories schools would like to see added.

Many believe PHSSL competitors are really "lagging behind the times" here and lose a shot to do well at NSDAs with zero POI practice during the regular season.

Also, many students do not do well with memorizing or speech writing, this would be another option for them. (Former Prose/Poetry speakers could even try to do a little more advanced preparation for future seasons.)

Even though not all schools compete at NSDA's – POI could even benefit smaller schools because it is another category where students do not have to fully memorize and can feel more comfortable having a manuscript to "read" from.

Often regular season teams have many students in Poetry and Prose and can only take two speakers to the district tournament, this could also be an option for more students to compete in a different capacity at the District Tournament.

This category also relies on research, important themes, and creativity to put a program together.

**Evidence:** (Thanks Paul Beer for the research here)

Evidence gathered by looking at State Circuit on Tabroom

The results of this are only indicative of leagues that are posted on Tabroom, and the State Championship their league hosts.

States that

- a. Do not have a State Championship listed on Tabroom, or
- b. Do not offer any Speech at the State Championship

16 States

States that have a State Championship and offer POI at it: 28 States.

States that have a State Championship and do not offer POI: 6 States.  
(DE, NC, OK, PA, SD, VA)

So, of the 34 states that have easily accessible state tournaments, 28 offer POI.

-It has also been noted that some states may refer to it as something else – so more states could in fact be utilizing it.

**Challenges:**

- Space has been listed as an argument against it in the past – however – most speech and interpretation events have estimated 25-30 some speakers... which would be only five additional rooms. (Could even be only four)
- The proposal is for a temporary basis to try it out for a season or two... evidence and additional challenges can be collected and assessed for more finalized decisions to made in the future.
- May add to the judge burden needed for some schools at states which can be concerning
- Hard to ensure students are not using original works within their program
- Extra cost to individual schools for registration at states.

**Benefits:**

- Those competing at NSDA's would have more practice and be more competitive.
- Many students do not do well with memorization or retaining information, having another manuscript category may increase numbers.
- Another option for schools/students to participate in the district tournament.
- Would increase student involvement at state tournaments.
- A way to recognize creativity and bring more awareness to many societal themes.

**Rules:**

- Time limit of ten minutes, with a thirty second grace period.
- Should a student go beyond the grace period, that student may not be ranked first.
- Must include a student written Introduction.
- All works and authors used in the program must be mentioned in the Introduction and/or transitional phrases.

- The contestant must address the script; however, introduction and transitional material may be memorized.
- Manuscript must be used in the form of a folder or binder.
- Reading from a book or magazine is not permitted.
- No costuming or Props may be used, apart from the manuscript.
- Changes to the script may only be used for the purpose of transition or to eliminate profane language.
- The voice of the script may not be changed (She cannot be changed to I)

**Proposed Changes:**

- Add POI to the speech events section of the state and district bylaws.  
**(Not sure where it will go or what article number it would get...)**

### 37. Proposal -Storytelling as a supplemental event

**Proposal:** Add Storytelling as a supplemental event for the PHSSL State tournament.

**Event Description:** (NSDA) Students select a published story that meets a specified theme and perform the story for no more than 5 minutes. Storytelling themes range widely and may include mysteries, heroism, or fairy tales. Students select a story that would be appropriate for young children and tell the story as if presenting it to that audience. Students may use a chair. Manuscripts are not permitted.

**Reasons for Proposal:** There are no Interpretation event supplementals at PHSSL states and it sounds fun.

**Evidence:**

-Interpretation events are currently not represented in the supplemental events at the PHSSL state tournament.

-It sounds simple enough and may bring in more students.

-Students who do not qualify in Poetry or Prose would have a place to present at the state level as would any student who did not qualify in a speech or debate event at districts.

-Students can be goofy and really be creative with their performance.

**Challenges:**

-Space?

-Judge burden

-Enough Judges

-Additional cost to schools for extra registration

**Benefits:**

-Interpretation events would be represented in the Supplemental Category

-More students would get to perform at the state level

-More schools may take advantage of the supplemental events

-Simple and fun

-Students can be creative and goofy

**Rules: (Compiled from NSDA, Tabroom, Various schools' websites)**

- A single published, printed story, anecdote, tale, myth, or legend must be retold without notes or props. Any theme/topic area may be used.

-Story must not exceed five minutes with a 30-second "grace period."

- Should a student go beyond the grace period, the student may not be ranked 1st.
- The student may not tell a story they have used previously in any Association tournaments (district or national).
- The delivery must be extempore, not “read.” No book or script may be used.
- Students may use a chair and use it in a variety of ways; however, it cannot be used as a prop.
- Students may express themselves in a variety of different ways.
- Gestures, pantomime, and characterization, may be used with restraint but the focus must be on the narrative.
- The retelling must be true to the original tale. The contestant may not add original material or materially change the content of the story.

**Proposed Changes:**

- Add Storytelling to the speech events section of the state bylaws.