

## **I. General**

1. The name of this organization shall be the Tri-County Forensic League (TCFL).
2. Purposes of the TCFL:
  - a. To organize, supervise, and determine rules for TCFL-sponsored Speech and Debate events and tournaments as well as prepare students for the California State Speech Tournament.
  - b. To provide liaison with the California High School Speech Association (CHSSA) and the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA).
  - c. To provide the necessary funds for the operation of the TCFL.
  - d. No substantial part of the activities of the TCFL shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the TCFL shall not participate or intervene in any political campaign, including the publishing or distribution of statements on behalf of any candidate for political office.
  - e. The property of this TCFL is irrevocably dedicated to scientific and educational purposes. No part of the net income or assets of this organization shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer, or member thereof, or to the benefit of any private persons.
  - f. Upon dissolution or winding up of the TCFL, its assets remaining after payment or provision of payment for all debts and liabilities of the TCFL shall be distributed to a non-profit fund, foundation, or association which is organized and operated exclusively for scientific and educational purposes, and which has established a tax-exempt status under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.
3. Voting Membership:
  - a. Membership shall be open to California high schools, and to junior high schools that include the ninth grade, upon payment of any dues established, which meet the geographical eligibility established in the bylaws of the California High School Speech Association.
  - b. A quorum of the TCFL shall consist of two-thirds of the voting membership (the Speech and Debate coaches).
  - c. No school may have more than one vote with regards to rule changes or other proposals. If one school has multiple coaches, they must submit one overall vote.
  - d. Member schools shall be required to submit the name of the Coach of Record for their school, along with a signature from a school administrator certifying that the individual is authorized to serve as that school's Coach of Record. A TCFL member school's Coach of Record should reflect the name registered with the California High School Speech Association.
4. Legislative Powers
  - a. The legislative powers of the organization shall be vested in the Tri-County Forensic League Executive Board (TCFL EB).
  - b. The TCFL EB will be comprised of:
    - i. President
    - ii. Vice-President
    - iii. Secretary

- iv. Treasurer
- v. Sergeant-at-Arms
- c. Each officer will serve a one-year term (starting in July). At the conclusion of the state tournament but before June 1, the board will be up for re-election. Any league coach may submit a candidate statement (not to exceed 500 words) to the league (typically over email) for consideration at any time up to seven days after the conclusion of the CHSSA state tournament. League coaches may run as partners (co-presidents, for example). Votes will be gathered using Google Forms or comparable vote-gathering tools.
  - i. If a quorum of eligible voters vote, then it shall be a legitimate election. The election results will not be certified until a quorum has voted.
- d. The president(s) must maintain communication with CHSSA officials.
- e. In case the elected president cannot serve the balance of their term, the president shall be succeeded by the vice-president for the remainder of the term.
- f. If a vacancy in any elected office other than the office of the president occurs, the president shall appoint, from the members of the TCFL with the advice and consent of the remaining TCFL EB members, an individual to serve in that office for the remainder of the term.
- g. Each officer will be responsible for the following duties. The distribution of these duties may vary yearly, depending on the makeup of the board.
  - i. Administering tournaments (paneling and running the tabulation room).
  - ii. Organizing league meetings.
  - iii. Updating the league website.
  - iv. Representing the league at the CHSSA meetings.
  - v. Disseminate all CHSSA communication to the full body of TCFL.
  - vi. Certifying Speech scripts for the state tournament.
  - vii. Updating handouts and ballots as necessary.
  - viii. Ensuring fairness and transparency.
  - ix. Mentoring new coaches.
  - x. Mediating conflicts.
  - xi. Ordering, collecting, and delivering trophies.
  - xii. Keeping minutes at league meetings.
  - xiii. Collecting ballots during tournaments.
  - xiv. Delivering judges' instructions at tournaments.
  - xv. Collecting and allocating funds for league expenses.
  - xvi. Assigning judges at tournaments.
  - xvii. Establishing a league tournament and event schedule.
  - xviii. Determining such policies and procedures as shall be necessary to carry out the purpose of TCFL.
- 5. Tournament Administration
  - a. The league officers will ensure that there are a minimum of six league competitions - two Congress tournaments, two Speech/Individual Events tournaments, and two debate tournaments - per competitive season. Additionally, they will ensure that the league sponsors a debate, congress, and speech qualifying competition for the CHSSA state championship.

- i. The rules for the Congress, Speech/Individual Events tournaments, and Debate tournaments will follow the rules established by the California High School Speech Association (CHSSA) unless otherwise noted.
  - b. The league officers will ensure that information regarding each tournament - such as entry fees, league dues, judging requirements, ballot instructions/rubrics, categories of competition, rules for those categories, tiebreakers, location, etc. - is readily available at least two weeks in advance of every competition.
- 6. Judicial Powers
  - a. The TCFL EB shall interpret the Constitution and Bylaws in all cases brought before it for adjudication.
  - b. The TCFL EB shall meet at least once per every school semester.
  - c. The president or quorum of the TCFL EB shall be empowered to call special meetings.
  - d. Any coach may propose revisions to the TCFL constitution/bylaws (this document) or other rule changes.
    - i. The proposed changes must be submitted to the TCFL EB in writing, who will review them before distributing them to the league at large.
    - ii. If a majority of a quorum of coaches votes in favor of their proposals, they will take effect immediately upon ratification (unless the proposals violate CHSSA rules, in which case they are not enforceable, regardless of quorum approval).

## **II. Mission Statement/Code of Ethics**

1. The Tri-County Forensic League (TCFL) will encourage, support, and sponsor both curricular and co-curricular oral communication in order to empower students (also known as “members”) to be productive participants in American society and the global community.
2. To accomplish this, we adopt the following goals:
  - a. Every member will participate in communication activities which promote self-worth and self-esteem.
  - b. Every member will develop the critical and analytical thinking skills necessary for success in both competitive and non-competitive environments.
  - c. Every member will develop the oral communication skills necessary for effective public presentations.
  - d. Every member will develop the listening skills necessary for reaching informed decisions and peacefully resolving conflicts.
  - e. Every member will develop interpersonal skills necessary for establishing understanding among members of a diverse society, and shall attempt to celebrate that diversity and empower marginalized perspectives.
  - f. Every member will demonstrate ethical responsibility in the acquisition and practice of communication skills.
3. Every student will further follow the National Speech and Debate Association’s code of conduct.

- a. Integrity: A TCFL member obeys the highest ethical standards and adheres to the rules of the organization. Members recognize that integrity is central to earning the trust, respect, and support of one's peers. Integrity encompasses the highest regard for honesty, civility, justice, and fairness.
  - b. Humility: A member does not regard oneself more highly than others. Regardless of a person's level of success, an individual always looks beyond oneself to appreciate the inherent value of others.
  - c. Respect: A member respects individual differences and fosters diversity. They promote tolerance, inclusion, and empowerment for people from a variety of backgrounds, including race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and ability.
  - d. Leadership: A member influences others to take positive action toward productive change. Members commit to thoughtful and responsible leadership that promotes the other core values in the Code of Honor.
  - e. Service: A member exercises their talents to provide service to peers, community, and the activity. At all times a member is prepared to work constructively to improve the lives of others.
4. Every coach will follow a strict set of ethical guidelines in order to model the appropriate uses of language and reasoned debate and to illustrate for the students the contrast between such constructive use of language and rude, nonproductive arguments, insult, and innuendo.
- a. Our coaches will disallow assaults on the senses, vulgar language directed at/stated for the apparent purpose of offending another, personal attacks, innuendos, rudeness, obscene language, screaming, vituperative words, and mean-spirited behavior.
  - b. Our coaches will promote the utmost respect for the power of properly organized and presented argumentation and debate, the beauty of persuasive speech, spirited intelligent argument, encouraging of opposing viewpoints, and the respect for the right of others to reject your priorities in favor of their own.
  - c. Our coaches will maintain identical treatment for email, writing, oral incidents, and inappropriate responses to inappropriate speech (with reasonable consideration for the specific situation).
    - i. For example, a coach must not scream vulgarities at a student because the student screamed vulgarities first.
5. Progressive Discipline Plan
- a. Any member school may be reprimanded for violation of this Constitution and By-Laws by a majority vote of the TCFL EB. A request for an investigation shall be brought before the TCFL EB by any TCFL member.
    - i. All investigations of the committee shall follow a prescribed procedure.
      - 1. The request must be in writing.
      - 2. The request must be made by the coach of record of a member school.
      - 3. The request must specify the alleged violation.
      - 4. Reasonable notice shall be given to all member schools which may be involved. Said notice shall state the nature of the violation to be considered.

5. The committee shall meet with the member school coach of record initiating the request for investigation and any other persons involved.
  6. Said meetings shall be held in private without the presence of any extraneous persons.
  7. A statement of the specific allegation of violation in question shall be made before the parties concerned at that time.
  8. All parties concerned shall have the right to present any evidence and arguments which may be germane to the issue in question.
  9. The committee shall deliberate in private after presentation of information by all sides.
  10. A vote shall be taken, recorded, and the minutes retained. All concerned parties shall be informed of the decision immediately.
- b. Individuals accused of an infraction will be given the opportunity to respond and clarify in writing before any decisions are made (unless they are actively threatening harm to others).
  - c. Degrees of discipline for infractions must be generally progressive in order to ensure that a coach has an opportunity to correct their behavior and their actions.
  - d. There is no set standard of how many oral warnings must be given prior to a written warning or how many written warnings must precede suspension or termination of coaching privileges.
    - i. Factors to be considered are:
      1. How many different offenses are involved
      2. The seriousness of the offense
      3. The time interval and response to prior disciplinary action(s)
  - e. For serious offenses, such as those which would violate state or federal criminal code (such as physical fighting, clear threats of violence, the sale or possession of drugs or abuse of alcohol on school property, etc.) termination of competing and/or coaching privileges in TCFL may be the first and only disciplinary step taken.
  - f. General Steps of Progressive Discipline
    - i. First, TCFL executive committee members (the league president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and sergeant-at-arms) will meet in order to discuss the infraction.
    - ii. Second, a verbal warning will be delivered by one of the members of the executive committee to those who have violated league rules.
    - iii. If the problematic behavior persists, a written warning will be delivered to the offending student or coach, and a copy may be sent to their school's principal.
    - iv. If the problematic behavior still persists, the student or coach may be suspended for a month from league activities and events. A written letter of apology to all parties involved and to the league will

be necessary for coaching privileges to resume in the TCFL. A letter of reprimand will be sent to the principal of the coach's school.

- v. If the problematic behavior still persists, the student or coach may be suspended for one or more years from all league activities.
- vi. The league executive committee will be the final arbitrator of all suspensions and resumptions of competing or coaching privileges. The executive committee reserves the right to take immediate action to respond to any gross misconduct by competitors of coaching personnel of the league.
- vii. If an executive committee member has committed the problematic behavior, they must recuse themselves from all deliberation and action regarding the infraction/their problematic behavior.
  - 1. In addition to the above consequences, EB members who have violated the bylaws/constitution may also be removed from their positions with a majority vote of the TCFL EB.

#### 6. Protests

- a. In general, the TCFL will follow the CHSSA bylaws for protests (ARTICLE XIV, Section 8), but will replace the language about 'area chairs' and 'protest committee' with 'TCFL executive board.'
- b. Protests are handled by the league's elected executive committee. A majority of committee members must agree on the remedy for the protest.
  - i. No lone executive committee member may make the sole determination as to the resolution of the protest.
- c. A protest must be presented in accordance with CHSSA rules for protests.
- d. If a member of the committee has a bias/interest in the resolution of the protest, they must act in good faith and recuse themselves from the deliberation.
- e. If it is determined that a script, speech, or action by a competitor has deliberately or inadvertently violated a TCFL or CHSSA rule, they may be warned, have their rank lowered, or be disqualified, depending on severity.
- f. If it is uncertain whether a CHSSA rule was violated, or the TCFL executive committee is deadlocked, a call to the Vice-President of CHSSA will be made to rectify the problem. Should a protest occur concerning tabbing, it will be resolved using CHSSA rules for IEs and Congress, and both TCFL rules and CHSSA rules for debate.
- g. All protests, including the initial complaint, the response, and the determination, must be documented in writing by the TCFL executive committee. The documentation must be made available upon request to any involved party.

### III. General Tournament Eligibility

- 1. ELIGIBILITY OF SCHOOLS: Only TCFL member schools may compete at TCFL tournaments. League dues must be paid no later than the first competition the school attends. All existing entry fees for a TCFL tournament must be paid to be

eligible to compete in subsequent TCFL tournaments and the TCFL State Qualifier Tournaments.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY OF STUDENTS:

- a. Students participating in TCFL tournaments shall meet the academic requirements for co-curricular participation established by their schools and/or school districts.
- b. Students must be enrolled in the school they represent.
- c. Novice students:
  - i. All of the following requirements must be met in order for a student to be entered at Novice debate, Novice speech, or Novice Congress:
    1. Novice Debate: the student has not competed in any debate tournaments during their high school Speech and Debate career (prior to those in the current season).
    2. Novice Speech: the student has not competed in any Speech tournaments during their high school Speech and Debate career (prior to those in the current season).
    3. Novice Congress: the student has competed in zero or one Congress tournaments during their high school Speech and Debate career.
    4. JV Congress: the student has competed in two or three Congress tournaments during their high school Speech and Debate career.
  - ii. In partnered events, if one team member is novice, and the other is varsity, they cannot compete in novice.
3. Students will meet all other eligibility standards outlined in the CHSSA bylaws.
4. Each school attending any TCFL tournament must be accompanied by the school's coach of record. If the coach of record is unable to attend the tournament, they must submit, in writing to the TCFL Executive Board, the name of an adult contact who will attend the tournament to serve as the adult point of contact. The adult contact should be an individual who is approved by one of the school's administrators, or one who would meet the school's requirements for chaperoning (i.e., has successfully passed a background check).
  - a. In emergency situations, or where extenuating circumstances prevent a school's coach of record from securing an individual who would meet these guidelines, the coach of record may identify another league member coach of record to serve as the school's adult point of contact for the tournament. The other coach of record must verify that they agree to this responsibility.

## IV.State Qualifying Tournaments

1. It is the intent of the TCFL to run each of our three qualification tournaments according to the State Tournament rules as closely as possible. Our rules follow CHSSA's rules except where otherwise noted. If any divergences, aside from

those listed below, are made, prior written notice must be given to all league coaches ASAP.

2. TCFL communicates to its members via e-mail reminders and our league website, created by and maintained by its president/co-presidents (<http://trivalleysite.yolasite.com>).
3. Tournament Dates and Locations
  - a. The dates of our state qualifying tournaments are calendared during the summer preceding the academic year; each tournament is hosted by a volunteer member school. All tournament expenses are paid for by the league, and the host schools receive a monetary honorarium.
  - b. Ideally, our state qualifying tournaments are held on three successive weekends in the following order: Debate, Congress, IEs. Contingent on the state tournament entry deadline, our state qualifying tournaments begin in late February and conclude by mid-March.
4. Eligibility
  - a. Any paid-up member school (league dues are due at the first tournament of the season) who is a verified member in good standing with the parent organization, CHSSA, may enter any or all of the state qualifying tournaments.
  - b. Individual students must satisfy their eligibility to enter by competing in at least one TCFL-sponsored Open level Debate or IE tournament or one Student Congress during the competition year. There are at least six opportunities from October to February for students to enter and compete in three rounds at a league open tournament.
  - c. Eligibility is verified by a league officer upon submission of student name.
    - i. Students gain eligibility under their team's name. For example, if John Smith competes three rounds at a TCFL tournament with Team A, but transfers to Team B only after all TCFL Open-level opportunities are exhausted, they are not eligible to compete at state qualifying tournaments.
    - ii. Even if a student competes with both Team A at one TCFL open-level tournament and transfers to Team B in time to compete at a second TCFL open-level tournament, they are not automatically eligible to compete; their eligibility is still subject to CHSSA transfer rules in Section Six, subsection F.
5. Entry Restrictions & Limits
  - a. By the first day of each competitor's first state qualifying tournament, their coach must submit a signed form outlining the student's event preferences in order.
    - i. For example, Student A may have the following preferences:
      1. Compete at the state championship in Parliamentary Debate and Impromptu Speaking
      2. Compete at the state championship in Parliamentary Debate and Original Oratory
      3. Compete at the state championship in Student Congress
      4. Compete at the state championship in Parliamentary Debate



- a. This student would be allowed to attend the Debate Qualifier, the Congress, qualifier, and the speech qualifier. They are competing in good faith.
    - ii. However, Student B may have the following preferences:
      - 1. Compete at the state championship in Student Congress
      - 2. Compete at the state championship in Parliamentary Debate
      - 3. Compete at the state championship in Parliamentary Debate and Impromptu Speaking
      - 4. Compete at the state championship in Parliamentary Debate and Original Oratory
        - a. This student, if they qualified in Student Congress, would yield their slots in Oratory and Impromptu at the IE qualifier; they would not compete at the IE qualifier.
  - b. Parliamentary Debate qualifiers are prohibited from entering in National or International Extemp at the IE qualifier.
  - c. Teams shall be permitted to register a number entries in each event that does not exceed one above the number of event slots that have been allocated for the TCFL by CHSSA.
    - i. For example, if the TCFL has been allocated 4 slots for Parliamentary Debate by CHSSA for the State Tournament, each team is permitted to enter up to 5 entries in Parliamentary Debate at our State Qualifying Tournament.
  - d. No student may be entered in more than one debate event at the debate qualifier.
  - e. No student may be entered in both Congressional Debate and the Presiding Officer contest at the congress qualifier.
  - f. No student may be entered in more than two events at the IE qualifier.
  - g. Students who are unavailable to attend on the dates of the state championship are ineligible to compete in the qualification tournaments.
6. Entry Fees, Deadlines, and Requirements
- a. The entry deadline for each tournament is generally the Tuesday prior to the tournament date.
  - b. Entries are submitted electronically.
  - c. Entry fees are due prior to the first round or will be subject to disqualification.
  - d. Debate entries are seeded by the submitting coach and are subject to limitations.
  - e. State Qual Entry fees are slightly higher due to the greater expense of qualifying plaques and finalist medals and judging stipends; there is also a mandatory school fee.
  - f. Coaches are required to meet judging obligations, typically one judge per every 2 teams, 4 LDs, 6 congress speakers, and 6 IEs. College-age judges must be 2 years out of high school. Every effort is made to secure a “non-biased” judging pool.
  - g. In order for a school’s entries to participate at the Congress state qualifier, schools will have to submit a bill/resolution in accordance with a deadline established by the TCFL EB (typically two weeks prior to the Congress state

qualifier). The Congress state qualifying tournament will have two pieces of legislation per round.

#### h. Speech Script/Entry Submission

- i. The procedure for approving a script will be proposed to and approved by a majority of the league no later than the final Open league speech tournament of the year.
  1. For example, in past years, scripts have been submitted to committees roughly a month prior to the competition and subjected to a series of checklists.
  2. However, there are other options, including requiring students to only submit their titles and subjects in advance, and have copies of the script available at the competition in case of protest; the checklist-based vetting could take place for the qualifying scripts when the contest is over.
- ii. In the 2019-2020 season, coaches must submit a verification form to the TCFL EB indicating their students competed in three full rounds at an Open Speech TCFL tournament, an Open Debate TCFL Tournament, or a TCFL Congress tournament. The TCFL EB will verify the submission.
  1. Students who did not compete for a full three rounds at one of those competitions will not be eligible to compete at the state qualifying tournaments.
- iii. In the 2019-2020 season, coaches must submit publication information for interpretation speeches on Tabroom by the conclusion of the Debate Qualifier. The TCFL EB will review and verify this information.
- iv. Coaches must submit a filled-out CHSSA cover sheet for each prepared event, scripts for every platform speech, and highlighted scripts (with added words indicated) for every interpretation speech in accordance with CHSSA guidelines by the Wednesday before Speech Qualifiers to the TCFL EB.
- v. Students in prepared events who have not successfully submitted an approved script by the state qual paneling session are not permitted to enter.

#### 7. Judging Assignments

- a. For IEs and Congress, we use 2 judges in prelims unless we have enough for 3.
- b. Events advancing straight to Finals are assigned 3 judges in Finals.
- c. For bigger Speech events and Congress, Semis have 3 judges and Finals have 5.
- d. We will use two debate judges per preliminary round and three per elimination round.

#### 8. Speech Procedures

- a. Coaches are permitted to “protect” two of their speakers in each event.
  - i. Coaches may use a double star for their top seed and a single star for their next in line.

- ii. TCFL encourages its coaches to use this system judiciously and to only star those speakers who truly have demonstrated their abilities
  - b. Every effort is made to keep double stars away from each other, to keep speakers from the same school apart, and speakers who have identical or very similar pieces apart.
  - c. The starring system becomes moot after the first round and is replaced by actual round 1 results. However, the tournament continues to power-protect based on seeding until the final round.
9. Debate Tabbing and Tiebreakers
- a. Automatic Qualification
    - i. If there are not enough entries from other schools to compete for all qualifying spots, a school can automatically qualify for those spots as long as the students taking those spots have competed in at least one Open level TCFL tournament. The coach from the school with several entries will choose the students to fill the vacant spots.
    - ii. Historically, the only debate event affected by Auto Qual is Policy Debate.
  - b. Judges:
    - i. Each school needs 1 qualified judge for every team in one event or fraction thereof.
    - ii. Each school needs 1 qualified judge for every 2 LDs or fraction thereof.
  - c. Judging Panels
    - i. We will use two judges for prelims and begin using 3 judges, depending on our judging pool, after the fourth preliminary round
    - ii. If the judging pool is small, then we will begin using 3 judges when it is mathematically feasible and use one judge per prelim.
  - d. Paneling
    - i. Schools will rank their entries from 1-4 for team events and 1-7 for LD. This is because we will try to power-protect through the entire tournament. No 1s should be hitting each other during round 1.
    - ii. Rounds 1-4 - Preliminary rounds:
      - 1. All teams or individuals shall debate in rounds one, two, three, and four.
      - 2. Teams or individuals will not be matched against students from their same school.
      - 3. Pairings will be based on:
        - a. Number of ballots won
        - b. Number of debates won (both judges, not a split decision)
        - c. Number of ballots won by all four Opponents faced
        - d. Number of ballots won by Opponents who split with them
        - e. Number of ballots won by Opponents who defeated them
        - f. Speaker points
        - g. Speaker points, drop hi-lo

4. After round one and prior to the elimination round, all competitors shall be matched against opponents with the same record of ballots won.
  - a. If the winner's bracket is uneven, the lowest speaker in the loser's bracket that fits will be put into the winner's bracket for that round. If the same thing occurs in the loser's bracket, a bye will be drawn following these guidelines
    - i. No school can have more than one bye unless all schools in the once-defeated pool already had one.
    - ii. Byes are drawn from competitors who lost to a team in the winner's bracket.
    - iii. If all candidates for byes are from schools with a previous bye, then the bye will be randomly drawn from all other schools in the once defeated pool with no previous byes.
5. Students are guaranteed to be assigned Affirmative and Negative one time each in rounds 1 and 2. Beginning with round 3, students will flip for sides.
- iii. At the conclusion of round four all teams or individuals shall be ranked according to the following criteria:
  1. Number of ballots won
  2. Number of debates won (both judges, not a split decision)
  3. Number of ballots won by all four Opponents faced
  4. Number of ballots won by Opponents who split with them
  5. Number of ballots won by Opponents who defeated them
  6. Speaker points
  7. Speaker points, drop hi-lo
- iv. The undefeated competitors/teams in each event, based on these rankings, will auto-advance to the state championship.
  1. If there are more undefeated teams than there are state qualification slots in a category, there will be no auto-advancing competitors in that category. Rather, the tournament will break to a bracket and follow the guidelines listed in CHSSA article XII, section 3, subsection G.
- v. If our league has additional slots for the state championship after determining auto-advancing/undefeated competitors, we will have an elimination round in order to determine who the final state qualifiers are.
  1. For example, if we have seven slots in a category, and the top four auto-advance to the state championship, then seeds 5-10 will debate in the elimination round to determine who our fifth, sixth, and seventh-place team will be.
  2. The sides for the elimination round shall be determined by a coin toss immediately preceding the round when both teams or individuals and judges are present unless the teams or

individuals have previously met. Rounds must begin no more than five minutes after the coin-toss-decision on sides.

3. If students from the same school would face each other based on seeding in the elimination round, we will 'break the bracket' in order to ensure that they are not paired against each other.
- vi. If the tournament is paired according to the procedures outlined in this Article, no byes should be necessary. If some unforeseen circumstance occurs (i.e. a team dropping from the tournament due to illness, the awarding of double wins as a result of a protest, etc.), it may be necessary to draw byes in preliminary rounds.
  1. If this is the case, byes should be drawn from the lowest ranked bracket that has an odd number of entries, so as to best maintain the integrity of each bracket through the tournament. If a bye is necessary in round one, it should be drawn at random.

#### 10. Speech/Congress Tabbing and Tie-Breakers

- a. Paneling follows state guidelines per the CHSSA constitution, Article X "I.E. Tabulation" pages 1-4.
- b. Results of each round are recorded on cards and then the next round is paneled following CHSSA guidelines.
- c. Ties are broken using CHSSA rules (Article X).
- d. For semis we place 7 in each panel instead of 6 and use CHSSA tabulation rules for final placement.
- e. Students in events with 14 or less advance straight to Finals and students in events with more than 14 competitors advance to Semis and then Finals.
- f. For Speech, each school needs one qualified judge for every 6 entries or fraction thereof.
- g. For Congress, each school needs one qualified judge for every 6 entries or fraction thereof. Due to the size of each Congress chamber, Congress judges must have not more than two judging conflicts in the tournament to count towards a school's judging obligation.

#### 11. Correcting Errors

- a. If an error in tabbing or paneling is caught before the round goes out, it is re-paneled immediately.
- b. Once a preliminary round begins, it won't be re-run.
- c. If a student is accidentally dropped due to a tabbing error, and the breaking rounds have already begun, s/he will be placed in one of the break round panels for that event.
- d. We have an open tab room so coaches can view scores and identify tabbing errors before the break rounds begin.
- e. If a student has been accidentally placed in a round when they should have been eliminated prior, and the round has already started, the round may conclude, but the students' scores will be discounted and they will be ineligible to advance further.

- i. For example, if Student A was placed in a semifinal round when they should have been eliminated prior, and they ranked 1st place from a judge that round, the next-in-line (Student B) will receive Student A's rankings instead (2nd place on that judge's ballot will be bumped up to first place).

## 12. Protests

- a. In general, the TCFL will follow the CHSSA bylaws for protests (ARTICLE XIV, Section 8), but will replace the language about 'area chairs' and 'protest committee' with 'TCFL executive board.'
- b. Protests are handled by the league's elected executive committee. A majority of committee members must agree on the remedy for the protest.
  - i. No lone executive committee member may make the sole determination as to the resolution of the protest.
- c. A protest must be presented in accordance with CHSSA rules for protests.
- d. If a member of the committee has a bias/interest in the resolution of the protest, they must act in good faith and recuse themselves from the deliberation.
- e. If it is determined that a script, speech, or action by a competitor has deliberately or inadvertently violated a TCFL or CHSSA rule, they may be warned, have their rank lowered, or be disqualified, depending on severity.
- f. If it is uncertain whether a CHSSA rule was violated, or the TCFL executive committee is deadlocked, a call to the Vice-President of CHSSA will be made to rectify the problem. Should a protest occur concerning tabbing, it will be resolved using CHSSA rules for IEs and Congress, and both TCFL rules and CHSSA rules for debate.
- g. All protests, including the initial complaint, the response, and the determination, must be documented in writing by the TCFL executive committee. The documentation must be made available upon request to any involved party.

## V. Sweepstakes

### 1. Sweepstakes Cycles

- a. There will be three sweepstakes cycles per competitive season.
- b. The first cycle is the novice sweepstakes cycle.
  - i. The novice sweepstakes cycle will include points earned in the novice division of the first TCFL Congress tournament of the year, the TCFL novice debate tournament, and the TCFL novice speech tournament.
- c. The second cycle will be the fall/winter sweepstakes cycle.
  - i. The fall/winter sweepstakes cycle will include points earned in the JV/varsity divisions of the first TCFL Congress tournament of the year, the TCFL fall debate tournament, and the TCFL winter speech tournament.
- d. The third cycle will be the winter/spring sweepstakes cycle.
  - i. The winter/spring sweepstakes cycle will include points earned in the JV/varsity divisions of the second TCFL Congress tournament

of the year, the TCFL spring debate tournament, and the TCFL spring speech tournament.

- e. In case there is an additional tournament, the league officers will conduct a vote to determine which cycle it shall apply to before the conclusion of that competition. A majority of league officers must agree on the cycle. If it is deadlocked, the vote will be opened to the entirety of league coaches (one vote per school).
2. Sweepstakes Categories
  - a. Speech sweepstakes will include the competitive categories of Extemporaneous Speaking, Original Advocacy, Expository Speaking, Spontaneous Argumentation, Impromptu Speaking, Original Oratory, Original Prose & Poetry, Improvisational Duo, Dramatic Interpretation, Oratorical Interpretation, Storytelling, Humorous Interpretation, Programmed Oral Interpretation, and Duo Interpretation.
  - b. Debate sweepstakes will include the competitive categories of Public Forum Debate, Policy Debate, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, and Parliamentary Debate.
  - c. Congress sweepstakes will include the categories of Student Congress and Presiding Officer.
3. Sweepstakes Points
  - a. Speech Points
    - i. A first place trophy in a speech event will earn 10 sweepstakes points.
    - ii. A second place trophy in a speech event will earn 8 sweepstakes points.
    - iii. A third place trophy in a speech event will earn 6 sweepstakes points.
    - iv. All other trophies in a speech event will earn 4 sweepstakes points.
    - v. A certificate of superiority in a speech event will earn 2 sweepstakes points.
    - vi. A certificate of excellence in a speech event will earn 1 sweepstakes point.
  - b. Debate Points
    - i. Winning three rounds (including BYEs) at a debate tournament will earn 8 sweepstakes points.
    - ii. Winning two out of three rounds (including BYEs) at a debate tournament will earn 4 sweepstakes points.
  - c. Congress Points
    - i. A first place trophy in a Congress house will earn 10 sweepstakes points.
    - ii. A second place trophy in a Congress house will earn 8 sweepstakes points.
    - iii. A third place trophy in a Congress house will earn 6 sweepstakes points.
    - iv. A fourth place trophy in a Congress house will earn 4 sweepstakes points.

- v. A fifth place trophy in a Congress house will earn 2 sweepstakes points.
  - vi. When there are two competing Presiding Officers in a room, the winning Presiding Officer (as determined by judge ballot count and, if necessary, student tiebreaker) will earn 4 sweepstakes points.
    - 1. This does not apply if the competing Presiding Officers also speak as Congressional debaters in the same sessions; there will be no additional sweepstakes point in that instance.
  - vii. When there are two competing Presiding Officers in a room, the losing Presiding Officer (as determined by judge ballot count and, if necessary, student tiebreaker) will earn 2 sweepstakes points.
  - viii. When there is a single Presiding Officer volunteering in a room, they will earn 1 sweepstakes point.
    - 1. During the first Congress tournament of the year, Presiding Officers who preside over Novice houses will earn Congress sweepstakes points for their novice cycle. Presiding Officers who preside over Varsity houses will earn Congress sweepstakes for the first varsity cycle.
    - 2. During all other Congress tournaments, Presiding Officers will earn Congress sweepstakes points for the most proximal varsity cycle.
  - ix. Congress and the Presiding Officer contest are to be treated as two separate categories. Therefore, if a team wins 4+ competitive Congress houses and 4+ competitive P.O. rooms, that team can earn a maximum of 56 (10, 10, 10, 10, 4, 4, 4, 4) sweepstakes points.
  - d. Teams may receive sweepstakes points for their top four entries per competitive event.
    - i. For example, if a team wins 1st Place, 2nd Place, 3rd Place, 4th Place, 5th Place, and 6th Place in the category of Impromptu Speaking, only 1st through 4th Place will count for sweepstakes purposes.
  - e. Sweepstakes standings will be made accessible in an Excel File or Google Spreadsheet to the TCFL member schools and coaches.
    - i. Any sweepstakes irregularities (for example, a disqualification) must be documented and reflected in a document, accessible to all of the league's coaches.
4. Sweepstakes Awards
- a. At the concluding/final tournament of each cycle, the earned sweepstakes points shall be totaled and added to a Google Spreadsheet/Excel File.
  - b. The team that earns the most sweepstakes points in Speech categories will earn the Speech Sweepstakes trophy.
  - c. The team that earns the most sweepstakes points in Debate categories will earn the Debate Sweepstakes trophy.
  - d. The team that earns the most sweepstakes points in Congress categories will earn the Congress Sweepstakes trophy.



- e. Additionally, sweepstakes points from the Speech, Debate, and Congress categories will be added to an Overall/Grand Sweepstakes Category.
- f. If a team wins multiple sweepstakes awards, they must select one of them, yielding the other(s) to the runners-up in the other category/categories.
  - i. For example, if Team A wins Congress and Debate Sweepstakes, they may select Congress. In that instance, Team B (the runners-up in Debate) would win the Debate sweepstakes. However, if Team B also won Speech Sweepstakes, they must now choose between Debate and Speech. If they select Speech, then Debate sweepstakes would fall to the third place team in that category.
- g. If a team wins Grand Sweepstakes, their number of earned sweepstakes points is set to zero. If a team does not win Grand Sweepstakes, their sweepstakes points are added to a running/cumulative total, summarized in the Google Spreadsheet/Excel File.
- h. The running/cumulative Novice Sweepstakes (earned during the first cycle) will be treated as separate and distinct from the second and third cycles, which shall be merged together.
- i. If a team wins Novice Grand Sweepstakes, resetting that Novice Sweepstakes total to zero, they will be ineligible to win Novice Grand Sweepstakes again for two subsequent cycles.
  - i. For instance, if Team A wins Novice Grand Sweepstakes in 2020, they will be ineligible during 2021 and 2022, but may win it again in 2023.
- j. If a team wins Varsity Grand Sweepstakes (given out during the second and third cycles), resetting that Varsity Grand Sweepstakes total to zero, they will be ineligible to win Varsity Grand Sweepstakes again for six subsequent cycles.
  - i. For instance, if Team A wins Varsity Grand Sweepstakes during fall/winter (cycle #2) of 2019-2020, they will be ineligible during winter/spring/cycle #3 (2019-2020), cycle #2 (2020-2021), cycle #3 (2020-2021), cycle #2 (2021-2022), cycle #3 (2021-2022), and cycle #2 (2022-2023). They may win it again during winter/spring/cycle #3 (2022-2023).