

**NATIONAL CATHOLIC FORENSIC LEAGUE
FALL MEETING, SEPTEMBER 29-30, 2023
FOUNTAIN VIEW ROOM – SHERATON STATION SQUARE HOTEL
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA**

I. INVOCATION

II. ROLL CALL

III. REPORTS OF THE OFFICERS:

PRESIDENT: ANN MARIE DUFFY
FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT: THOMAS BECK
SECOND VICE-PRESIDENT: KATY BLAIR CECIL
PUBLICITY/RECORDING SEC: MARC RISCHITELLI

IV. FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR 2022-2023

EXECUTIVE SEC/TREASURER: MIKE COLLETTI

V. FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT: ANN MARIE DUFFY

VI. TOURNAMENT REPORTS:

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR: ROLAND BURDETT
LOUISVILLE, 2023
CHICAGO, 2024 & 2025
WASHINGTON, DC, 2026
MINNEAPOLIS, 2027

VII. REPORT: POLICY DEBATE TOPIC SELECTION MEETING

VIII. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

A. Finance Committee Recommendation #1. Increase School Membership Fees to \$60.

Constitution, Article III, Section B, Paragraph 8.

The NCFL Annual School Membership Dues shall be \$50 (fifty ~~\$50~~ **\$60** (sixty dollars) per school **with at least \$5 (five dollars) of the Dues going into NCFL savings.**

B. Finance Committee Recommendation #2. Eliminate requirement for Executive Council to visit City.

Constitution, Article V, Section D, Paragraph 4.

The National Tournament Director and/or NCFL Event Planner shall conduct at least one site visit to the city hosting that year's Grand National Tournament. ~~Either the Fall Executive Committee Meeting or the Winter Executive Council Meeting shall be hosted by the Diocesan League hosting that year's Grand National Tournament.~~

IX. CHANGES IN THE BY-LAWS:

A. Finance Committee Recommendation #3. Increase Tournament Registration Fees to \$75.

By-Laws, Article II, Section B, 2.

The fee levied for registration in the NCFL Grand National Tournament shall be ~~\$75~~ \$60 per student staying in the designated NCFL Tournament Hotel Block.

B. Finance Committee Recommendation #4. Increase the Out-Of-Hotel-Block Surcharge Fee.

By-Laws, Article II, Section B. 2.

For students not staying in the designated NCFL Tournament Hotel Block, the entry fee will be ~~double the entry fee \$110 per student~~ of a student staying within the Hotel Block.

C. Finance Committee Recommendation #5. Increase the length of time for late registration to April 30 with a late fee per day.

By-Laws, Article II, Section B, 3.

Failure to register a Diocesan League for the Grand National Tournament by mail postmarked the date set and communicated by the Secretary/Treasurer will result in a fine of ~~fifty~~ ~~twenty-five~~ dollars (~~\$25~~ \$50.00) per day up for up to ~~15~~ 7 days. The fine is assessed to the Diocesan League. After the ~~15~~ 7th day, the League may not register for the Tournament and therefore may not compete that year.

D. Proposal #1. To Change the Quotas **Erie & Pittsburgh, Susan Peebles & Beth Young**

Rationale: As a result of the pandemic, many programs collapsed, as a result dioceses decreased in membership, and veteran coaches retired with little or no transfer of documents or instructions to new coaches and directors. To help schools rebuild their programs and dioceses become viable again, we need to enable new and/or rebuilding leagues to bring more students to the Grand National Tournament to showcase who we are as a league and what makes us unique.

By-Laws, Article II – Grand National Tournament; Section B – Registration; 1. Quotas

a. Contestants: Entries from Diocesan Leagues in the tournament shall be governed by the following quota system based upon school membership in the LEAGUE:

~~2 Schools: 03 entries with no more than 1 in any event~~

~~3 Schools: 04 entries with no more than 1 in any event~~

~~4 Schools: 05 entries with no more than 1 in any event~~

5 or fewer Schools: 10 entries with no more than 1 in any event

6-10 Schools: 20 entries with no more than 2 in any event

11-15 Schools: 30 entries with no more than 3 in any event

16-20 Schools: ~~50~~ 40 entries with no more than ~~5~~ 4 in any event

21+ Schools: ~~60~~ 50 entries with no more than ~~6~~ 5 in any event

~~26+ Schools: 60 entries with no more than 6 in any event~~

An individual school may have **up to three entries, with no more than 1 entry in any event, ~~one entry~~** as an Independent School for one year only.

E. Proposal #2. To Freeze the Quotas One Additional Year
Erie & Pittsburgh, Susan Peebles & Beth Young

To extend the Emergency Powers of the NCFL Executive Council in the following manner: Keep the pre-pandemic quotas “frozen” at the canceled NCFL 2020 level for one additional year, for NCFL 2024, to encourage regrowth of programs and dioceses. As in prior years, Leagues can increase their quotas based on the number of school members, but they cannot have their quotas reduced regardless of the number of school members.

F. Proposal #3. To adjust the criteria for clearing to Policy Debate Elimination Rounds -- Chris Berdnik, Philadelphia

By-Laws, Article II, Section C. 4 Debate Procedures. b, add ...

In Policy Debate, only entries earning at least 3 preliminary wins or at least 10 preliminary ballots will be eligible for Round VII (Double octo-final), up to a maximum of 32 teams.

G. Proposal #4. To limit the use of timing devices in Extemp --
NCFL Tournament Director

By-Laws, Article II, Section C. 1. Speech Events. c. Extemporaneous Speaking.
13. Add ... **While students may time themselves during their speech, the judges have the final decision on when time expires. If a student is using any handheld device other than a physical stopwatch or timer, such as a phone or tablet, they cannot hold the device, and must put it on a desk or a stand throughout the speech, and cannot touch or access the device during their speech.**

H. Proposal #5. To set “5” as the highest ranks allowed in Speech. --
NCFL Tournament Director

By-Laws, Article II, Section C. 2. Speech Events Procedures. a.

All speakers will compete in 4 rounds of a prearranged schedule. **In each section of each prearranged round, there will be no more than 7 entries. Sections should be balanced to the greatest extent possible. No rank greater than “5” will be awarded, regardless of the number of entries in a section.** At the end of the fourth round, the top 48 contestants in each event, based upon the low totals of all the judges in the four qualifying rounds, will be selected as octo-finalists.

I. Proposal #6. To adjust the number of Chambers in Student Congress -- NCFL Tournament Director

By-Laws, Article II, Section C. 6 Student Congress a.

~~The goal for the size of preliminary chambers will be 18 members. If there are 216 entries or less, as of 1 week prior to the Grand National Tournament, there will be 12 preliminary chambers. If there are more than 216 entries prior to the Grand National Tournament, then there will be an additional chamber added for every 18 entries above 216, or fraction thereof. Five members will advance from each Chamber to the Semi-Finals. Selection will be as defined in the NCFL Student Congress Manual.~~

J. Proposal #7. Move By-Law items from Student Congress Manual to the By-Laws. -- NCFL Tournament Director, LeAnne Schmidt, Detroit, & Keith Pittman, Charlotte

By-Laws, Article II, Section C. 6. Student Congress a.

~~... Selection [from Semi-Finals to Finals] will be as defined in the Student Congress Manual.~~ **Based on the cumulative rankings from all Scorers (including each of the three Preliminary Sessions), the four top-ranking members of each chamber will advance to Semi-Finals. The Parliamentarian ranks all members of the chamber. The highest-ranking member of the chamber from the Parliamentarian ballot who has not already advanced based on Scorer ranks will also advance to Semi-Finals.**

By-Laws, Article II, Section C. 6. Student Congress b.

~~... Selection [from Semi-Finals to Finals] will be as defined in the Student Congress Manual.~~ **Based on the cumulative rankings from all Scorers, the five or seven (five if there are 4 Chambers, or 7 if there are 3 Chambers) top-ranking members of each chamber will advance to Finals. The Parliamentarian ranks all members of the chamber. The highest-ranking member of the chamber from the Parliamentarian ballot who has not already advanced based on Scorer ranks will also advance to Finals.**

By-Laws, Article II, Section C. 6. Student Congress c.

~~... Selection to determine the National Champion will be as defined in the NCFL Student Congress Manual.~~ **The four Scorers and the Parliamentarian will rank the top 8 persons at the end of the Grand Final Session; each student unranked by an official will receive a rank of "9". The ranks will be totaled to determine the final placement. The ballot cast by the Parliamentarian in Preliminary, Semi-Final, and Grand Final Sessions will be used to break any ties that may occur.**

By-Laws, Article II, Section C. 6. Student Congress d.

~~Semi-Finals and Grand Finals will consist of two two-hour sessions~~ **parts using the same panel of judges for each,** with Presiding Officers elected for each.

By-Laws, Article II, Section C. 6. Student Congress e.

~~... Each diocese entering students is encouraged to submit legislation, and may submit up to two items~~ **one item for each school the diocese is sending Congress qualifiers from ...**

- K. Proposal #8. To restate the Student Congress Manual in its entirety --**
LeAnne Schmidt, Detroit & Keith Pittman, Charlotte

Final Link from them goes here. Needs to be locked so folks can only VIEW.

- L. Proposal #9. To restate the NCFL National Tournament Bidder Instructions in its entirety. -- NCFL Tournament Director & NCFL Event Planner**

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1zdUrgycaIAOI8GgBkH0TW6dxstx3bXELAlbrn-mZwrY/edit?usp=sharing>

X. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. New Business Discussion Item #1. To allow NCFL Middle School NCFL Membership and to hold an NCFL Middle School National Online Tournament --**
LeAnne Schmidt, Detroit

Several schools and leagues have asked about NCFL supporting Middle School teams.

The Executive Council should develop rules for membership, and establish guidelines and a plan for running an NCFL Middle School National Online Tournament. Report back to the Fall Meeting 2024 recommending appropriate Constitution & By-Laws Amendments for implementation.

- B. New Business Discussion Item #2. Pieces approved/accepted by the Local Diocesan League, do not mean they are/will be accepted at the National Tournament. -- The Protest Committee**

The vast majority of our protests this year regarded using drama in prose. Our rules are clear and they put the onus on the coach/student to prove what they are reading is prose if questioned. I think the consensus of our group is that no changes in rules are needed. If there is a way to reinforce that coaches/students should read the rules of the events in which they qualify to Nationals - it would be great. But again I think we do all we can. Perhaps we need some statement that just because a piece goes through a qualifying tournament, it does not mean that the National rules have been applied. Getting through the Diocese is not a defense against protest at Nationals.

The use of a piece of literature in a Local Diocesan League tournament does not mean that National League rules have been applied to it. Getting through the Diocese with a piece is not a defense against protest at Nationals.

**C. New Business Discussion Item #3. Definition of “single work” --
The Protest Committee**

This is a fairness issue to which we need to give some thought. In the DP and DUO events when we indicate that the presentation should be from a “single published play,” “single work,” - do multiple episodes from a show meet our definition? As web shows get shorter and shorter - with multiple episodes providing the “rising action” “climax” and “falling action” - not to mention television series, etc. it is just a matter of time until we have to rule on this. Being able to select from multiple episodes would seem to give a competitor an unfair advantage over someone who sticks to one single episode. But a lot that is being written in series form - includes the “climax” in the 3rd or 4th episode of a 6 part series. Is BRIDGERTON a single work - or 16 single works (8 episodes over 2 seasons)?

Do cuttings that draw from multiple episodes and/or multiple seasons of the same show constitute a “single work” for the purposes of our definitions?

**D. New Business Discussion Item #4. Forms of “literature” --
The Protest Committee**

There are always new sources being developed which may or may not fit our rules. The discussion came up about podcasts at Nationals - some of which are “dramatic” in nature and some of which are “informational.”

Are there new sources of “literature” that we should be cognizant of?

E. Student Congress clarification -- Traci Lowe, Palm Beach

On page 4 of the Congress Manuel, it states that NCFL has indirect questioning, yet there was direct questioning at Nationals. Is this a permanent change?

XI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Report: NFHS Speech and Debate Summit
- B. Richard Gaudette Service Award selection committee.
- C. Biennial Elections

XII. OTHER ITEMS

XIII. ADJOURNMENT