

Wisconsin Debate Coaches Association

Minutes

May 16th 2026

Online Meeting

Schools Represented: Brookfield East, Homestead, Edgewood, Fort Atkinson, LaCrosse, Madison West, Marquette, Neenah, Rufus King, Regan, Sheboygan South, SPASH West Bend, Vel Phillips

The meeting was called to order by Chris Roe at 9:12 a.m.

Secretary Report

Justin Flynn moved the approval of the Fall meeting minutes, and the motion was seconded.

<https://wdca.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Fall-Meeting-2025-.docx.pdf>

Fall minutes were approved by unanimous consent.

Justin showed the calendar and discussion was made on it

Linda talked about moving here date and needed to get more details

Ben Hanburger, will have his tournament online

Tim is locking in his tournament dates.

 2026-2027 WDCA Calendar

Treasurer's Report

Dan Hansen gave his report on the state tournament, which made money this year 1,300 total . Next year expect it to be about \$500.00.

Dan stated we don't need to shift or make cuts this year. In the account 3,260.00 and 4 schools still owe money. 4,265.00 is what the account will be at once all fees are paid.

Interim President Elect's Report

David Henning has no new report, but thanks us all for what we all do.

President's Report

Chris reported the state tournament went really well.

Judging Standards and Ethics

Stephine King gave a recap, the only small problem was judges not writing minimal RFDs. She stated we all at our tournaments need to request judges to make/take better notes so there is no push back at state. Otherwise updates will come with changes the committee will make.

Stephine thanked Brooke for all the help she does with judge paradigms

Tournament Practices and Procedures/State tournament

John explained the state tournament went well, and had a record low number of allegations. We will brainstorm changes to make this go smoother with numbers in New Business.

BIS

Jack Steele gave his report on the state tournament , and it went really well, the system is running smoothly.

The rest of the year went fine. Jack mentioned how we can get better at having a structure that is unified, in communication with the email and or forms.

Linda likes the idea of QR codes, Jack agrees.

Jack says he welcomes any help he can get at providing equity for students.

Media/communications

No new report by David Umstot besides noting the membership list will get cleaned up.

Novice Packet/New coaches

Stephine talked about how she will do the packet in the same process as last year.

New Coaches

Stephine requested if you know of anyone new, send them her way.

The group talked about the obstacles with new coaches getting on contact with the WDCA

The big topic was recruiting and getting new teams, and the hurdles we have had as a group. We talked about ideas like getting a recruiter or using our money to incentive coaches.

It was properly motioned and seconded to have a committee working on said recruitment this summer. Dan is in charge of committee

Old Business

Elections

President elect Jaya Sims was nominated and elected

Treasurer Dan Hansen was nominated and elected

JSE chair Stephenie King was nominated and elected

BIS Jack Steele was nominated and elected

Chris thanked the group and ended his term.

We took a quick 5 min break

New Business

Dan Hansen—Grammar

Dan told about his Grammar changes

 Hansen Grammar Edit - Dan Hansen.docx

Dan Hansen—Clarity and Simple Changes

6 (1,2,4,5,6,7) of the changes were discussed and passed

Rule 3 was discussed about time limits with the change of using the word should. It was motioned and passed

 Hansen Clarity and Simple Changes - Dan Hansen.docx

Dan Hansen—Proposals

210.10 F Proposal

Current:

A. Evidence Accessibility. Text in evidence should be provided in an accessible format

- (i) All font sizes, including non-highlighted text, should be size 8 or larger.
- (ii) Text color should be high contrast and readable.
- (iii) Highlighting should be readable and high contrast with text.
- (iv) A digital copy may be considered accessible if the text is able to be

altered to meet the aforementioned guidelines.

Addition as (v): The team receiving the evidence should not be charged prep time for altering the text to render it readable.

RATIONALE: Teams are currently disadvantaged if the opponent sending evidence puts it in a screwy font size (intentionally or not) and has to spend their own prep to make it readable. This goes against the idea of equity and accessibility.

Dan Hansen explained this and it was motioned and passed

Novice, not JV Proposal

Change 1 is section 300.20

(1) Schools whose dues are up to date in the WDCA as of December 1 and have met the qualification procedures for any of the WDCA-sanctioned divisions of competition (Varsity Policy Debate, Novice Policy Debate, Varsity Lincoln Douglas Debate, Junior Varsity Novice Lincoln Douglas Debate, Varsity Public Forum Debate, and Junior Varsity Novice Public Forum Debate) are eligible to compete in the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament.

Change 2 is section 300.22

STUDENT PARTICIPATION

(1) Any debater who qualifies for the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament in the varsity policy division and has competed in the varsity policy division at three or more WDCA-sanctioned tournaments during the season is not eligible to compete in the corresponding novice or junior varsity division of the Wisconsin State Debate Tournament.

(2) Debaters that qualify in novice or junior varsity may enter into the corresponding varsity division at state. Debaters that have exactly one qualification from a novice or junior varsity division and one qualification from a varsity division may enter either state division.

Change 3 is section 330.10

(1) Varsity divisions are offered in Policy, Lincoln-Douglas, and Public Forum.

(2) Junior Varsity divisions are offered in Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum. Junior Varsity is defined as a student debating in their first or second high school season.

(3) Novice divisions are offered in Policy. Novice is defined as a student debating in their first high school season.

(4) Students with identified exceptional education needs may remain a Novice or Junior Varsity division beyond that division's experience limits at the discretion of the coach. Should this rule be invoked, the coach must notify the WSDT Tournament Director by the registration deadline.

This section would get renumbered since (2) is deleted.

RATIONALE: When I first proposed a non-varsity division of PF, I actually proposed novice. Other coaches, who are no longer in the organization, wanted a JV division. I believe part of the rationale was to build numbers in the activity. Regardless, I conceded to get the division to exist. Based on the numbers from state last year, participation from newer debaters is not a significant problem. Certainly not more of a problem than in LD or Policy. And it isn't equal to have it this way. Our other two divisions have novice and varsity. In fact, the intentional less-steep learning curve of PF would suggest it has the least need for a second-year protected division. Thus, I return to my original proposal - we should have novice PF and varsity PF.

Dan explained this change,

Chris talks about his teams retainage might be lower if we pass this

We all talk equity and protection and confusion with the NSDA novice topics

John talked about Sate and judging numbers

it was motioned and passed

330.30 (1) F Proposal

i. A coin toss by the two teams will determine the sides to be debated.

The winner of the coin toss will decide on which side they will debate.

If teams meet a second time, they must reverse sides if it occurs in Lincoln Douglas or Policy Debate. In Public Forum, teams must either compete on different sides and/or from different speaking positions.

RATIONALE: Again, making the divisions equal. In the other two, the same debate cannot occur. This should be the case in PF as well. This rule is already present in some tournaments.

Dan Hansen explained this and it was motioned and passed

Tim Shefer says this gives one team a lot of power.

The group talked about how this will affect the students

This proposal fails on a vote of 2 to 14

Proposal for 210.10 (4) - Evidence Standards: Penalties.

Current:

A. If a nonexistent evidence violation occurs due to a paperless team providing an excessive amount of evidence in Novice Policy debate while the argument limitations are in effect, the judge will provide feedback to the students in violation of the evidence sharing requirements and notify the Tournament Director immediately. The

judge will then continue the round. The Tournament Director shall talk to both coaches to provide education and training as needed, and an explanation that a second violation at the same tournament by the same entry will result in a loss.

B. In the case of an inadvertent violation of (D) (Straw Argument) above, the judge must disregard the evidence presented; however, the offending team does not forfeit the round.

C. In the case of a violation of rule (2), B (nonexistent evidence), the Tournament Director or their designee shall give the violating team 10 minutes to produce the evidence. If the team does not produce the evidence in that time period, that team will may be disqualified from the tournament by the Tournament Director.

D. Results from previous rounds will not be reversed if an evidence violation results in a loss/disqualification to a team.

E. A second evidence violation in a subsequent round during a tournament will result in an automatic disqualification for that team.

RATIONALE:

Right now, C is not really being followed. If a team was careless and used a link that doesn't go to the article, they DO currently get a loss, but we aren't disqualifying them immediately. This rule should still stay in for egregious violations such as wholly invented evidence, or NONE of the evidence can be found, etc. But by putting "may", it's not automatic. Note that in "E", a second violation would still lead to Disqualification.

This was withdrawn due to redundancy

JSE 26 Proposals–Stephanie King

Addition: Create 210.10 (3)

a. To assist in independent adjudication during elimination rounds, after verifying a formal allegation has been made, all judges and competitors should come directly to the tabulation room. No discussions or comments regarding the evidence violation process should occur until in the presence of a WSDT-assigned representative. This representative will act as a neutral party to assist in any exchanging of evidence/materials in a way that permits judges to render an independent decision.

Stephine explains this

We discussed this and how it functions and how adults and coaches are involved in a fair and responsible way

it was motioned and passed

WSDT Proposal Ideas—John Knetzger

330.30 WSDT OPERATIONS PROCEDURES

E. Preliminary rounds will adhere to the following: Preliminary rounds will adhere to the following based upon the number of active entries between the registration deadline and round . at the registration deadline. Should the WSDT Director determine that other alterations are necessary, they should follow the appropriate standing rules in consultation with the President IX. (new sections, renumber below this rule)

If, at the close of registration, the WSDT Director determines that due to one school comprising a significant portion of a division, the preliminary schedule would require teams from other schools to have only debates against that school for a majority of preliminary rounds, the following changes should be made upon consultation with the President and JSE Chair.
Lifting of school protection for all schools in the third and penultimate preliminary round.
Lifting of school protection for all schools for additional preliminary rounds.

If a school's entries are 50% or more of a division, school protection for all schools is lifted for all rounds.

X. Alterations to the procedures outlined in the standing rules should be announced 3 days before the tournament and must be made before judge preferencing opens. Changes to individual school registrations after that time will not change the operations of the division.

XI. When schools are scheduled to have debates in preliminary rounds, the coach shall have the option to choose a winner or hold the debate. The WSDT Director, at their discretion, may assign a judge from that school to the debate.

Rationale:

We've had to make changes a lot the last few years and without an agreement on when we need to make changes that aren't spelled out in the rules, especially when there's a big school in a division. These changes seek to provide clarity and predictability to the WSDT.

This was withdrawn

John has a recap of the said above and ask for ideas

Tim talked about options with collapsing divisions or having prefs like SpeechWire does.

The group talked about splitting team and the pros and cons

We all agree things change with drops and we need to have transparency and a system that will out last us.

Dan talked about the rule with leaving the room rule, and what's DQable and what is not.

Chris Roe talked about cheating allegation and repercussions. We talked as a group about the protesting process and how BIS functions with this.

There being no objection, the meeting was adjourned at 12:31 am.

Respectfully submitted,

Justin Flynn

WDCA Secretary

Voting overview

Old Business

President Elect Jay Sims

Treasurer Dan Hansen

JSE chair Stephenie King

BIS Chair Jack Steele

New Business

Dan Hansen—Grammar all Passed

Dan Hansen—Clarity and Simple Changes all Passed

Dan Hansen—210.10 F Proposal Passed

Dan Hansen—330.30 (1) F Proposal Fails on a vote of 2-14-0

Dan Hansen—Proposal for 210.10 (4) This was withdrawn due to redundancy

Dan Hansen—Novice, not JV Proposal Passed

Stephanie King-Addition: Create 210.10 Passed

John Knetzger- 330.30 was Withdrawn