

PROCESS FOR SELECTING THE DEBATE TOPIC

Sources for topic reports

1. Volunteers from the previous year's Topic Selection Meeting.
2. Individuals or groups contacted to prepare topic reports on subjects of demonstrated interest.
3. Individuals or groups who have a special interest in a particular topic area.

Procedures for preparation of topic reports

1. A confirmation of commitment to complete a report and a preliminary outline of the direction of the report is due to the NFHS office Jan 15.
2. Report authors may contact others for assistance in developing the report and wording the resolutions. Topic report drafts are due at the NFHS office by April 30.
3. Copies of the reports are sent to groups or individuals for review, and the reactions are provided to each topic report author.
4. Topic report authors have the opportunity to revise their reports during the month of June.
5. Revised topic reports are due at the NFHS office on July 1.
6. Copies of the revised reports are distributed to Topic Selection Meeting delegates and Wording Committee members prior to the August meeting.
7. **Except in exceptional cases approved by the NFHS liaison, no topic reports will be considered that have not been distributed to attendees prior to the meeting.**

Procedures at the Topic Selection Meeting

1. Topic report authors briefly introduce their reports to the general assembly. Wording Committee members chair Marshall subcommittees which meet the first day of the Topic Selection Meeting. All delegates are assigned to Marshall subcommittees. During these subcommittee meetings, topic report authors have an opportunity to thoroughly explain and discuss their reports.

Delegates have an opportunity to ask questions and discuss strengths and weaknesses. Wording Committee co-chairpersons have the responsibility of conducting these subcommittee meetings and reporting the results.
2. In a second general session, Wording Committee members report on the discussions from the Marshall subcommittees, and topic report authors have an opportunity to answer questions. A straw vote is taken; topics receiving the support of over 25% of those present and voting are retained for further discussion and debate.
3. On the second day, Wording Committee members assemble to meet with all topic report authors. A schedule is posted which allows approximately 20-30 minutes per topic. Additional sessions with any author may be scheduled as needed. All delegates are *urged* to participate in these meetings.
4. All delegates re-assemble to review the results of the Wording Committee meetings. The chairperson of the Wording Committee conducts a short, preliminary exposition of the topic reports. Discussion and proposed amendments to revise the resolutions are in order.
5. Each participant receives a copy of the proposed topic areas and resolutions. A straw vote is taken of all participants. Each person may vote for as many topic areas as he or she chooses. Those topic areas receiving at least a one-third vote are retained for further discussion. Those areas receiving less than a one-third vote are dropped from consideration. If no more than seven areas initially receive a one-third vote, state delegates will proceed to selection of the five problem areas in the final general session.

6. On the morning of the third day, participants discuss each area which received at least a one-third vote. No vote is taken to accept or reject any problem area until all areas have been discussed.
7. Upon completion of discussion, the number of areas is limited to seven by the following procedure:
 - a. Each state delegate votes for five areas.
 - b. A brief caucus period will be allowed before each state delegate vote.
 - c. The seven areas which receive the most votes will be those retained.
 - d. If there is a tie in the voting which prevents limiting to seven areas, the area(s) receiving the fewest votes will be dropped and a re-vote will be conducted after the lowest (non-tied) area(s) have been eliminated. In the re-vote each state delegate will cast five votes for five areas.
8. After further discussion, the five areas to be referred to the state delegates are selected through the following procedure:
 - a. Each state delegate votes for five of the seven areas.
 - b. The area(s) receiving the fewest votes will be dropped. Another vote is taken if needed (not necessary if the total of sixth and seventh place areas are not equal to or greater than the fifth place area).
 - c. A brief caucus period will be allowed before each state delegate vote.
 - d. The five areas receiving the greatest number of votes will be placed on the ballot to be sent to the states.

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1/8/2018