JOHN C. STENNIS CENTER

FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

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Please consider this your school’s invitation to attend the 2023 John C. Stennis Center for Public Service Novice Tournament on September 22-23. The Stennis Center has long been affiliated with the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA) and is the sole sponsor of the competition in Congressional Debate at the NSDA National Tournament.

In order to foster and promote Forensics in the South, the Stennis Center agreed in 1995 to underwrite the costs of a novice tournament. As a result of the commitment of the Stennis Center, **each school must still furnish enough qualified judges to cover its entries, but there will be NO FEE to compete.**

The focus of the tournament will be on getting new students involved in Policy Debate, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Public Forum Debate, Speech Events, and Congressional Debate. This year’s tournament will continue the tradition of Workshop sessions led by Mississippi coaches in the tournament’s Speech Events by offering in-person workshops.

Students competing at Stennis **must be novice competitors in high school** (9th-12th grade only).

**Definition of Novice:** A novice student is a student that has never competed in speech or debate events prior to this academic school year on the HIGH SCHOOL level. A novice student may be in any high school grade (9-12) as long as they meet the condition in the previous sentence.

A student who has previously competed in middle school is still considered a novice when they enter high school, as long as they only competed against other middle-school students and never competed against high-school students while in middle school.

There is no distinction between types of events in the definition of novice. A student who competed in Speech as a freshman is not a novice for purposes of Debate events. A student who competed in high-school debate last year is not a novice in Speech events.

Please review this definition carefully, and please enter only those students who truly qualify for novice status. Any competitors who violate the rules above will be disqualified immediately. Please email the Tournament Director with any questions about novice status or eligible students for Stennis competition at [sonya.harvey@gmail.com](mailto:sonya.harvey@gmail.com).

Beginning at the 2023 tournament, students in grades 6-8 may participate at Stennis. Each student may choose from one of three events: Storytelling, Expository, and Middle School Impromptu. Competition will take place on Saturday and will follow the same format as IEs offered to high school students.

*A few new directions:*

1. Ballots will be ONLINE through Tabroom.com. All coaches, competitors, and judges will need to create a Tabroom.com (free) account to participate in the tournament. Every judge and competitor will need a device with a microphone and camera. Use of Google Chrome as your browser is highly recommended.
2. Postings for all rounds will be blasted on Tabroom.com.
3. An adult sponsor (authorized by the school) must be in attendance at all times by judging at the tournament and being available to contact via phone or computer.
4. We will accelerate the schedule when possible – please remain available during the tournament to avoid forfeiture.
5. If you are not listed on a debate round – please stand by or near your computer, in case you are needed.
6. All school judges – both IE and debate are obligated to judge one (1) round past their student’s elimination; please remain available.
7. Only the judge(s) and competitors may access their competition rooms during preliminary rounds. This means a few things: (1) No observers, (2) Students that are not competing in the tournament will not have access to rounds, (3) Coaches will not be able to view their student’s rounds. Finals are open to observers.
8. All events will take place in-person on MSU’s campus!

**Workshop Sessions.** A series of recorded tutorials on various topics will be offered during the 2022 Stennis tournament for interested students, coaches, and judges on Friday night.

**School Entry Limits.**  A school may enter up to ten (10) entries per IE event and 6 for Debate Events.

**Student Entry Limits.**

\*Students may enter three events total. The combinations can go like this-

-One Debate, one Individual Event, and Congress

-Two Individual Events and Congress

-Three Individual Events.

\*Students may NOT enter more than one debate event OR a debate event and two IEs due to schedule restraints.

**Entry Deadlines.** The deadline to **add entries** is Monday, September 18th, at 11:00pm. Judges should be entered by Tuesday, September 19, by 11:00pm. Any and all changes to registration must be emailed to [sonya.harvey@gmail.com](mailto:sonya.harvey@gmail.com) after Tuesday, September 19.

**Judges-General Requirements**. A school MUST register a sufficient number of judges to cover its own entries; otherwise, the tournament cannot accept a school’s entries. Experienced high-school students who have earned at least 150 National Speech and Debate Association points may judge, at the discretion of their coach. Schools should help provide a positive experience for the novice competitors by encouraging only serious, committed, trained students to accept this offer to judge.

**Judges-Specific Requirements**. One (1) judge for each Policy Debate team, one (1) judge per two (2) Lincoln-Douglas debaters, one (1) judge per two (2) Public Forum Debate teams, and one (1) judge for each six (6) entries (or fraction thereof) in Speech Event.

**All Judges:**

1. All ballots will be online at Tabroom.com. Please be sure all competitors and judges have an active Tabroom account that is linked to your school. Judges will be notified through an email or text from Tabroom when they are assigned a ballot. Please hit start on the round as soon as you receive your assignment. That lets the tab staff know that you have accepted your ballot.
2. Once the round is completed, judges should virtually turn in their ballots by clicking SUBMIT ballot.
3. Judges will be expected to be *available* every round in case they are needed as substitutes.
4. A judge who is called as a substitute will received a notification via email or text (whatever they have set up in tabroom) and is expected to click “Start Round” and go to their room immediately.
5. Judges will turn in ballots immediately. Judges have the opportunity to edit ballot comments after submitting the completed online ballot with points/ranks/decisions.

**Policy Debate:** This is a switch-sides cross-examination division utilizing the NSDA Format for time and prep**.**

**Public Forum Debate:** This event will follow NSDA Format for time and prep. **There will be assigned preliminary sides and PRO will speak first each round.** Elimination rounds will be flip rounds and will follow normal procedures for determining sides and speaker position.

**Lincoln-Douglas Debate:** This event will follow NSDA Format for time and prep.

***Judges should not give oral critiques or disclose decisions.***

**Congressional Debate:** A percentage of students from each room will advance from the Preliminary Session to the Super Session. Qualified varsity students and/or coaches will serve as Parliamentarians. Varsity Students may be nominated as presiding officer to Mrs. Sonya Harvey. There will be one (1) preliminary session of Congressional Debate and a Super Session (Finals). The workshop for Congress will be held in the Congress session. The Congress chamber will encourage all students to speak and students will be ranked by judges, the parliamentarian, and the Presiding Officer. Each school may submit one piece of legislation. Students may leave the chamber if they break in another event or enter later if they are in another event.

**Event Rules: Speech**

Individual Events Judging Procedure

\*Judges should always plan to be available thirty (30) minutes before each round. Judges that adjudicate out rounds will be required to complete the out rounds immediately.

**Extemporaneous Speaking:** There will be three (3) preliminary rounds in this event and a final round of six (6) competitors. Topics each round will alternate between Domestic and International questions. Students will choose between three (3) topics posted in the room by the proctor. They will then prepare their speech during a thirty (30) minute period. The time limit for delivering the speech is seven (7) minutes; there is no minimum time limit. Students who exceed the time limit by more than thirty (30) seconds should not be given first place in a panel; further consequences of exceeding the time limit are left to the discretion of the judge.

**Impromptu Speaking:** There will be three (3) preliminary rounds in this event and a final round of six (6) competitors. Students will choose between three (3) topics posted in the chat by the judge. They will then prepare and deliver their speech within 7 minutes. There is no minimum time limit. Students who exceed the time limit by more than thirty (30) seconds should not be given first place in a panel; further consequences of exceeding the time limit are left to the discretion of the judge. Students may use a notecard in Impromptu Speaking.

**Poetry Interpretation**: There will be three (3) preliminary rounds in this event and a final round of six (6) competitors. The selection must come from an acceptable source as defined by the National Catholic Forensic League as explained at the NCFL website ([www.ncfl.org](http://www.ncfl.org)). The original source(s) must be present at the tournament. The selection must be presented from a manuscript. An introduction is required and is a part of the ten (10) minute maximum for time allowed; there is no minimum time limit. Students who exceed the time limit by more than thirty (30) seconds should not receive first place in the panel; further consequences of exceeding the time limit are left to the discretion of the judge. There should be no movement below the waist in this event.

**Prose Interpretation**: There will be three (3) preliminary rounds and a final round of six (6) competitors. The selection must come from an acceptable source as defined by the National Catholic Forensic League as explained at the NCFL website ([www.ncfl.org](http://www.ncfl.org)). The original source must be present at the tournament. The selection must be presented from a manuscript. An introduction is required and is a part of the ten (10) minute maximum for time. Minimal movement is allowed in this event. There should be no movement below the waist in this event.

**Dramatic Performance**: The selection, either humorous or dramatic in tone, shall last not more than ten (10) minutes. An introduction must be given and is included in the time limit. The selection must come from an acceptable source as defined by the National Catholic Forensic League as explained at the NCFL website ([www.ncfl.org](http://www.ncfl.org)). The original source must be present at the tournament. The selection must be memorized. There is no minimum time limit. Students who exceed the time limit by thirty (30) seconds should not receive first place in the panel; further consequences of exceeding the time limit are left to the discretion of the judge. Movement is allowed in this event.

**Declamation*: This is event is for 9th and 10th grade students only***. The selection shall last not mare than ten (10) minutes. An introduction providing the author, title, and circumstances of the original speech must be given and is included in the time limit. Acceptable material for this event will follow the rules of the National Catholic Forensic League as explained at the NCFL website ([www.ncfl.org](http://www.ncfl.org)). The speech must be memorized. There is no minimum time limit. Students who exceed the time limit by thirty (30) seconds should not be given first place in a panel; further consequences of exceeding the time limit are left to the discretion of the judge. Movement is allowed in this event.

**Middle School Events: Choose one event**

**Storytelling:** 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 to that audience. Students may use a chair. Manuscripts are not permitted. **The theme for Stennis is Fairytales.**

**Expository Speaking:** Expository Speaking is a five minute informative speech that introduces to the audience a topic of the student’s choosing. The speaker should provide unique insights and explore interesting implications. At its core, Expository Speaking is an informative speech. Students doing Expository may cover topics ranging from an organization to a product , a process or concept. Effective speeches provide new information or perspectives on a topic, including those that are widely known.

**MS Impromptu:** There will be three (3) preliminary rounds in this event and a final round of six (6) competitors. Students will choose between three (3) topics posted in the chat by the judge. They will then prepare and deliver their speech within 7 minutes. There is no minimum time limit. Students who exceed the time limit by more than thirty (30) seconds should not be given first place in a panel; further consequences of exceeding the time limit are left to the discretion of the judge. Students may use a notecard in Impromptu Speaking.

***The final decision on any and all rules and procedural violations will be made by the Tournament Director, Sonya Harvey. Any questions concerning rules or procedures should be directed to the Tournament Director who can be reached at* sonya.harvey@gmail.com *or* 601-842-7004.**

**Awards:** Will be live and in-person!

**Tournament Schedule**

***Students/Coaches/Judges are expected to report to their respective rooms twenty (20) minutes prior to the start of any event on the Stennis schedule.***

**Monday, September 18**

11:00pm Deadline for entries to be entered at [www.tabroom.com](http://www.tabroom.com)

**Tuesday, September 19**

11:00pm All judges must be finalized on Tabroom.com

**Friday, September 22**

4:00pm ROUND I Policy, Public Forum, and L-D Debate

5:00pm ROUND II Policy, Public Forum, and L-D Debate

6:30pm ROUND III Policy, Public Forum, and L-D Debate

8:00pm ROUND IV Public Forum, and L-D Debate

\*Workshops will be held in-person on Friday night\*

**Saturday, September 23**

8:00am QUARTERFINALS Policy, Public Forum, and LD Debate

8:30 am Round I Extemporaneous Speaking Draw

9:00 am Round I Extemporaneous Speaking, Impromptu, Dramatic Performance, Prose, Poetry, Declamation

10:00 am Semifinals Policy, Public Forum, LD Debate

10:30 am Round II Extemporaneous Speaking Draw

11:00 am Round II Extemporaneous Speaking, Impromptu, Dramatic Performance, Prose, Poetry, Declamation

12:00 pm Finals Policy, Public Forum, LD Debate

12:30pm Round III Extemporaneous Speaking Draw

1:00 pm Round III Extemporaneous Speaking, Impromptu, Dramatic Performance, Prose, Poetry, Declamation

1:30 pm Congressional Debate Session One Begins

3:00 pm FINALS Extemporaneous Speaking Draw

3:30 pm Finals Extemporaneous Speaking, Impromptu, Dramatic Performance, Prose, Poetry, Declamation

4:00 pm Congressional Debate Session One Adjourns

4:30 pm Congressional Debate Finals Begins

6:00 pm Congressional Debate Finals Adjourns

6:30 pm Awards Ceremony