

North Carolina TSA Western Regional Conference 2026

Call to Conference (09/18/2025)



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Message from the Team 47

Welcome back to a new school year! We are excited to announce that the Appalachian State University Career & Technical Education Program will host the North Carolina TSA Western Region Conference.



This year's Western Region Conference will focus on preparing its members for the state conference and beyond by providing valuable feedback and recognition for its student members in select TSA competitive events at the middle and high school levels.

The Regional Conference will continue to use our Achievement Judging scale to inform participants of their standing regarding the assessment provided by the National TSA. Entries at Regionals will be recognized as Gold, Silver, or Bronze. These rankings will be based on a percentage of the total points possible. This metric promotes continuous improvement and accurate assessment of work quality.

We look forward to coming together at Appalachian State on **Friday, February 20**. We are excited about this year's conference and the opportunity to be creative, meet together, and positively influence our TSA members now and in the future.

Thank you to our Chapter Advisors for all you do behind the scenes. Thank you to our student members who stay committed and dedicated to North Carolina TSA. Lastly, welcome to our new chapters and members. We can't wait to meet you!

Now, let's have a great Western Region Conference!

North Carolina TSA State Officer Team 47



Appalachian State University is a cashless campus. Please ensure that participants prepare meals and make any other necessary purchases.

General Conference Information

Each year, the North Carolina Technology Student Association hosts an annual regional conference that brings together student members with industry, post-secondary, and community leaders in a competitive showcase, recognizing technical skills and leadership development at the regional level. The conference includes competitive events and a recognition ceremony.

DATES

This year's Western Region Conference will be held at Appalachian State University on Friday, February 20, 2026.

COST

Registration Costs are \$20 per student and \$10 per advisor.

THEME

The theme for Regional Conferences 2026 will be "Unity Through Community."
Please note that the conference theme differs from those used for competitive events.

Important Dates and Deadlines

Please note that the dates and deadlines below are tentative and subject to change.

Changes will be highlighted and announced to Chapter Advisors if they are made.

Date	Item
November 24, 2025	Registration Opens.
January 20, 2026	NCTSA Chapter Advisor's Regional Meeting at 4:00 PM
January 21, 2026	Registration Closes.
February 6, 2026	Credit Cards are accepted. Payment Postmark Deadline. Please make checks payable to NCTSA and mail them to North Carolina TSA % Jerianne S. Taylor, 292 Ridgefield Road, Boone, NC 28607.
February 9-12, 2026	Preliminary Round Submission Portal Open.
February 13, 2026	Online Testing for various competitions from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM
February 20, 2026	NCTSA Regional Conference Awards Ceremony 3:00 PM Middle School/ 4:00 PM High School
April 9-11, 2026	NCTSA State Conference at the Sheraton Greensboro.

Conference Checklist

Please consult your administrators for any school district- or school-specific procedures.

- ☐ Follow essential dates and deadlines outlined in the Call to Conference.
- ☐ Set up a money collection with your school's bookkeeper.
- ☐ Set chapter deadlines for registration and payment.
- ☐ Send permission slips with conference information, including cost and code of conduct, to members and parents.
- ☐ Collect member payment before the registration deadline.
- ☐ Register all members, advisors, and support staff by the registration deadline.
- ☐ Print the emailed invoice and double-check it for accuracy, then triple-check it.
- ☐ Submit an invoice to your school's bookkeeper for payment.
- ☐ Mail a check or submit a credit card payment to North Carolina TSA by the payment deadline.
- ☐ Review the tentative agenda with attending members.
- ☐ Host a chapter meeting with students to discuss expectations and responsibilities.
- ☐ Host a chapter meeting with parents to discuss expectations and responsibilities.
- ☐ Establish an online testing time for those taking the test on February 13.
- ☐ Remind students to upload their preliminary submissions.
- ☐ Ensure each attendee has signed a multiple-release form, which is kept with the chapter advisor.
- ☐ Have all members follow and like North Carolina TSA on social media sites.
- ☐ Discuss Regional Conference expectations with members so they are prepared.

Best Practices from Experienced Advisors

Please confer with your administrators before putting any of these into practice to ensure compliance with school district and school policies:

- Have a parent meeting before the conference to lay out expectations and consequences.
- Create a behavioral contract for members and parents to sign.
- Collect parent phone numbers and emergency contacts just in case.
- Collect a deposit from those who commit to attend, primarily if members are fundraising.
- **Think quality over quantity—3 competitive events per student is an excellent sweet spot.**
- Ensure students have a mix of event types, including team and individual competitions, as well as early and on-site events.
- Help students determine their schedules so they feel prepared.
- Determine your advisor schedule and communicate it to attendees.
- Set up a group chat (e.g., GroupMe or Remind) with all attendees to facilitate quick communication.
- Hold a chapter meeting to check in with students and provide updates.
- Ensure that student submissions meet the quality standards expected by your school.
- Set clear behavioral expectations in advance.
- Ensure that students can access an advisor at all times.

Tentative Schedule

Please note that the schedule below is tentative and subject to change.

November 24, 2025 - January 21, 2026	
ONLINE	Registration Opens for Advisors. Western: https://www.registermychapter.com/tsa/nc-west
February 9, 2026	
9:00 AM	Preliminary Round Submission Portal Opens for Students Western: Judge Pro - Admin (registermychapter.com) / Password NCtsa2026
February 12, 2026	
10:00 PM	Preliminary Round Submission Portal Closes for Students Western: Judge Pro - Admin (registermychapter.com)
February 13, 2026	
8:00 AM - 8:00 PM	Take the Written Test Online
Friday, February 20, 2026	
9:30 - 4:30	Western Region Conference at Appalachian State University Preliminary Schedule (2025 Conference Program)

Conference Registration

LINK ([Registration \(registermychapter.com\)](https://www.registermychapter.com))

- The Western Region Conference serves all LEAs west of Forsyth County, including Forsyth County itself.
- The Central Region serves all LEAs between Guilford and Wake County. Central Region Chapters can attend either the Western or Eastern Region Conferences.

ELIGIBILITY

Affiliated chapters and members can register for competitive events at the Regional Conference. Chapters considering affiliation with NCTSA may also register to compete in these conferences. ALL ATTENDEES, including members, advisors, and support staff actively participating in conference activities, are REQUIRED to register.

COST

Attendee	Cost
Students	\$20
Advisors	\$10
State Officer, Chaperone, or Judge	Comp
Accessibility Support Staff (Interpreter, paraprofessional, etc., to provide accommodations)	\$0
Credit Card Administrative Fee	5%

DEADLINES

Item	Deadline
Registration Opens	December 8, 2025
Registration Deadline*	January 21, 2026
Final Payment Deadline**	February 6, 2026

*** Only paid registrants may participate in the Semifinalist Round.

INFORMATION NEEDED TO REGISTER

- Username and Password = National TSA Affiliation Username (Chapter ID #) and Password
- Judges System Student Password = **NCtsa2026**
 - You will set this yourself, and it will be the same for every student in your chapter.
 - Students can log in to the judge's system and upload their projects.
- Competitive Event Selections for Student Participants and their email addresses
 - **MAX 6 EVENTS PER MEMBER (Nationals). Chapters are encouraged to have students compete in only THREE events. All work must be completed during the current school year.**
 - **Please note: You must select a Team Captain for team events.** The Team Captain will be the student designated to upload the team's materials to the judges' system.

EVENT CHANGES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

You can change your registration as often as possible until registration closes on JANUARY 21 at 11:59 PM. Simply log back on, edit, and resubmit. **Beginning JANUARY 22, you will need to contact the [State Advisor](#) to make any event changes or substitutions, and you will be invoiced an additional \$10 per event change or substitution.** This includes, but is not limited to, adding events for students, editing teams, and substituting new students for those already registered who are unable to attend. If you want to drop a student from an event or your roster after the January 21 deadline, there will be no \$10 charge for notifying the State Advisor. However, no refunds will be granted. Notifying us of no-shows is helpful to our planning.

Payment

DEADLINE

All invoices must be paid by February 6, 2026.

INVOICE

Upon submitting your registration, you will receive an email confirmation that serves as your invoice.

PAYING BY CHECK

- Make checks out to NCTSA
- Mail to North Carolina TSA, 292 Ridgefield Road, Boone, NC 28607
- FOR SCHOOL SYSTEMS AND VENDOR PURPOSES: [Link to Tax Form](#)

PAYING BY CREDIT CARD

- Available through the registration portal or upon request. A 5% ADMINISTRATIVE FEE WILL BE ADDED. Email Dr. Taylor at stateadvisor@nctsa.org.

POLICIES

- Late registrations requested after the deadline are not guaranteed and will incur a \$50 late fee.
- If proof of payment is not received before the conference date, a 10% late fee will be added to the invoice.
- No refunds are available for registrations made after the registration deadline.
- Beginning JANUARY 21, you will be invoiced \$10 per event change or substitution.
- Only paid registrants may participate in the Preliminary Round uploads and take written tests.
- NC TSA Conference registration is NONREFUNDABLE. Once registration is submitted electronically, the Chapter is responsible for paying in full for all registered attendees. Ensure that students, administrators, and parents are informed.

Forms

Letter of Justification to Administrators - Template

Please read through the required forms below. Some may need to be reviewed with attendees, while others require a signature, completion, and submission to the appropriate party.

Attendee Code of Conduct

It should be reviewed and signed by each attendee/ parent before the conference. This form is good for the entire academic year.

CTSO Multiple Release Form

Each attendee must complete and submit the form to the Chapter Advisor. This form is good for the entire academic year.

Chapter Certification Form

This form is required to participate in conference activities, including but not limited to the preliminary round, semifinalist interviews, on-site events, general sessions, and breakout/interest sessions. Only one form needs to be completed per chapter per year.

Completed Chapter Certification Forms must be submitted for Western by February 20, 2026.

[Upload HERE](#)

If the Chapter Certification Form is not received by the deadline, chapters may not participate in on-site Regional and/or State Conference activities until it is received.

JUDGES

Each chapter MUST provide at least two judges for the regional conference. Chapters are encouraged to identify individuals other than chapter advisors to serve as judges. Please ensure that you complete the following form by February 3rd.

Dress Code

Chapter Advisors and chaperones are responsible for ensuring that all TSA student members wear appropriate attire for the occasion. Adults are also expected to dress appropriately for all TSA occasions they attend.

Please consider the following guidelines for the Regional Conference:

Occasion	Appropriate Attire
Regional Conference	• Smart casual attire or Business casual attire*

** Please note that smart and business casual attire is an exception at North Carolina TSA Regional and State Conferences only. This exception will not be made if and when attending and competing at the National TSA Conference.*

BUSINESS CASUAL ATTIRE

Examples: blouse, polo, button-up, sweater, blazer, slacks, chinos, skirt, flats, loafers, dress shoes

SMART CASUAL ATTIRE

Examples: TSA or school spirit t-shirt, sweatshirt, non-ripped jeans, pants, skirt, sneakers, sandals

UNACCEPTABLE ATTIRE

Examples: sleeveless tops, ripped jeans, leggings, sweatpants, shorts, flip-flops



COMPETITIONS

At each regional, we will evaluate competitive events using the guidelines and rubrics in the TSA National Competitive Events Guides for Middle School and High School.

HELPFUL LINKS

- [High School Competitive Events & Eligibility for the 2025 NCTSA Regional Conference](#)
- [Middle School Competitive Events & Eligibility for the 2025 NCTSA Regional Conference](#)
- [Middle School Competitive Events Guide 2026 & 2027](#)
- [High School Competitive Events Guide 2025 & 2026](#)
- [National Competitive Event Themes and Problems](#)
- [National Competition Updates](#)
- [NCTSA Advisor Google Folder](#) - contains Chapter Resources and forms for various competitions.

PRELIMINARY ROUND

Individuals and teams will submit their entries for the preliminary round prior to the conference beginning. Refer to the competitive event guides for details on specific preliminary round submissions. These events will be evaluated before the conference.

February 9, 2026	Preliminary Round Submission Instructions Released
February 12, 2025	Preliminary Round Submission Deadline

Frequently Asked Questions

This list will be updated regularly with FAQs regarding the North Carolina TSA Regional Conferences in 2026.

Q: Can you push or extend the deadline for Preliminary Round submissions?

We wish we could push the deadline! We have already lined up judges to start evaluating before the conference date. Additionally, hosting a regional conference has led to 75% of our events now featuring a preliminary round, which means the number of submissions that need to be evaluated has quadrupled. Because of these reasons, we are unable to extend the deadline.

Q: Why does the Regional Conference cost \$20?

A significant amount of money is being used to host this conference (space and online management systems) and to provide travel for staff. Conference costs include, but are not limited to, facilities, the conference platform, the conference management system, video meeting pro accounts, the conference app, testing, awards, judges' gifts, postage, and additional fees. If you have ideas on how to offset the costs of the Regional Conference, we would love to hear them!

Q: Where can I find the themes and problems for events?

The themes and problems for national competitive events are [here](#) and on [page 8](#) of this document.

Q: Where can I find eligibility for each event?

Event eligibility is listed in the "Events at a Glance" document, available [here](#). See Column B. **Please note the differences between who is eligible to compete at the Regional Conference versus the State Conference and/or National Conference.**

Due to time constraints, many of the events are modified. Please pay close attention to the modifications noted in the Events at a Glance document, available [here](#). See Columns C-J.

Q: Where can advisors find the competitive event guidelines and rubrics?

The National Competitive Events Guide is located in the [TSA Membership System](#). Follow this path: www.tsaweb.org > Join/Login > Total TSA > Competitions. The State Competitive Events Guide was shared with the Chapter Advisor email addresses provided upon affiliation via Google Drive and email. Try searching for "[TSA Times](#)" in your Google Drive or NCTSA Advisor Google Folder in your email, or visiting our website at [North Carolina TSA \(nctsa.org\)](http://NorthCarolinaTSA.org).

Q: Does my school have to be affiliated with North Carolina TSA to compete in Regionals?

No. The Regional Conference is open to all STEM and CSITT programs in North Carolina. Schools will need to affiliate with National TSA and NCTSA to compete at the State and National Conferences.

Q: Is Regionals a qualifier for the State Conference?

No. Regionals allow student members to receive specific feedback as they prepare for the state conference and beyond.