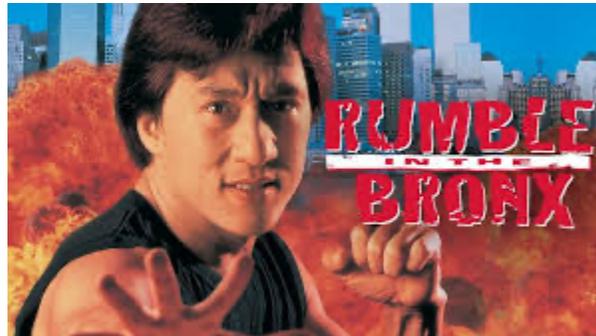


NYCFL Debate Live Doc  
Rules, Policies, and Procedures for the  
**Bronx Winter Local**

2/7/26



## The Bronx High School of Science

This document will be updated before and during the tournament as needed. Coaches: make sure all your teams have the link.

**Need further information? Consult the [NYCFL DEBATE MANUAL](#).**

**Remember: We are guests!**

1. Do not move furniture. If a desk is facing forward and you move it sideways, you **MUST** move it back exactly as you found it.
2. Do not unplug anything. The only place you can charge things is in the cafeteria!

## Announcements/Updates

CURRENT STATUS: **Round 3 has all started.**

## Reminder: Novice CX, just this one time, is not limited to the packet.

Reminder: There will be no coin flips in PF; sides are assigned by tab. Teams will debate both sides of the resolution during the day. Pro goes first in rounds 1 and 2. Con goes first in round 3.

Division	Half Quals	Team recognition	Speaker awards
VLD	2	2	
JVLD	2	2	
NLD	8	16	
VPF	5	8	3
JVPF	5	9	5
NPF	9	17	8
VCX	2	3	3
JVCX		0	
NCX	1	1	1

### Wireless Network:

**Wifi: DOEGuest**

**PW: NYC\$itevent**

### Contact Information

**Debate helpline email: [tabroomissues@gmail.com](mailto:tabroomissues@gmail.com) or text: 929 249 1476. Please include your name, the room number and full description of the problem!**

### Important Notes

If you cannot adhere to these guidelines, you will be asked to leave the tournament

It is really important that all coaches, competitors and judges really help us out to keep the building organized this weekend. Here is what we ask that you impart to everyone.

1. Do not touch the teacher's desk/computer. Do not unplug anything.
2. Do not move any furniture
3. No food or drink in any of the classrooms.
4. When not in a round, all students should be in the cafeteria. Please do not go into any rooms other than the room you are assigned to for your round.
5. There is an ADULT Judges Lounge. All adult judges should stay in the Judge Lounge when not judging.

## Topics

LD — Resolved: The possession of nuclear weapons is immoral.

PF — Resolved: The Federal Trade Commission should establish a federal regulatory framework for sports betting.

CX — Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its exploration and/or development of the Arctic.

## Getting Your Assignments

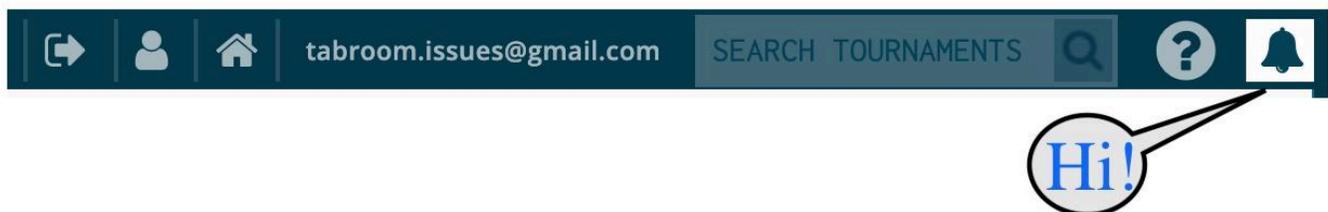
It is the obligation of all judges to know if they have assignments and report to those assignments in a timely manner.

This document will announce when pairings are released. At that time you will get an email notifying you of an assignment. It is unlikely, but it is possible that an

email might not reach you. If you do not receive an assignment immediately when the pairings are released, check the pairings to see if you're on there. Clicking on your email address on the top of the page of [tabroom.com](http://tabroom.com) will show any upcoming assignments.

The moment you get your assignments, you must ACKNOWLEDGE in tabroom. If you do not acknowledge, we do not know that you are aware that you have an assignment. This means we have to call and/or text you, so please make sure that your phone is on and open to unknown callers, and that your voicemail is not full. Usually at about 10 minutes or so before start time, if we haven't heard from you and you have not acknowledged your ballot, we will assume that you are unavailable and we will fine and replace you.

There is also a new way of getting assignments, but it seems to be less than 100% reliable. We recommend using it, but don't make it your only hope. To wit, there is now a bell-button on the top right of the tabroom home screen:



It starts out red:



Press it, and it turns green:



This allows tabroom blasts to be sent directly to the device in your hands, bypassing basic text messaging. (Slightly more detail here if you want it:

<http://www.jimmenick.com/vault/assignments.pdf> )

## Ethics

**Dear Coach:** Among the goals of high school debate are the enhancement of students' basic education and the providing of a competitive arena in which to develop important life skills. The very nature of these goals requires that coaches promote an environment of strong, positive ethical behaviors. To aid coaches in this pursuit, some actions that should be avoided, either as clear ethical violations or giving the appearance and/or opportunity for such violations, include the following: communication during a round between debaters and persons not debating; communication during a round between judges; accessing documents during a round to which others also have access (including opponents sending cases to a team email rather than a debater's personal email); live-streaming a round to outside persons; recording rounds without permission; intimidation of debaters or judges in any fashion; the use of fabricated/misrepresented evidence. While not all-inclusive, this list should provide a starting point as we work together as a community to maintain the benefits of competitive debate for all involved.

## Mavericks

Students in team debate events may not be registered as mavericks. If, during a tournament, a student's partner has health or tech issues that prevent them from debating during one or more rounds, the remaining partner may continue to compete, at their discretion, with no additional prep time provided.

## Quick Notes

1. Pairings will be released approximately 30 minutes before round start.
2. Judges will hit the ACKNOWLEDGE BALLOT button immediately on receiving assignment.
3. Prep time: LD - 4 minutes; PF - 3 minutes; CX - 8 minutes
4. All judges are obligated for every round and must arrive at the rounds on time.
5. All PF and LD rounds are double-flighted. Enter decision and points on your ballot for Flight 1 before starting Flight 2. Enter Flight 2 before leaving the room. For both events you have until the end of the tournament to add any comments.
6. CX is not flighted. Enter your points and decision before leaving the room.

## The Needham Protocol

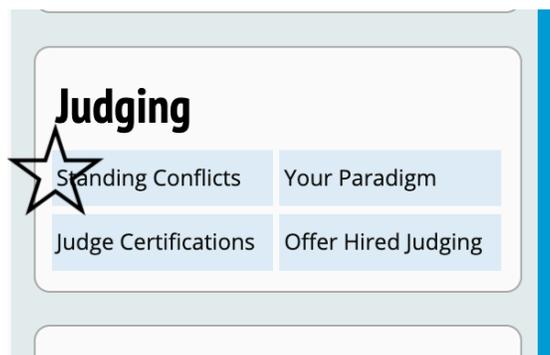
It is possible that a division might have an imbalance of judges, i.e., not enough neutral judges to conduct all the rounds. We try to avoid this, but it can happen, and we do want the rounds to take place, and the only way to make that possible is if judges adjudicate rounds where their own school is competing against a rival school or their own school. To make these rounds fair we invoke **the Needham Protocol: When you are judging a round including your own school, your goal is the most reasoned, fair decision possible. Forget which school is yours and judge the debate as if you've never heard of either team before. Pretend you're from a different school altogether.**

Your team has put you into this seemingly uncomfortable position because they know they can rely on your demonstrated professionalism in the activity. Your good work will allow rounds to happen that might never otherwise take place. We thank you.



### Warning!!!

If we turn to the Needham protocol, there is a possibility that you could end up assigned to judge your own child or brother or mother-in-law or clone or some other person of that ilk which would cause an unacceptable conflict. So for the sake of sanity and security, please mark such conflicts in advance on [tabroom.com](http://tabroom.com). The setting is on the site homepage.



## Schedule

- The schedule plan:
  - Pairing Released: 30 minutes before scheduled start time. **Judges without assignments should check the pairing. Judges with assignments must press ACKNOWLEDGE BALLOT immediately.**
  - Mandatory In-Room Time: 15 minutes after postings, and 15 minutes before round start time. **THIS IS WHEN YOU MUST BE IN YOUR ROOM!** Coordinate email chains for evidence sharing during this time. Send a message to tab if anyone is not present 5 min after in-room time (contact email is above).
  - Start Time: 30 minutes after pairings are posted. This is the **LATEST** that a round should begin. IT IS OKAY TO START EARLY IF ALL COMPETITORS AND JUDGES WANT TO BEGIN.
- **TEAMS**: Forfeit time is theoretically the start time. If you have not communicated with the judge/tournament by this time, you may be given a forfeit for the round. Please note that only the tab room can award a forfeit.
- **JUDGES**:
  - If you are assigned a round: push ACKNOWLEDGE BALLOT as soon as you receive it, be in the room by the mandatory in-room time, and start on time (at the latest).
  - If you are not assigned a round, please stand by. You will be released via this document when all rounds have started.

### Schedule

	Pairings Released (judges press ACKNOWLEDGE)	Mandatory In-Room Time	Start Time (should be underway!)
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Check in on tabroom.com	9:00		
Opening remarks to judges	9:15ish (location TBA)		
Round 1	9:30	9:45	10:00
Lunch			
Round 2	11:30	11:45	12:00
Round 3	2:30	2:45	3:00

Award announcements	5-ish		
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### Decision Timer

Judges have 55 minutes from the ROUND START TIME (not when you click start, not when you really start, but the scheduled start time) to submit their decisions in PF and LD, 90 minutes in CX. This countdown is visible on the ballot. This rule exists a) to keep us on schedule, b) to encourage debaters to minimize wasted time within rounds, and c) to prevent judges from overanalyzing every piece of evidence in a round. This should create an incentive for all participants to start on time (or early!), move swiftly through the round, and quickly notify tab of any tech issues or missing persons. It may NOT be used to justify cutting time from speeches, crossfires, prep, or tech time.

The ballot does not disappear when the timer ends; even if you exceed the time allotted, finish the round and vote as normal! Remember that the decision timer is only for **points and the winner**. If you find yourself approaching the end of the decision time, you can submit speaker points and a decision without comments and re-visit your ballot throughout the rest of the tournament to include your comments, if any.

# Judge Notes and Expectations

**ONLY THE ASSIGNED JUDGE MAY JUDGE THE DEBATE. YOU MAY NOT (NOT NEVER EVER, NOT NO HOW, NOT NO WAY) ALLOW SOMEONE ELSE TO JUDGE IN YOUR NAME.**

## **Before Rounds**

- Be on the premises.
- CLICK ACKNOWLEDGE IMMEDIATELY TO LET TAB YOU HAVE RECEIVED THE BALLOT.
- If debaters are missing at the mandatory in-room time, send a message to the helpline.

## **During Rounds**

- Flow (take notes)
- Enter comments on tabroom between speeches or during prep time
- That's it. **Do not ask questions, answer questions, comment on arguments, or get involved in the debate in any way during the rounds.**

## **After Rounds**

1. Quickly read any evidence that is crucial to making your decision.
2. Confirm (verbally) that the sides listed on your ballot are correct.
3. Enter points (following the scale; see ballot and below) and a decision (must be one winner and one loser). Low point wins and ties are not accepted in the NYCFL.
4. Confirm decision on tabroom.com. Write the winning SCHOOL and SIDE in your RFD. Do this for Flight 1 before starting Flight 2. **DO NOT LEAVE ROOM UNTIL YOUR DECISION IS ENTERED AND CONFIRMED.**
5. There is no disclosure of results in the NYCFL.

## Forfeits

Only tab can declare and issue forfeits. If you think a team should be forfeited, you must talk to tab staff. As noted above, teams not in the room at the official start time may be forfeit, unless you're feeling really generous, or they're first-time novices with barely half a clue to share for the day.

## Rules Violations

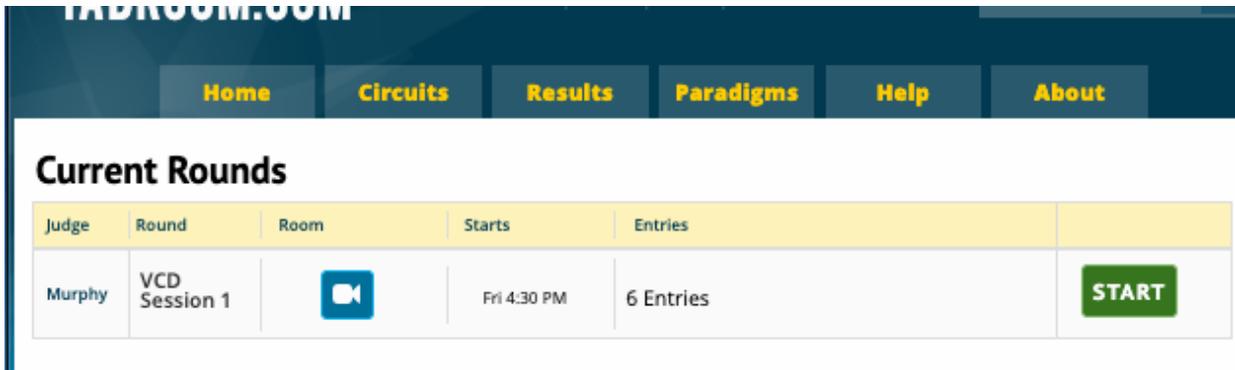
Please consult tab before deciding that something in the round warrants punishment for violating the rules, except for evidence challenges (explained below).

## Judge Obligations

All schools are obligated to provide judging for all rounds.

## Where's my ballot?

Here! On the main screen of your tabroom account (click your email address in the upper right to refresh the page) and under "Current Ballots and Panels" you'll see this view when you have a round.



The START button opens the ballot. At NYCFL, we label it ACKNOWLEDGE BALLOT. The little camera icon will not appear at an in-person event; you will instead see a room location.

## Advice

- A great resource for judge training: <https://sites.google.com/view/judge-training/home>
- A description of good and bad ballot writing: [Debate Ballot Examples](#)
- A set of event explainers and sample rounds with commentary: [PCFL Resources and Videos](#)
- [Jim Menick's Parent PF Training Session from 2025](#)

## Awards

Placement awards for the top third of teams in a division, and speaker awards for top 15% of PF and CX.

## NY State Quals

Speakers	Half Quals
3-5	1
6-10	2

11-15	3
16-20	4
21-25	5
26-30	6

After 30, the ratio changes to one half qual for every 10 speakers. There must be at least 2 schools and 3 speakers in a category in order to have a half qual available.

### **Other Tournaments of Interest This Season**

Visit <http://www.jimmenick.com/sked.html> This document is updated regularly, and lists most of the tournaments in our region, often with useful background information.

## **Judging Miscellany**

### **Implicit Bias Reminders**

We live in a world that is filled with bias. While it may be impossible to completely separate ourselves from our worldview and the many factors that influence us on a daily basis, we can make a concerted effort to minimize the way our personal biases impact the way that we interact with students within this activity. The vast majority of adults within this activity do a phenomenal job of this throughout the season but we wanted to put out a few reminders for everyone to take note of:

- Accents do not reflect intelligence.
- Race does not indicate socioeconomic status.
- Gender is fluid.
- There is no uniform in Speech and Debate. Your personal opinions about what a student chooses to wear have no bearing on the proceedings, and should not be indicated on your ballot.
- Pitch is not a personal choice.
- Positions that students take while competing don't necessarily equate to their personal beliefs.
- Your beliefs on a topic should have no bearing on how you judge a speech or performance.
- Recognize that words do not exist in a vacuum. Avoid using charged language on your ballots.

- You are the adult in the room, even if you are a student judge. As such, please be mindful of how students will interpret what they see and hear you do. Please demonstrate respect in every aspect of the word.

### Debate Speaker Point Scale

Speaker points are used to give a holistic measurement of the effectiveness of the debater's participation in the round - speaking, strategy, decorum, etc. Judges must follow the speaker point scale below, regardless of what they are used to or may prefer, so that there is a fair standard across all rounds. Plus, if we have a standard, points provide meaningful feedback instead of being arbitrary and useless!

**29.5-30:** I wish I could frame your speeches – hard to imagine a better speaker

**29.1-29.4:** you were consistently excellent

**28.8-29.0:** you were effective and strategic, and made only minor mistakes

**28.3-28.7:** you hit all the right notes, but could improve (e.g. depth or efficiency)

**27.8-28.2:** you mainly did the right thing, but left something to be desired

**27.3-27.7:** you missed major things and were hard to follow

**27.0-27.2:** you advanced little in the debate or cost your team the round

**26.0-26.9:** you are not ready for this division/tournament

**Below 26:** you were offensive, ignorant, rude, or tried to cheat (MUST come to tab)

Low-point wins (where the winning team has fewer points than the losing team) and ties are not allowed in CFL rounds.

### Content Warnings

Content warnings are intended to give speakers, judges and debaters time to prepare their minds for potentially difficult content. It is the position of this tournament that all students who might explore such content provide warnings prior to the start of the round so that all listeners can be prepared. This should not be construed as a reason to win or lose debates, but should be done in the interests of making debate as comfortable a place as possible for all participants, given the complicated world in which we live.

Content warnings cannot be used to exclude content from the round and cannot be used by judges in the voting process. We are constantly in the process of learning, growing, and trying

to become more inclusive as a community. We ask that competitors, judges, and coaches use this opportunity as a teachable moment and not for competitive gain.

## **LD Rules and Procedures**

### **Structure of a Round**

Affirmative Constructive - 6 minutes

Cross-examination - 3 minutes

Negative Constructive - 7 minutes

Cross-examination - 3 minutes

Affirmative Rebuttal - 4 minutes

Negative Rebuttal - 6 minutes

Affirmative Rebuttal - 3 minutes

The structure of a round is not modifiable, with the exception that speakers are not required to use all of their speech/cross-ex time. That time is simply absorbed, not transferred to other activities.

### **Prep time**

4 minutes - teams may ask for prep time in between any two elements of the round and may divide their prep time in any increments.

### **Calling for and sharing evidence**

Any evidence read/cited in the round must be made available to the opponent upon request. Requests for evidence, and the time spent finding the evidence, is untimed in the round and **MAY NOT** be used for prep time for any debater. Teams ought to be able to find and electronically share their evidence very, very rapidly. If the time spent finding a piece of evidence is excessive, you may begin running prep time - however, the lack of prep time **CANNOT** be a reason to deny a team the chance to see their opponent's evidence.

If a team simply cannot produce their evidence, or is out of prep time to find it, it should be tossed out of the round and not factored into your decision.

Time spent reading the opponent's evidence must be timed in some way, either as prep time or while another speech is underway.

Judges may ask for evidence if they would like to, but are not required to read any evidence presented in round. Judges may not ask for evidence until the round is over.

### Evidence challenges

The quality of evidence may be a part of the debate. In fact, good debaters make evidence comparisons. Here is a way to consider the escalation of evidence issues:

1. A team claims evidence is of low quality, from a disreputable source, uses a flawed methodology, etc. - decide this issue in the course of the debate based on the arguments made by the teams. Read the evidence after the debate if you'd like.
2. A team cannot produce evidence they read - disregard the evidence in your decision and pretend it was never mentioned
3. A team alleges that their opponent's evidence is fabricated - this claim would, under NSDA rules, stop the round for the judge to determine win/loss in the debate based solely on the evidence challenge. Please confirm that this is a team's intent before stopping the debate.

You can consult tab via the helpline email for directions on how to resolve this issue in the round, but we cannot make the decision for you.

## PF Rules and Procedures

### Coin Flips

There will be no coin flips (an NCFL rule). Teams will debate both sides of the resolution during the day. Pro goes first in rounds 1 and 2. Con goes first in round 3.

### Structure of a Round

Constructives - 4 min

Crossfire between 1st speakers - 3 min

Rebuttals - 4 min

Crossfire between 2nd speakers - 3 min

Summaries - 3 min

Grand Crossfire - 3 min

## Final Focuses - 2 min

The structure of a round is not modifiable, with the exception that speakers are not required to use all of their speech/crossfire time. That time is simply absorbed, not transferred to other activities.

### **Prep time**

3 minutes - teams may ask for prep time in between any two elements of the round and may divide their prep time in any increments.

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You can consult tab via the helpline email for directions on how to resolve this issue in the round, but we cannot make the decision for you.

### Mavericks

Students in PF may not debate as mavericks. We will allow a team to go maverick one round in situations where a partner has health or, at virtual tournaments, tech issues.

## Policy Rules and Procedures

(Yeah, there's no policy at this one, but there may be at a future event, and we don't want to lose this content—it's hard enough already for us to remember where we put our eyeglasses, much less where we put our policy procedures.)

### Structure of a Round

1st Affirmative Constructive - 8 minutes  
Cross-examination (by 2N) - 3 minutes  
1st Negative Constructive - 8 minutes  
Cross-examination (by 1A) - 3 minutes  
2nd Affirmative Constructive - 8 minutes  
Cross-examination (by 1N) - 3 minutes  
2nd Negative Constructive - 8 minutes  
Cross-examination (by 2A) - 3 minutes  
1st Negative Rebuttal - 5 minutes  
1st Affirmative Rebuttal - 5 minutes  
2nd Negative Rebuttal - 5 minutes  
2nd Affirmative Rebuttal - 5 minutes

The structure of a round is not modifiable, with the exception that speakers are not required to use all of their speech/cross-ex time. That time is simply absorbed, not transferred to other activities.

Prep time

8 minutes - teams may ask for prep time in between any two elements of the round and may divide their prep time in any increments.

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