CHIEF JUDGE'S BRIEFING – Table Topics, Evaluation & International Speech Contests (Judges, Timers and Ballot Counters)

Confirm in Advance that

- Ballot Counters have been given or sent Ballot Counter's Tally **Form (1176)**

- Timers have been given or sent Timer's Record Forms (1175), timing lights, cards, and or a stopwatch or confirmed using own device.

- Judges and Tie Breaking Judges have been given or sent Judge's Guides & Ballots & Tie-breaking Guides & Ballots for each contest.
- You have received the Judge's Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics (1170) from all judges & the Tie-breaking judge.
- Everyone has writing utensils.
- You have reviewed the Contestant's Eligibility Forms from the Contest Chair to confirm that all contestants are eligible.
- **Print your Ballot Counter's Tally Form (1176) for each contest.**
- **Print one Form 1168 Results Form for each contest.**

BRIEFING

Gather the timers, ballot counters and secretly the judges (excluding the tie-breaking judge)

Find out from the contest master if any verbal timing cues are required by a contestant and for whom.

"My name is: _____ and I am the Chief Judge for this Speech Contest.
It is **(give the time)** and I am bringing this briefing to order.

Thank you for participating in this contest and for attending the briefing. The briefing has several purposes, including completing the required forms needed for the contest, reviewing the rules and procedures and when to expect the speaking order.

You should have received and printed the following:

- **To the Ballot Counters:** Counter's Tally Form (Item 1176)
- **To the Timers:** Speech Contest Timer' Record Form and Instructions for Timers **(Item 1175)**

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- **To the Judges:**
  - Judge's Guide and Ballot Evaluation Contest (**Item 1179)**
  - Judge's Guide and Ballot International Speech Contest (**Item 1172)**
  - Judge's Guide and Ballot Table Topics Contest (**Item 1180**)
  - Speech Contest Rulebook (**Item 1171**)
  - Judge's Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics (**Item 1170**)

- **To everyone** – the Video Release form for District Contests (**Item 470**).

Speaking Order: The speaking order will be announced at the beginning of the contests for all to see..

Timers Briefing:
(Chief Judge, please select option 1 or 2 below)

Option 1 – None of the speakers require verbal timing cues
Option 2 – Contestant XXX requires verbal timing cues – simply say the color when appropriate

"Timer 1 – You will control the timing lights/cards and complete the Timer's Record form in case there is a question or problem. Please confirm verbally that you understand how to use the timing light/cards. You will ensure each contestant can view an accurate green, yellow, or red signal at the appropriate time."

Ask the timers to display Green – Yellow – Red timing lights/cards.

Timer 2, You will officially oversee the stopwatch and will be responsible for delivering to me the Timer's Record form with the elapsed time of each contestant's speech and any disqualifications.

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The lights are as follows: **Speech presentation time limits:**

CONTEST QUAL GREEN YELLOW RED DISQUAL Table Topics 01:00
01:00 01:30 02:00 02:31
Evaluation 01:30 02:00 02:30 03:00 03:31
Int. Speech 04:30 05:00 06:00 07:00 07:31

Timers 1 and 2, verbally acknowledge that at NO time will you give any indication that the speakers are over time.

Additional items of note:

- Timing begins with the first word uttered or deliberate gesture
- One minute of silence before the first contestant and in between contestants
- Contest Master must instruct the beginning of 1 minute of silence
- The timer must indicate the end of the period of silence with a red card/light & verbal announcement
- Both Timers should give their Timer's Record forms to the Chief Judge or send a photo

- If their Timer's Record forms do not agree, give the contestants the better of the two timings.
- Timer 2 will notify the Chief Judge of any disqualifications on the Timer's Record form

- A visually impaired contestant is permitted to request and must be granted a form of warning signal of their own choosing. Acceptable warning signals would include, but not be limited to: a buzzer, a bell, or a person announcing the times at five (5), six (6), and seven (7) minutes. If any special device and/or specific instructions for such a signal is/are required, the contestant must provide the same.
- In the event of technical failure of the signal or timing equipment, a speaker is allowed 30 seconds extra overtime before being disqualified.

Thank you for helping us with the contests.

CHIEF JUDGE'S BRIEFING – Table Topics, Evaluation & International Speech Contests

(Judges, Timers and Ballot Counters)

Ballot Counters Briefing:

Your responsibility is to collect all the ballots from the judges (excluding the tie-breaking judge). At the end of each contest, the judges will provide their signed ballots with the names displayed in the first, second, and third spots. Be sure to tell the judge you received their information. If the ballots are not signed or completed, they are void and cannot be counted.

Once you have all the judging information assigned to you, go to the Chief Judge's room/area to count the ballots along with the other ballot counters and Chief Judge

We will now assign judges to each ballot counter.

Ballot Counters' Tallying:

For each contest, perform the following:

- Write the name of the contestants across the top of the Tally Form.
- Write the names of all the judges along the side.
- Ensure you have collected ballots from each judge.
- Ballot counters read first, second, and third place winners from each ballot.
- After all the ballots are read, the Chief Judge confirms the order.
- Each ballot counter and the Chief Judge tally the score.
- **The chief judge checks the timing form for any timing disqualifications** ● Confirm amongst all the ballot counters and Chief Judge the total score ● **In case of a tie, the Chief Judge opens the tiebreaker judge ballot to break ONLY the tie.**
- Confirm first, second, and third place winners.
- Chief Judge to notify Contest Master of the results on the Results Form
  - # of disqualification(s) (based on time/eligibility/originality) (no name(s))
  - Third Place Winner
  - Second Place Winner
  - First Place Winner

Thank you for helping us with the contests.

Judges Briefing:

Chief Judge, confirm you have received all Judges' Certification of Eligibility and Code of Ethics Forms (Item 1170).

CHIEF JUDGE'S BRIEFING – Table Topics, Evaluation & International Speech Contests (Judges, Timers and Ballot Counters)

As you know, your job is crucial to any good contest. As a judge, you should be fair, accurate, knowledgeable, and a good listener. Make sure you do not have any distractions in your judging room. Avoid bias, and remember you are judging and not evaluating.

Please read the 2024-2025 speech contest rule book.
2025-2026

When each contest is complete, finish your scoring. When you are done, tear off (or take a photo of) the bottom portion of your ballot & give it to or send it to your assigned ballot counter.

DO NOT include the actual scoring in the upper portion. Be sure one name is in the first, second, and third spots. Please sign your ballot now.

You may discreetly discard the ballot after the contest.

The following are reasons why your ballot would not be counted:

- The ballot does not have your name & signature
- Multiple names on first, second, or third place
- Missing names in first, second, or third place (assuming we have at least 3 contestants)

Protests are limited to eligibility and originality and can only be lodged by the voting judges and contestants. Any protests should be lodged with the Chief Judge or the Contest Chair before the announcement of the winner. Once announced, the results are final.

Do not leave the contest until the winners are announced and the contest is adjourned. In case of a protest, all the judges will be called to a huddle meeting with the Chief Judge to discuss and vote on the protest.

Thank you for helping us with the contests.
(If briefing on the day of the contest, ask the judges to not all return to the contest room at once. Return a few at a time.)

Tie-Breaking Judge:

After the Timers/Ballot Counters & Voting Judges', briefings are complete, brief the tie breaking judge separately. Review everything you just discussed with the judges. The tie breaking judge must complete the entire Tie-breaking Ballot & rank all contestants, not just the top 3. Inform the tie-breaking judge that they must give or text you their signed tie-breaking ballot.

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Final Notes to the Chief Judge:

Ensure that a judge's briefing takes place before the contest(s)

The Chief Judge **MUST** be in the Main Contest Room during a contest. After the ballots are counted, return to the Main Contest Room ASAP to finalize the contest. Address any protests.

Print and have one copy of the **Form 1168 Results Form** for each contest.

Obtain Disqualifications from Timer 2 and place on the Results Form

Obtain and review the Contestants' Eligibility forms from the Contest Chair to ensure that the contestants are eligible to compete.

Review the Judges' Eligibility forms to ensure that the judges and tie-breaking judge are eligible to serve as a judge.

After the Contests:
The Chief Judge will complete the Notification of Contest Winners (form 1182). You MUST include details for ALL contestants who were not disqualified from the Contest Chair.

Provide Form 1182 filled out with all the contestant names **WITHIN 3 DAYS** to the following:

Club Contest – Submit to your Area Director
Area Contest – Submit to your Division Director
Division Contest – submit to the District Speech Contest Co-Chairs:
Kathy Dyke, DTM and Rosena Stubbs, DTM

Congratulations on being a successful Chief Judge.