

STUDENT CONGRESS MANUAL

Our concept of Democracy rests upon faith in the value of the individual. Our system of government and our way of life assume that every citizen has the right to a voice in determining the policies that affect his/her well-being.

Student Congress has been called "a realistic approach to the democratic idea of cooperative discussion." The idea on which it is based -- that of getting representative student leaders to consider some of the problems which actually confront our lawmakers -- is excellent. Training of this sort is invaluable. It is, in a sense, a preparation for real life.

For obtaining practice in the various types of public speaking, gaining a better knowledge of political science, provoking practice in discussion, debate, and parliamentary procedure, and learning to know students of other high schools, the Student Congress serves as an excellent demonstration of Democracy at work.



Oath of Office:

I do solemnly swear that I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution; that I take this obligation freely, without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; and that I will well and faithfully discharge the duties of the office on which I am about to enter, so help me God.

NATIONAL FORENSIC LEAGUE

2003

CONGRESS TEXTBOOK

Understanding Legislation

A bill is an enumeration of specific provisions which if enacted will have the force of law. A resolution is simply a generalized statement expressing a conviction or sentiment. A resolution will generally center debate on the broad principles of the concept; a bill is more apt to delve into the merits of the specific provisions it contains. Although they are not necessary, a resolution may have whereas clauses, but a bill never has them. The use of both bills and resolutions will add variety to congress proceedings.

Resolutions

A simple resolution is passed by one house alone. Simple resolutions are usually generalized statements expressing the belief of the group adopting them, and they do not have the force of law. Constitutional amendments fall into this category since they must be submitted to the states after they are passed by congress. Resolutions may be preceded by one or more whereas clauses, stating the principal reasons for adopting the resolution, but their number should be limited and may be omitted altogether.

Simple Resolution

1 Whereas, it is axiomatic that it is fundamental to our
2 country and her constitutional way of life that where the
3 Press can continue to be free, so, too, will our people remain
4 free, and
5 Whereas, freedom of the Press may be stifled by direct or
6 indirect restraints, and currently is, and
7 Whereas, the disclosure of confidential news sources
8 threatens the Press's ability to obtain information, and
9 Whereas, research shows that every major scandal in
10 public office in the past twenty years was revealed by
11 journalists, and
12 Whereas, if we fail to protect confidential news sources
13 we may never have this information again, and
14 Whereas, the failure to guarantee confidentiality of news
15 sources threatens to preclude the fulfillment of the public's
16 right to know, therefore
17 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the House of Representatives in
18 Student Congress assembled that two levels of protection
19 for newsmen's sources will be established:
20 1. An absolute immunity from forced disclosure before
21 grand juries, legislative committees, and government
22 agencies.
23 2. A severely limited immunity before open courts
24 involved in criminal cases.

A joint resolution is introduced into all chambers of the legislature at about the same time. A joint resolution does not have "whereas clauses." After passing both houses of congress, a joint resolution must be signed by the President.

Joint Resolution

1 **BE IT RESOLVED** by the National Student Congress
2 assembled to permit the voluntary partial payment of a
3 claim based on alleged liability without having such
4 payment construed as an admission of liability on the part
5 of the person so charged.
6 Section 1. The voluntary partial payment of a claim
7 against any person based on alleged liability of that
8 person for injury arising out of any occurrence shall not be
9 construed as an admission of fault or liability. Such
10 payment shall not be admissible in any action, as
11 evidence, for the purpose of determining the amount of any
12 judgment with respect to the same parties as to such
13 occurrence, nor shall any payment hinder admission of

14 evidence.
15 Section 2. After judgment, however any payment shall,
16 be treated as credit against the judgment and shall be
17 deductible from the amount of the judgment.

A concurrent resolution is one which reflects the attitudes of both the House and the Senate of a Congress. The same identical words are used by both bodies. Special Concurrent Resolutions will be prepared by the Presiding officers of both Congresses.

A Concurrent Resolution

1 Whereas: Inefficiency has resulted in the present postal
2 system of the United States, and
3 Whereas: Private enterprise can alleviate this problem
4 Which is inherent in a program administered by bureaucrats,
5 and
6 Whereas: Private enterprise would select officials on a
7 basis of ability rather than political partisanship,
8 **BE IT RESOLVED:**
9 Section 1. That the United States Post Office be removed
10 from the Cabinet and be set up as a government corpora-
11 tion.
12 Section 2. That a board of directors be appointed by the
13 President and approved by Congress to run the corpora-
14 tion.
15 Section 3. That the Board of Directors select a
16 professional executive to manage the postal system.
17 Section 4. That the postal system be financed by postal
18 revenues, the sale of bonds, and Congressional grants.

Bills

A bill is an enumeration of specific provisions which if enacted will have the force of law. It must be definite; it must state exactly what is to be done or not to be done. A penalty must be stipulated or the law will not have force. A bill does not have "whereas clauses."

A Bill

1 Be it enacted by the Senate in Student Congress
2 assembled that
3 Section 1. All journalists and news reporters or anyone
4 associated with publication, news service, or radio or
5 television, be protected from identifying confidential
6 sources or produce unpublished information.
7 Section 2. An instance in which only all three of the
8 following conditions are met will a journalist or news
9 reporter, or anyone associated with publication, news
10 service, or radio or television, be compelled to reveal
11 confidential sources, or unpublished information.
12 A. There is evidence that protected person has informa-
13 tion of a law violation.
14 B. There is no alternate means of obtaining the informa-
15 tion.
16 C. There is a compelling and overriding national
17 interest in the information or source.
18 Section 3. Anyone found in violation, either by with-
19 holding evidence that meets the three requirements or by
20 illegally obtaining confidential sources or unpublished
21 information, can receive a minimum sentence of four years
22 in prison and/or \$4000 fine.

Preparing Legislation

In constructing your bill or resolution, be sure that the following procedures are followed:

1. The bill or resolution must be typed.

2. The typing must be double spaced, and the bill or resolution may not be longer than one page.

3. The first words of a bill are "Be It Enacted" following any whereas clauses the first words of a resolution are "Be It Resolved."

4. Each line of a bill or resolution must be numbered.

5. A resolution may be preceded by one or more "whereas clauses" but bills and joint resolutions never have them.

6. The language of a bill must always be in the imperative mood. That is, it must state exactly what is to be done and by whom. Bills and/or resolutions that do not conform to the NFL Congress guidelines may be rejected from consideration for the Student Congress calendar.

Offering Amendments

Amendments must be in writing and state exactly the words to be added or stricken out. They will be considered only if they are presented to the Presiding Officer before being introduced from the floor on the proper amendment form and only if they receive a second from one-third of the members. Amendments are not guaranteed an authorship speech. [See form on page SCM - 12]

In all Student Congresses, an amendment shall be considered neutral in the speaking order of proponent and opponent speeches on a bill or resolution.

Order of Business

The following is offered as a suggestion for the Order of Business at a District Congress:

1. Call to Order
2. Invocation and/or Opening Comments
3. Oath
4. Roll call of members and confirmation of seating charts
5. Special Orders
 - a. Review of special rules
 - b. Review of Congress procedures
 - c. Special announcements and questions
6. Consideration of the Calendar
7. Election of Presiding Officer
8. Committee meetings (optional) may be held at a time prearranged by the District or Congress Chairperson.
9. Floor Debate on Bills/Resolutions
10. Selection of Outstanding and Most-Outstanding Congresspeople
11. Awarding of Congress Gavels and Plaques
12. Fixing time for next meeting
13. Adjournment

Presiding Officer

Students wishing to serve as presiding officer in NFL District Congresses shall apply for appointment to the District Chairperson. Such application may be done with the official entry mailed in advance of the Congress. (There shall be no more than 4 nominees per session.) Each student appointee shall preside for 20 to 30 minutes whereupon the Chamber shall, by ballot, select one of them to preside for the duration of the Congress. In the event one of the nominees calls the Chamber to order and conducts business up to the election of the presiding officer, that time shall constitute part of his/her presiding time. In the event the District Chairperson does not receive four nominees for presiding officer, the Chairperson shall conduct the Congress election process with those that have been nominated. In the event of a two legislative day Congress, the above procedure shall be repeated each day.

The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall follow Parliamentary Procedure according to NFL rules and according to *Robert's Rules of Order* in the event NFL rules do not cover a question of procedure.

Bills and resolutions shall be considered in the order in which they appear on the calendar, unless the rules are suspended. (A motion to consider a bill out of sequence or not on the calendar at all is a suspension of the rules and requires a two-thirds vote.) A district committee may deny bills or resolutions from the floor.

Resolutions not relating to legislation shall be considered as privileged and may be introduced at any time when no other motion is being considered. Such resolution shall be considered immediately.

The author of the bill or resolution, or someone appointed by him/her, shall be recognized to open the debate, but thereafter s/he shall take his/her chance with the rest of the members for further speaking opportunity. S/He does not have special privilege to close the debate. An authorship speech shall be a maximum of 3 minutes in length, but this authorship speech will have an additional 2 minutes of cross-examination to follow the speech. This two minute addition does not apply to speeches on amendments. At the National Congress, in the event the author of a bill or resolution is not in attendance, the Congressperson from that district shall be entitled to, but not required to, present the authorship speech. At the District Congress, a Congressperson from the authorship school shall be entitled to this privilege.

Alternately recognize speakers who favor and oppose the motion.

Throughout the session recognize those Congress participants who have spoken least or not at all, first. Allow this to serve as the basis of any priority system. It is not necessary that every member speak but it is encouraged. Students should not be forced to contribute if they have no meaningful contribution.

Use of the motion for previous question should be discouraged but not refused as long as members have something new to contribute to discussion. When debate or discussion becomes repetitive, allow the previous question without reservation. When debate becomes one-sided, the previous question may be considered immediately, and should be encouraged. (When the motion is made, take a standing vote as two-thirds is required. When no one wishes the floor for debate, the vote shall be taken without the motion for the previous question.)

Take a vote quickly and with precision: "The question is the adoption of the motion (state the exact motion). Those in favor say, 'Aye'; opposed say 'No'. The ayes have it and the motion is adopted." On the final vote on a bill or amendment to a bill, and in all cases where other than a majority is required for passage, take a standing vote. A division of the house may be demanded by any two members on any question on which a voice vote has been taken. The call must be made before another motion has been placed before the assembly.

All voting in a student congress shall be done only by those members in the Chamber at the time of voting. Absentees and/or abstention shall not be counted in determining the results of a vote.

In regards to certain motions, it is not necessary to count the "nay" or "abstention" vote, such as with the seconding of an amendment or for the motion to close debate. NFL (quite different from Robert's) considers the will of the total chamber and therefore one-third of the chamber present must second an amendment and two-thirds of the chamber present must be in favor of closing debate. Never should an absentee or an abstention vote be counted as a "nay" vote in an NFL Congress.

As soon as debate has been concluded on the last bill or at a designated time as fixed by the District Chairperson, conduct the

election for superior members. The Parliamentarian should stress the need of selecting the most outstanding members and that "sympathy votes" should be discouraged.

After all elections have been held, results announced and awards made, ask for a motion to adjourn the congress to a definite date and place unless this motion has prevailed as a concurrent resolution. If plans for such a meeting are still indefinite, the motion should provide for the congress to reassemble at the call of the district chairperson. Sessions shall not continue from year to year.

Members

Members shall claim the floor only if they wish to oppose the views of the preceding speaker. Debaters must alternate from affirmative to negative. If no one wishes to oppose the preceding speaker, the presiding officer may recognize a speaker upholding the same side.

A member may speak more than once on the same question but it will count against his/her five allowed speeches per session unless the Base System is utilized. In legislative debate the Chairperson will recognize first those Congress participants who have spoken least or not at all.

A member may not yield any portion of his/her speaking time to another except for a question. However, only a question may be asked. No statement or exposition is permitted. Series of questions are not allowed. Congress should not be viewed as a press conference and even follow-up questions should not be allowed. Sign-posting questions, followed by the primary question, should be discouraged.

There is a right way and a wrong way to speak in a legislative session. By studying the table of motions, and learning to use these motions in correct language, you will be taking a step forward in your effort to be a good congressperson. The suggestions in this manual should also help you.

When referring to another participant, use the following form: "Representative (or Senator). . . . or the Representative from . . ."

The correct way to obtain the floor to offer a motion or participate in the debate is to rise immediately at the conclusion of the preceding speaker's remarks and at the same time say: "Mr. President (or Mr. Speaker)." If the presiding officer recognizes you, then proceed to make your motion or discuss the pending legislation. If another member is recognized, take your seat until he/she relinquishes the floor.

If you wish to amend a motion that is before the Chamber, you must gain the floor in the usual manner. Remember that your amendment must be sent to the Presiding Officer and/or the Parliamentarian before you can present the motion to amend. Once you have been recognized say, "I move to amend the motion by" and then word your amendment. One-third of the members present must then second the amendment before it can be discussed. Amendments are not guaranteed an authorship speech.

To interrupt a speaker for questioning, use the following procedure: "Mr. Speaker (or Mr. President), will the speaker yield to a question?". The chair will then ask the speaker if s/he wishes to yield. If the speaker does not yield, resume your seat immediately, and do not interrupt him/her again. If s/he does yield, ask your question (one question) quickly and state it clearly and concisely. Prefatory statements and long questions are incorrect. Frequent interruptions of the same speaker will be discouraged.

Diplomacy is encouraged. If you have a question for the speaker on the floor, rise and that speaker will recognize you as soon as possible. The examiner should refrain from all interruptions unless absolutely necessary.

A Chamber may also suspend the rules (two-third vote required) to allow the examination of a speaker to be controlled by that speaker on the floor, thus avoiding the process of directing questions through the Chair. If this is done, the Speaker on the floor may recognize questions or announce that no questions will be recognized.

Under no circumstances are you permitted to argue with your presiding officer. You elected him/her to preside over you and should abide by his/her decisions unless they violate the rights of the assembly or its members. You have only one recourse if you feel the presiding officer has made a serious error, but before using it remember that the purpose of the congress is to debate legislation and not to "show off" knowledge of parliamentary law. If you believe that the error is significant enough, stand up and say, "I rise to a point of order." The presiding officer will say, "state your point." State what you think has been done wrong, and then sit down. Until the presiding officer answers you no other member is permitted to say anything. There can be no argument by you or any other member. The presiding officer may confer with the Parliamentarian before answering. If you still feel that the presiding officer is wrong and the mistake should be corrected, you can rise and say, "I appeal from the decision of the chair." The motion requires a second. There is no discussion, but the person making the motion may, in a few sentences, say why he/she thinks the presiding officer should be overruled. The presiding officer then takes the vote as follows: "Those voting to sustain the presiding officer," "those voting to over-rule the presiding officer." Once the vote has been taken and the results announced, the decision is irrevocable and no further discussion is permitted on the matter.

On Student Congress rules, your Parliamentarian is the final authority, and he/she, of course, should correct any deviations from the rules.

All evidence used in the course of a Student Congress may be subjected to verification. Honesty and integrity are utmost in the course of deliberations. Falsification or deliberate misuse of evidence may result in the member being suspended from the Congress. Electronic retrieval systems are not allowed in congress chambers.

Parliamentary Procedure Review

It is necessary for all student congress participants to have a working knowledge of parliamentary procedure and congress rules. The following suggestions should be helpful.

Decisions on all bills and resolutions shall be by standing vote unless a roll call is demanded by one-fifth of the members.

Any two members on any question on which a voice vote has been taken may demand a Division of the Chamber. The call for Division must be made before another motion has been placed before the Chamber.

A motion to suspend the rules of the assembly must be passed by a two-thirds majority. This procedure is needed when the group wishes to consider a bill or resolution which is not on the official calendar or when the order of considering the business on the agenda is to be altered. Rules established by the National Forensic League Manual or imposed by the District Chairperson may not be suspended unless authorized in advance.

All speeches are limited to three (3) minutes. A speaker must relinquish the floor at the expiration of his/her time. When a participant has spoken five times (parliamentary motions or questions not included), he/she will not be recognized by the chair unless there is no one else requesting an opportunity to speak. Speeches past the first five will not be scored. The five-speech rule is not applicable if the Congress is using the base system.

Do not overwork the motion for the previous question. As long as anyone has something to say, try to give him/her a chance to say it.

Relations between Senate and House in Bicameral Congresses

The single purpose of enacting laws in the District or National Student Congress is to reflect the will of the people and to decide that which is best for the common good. The process calls for debate on the issues, getting the majority in the two assemblies of Congress to approve the legislation, and final signature for passage. In the National Student Congress, the Director of Congress shall act the role of President, thus completing the enactment process. At the District Congress the District Chair serves as President.

A B/R may be introduced in either the House or the Senate except B/R relating to the raising of funds. The U.S. Constitution requires that the raising of funds must originate in the House of Representatives. Every Bill or Resolution, excluding a simple Resolution, passed by any House of Congress, shall be given to the Recording Clerk or the Congress Director. It may then be forwarded to other chambers for concurrence..

The process for a B/R shall be as follows:

- A. B/R is introduced from the Standing Committees (if established) of the Congress in either the House or the Senate.
- B. B/R is debated according to correct rules and procedure.
- C. If both the House and the Senate of Congress are considering the same subject, it is a breach of order for members of one body to make reference to action in the other. Each House should undertake not to be influenced by the other chamber.
- D. If legislation is approved or passed, the B/R is sent to the Clerk or Congress Director who will forward it to the other chamber of Congress. In either the House or the Senate, a motion to proceed to its consideration shall be in order as soon as immediate pending business is disposed of. The Chair shall present the B/R and its amendments to the Chamber. (Main motion)
- E. The B/R may be referred to one of the Standing Committees. A Committee cannot erase, blot out, or mutilate an original B/R in any way. To make changes, the committee notes whether insertions or omissions should be made on a separate sheet of paper.
- F. If the counter chamber refused to accept the amendments, a motion shall be in order that a conference is requested of the House and Senate. If carried, a committee shall meet and attempt to amend the B/R in a way that is satisfactory to both bodies of the Congress.
- G. Reports from the House or the Senate to the other body, and reports of Conference Committees, shall be privileged and may be received in either body at any time, but reports may not interrupt a speaker.
- H. Any changes proposed in Conference Committee mandates that the B/R must go back to both the House and the Senate for a vote of approval. Either the House or the Senate may further debate and/or amend or reject the B/R but the work of the Conference Committee is usually accepted.
- I. Once a B/R has been approved in identical form by both the House and the Senate, it is signed by the Presiding Officers and then (in theory) sent to the President. In the National Congress, they shall be sent to the Clerk of Congress. At the District Congress, the District Chair.

This manual supersedes all earlier editions of every manual, constitution, or credit point instruction card. All obsolete copies of these items should be destroyed.

Congress Rulebook

Conducting a Practice Congress

1. Schools are encouraged to hold practice Congresses. However, if schools wish to record NFL credit points for their participants that Congress must adhere to NFL Rules and Point Recording Procedures as outlined in the Chapter Manual. [See pages CM-4 - CM-11]

NFL District Congress

2. Each district may conduct an NFL District Congress, held at a time not conflicting with NFL and State League Tournaments.

3. The District Congress must be registered in the National Office. A registration form (obtainable from the National Office) must be submitted at least 18 days prior to the date of the Congress. [See page SCM - 15]

4. Schedule the District Congress at a central location to facilitate the attendance of as many chapters as possible.

5. District Chairpeople will notify the Chapters of the date, place, and time of the Congress. Names and alternates should be submitted to the District Chairperson or a person designated by the Chairperson not less than 7 days in advance of the Congress date. [See pages SCM - 16 and 17]

6. Proper Congress rooms are important. Meet in a classroom and the members will act like students; meet in the State Capitol and they will act like legislators. The City Council Chambers, a lodge hall, a Sunday School Chapel, the County Board Room all invest the meeting with a dignity not readily obtainable in the study hall.

7. Seating charts should be prepared in advance based on the entry forms received from the schools. Assign alternate students to the seats assigned to the non-attending delegates.

8. A one day Congress must include five (5) hours of floor debate in addition to time used for elections. A two-day Congress must include eight (8) hours to qualify as two legislative days.

9. In the District congress the NFL Student Congress Manual must be followed. The congress report form must be sent to the National Office by the Congress Director within 5 days after the Congress. [See page SCM-19 - 22]

10. Obtain gavels locally. The National Office will send National Qualifier Plaques for the District Congress. Additional Congress Plaque Awards may be ordered from the NFL Office or online at nflonline.org/store.

11. Obtain needed equipment: (A) A minimum of three seating charts for each Chamber (P.O, Parliamentarian, and scorer) size about 14 by 25 inches, on which the names of the members are written in the pattern of their seating as one faces the assembly. On this chart the scorer may mark the number of NFL points underneath each name as the person speaks in the debate. (B) Automatic timers or stop watches to facilitate timing speeches. It is also suggested that time cards be used or small bells be obtained to note the time remaining. If bells are used, ring once at the expiration of two minutes, twice when the three minute speaking time has expired. (C) About 500 slips of paper 2 by 3 inches for use as

ballots. (D) Two pages for each Chamber. Note that pages are to be used constructively and are not there to run personal notes between the members. (E) Necessary forms to be used for any and all amendments (see Congress Textbook for sample form).

District Congress Legislation

1. Chapters entering the District Congress shall be encouraged to submit 2 bills or resolutions for debate not later than 24 days prior to the scheduled Congress. All bills and resolutions submitted must be in accordance with the rules established by NFL. The District Committee shall attempt to accept at least one bill or resolution from each school submitting bills or resolutions.

2. At least 14 days before the official Congress date, the District Chairperson should send to each participating school a copy of not fewer than six bills or resolutions which shall constitute the Calendar for each Chamber per legislative day.

3. Other bills or resolutions not mailed may be considered by a vote to suspend the rules only if the District Committee allows for such suspension.

4. A district committee may deny bills or resolutions from being offered from the floor at the District Congress.

Apportionment

1. Only NFL members may be seated in the District Congress. An affiliate school may seat up to four members in this Congress. All students must be NFL members on record 7 days before the convening of the Congress. [Affiliate entries no longer have to hold degree of distinction to participate.]

2. A District may have no Senate or one or two Senate Chambers and up to four House Chambers as determined by the formula as found on the Registration of Official District Congress, [SCM-15]. Non-qualifying Houses may also be held.

The District Committee should align the District Congress, as closely as possible, with the Student Congress Manual guidelines as well as align itself as closely as possible with the guidelines and protocol of the National Student Congress.

3. The number of entries from a chapter school shall be based on the number of active members and degrees on record in the National Office seven (7) days before the Congress. The following apportionment table shall be used.

No District Committee should set limits on the number of students entering the District Congress that is in conflict with the Congress Tournament Manual concerning apportionment.

MEMBERS AND DEGREES ON RECORD

Chapter	Senate	House
1 - 20	2	2
21 - 35	2	3
36 - 55	2	4
56 - 75	2	5
76 - 100	2	6
101 - 150	2	7
151 - 200	2	8
201 - 250	2	9
251 - 300	2	10
301 - 351	2	11
351 - 400	2	12
401 - 451+	2	13

Congress Officials

1. Each Congress will require a director to exercise general supervision over the entire Congress. This will be the District Chairperson or person designated by him/her.

2. Each Chamber will require the services of a parliamentarian, or chief clerk to supervise each particular Chamber, to intervene in case a student officer becomes too deeply involved in parliamentary rules, to correct gross errors in procedure, and to record actions taken. Ordinarily s/he should remain in the background, but step forward firmly when his/her presence is required. This will be especially necessary when the presiding officer is weak. The purpose of the Congress is to debate legislation, and it is the parliamentarian's duty to see that this is done.

3. An official scorer (one for each half of the total session) shall be appointed for each chamber to assign credit points as prescribed in the constitution.

The Parliamentarian

The Parliamentarian shall serve as the Recording Clerk of the Chamber. S/He shall remain assigned to a Chamber for the duration of the National or District Student Congress. The Parliamentarian should see that all legislation is prepared in the proper form and that all legislation debated, whether passed or failed, is sent to the Director of Congress. In Bi-Cameral Congresses the Director, in turn, will forward that legislation, or notice of defeat of same legislation, to the other body of Congress. If the B/R is passed, a request shall be made to the other body that concurrence is desired. If the B/R is passed with amendments by the other body, it shall then be sent back to the first body with the request that the Congress counterpart concur in the amendments. Sections added shall be underscored; sections stricken out shall be placed in parentheses.

The Official Scorer

1. Call the roll from your seating chart and verify that each member is seated in the place the chart designates for him/her.

2. Use a stop watch or automatic timers to time speakers and call "Time" at the expiration of three minutes. It is suggested that time cards be used and placed where both the speaker on the floor and other Congresspeople are able to see the time remaining. Bells may be used also, striking them once at the expiration of two minutes and twice at the expiration of three minutes. The Chairperson may allow the speaker on the floor to finish their sentence in overtime or allow an answer to a question to be given in overtime. However, this should be held to an absolute minimum.

3. To avoid errors in recording points, place a coin on your chart and move it to the proper name as a member speaks in debate. Parliamentary motions and questions are not regarded as speeches.

4. For each speech, not exceeding five a day unless the Chamber is utilizing the Base System, a participant in the District Congress shall not receive more than six points per speech as determined by an Official Scorer. No participant may be awarded more than 30 points per legislative day. Note also that there is a 5-hour minimum for a one-session Congress and a combined total of 8-hour minimum total for a two-session Congress.

5. As a student finishes a speech, award from 1 to 6 points and enter the number on the seating chart and/or scorer's sheet. When the base system is not used, as soon as a student has spoken five times lightly mark his/her name off the presiding officer's chart so s/he will not be recognized for further debate.

6. Note the time a legislative session begins and the time it ends.

7. There is no automatic maximum of 30 points at the District Congress. That number can be earned only by giving speeches of superior quality; a greater number of mediocre speeches cannot be substituted.

8. At the end of each legislative hour the official scorer shall award the presiding officer up to six points. Committee participation, if scored (1 to 6 points) counts as one speech. The person giving a committee report or a committee recommendation is not to be scored on that report nor is that report to be counted as one of the five speeches. The report represents the views of the entire committee and not just the individual.

Please note "D" under Guidelines for a Final Session below.

9. At the end of the legislative day, the District Chairperson shall award two points to all students in attendance whether they spoke or not. These points shall be in addition to their speaker points, but not to exceed 30 points. The Secretary or Reading Clerk shall be awarded points in the same manner as other Congressperson.

Final Tabulation

1. The Congress Director shall obtain from the Official Scorer(s) the form showing points awarded and list the points on the special Congress Point Report forms, one sheet for each chapter.

2. Not later than five days after the Congress has adjourned, the District Chairperson shall send to the National Office a list of the Senators and Representatives; their schools; and the number of NFL points earned by each. These points will be recorded by the National Office. [See form on page SCM - 18]

3. District Congress points shall be recorded beyond the 1000 point limit.

Guidelines for a Final Session of Congress

An NFL District *may* choose to hold a Final (Super) Session of Congress at their District Congress Tournament. A District should review the Student Congress Manual and follow, as closely as possible, the same procedure and protocol that is used at the National Student Congress [SCM 8, 9, 10]. Follow these guidelines:

A. There must be a preliminary session (or sessions) of Congress in two or more Chambers, from which the top ranked or voted students advance. A final session of Congress should seat no more than 24 contestants and must have a minimum of four hours of on-floor legislative debate.

1. If two preliminary chambers, advance not fewer than 8 from each chamber and not more than 12.
2. If three preliminary chambers, advance not fewer than 6 from each chamber and not more than 8.
3. If four preliminary chambers, advance not fewer than 4 from each chamber and not more than 6.

B. The number of students advancing to the National Congress is in direct ratio to the number of preliminary chambers conducted from which the top students in the preliminary chambers advanced to the Final Session of Congress.

C. A final Session of Congress should have two and preferably three scorers. One of those Scorers may serve as Parliamentarian.

1. A District may have the Scorers and Parliamentarians choose the National Qualifiers in one or both Congress Chambers and/or have the students elect the National Qualifiers in one or both Chambers.

2. A District may have the Congress Scorers and Parliamentarian select the most superior Congress contestants (not more than 7) and then proceed to an election process in that final Session in which the student Congress contestants select/elect their own National Senators and/or Representatives. A District may nominate their most outstanding Congress contestants by taking the top speaker point contestants, placing not fewer than three and not more than seven on the final ballot.

a. It is strongly recommended that the District use the "base system" for scoring in the Final Session of Congress as the goal is to keep all contestants on a "level playing field" for being eligible. No contestant should automatically be placed in nomination by speaker points simply because s/he was fortunate enough to get in an extra scored speech.

b. It is strongly recommended that preferential balloting be used for the selection/election process of the national Qualifiers from a Final Session of Congress. The preferential ballot will determine the qualifiers as well as the alternates for the National Congress.

c. If a District uses the student voting process, as used in the election of Presiding Officers, all National Qualifiers and Alternates must be elected by a majority of Congress contestants in the final session chamber. (Please consult "Selecting of Superior Member, #3, below.)

D. If a final session of Congress is conducted in either the House or the Senate, and a base system is used as recommended for awarding NFL Speaker Points, the Presiding Officer shall also be awarded points on the base. The Presiding Officer is to be scored for one speech (1 to 6 NFL speaker points) for each hour of presiding. Each hour of Presiding also determines the Speaker's priority for recognition for on-floor debating in the event s/he relinquishes the Chair. If the base for a Chamber is less than the total hours of presiding in the chamber, the Presiding Officer's points shall be determined by placing the number of hours on the same base as the other Congress contestants' speech base. For example: if the base is 3, and even if the Presiding Officer has presided for four or more hours, his/her points for presiding shall be determined on the base of three as are all other contestants in that session. [See explanation of Base System on SCM-19].

Selection of Superior Members

1. At the District Congress each Senate and House shall vote to award one gold and one silver plaque for outstanding work as Congresspersons.

2. Each official scorer (one for each half of the total session) and the Parliamentarian shall nominate in writing, without consultation, two students for Congress honors. In addition, the Clerk or Director of Congress shall place in nomination the top three NFL Speaker Point earners for that Chamber. Chairpeople are eligible by either nomination or by total NFL Speaker Points. The members shall immediately vote by ballot to award plaques to the most outstanding and to the outstanding members. Preferential balloting is encouraged.

3. When using the individual ballot vote (and not the preferential process), each member, including the presiding officer, shall on each ballot vote for one nominee. After each ballot, unless one candidate has received a majority of the votes cast, the person receiving the fewest votes shall be dropped. If the combined votes of the two lowest candidates do not equal the votes of the next lowest candidate, both shall be eliminated. If there is a tie for the lowest two or three candidates, it is recommended that a vote be taken on the tied candidates and eliminate only one candidate at a time. When one candidate receives the majority vote of the chamber, that person shall be declared the National Qualifier providing other requirements are met as set forth by the National Forensic League. If the District is eligible for qualifying two in a chamber for the National Congress, voting shall start over with all nominees, except the one selected on the first ballot, being placed on the second ballot. When, on the second voting, a member receives a majority vote of his/her chamber, that person shall be recognized as the second National Qualifier. Never should a person advance to the National Congress by less than a majority vote of their chamber.

National Congress Qualification

1. District qualification rules for the National Student Congress: Senate

A district with 8 schools or more represented may qualify 2 Senators for the National Senate.
Without 8 schools no Senate may be seated but a district may still conduct a house with sufficient entries

It is strongly encouraged that when 30 or more students are entered in the District Senate, two Senates, or a "Super Session Senate, should be conducted to determine the National Senate qualifiers.

House

25 to 29+ students in 1 House only may qualify 1 to Nationals
30 to 60+ students in 2 Houses may qualify 2 to Nationals
61 to 90+ students in 3 Houses may qualify 3 to Nationals
91+ in 4 Houses may qualify 4 to Nationals

School entries in the House must be proportionally divided in the several House chambers.

No more than four (4) students may qualify for the National House of Representatives from a District based on the total number of students entered in the District House of Representatives and based on the number of Chambers in which those students were divided.

National qualification is to be based on number of Congress participants as well as the number of Chambers.

It is encouraged that when multiples of 30 students are entered in the House, an additional Chamber be established. Ideally, a chamber should seat no more than 25 Congress contestants.

2. National Forensic League Districts may choose to select national qualifiers to the National Student Congress by one of the following methods: A. Selection by student participants. B. Selection by critic judges. C. A combination of the two.

3. Only those Congresspeople that are recognized as outstanding, based on the number of participating school criteria as established, shall be eligible for the National Student Congress. In the event the "Outstanding" Congresspeople are unable to attend the National Congress, eligibility for the National Congress shall be extended to the consecutive recognized Superior Congresspeople but said eligibility shall not be extended beyond the 4th place Congressperson in a Senate or House in a given district.

4. No NFL district shall state or imply that if a student qualified in a previous event, that student may not qualify for the National Congress.

If a student qualifies in Congress and in another event or events, s/he must make a decision and notify the District Chairperson concerning the event s/he decided not to enter at the National Tournament. Participation in Congress and any other main event is not permitted.

Selection of National Legislation

1. Immediately following the adjournment of the District Congress, the qualifying student(s) should select the best bill or resolution in that Congress and that legislation should be presented to the National Congress. The legislation must be sent to the National Congress Director on or before April 1st. If the District Student Congress is held after the submission deadline the District Chairperson must submit an item of legislation chosen by a committee. In the event legislation is not received by the National Congress Director on or before the April 1 deadline, that District will not have legislation for debate at the National Student Congress.

2. All legislation for consideration in the National Student Congress must be submitted in camera-ready form to the National Congress Director on or before the April 1 deadline. Legislation for the National Congress will be reproduced and distributed accordingly.

3. Deadlines as established by the NFL must be met.

NFL National Congress

The Parliamentarians in the National Congress will:

1. Make sure a temporary presiding officer has been assigned. This temporary presiding officer will open the first session. After introducing himself/herself, the Parliamentarian, and the Scorer(s), he/she will accept nomination speeches for the first Presiding Officer of the chamber.

2. See that the members, including the Temporary Presiding Officer, vote immediately by ballot for one nominee.

3. See that after each ballot, unless one candidate has received a majority of the votes cast, the person receiving the fewest votes is dropped. If the combined votes of the two lowest candidates do not equal the votes of the next lowest candidate, both are eliminated. When one candidate receives a majority vote, s/he shall be declared the Presiding Officer for Session 1. The Parliamentarian shall further see that the same procedure for choosing the Presiding Officer is used at the beginning of each legislative day.

4. Announce from the podium that as Parliamentarian s/he will remain in the background, but that s/he will not hesitate to step forward firmly when his/her presence is required. The Parliamentarian will impress upon the Senate or the House members that they are there to debate legislation and that it is his/her duty to see that this is done; no misuse of the rules of parliamentary procedure will be tolerated. S/he will further announce that the rules in the Student Congress Manual will be followed. Roberts Rules of Order will be used for anything not covered in the manual.

5. Turn the session over to the newly elected Presiding Officer who will announce meeting rooms for the four Standing Committees. After a time has been set for reconvening, the members shall adjourn to committee meetings. (The Senators and Representatives will have been assigned to one of the committees by the Clerk of Congress, who will have also appointed chairmen of the committees for the 1st day. It is not necessary for the Parliamentarian to attend the committee meetings.)

6. Use time during committee meetings to acquaint himself/herself with the National Student Congress Rules which s/he will find in the folder given to him/her by the Clerk. It will also be helpful to become acquainted with the names of the members of the group, and to locate them in the chamber. Each will have a place assigned by the Clerk.

7. Make sure that the items under "Consideration of Bills and Resolutions" in the National Student Congress Rules (found in folder referred to in Item 6) are followed. Do not hesitate to interrupt if they are not. It is especially important that this be done the 1st session so that the group will know what is expected of them. Since different districts use their own rules, the legislators frequently think their rules are the National Rules. There must be no question in the mind of the Parliamentarian what the National Rules are. The Clerk should be consulted prior to the beginning of a National Congress if there is a question in the mind of the Parliamentarian. If this individual is weak and uncertain, the National Congress will be a poor one as student legislators soon sense this fact and then do everything except debate the bills. The Parliamentarian must be firm but fair at all times.

8. Instruct the scorer that s/he is to award up to nine (9) points per speech with a limit of five speeches per legislative day unless

the Base System is utilized. Instructions need to be given before the session begins. There should be little consultation between Congress officials concerning the Chamber when that Chamber is in session. Officials may need to consult to confirm the number of speeches actually given and to whom credit is due.

9. Keep a list of the legislators who speak during each session. Make notes regarding strengths and weaknesses of each speaker, but do not consult the points awarded by the Scorer.

10. In any Student Congress, the speaker's 'Order of Speaker Preference Chart' shall not be continuous from session to session. A new speaker's chart shall be started with each session. A session must have a minimum of five hours of on-floor debate.

11. Record the time each legislative session starts and ends.

12. See that the Presiding Officer designates someone to be timekeeper and that the three minute time limit is explained. There is the exception for the first speech, however. The first speech on a bill or resolution at the National Congress shall be allowed an additional two minutes for the purpose of cross-examination from the floor. Timing starts after the bill or resolution is read. The timekeeper must station himself/herself where the person speaking and the Presiding Officer can see the timekeeper easily.

13. The Parliamentarian should serve as secretary. This individual shall keep a record of all amendments and proposed amendments. A standardized amendment form should be used.

14. The Parliamentarian may advance one (1) Congress participant to the semi final session based upon the overall performance of the Congress student in the preliminary session. In addition, the high point NFL point earners, determined by adding the four scorer's point totals, converted to the base system, and the Parliamentarians participatory points, shall advance to the semi finals. The number of Congress contestants advancing to the semi finals shall not exceed a total of eight dependent on the number of preliminary chambers of Congress. The Presiding Officer cannot be nominated as a Superior Member but may be placed in nomination if the Presiding Officer is one of the top NFL Speaker Point earners for a session.

15. See that preferential voting is done when called for. Each Senator or Representative shall designate their 1st choice, their 2nd choice, their 3rd choice, their 4th choice, and so forth for Outstanding and Most Outstanding Representative. The Director and/or someone appointed by him will count the ballots in the preferential voting according to NFL By-Law, Number 6. The winner will be announced at the Tournament Awards Session.

NATIONAL CONGRESS PROCEDURES

I. Preliminary Sessions

Establish 18 Chambers with 8 Senates and 10 Houses of Representatives. Each chamber would seat approximately 24 Congress people.

II. Breaking to Semifinals

At the end of the preliminary session of Congress, the top 8 students in each Senate and top 6 students in each House will advance to the semifinal session of Congress. This will advance 64 Senators and 60 Representatives for a total of 124 students.

A. The speaking priority shall be retained in the preliminary session of Congress in an attempt to better guarantee all students an opportunity for an equal number of scored speeches.

B. There shall be two Scorers and one Parliamentarian in each preliminary Chamber. The Scorer will change at noon on the second legislative day of Congress. The Parliamentarian will not change and will not award speaker points but s/he will award quality Participation Points to each Congress person on a scale of 1 point (low) to 6 points (high) at the end of the preliminary session.

C. The students advancing to the semifinal session of Congress

from each Chamber will be established by:

1. Congress Officials (Parliamentarians and Scorers):

a. The Parliamentarian may advance one student based upon the overall performance of the Congress students in the preliminary sessions.

b. The high NFL point earners, determined by adding the four Scorer's point totals, converted to the base system, and the Parliamentarians participatory points, shall advance to the semi finals. The number of Congress contestants advancing to the semifinal session shall not exceed a total of 64. (If 8 Senate chambers, 8 from each Senate chamber will advance. If 10 House chambers, 6 from each House chamber will advance.)

c. There shall be no conferring between the Scorers and the Parliamentarian concerning point totals and/or concerning the Parliamentarian's student nominee. Congress Officials may confer to seek accuracy as to the number of speeches and other Chamber business concerns..

2. Congress headquarters:

a. The Congress headquarters will determine the names of those contestants advancing based on the above procedure.

b. In the event there is not a clean break in points, and/or a tie exists that would advance more than the specific number of students, a preferential ballot will be used to determine which student(s) advance.

D. Each preliminary session shall have three Presiding Officers each serving for one segment. Presiding Officers shall be scored on a scale of 6 Speaker points (low) to 25 Speaker points (high) for presiding. Each half session of Presiding shall constitute two speeches on the priority scale (see V below). The Presiding Officer in the preliminary session will receive an engraved gavel.

E. Those Congress people not advancing to the semifinal session of Congress may enter Supplemental Events and/or Consolation Events if pre-registered.

F Those Congress students advancing will be honored as "Senator Karl E. Mundt Legislators".

III. Semifinals

The semifinal session of Student Congress: 4 Senate Chambers of 16 qualifying students in each Chamber for a total of 64 students; 4 Houses of 15 qualifying students in each Chamber for a total of 60 students.

A. The advancing outstanding Congress people will be assigned to Chambers by a mathematical progression of the students advancing from each preliminary Chamber of Congress with the following constraints:

1. Students from the same District will not be seated in the same semifinal Congress Chamber.
2. Presiding Officer nominees shall be distributed as equally as possible.
3. Congress people from the same state shall be divided as equally as possible.

B. There shall be three Scorers and one Parliamentarian in each Chamber. The Parliamentarian will award participation points (1 (low) to 6 (high) based on the overall quality of the student's participation. Parliamentarians from the preliminary sessions may be used as Parliamentarians and/or Scorers.

C. Seating in the semifinal session will be established by a random drawing of names of the student qualifiers by the several Parliamentarians and the Congress people will be assigned to a seating chart accordingly.

D. The Presiding Officers for each Chamber shall be elected from the high NFL point Presiding Officers in the preliminary sessions wishing to run for Presiding Officer (not to exceed four nominees) that advance to semifinals. An "auditioning period" process (as used in NFL District Congresses) will be used before voting for Presiding Officer. The candidates names shall be drawn blindly from an envelope to determine the order of auditioning. In the event there is no student in a Chamber wishing and/or eligible to preside, an adult Congress Official will be assigned as Presiding Officer. The student Presiding Officers will receive an engraved "Judge's Gavel" approximately 12 to 14 inches in length. (See V-2 below regarding the breaking of ties.)

E. The agenda for the semifinal session will be taken from legislation used in previous National Congresses.

F. There will be no guaranteed authorship speeches in the semifinal session of Congress.

G. Those Congress people not advancing to the Final Session will be presented the Senator Karl E. Mundt Medallion.

H. Those Congress people not advancing to the Final Session of Congress may enter Consolation Events if pre-registered.

I. Those Congress people advancing to Congress Finals shall be honored as "Senator John C. Stennis Legislators".

IV. Final Session

At the end of the semifinal session of Congress the top 6 Superior Congress people in each Chamber will advance to the final session ("Super Congress") using the base system to determine points and qualifying as currently done.

A. At the end of the "Super Session" the top 9 Congress people in each Chamber will be placed on a preferential ballot and voted on accordingly by the student members of the Super Session for the selection of the National Champions. These eighteen (9 Senators and 9 Representatives) will be recognized on stage at the Awards Assembly.

B. Those Congress people not advancing to the final ballot will receive the Senator John C. Stennis Medallion.

C. The agenda for the Super Session will be selected from previous National Congresses (see VII below).

V. Presiding Officers

A. Each segment of the preliminary session of Congress shall have 4 Presiding Officers. Only students serving as Presiding Officers in the preliminary sessions shall have the opportunity to advance to semifinals as Presiding Officers and only those serving as Presiding Officers in the semifinals shall have the opportunity to serve in the Super Session of Congress.

1. A student may decline nomination at any time but once nomination is declined the student shall not be eligible for future nomination for Presiding Officer.

2. Only the top point students, 4 maximum, based on NFL Points awarded in the previous session in which they presided, will advance in nomination for the next level of Congress presiding. The selection of the four nominees shall be done using a priority system as follows:

- a. Presiding Officer points awarded from the previous session in which a nominee presided.
- b. Total points (Presiding and speaking) assigned by the Scorer(s) awarded to the nominee.
- c. Participation Points assigned by the several Parliamentarians.

B. Presiding Officer candidates in the semifinal and final session of Congress shall audition as currently done in the District Congresses.

1. In the semifinal session of Congress, nominees will audition for approximately 30 minutes.

- a. This auditioning period shall not be scored as a speech and shall not count as a speech in the priority order.
- b. The names of the nominees shall be drawn randomly to determine the auditioning order.
- c. The Presiding Officers in the semifinal session will be presented a "Judge's Gavel".
- d. There shall be two students elected as Presiding Officer in the semifinals and each shall serve approximately half of the semifinal session.
- e. Each Presiding Officer in the semifinals will be credited with two speeches on the speaker's priority chart and the base.

2. In the final "Super Session", each Presiding Officer nominees shall audition for approximately 30 minutes.

- a. This auditioning period shall not be scored as a speech and shall not count as a speech in the priority order.
- b. The names of the nominees shall be drawn randomly to determine the auditioning order.

3. In the event there are no student nominees, an adult Parliamentarian from a previous session of Congress shall be assigned as Presiding Officer.

4. To avoid students advancing based strictly on Presiding, the following adjusted NFL point scale will be adopted replacing the current point system of one hour of Presiding being scored as one speech:

NFL Speaker Credit Points for Presiding Officers	Prelims & Semis Super Session	
	Superior	50-44
Outstanding	25-22	43-36
Excellent	21-18	35-28
Average	17-14	27-20
Below Average	13-10	19-12

5. The student advancing to the position of Presiding Officer of the Super Session in the House and in the Senate will be recognized in the Award Assembly and shall be presented a two foot "presentation" gavel engraved accordingly, "Superior Presiding Officer."

VI. Projected Hours of Congress Competition to:

Monday	8:30 am - 12:00 pm	Opening Assembly & Scored Committee Meetings Preliminary Congress, Segment "A"
	1:30 pm - 7:30 pm	
Tuesday	8:30 am - 1:00 pm	Preliminary Congress, Segment "B" Preliminary Congress, Segment "C"
	2:15 pm - 7:30 pm	
Wednesday	8:30 am - 1:00 pm	Semifinal Congress, Segment "D" Semifinal Congress, Segment "E"
	2:15 pm - 7:30 pm	
Thursday	8:30 am - 9:00 am	Opening Assembly and Reaffirmation of Oath Final Congress, Segment "F" Final Congress, Segment "G" The John C. Stennis Congressional Dinner for Final Congress participants and their designated Coach
	9:00 am - 11:30 am	
	12:45 pm - 6:00 pm 6:30 pm - 9:00 pm	
Friday	8:30 am - 10:00 am	House of Representative ~ Voting, Adjournment and Awards Senate ~ Voting, Adjournment and Awards
	100 am - 11:30 am	

[The Presiding Officer at the close of the final session should "adjourn this House/Senate of the National Student Congress to meet in (Next location of National Congress)."]

Additional Duty for Parliamentarian

At regular intervals the Parliamentarian shall make available a record indicating the total number of speeches each Congress person is credited with. The Congress contestant has the responsibility to make sure that his/her number of speeches is correct.

VII. Legislative Calendar and Committees

A. In the preliminary sessions, each Congress Chamber shall be divided into Standing Committees and each Committee shall have an equal number (or as nearly as possible an equal number) of legislative items assigned to them.

1. The students will divide and assign their District Resolutions and/or Bills to the four Committees. Legislation should be divided by subject matter as much as possible and each Committee may choose an appropriate name for their respective Committee. Students will serve on the Committee to which their District's legislation was assigned.
2. The Committee will rank their assigned legislation on Monday morning and the several committees will establish the agenda for their respective Chamber.

B. The legislation and the agenda for the semifinal session and the final session of Congress shall be accomplished as follows:

1. The Director of Congress shall chose 14 pieces of legislation debated in previous National Congresses.

2. The Parliamentarians (Congress Officials) serving in the current National Congress shall rank these 14 pieces on a preferential ballot.
3. Legislation voted 1 through 6 shall be the agenda for the Super Session of Congress and legislation voted 7 through 12 shall be the agenda for the semifinal session of Congress. Legislation items voted 13th and 14th shall be reserved for either semifinals or finals if needed.
4. If more legislation is needed in either session, a committee of the Chamber shall, with consensus, pull legislation from the preliminary session.
5. The agenda for semifinals and final session of Congress shall be announced before the Tuesday noon recess.

VIII. Trophies and Awards

A. Gavels -

Preliminary Session	54 count - 10 inch gavels
Semifinal Session	16 count - 12 inch gavels
Final Session	2 count - 24 inch gavels

B. Senator Karl E. Mundt Medallions -

Semifinal Session 76 count

Senator John C. Stennis Medallions -

Final Session 48 count

C. Trophies (on-stage presentation at Awards Assembly) 1st through 9th in Senate and House 18 count

Gavels presented to Final Session Presiding Officers
2 count

IX. Admonitions

- A Congressperson's conduct should be above reproach at all times.
- A Congressperson should never be guilty of intentional harassment.
- Visual aids are permitted in Student Congress providing that they do not require electronic retrieval systems in the Chamber.
- The use of evidence in Congress is encouraged as in all forms of debate. Evidence should be documented.
- Cross-examination time should be considered in the scoring of Congresspeople and cross-examination is encouraged during debate on legislation.
- Computers, cell phones, radios, CD players and games are not to be used in Chambers when in session. Traditional timing devices are permitted.

Karl E. Mundt National Student Congress Trophy

The award is to be made each year to the school represented at that year's Congress whose students have amassed the largest total of National Student Congress participation points. Points are awarded as follows: One point for each legislative day of participation in a National NFL Student Congress, two points for being elected Superior or for being elected Presiding Officer in a session, three points for being 4th, 5th, or 6th in the Final Session of the National Congress, four points for being elected Outstanding (2nd and 3rd place) in the National Congress final session, and five points for being elected Most Outstanding (1st place) in the National Student Congress.

This award is based on participation in National Student Congresses; beginning with the first one which was held in Wooster, Ohio, in 1938.

THE WHY AND THE HOW OF THE "BASE SYSTEM"

by Harold C. Keller

Many students and coaches have observed the fallacy of the frequently used "priority system" in recognizing students in congress. All too often we hear Presiding Officers' comment, "I'll recognize speakers from front to back and left to right." There are fairer ways of recognizing students, either with "Speaker cards" or the blind draw or a computerized program. But where the tradition of left-right, front-rear has been established, students and coaches alike see any deviation as a probable attempt to manipulate the Congress.

To alleviate the unfairness of more speeches (under any system) causing inequity in the National Student Congress, the Base System was devised.

The goal of the Base System is to place every Congress person on a common denominator (regardless of the number of speeches given) for figuring speaker points, for advancement to the next level of competition or for award recognition.

All recognition systems (hopefully) work under the principle of recognizing *first* those Congress people who have *spoken least or not at all*. All students start the Congress on a Base One. Once every participant has spoken once, or has had the opportunity to speak once, the system is moved to a Base Two. Logically, once every participant has spoken twice, or has had the opportunity to speak twice, the chamber moves to a Base Three.

By the close of the session some Congress people will have spoken more often than others thus giving them an unfair advantage for nominations or advancement to the next level of Congress competition. In order to guarantee equity the Congress Director determines what "Base" everyone reached or had the opportunity to reach. If a Congress person elected not to give a speech but had the opportunity to speak, he/she remains on a previous Base as it was their choice not to advance to the next Base level, and their total speaker points would be those awarded by the scorers in that session.

Assuming, for example, that every Congress person had the opportunity to give four speeches the Congress Director determines that the Congress chamber is on the Base Four level. If some, but not all, Congress people had the opportunity to give five speeches, their total points are added and then divided by five and multiplied by four (*total speaker points divided by the total number of speeches given multiplied by the base that everyone had the opportunity to achieve*). If every Congress person only had the opportunity to give three speeches in the session, the chamber is on the Base Three level. Therefore the students that did get in four or more speeches will use the formula of total speaker points divided by their number of speeches and multiplied by the common base number of their Chamber, in this case three.

When division creates a fraction of a speaker point, the points are rounded up to the next whole number for the recording of NFL speaker points, but *fractions may be used for the advancement process*. In other words, a student with 18.876 points might advance while a student with 18.875 might not advance and still both students would receive 19 NFL Speaker points.

In this process some students will not advance strictly based on their total *number* of Congress speeches. A student with three superior speeches may receive more speaker points than those with five or six poor or average speeches (logical under any system). The Base System does encourage quality compared to strictly quantity that often causes recognition of the less than superior Congress contestant. Over the years that the "Base System" has been used no one has objected, because they recognize its fairness to all Congress students.

A fairly simple computer program uses the following formula:

1. Speaker points earned from all speeches are totaled.
2. These points are divided by the number of speeches given (carried out to the fourth decimal place).
3. Average points for each speech multiplied by the base number equals the speaker credit points. The Base System insures equity!

[Form found on pg SCM-14]

TABLE OF MOST FREQUENTLY USED PARLIAMENTARY MOTIONS

Adapted for use in NFL Student Congresses

Type	Motion	Purpose	Second Required?	Debat-able?	Amend-able?	Required Vote	May Interrupt a Speaker
Privileged	24. Fix Time for Reassembling	To arrange time of next meeting	Yes	Yes-T	Yes-T	Majority	Yes
	23. Adjourn	To dismiss the meeting	Yes	No	Yes-T	Majority	No
	22. To Recess	To dismiss the meeting for a specific length of time	Yes	Yes	Yes-T	Majority	No
	21. Rise to a Question of Privilege	To make a personal request during debate	No	No	No	Decision of Chair	Yes
	20. Call for the Orders of the Day	To force consideration of a postponed motion	No	No	No	Decision of Chair	Yes
Incidental	19. Appeal a Decision of the Chair	To reverse the decision of the chairman	Yes	No	No	Majority	Yes
	18. Rise to a Point of Order or Parliamentary Procedure	To correct a parliamentary error or ask a question	No	No	No	Decision of Chair	Yes
	17. Division of the Chamber	To verify a voice vote	No	No	No	Decision of Chair	Yes
	16. Object to the Consideration of a Question	To suppress action	No	No	No	2/3	Yes
	15. To Divide a Motion	To consider its parts separately	Yes	No	Yes	Majority	No
	14. Leave to Modify or Withdraw a Motion	To modify or withdraw a motion	No	No	No	Majority	No
Subsidiary	13. To Suspend the Rules	To take action contrary to standing rules	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
	12. To Rescind	To repeal previous action	Yes	Yes	Yes	2/3	No
	11. To Reconsider	To consider a defeated motion again	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	No
	10. To take from the Table	To consider tabled motion	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
	9. To Lay on the Table	To defer action	Yes	No	No	Majority	No
	8. Previous Question	To force an immediate vote	Yes	No	No	2/3	No
	7. To Limit or Extend Debate	To modify freedom of debate	Yes	Yes	Yes-T	2/3	No
	6. To Postpone to a Certain Time	To defer action	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
	5. To Refer to a Committee*	For further study	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	Yes
	4. To Amend an Amendment*	To modify an amendment	1/3	Yes	No	Majority	No
3. To Amend*	To modify a motion	1/3	Yes	Yes	Majority	No	
2. To Postpone Indefinitely	To suppress action	Yes	Yes	No	Majority	No	
Main	1. Main Motion	To introduce a business	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority	No

*No. 5 Should Include:
1. How Appointed?
2. The Number
3. Report When?
 or
To What Standing Committee

T-Time

*Nos. 3 and 4 by:
1. Adding (Inserting)
2. Striking Out (Deleting)
3. Substituting

[See form for amendments on page SCM-19]

NATIONAL FORENSIC LEAGUE ~ BASE SYSTEM TABLE

To determine the Base completed for a Chamber, find the number of Congresspeople **officially participating** in the Chamber in the left-hand column and follow that row across to find the number of floor speeches necessary to complete the Base as noted in the top row. When the number of floor speeches given exceeds the number shown on the Base Table, that base is completed for the Chamber and a new base starts.

Number Participating in Chamber	Base Completed									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
10	12	22	32	42	52	62	72	82	92	102
11	13	24	35	46	57	68	79	90	101	112
12	14	26	38	50	62	74	86	98	110	122
13	15	28	41	54	67	80	93	106	119	132
14	16	30	44	58	72	86	100	114	128	142
15	17	32	47	62	77	92	107	122	137	152
16	18	34	50	66	82	98	114	130	146	162
17	19	36	53	70	87	104	121	138	155	172
18	20	38	56	74	92	110	128	146	164	182
19	21	40	59	78	97	116	135	154	173	192
20	22	42	62	82	102	122	142	162	182	202
21	23	44	65	86	107	128	149	170	191	212
22	24	46	68	90	112	134	156	178	200	222
23	25	48	71	94	117	140	163	186	209	232
24	26	50	74	98	122	146	170	194	218	242
25	27	52	77	102	127	152	177	202	227	252
26	28	54	80	106	132	158	184	210	236	262
27	29	56	83	110	137	164	191	218	245	272
28	30	58	86	114	142	170	198	226	254	282
29	31	60	89	118	147	176	205	234	263	292
30	32	62	92	122	152	182	212	242	272	302
31	33	64	95	126	157	188	219	250	281	312
32	34	66	98	130	162	194	226	258	290	322
33	35	68	101	134	167	200	233	266	299	332
34	36	70	104	138	172	206	240	274	308	342
35	37	72	107	142	177	212	247	282	317	352

This table works well for a Student Congress wishing to use the Base System. Please note that it uses the **Number Participating** in the Chamber and is **not** based on the **number seated** in a chamber. A Chamber could have several people seated that don't participate and they should not be counted in the base. For example; an "early in the year" Congress with a large number of "first timers" might see a Chamber of 20 Congresspeople seated but 10 do not participate. If this were the case a *participating Congressperson* would have to give two speeches in order to be scored for one speech as half of the Chamber did not participate. There have even been a few instances where a student was "seated" in the National Congress but they did not participate in the Congress (left early due to poor time/travel planning, left Congress to watch other events, etc.). The fact that a person is "seated" in a Congress does not mean that the person participated in that Congress.

DISTRICT CHAIR CONGRESS REGISTRATION FORM

I understand that in order to send students to the National Student Congress the following requirements must be met:

Senate

A district with 8 schools or more represented may qualify 2 senators for the National Senate. Without 8 schools no Senate may be seated but a district may still conduct a house with sufficient entries.

House

25 to 29+ students in 1 House only may qualify 1 to Nationals

30 to 60+ students in 2 Houses may qualify 2 to Nationals

61 to 90+ students in 3 Houses may qualify 3 to Nationals

91+ in 4 Houses may qualify 4 to Nationals

School entries in the House must be proportionally divided in the several House chambers.

No more than four (4) students may qualify for the National House of Representatives from a District based on the total number of students entered in the District House of Representatives and based on the number of Chambers in which those students were divided.

Affiliated schools may be seated at the NFL District Congress and be counted toward the minimum count necessary to send elected officials to the National Student Congress.

NATIONAL FORENSIC LEAGUE

REGISTRATION OF OFFICIAL DISTRICT CONGRESS

NFL District _____ District Chairperson _____

Person in charge of Congress _____

Place where the Congress will be held _____
(School, Courthouse, etc.)

(City)

(State)

Date of proposed Congress _____

The Congress will convene at _____ A.M. and probably adjourn at _____ P.M.

Type of Congress: (Circle one) Anticipated Chambers: Senate 1 or 2 | House 1, 2, 3 or 4

Approximate number of schools attending _____

Apportionment is made by the District Chairman based upon the last chapter strength report 7 days prior to the District Congress.

NFL District Chairperson

NFL DISTRICT CONGRESS REGISTRATION

To the District Chairperson:

Date: _____

The _____ Chapter registers the following entries in the NFL

District Congress to be held at _____ on _____ .

Names Must Be Printed

- SENATE:**
1. _____
 2. _____

HOUSE: (Check your apportionment chart in the District Manual for entry allowed)

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 10. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 11. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 12. _____ |
| 6. _____ | 13. _____ |
| 7. _____ | _____ |

We certify that the above named students are full-time undergraduates who have not attended a secondary school for more than nine semesters, are under 20 years of age, were enrolled as members of the NFL seven days before the start of the District Congress, and are eligible to compete in the Congress according to the prescribed rules as published in the Student Congress Manual and the *Rostrum*.

We, the coach, the principal, and the students, are aware that the individuals listed on this NFL District Congress entry blank are ineligible to compete in this tournament or in the National Student Congress unless they were duly and timely recorded as NFL members, and the obligation to assure that the student was duly recorded as a member lies with the student and/or the student's coach, and it is not the responsibility of the NFL or its district committee.

We, the coach, the principal, and the students undersigned accept that no District Congress is official and no qualifications are final until the District Congress has been audited and certified by the NFL national office.

Signature of Coach

Signature of Principal

Signatures of students entered and of alternates are to be signed on the reverse of this entry form.

THIS REGISTRATION MUST BE IN THE HANDS OF THE DISTRICT CHAIRPERSON BY THE DEADLINE SET BY THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE. STUDENTS NOT LISTED AS RESERVE ENTRIES ON THE REVERSE SIDE CAN BE ENTERED ONLY BY A LETTER SIGNED BY THE PRINCIPAL.

SIGNATURES OF STUDENTS ENTERED AND ALTERNATES

**We, the students signed below, understand the statement of
Congress participation eligibility as printed on the
reverse side of this District Congress Registration form.**

CONGRESS ENTRIES:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

ALTERNATES:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
11. _____
12. _____
13. _____
14. _____
15. _____

NATIONAL FORENSIC LEAGUE OFFICIAL REPORT FOR DISTRICT CONGRESS

Both sides of this report must be accurately and totally completed. All student names listed must be typed or neatly printed and appear as the student's name is recorded on their official proof of membership. Please complete the Final Super Session form if your District used one for your final session.

NFL DISTRICT: _____ CHAIRPERSON: _____

PLACE: _____ DATE: _____

Number of NFL Schools actually attending the District Congress: _____

Total hours of on floor debate: _____ Use "NA" when not applicable

Day 1: Congress convened at _____ and recessed/adjourned at _____.

Day 2: Congress convened at _____ and recessed/adjourned at _____.

NEATLY PRINT OR TYPE THE NAMES BELOW AS RECORDED IN NFL RECORDS
DISTRICT CHAIRS MUST INCLUDE ATTACHED FORM WITH STUDENT'S MAILING
ADDRESS IN ORDER TO QUALIFY FOR NATIONAL TOURNAMENT

SENATE REPORT: Use "NA" below when not applicable.

Enter the number of students seated in each Senate Chamber below:

_____Senate 1 _____Senate 2

SENATE "1" HONORS:	NAME	SCHOOL
Outstanding (1st)	_____	_____
Superior (2nd)	_____	_____
President 1st Session	_____	_____
President 2nd Session	_____	_____

SENATE "2" HONORS:		
Outstanding (1st)	_____	_____
Superior (2nd)	_____	_____
President 1st Session	_____	_____
President 2nd Session	_____	_____

ELECTED TO THE JOHN C. STENNIS NATIONAL SENATE

SENATE 1 _____

(If only one Chamber, 2nd Qualifier) _____

1st Alternate _____

2nd Alternate _____

SENATE 2 _____

1st Alternate _____

2nd Alternate _____

Signature of District Chairperson

Signature of Congress Director

HOUSE REPORT: Use "NA" below when not applicable.

Enter the number of students seated in each House Chamber below:

_____ House 1 _____ House 2 _____ House 3 _____ House 4

HOUSE "1" HONORS:

NAME

SCHOOL

Outstanding (1st) _____

Superior (2nd) _____

Speaker 1st Session _____

Speaker 2nd Session _____

HOUSE "2" HONORS:

Outstanding (1st) _____

Superior (2nd) _____

Speaker 1st Session _____

Speaker 2nd Session _____

HOUSE "3" HONORS:

Outstanding (1st) _____

Superior (2nd) _____

Speaker 1st Session _____

Speaker 2nd Session _____

HOUSE "4" HONORS:

Outstanding (1st) _____

Superior (2nd) _____

Speaker 1st Session _____

Speaker 2nd Session _____

ELECTED TO THE JOHN STENNIS NATIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE 1 _____

1st Alternate _____

2nd Alternate _____

HOUSE 2 _____

1st Alternate _____

2nd Alternate _____

HOUSE 3 _____

1st Alternate _____

2nd Alternate _____

HOUSE 4 _____

1st Alternate _____

2nd Alternate _____

NATIONAL FORENSIC LEAGUE OFFICIAL REPORT FOR FINAL SUPER SESSION

Please complete the following if your District used a final "super" session of Congress for determining those students that qualified for the National Congress. You must still complete the other District Report pages but you do not fill in the sections pertaining to national qualifiers.

NFL DISTRICT : _____

CHAIRPERSON: _____

PLACE: _____

DATE: _____

ELECTED TO THE JOHN C. STENNIS NATIONAL SENATE

Two may qualify in the Senate - others are alternates listed in order.

Superior Senators

School

1st: _____

2nd: _____

3rd: _____

4th: _____

5th: _____

6th: _____

7th: _____

ELECTED TO THE JOHN C. STENNIS NATIONAL HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The number of Representatives qualifying for the National House of Representatives is in direct ratio to the number of preliminary Houses seated. One House qualifies only 1, two Houses qualifies 2, three Houses qualifies 3, four Houses qualifies 4. A maximum for four may qualify - others are alternates.

The basic demographics for the Houses must be recorded at the top of the House Report page.

Superior Representatives

School

1st: _____

2nd: _____

3rd: _____

4th: _____

5th: _____

6th: _____

7th: _____

8th: _____

9th: _____

Signature of District Chairperson

Signature of Congress Director

REQUIRED FORM FOR NATIONAL TOURNAMENT QUALIFICATION
AND THE MAILING OF NATIONAL CONGRESS LEGISLATION

STUDENT MAILING ADDRESS INFORMATION FORM

Neatly Print or Type:

Student's Name as Recorded in NFL Records

Student's Preferred Mailing Address (Street)

(City/State/Zip)

Student's Name as Recorded in NFL Records

Student's Preferred Mailing Address (Street)

(City/State/Zip)

Student's Name as Recorded in NFL Records

Student's Preferred Mailing Address (Street)

(City/State/Zip)

Student's Name as Recorded in NFL Records

Student's Preferred Mailing Address (Street)

(City/State/Zip)

Student's Name as Recorded in NFL Records

Student's Preferred Mailing Address (Street)

(City/State/Zip)

Student's Name as Recorded in NFL Records

Student's Preferred Mailing Address (Street)

(City/State/Zip)

Student's Name as Recorded in NFL Records

Student's Preferred Mailing Address (Street)

(City/State/Zip)
