

**PALM BEACH CATHOLIC FORENSIC LEAGUE**  
**BYLAWS**  
(rev. May 2017)

**ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of the organization shall be: Palm Beach Catholic Forensic League, hereafter referred to as *PBCFL*.

**ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

It shall be the purpose of this organization to promote interest in interscholastic debate, oratory, interpretation, and public speaking by encouraging a spirit of fellowship and by conferring upon deserving candidates awards recognizing their achievements.

**ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP**

A. Admissions

1. Eligibility: Any private or public high school in either Palm Beach diocese or an adjacent diocese that does not have a league affiliated with NCFL.

2. Certificates and fees: the annual school membership dues for a given season (school year) are \$75 for senior high schools. Individual student entry fees will be \$7 per tournament. A school's membership dues will be paid by the 1st tournament of the competitive school year.

B. Exclusions

No school or individual may be excluded for reasons of race, religion, or creed. Exclusions for cause may occur in cases of specific rules violations as presented in the NCFL Constitution, by-laws and the event guidelines and rules.

C. Home School Students

Home school students are welcome to participate in the PBCFL. Interested students should contact their public school district for information on how to join a school forensics program.

**ARTICLE IV – LEAGUE ORGANIZATION**

A. Organization/Operation

All schools, which have attained membership, their students have attained membership, and their forensic moderators shall constitute the league.

B. Function

The league will conduct an average of one tournament per month beginning in September and ending in March. The March tournament shall be the "PBCFL Barbara Dale Lauder McCall National Championship Qualifier Tournament" (aka/"Grand Finals), which will determine the league's representatives to the National Catholic Forensic League "Grand National" championship tournament.

**ARTICLE V – EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

A. Members

The executive committee shall be composed of the President, Vice President/Individual Events, Vice President/Debate, Secretary, and the Treasurer of the league.

B. Election

The election of the executive committee members shall occur after the last regular-season tournament and no later than two weeks prior to the Grand National tournament. All member schools shall have one vote in the election.

C. Term of Office

The term of office for all executive committee members shall be one year, beginning and ending with the fall meeting, which shall occur no later than the first of September.

D. Vacancies

Vacancies on the executive committee in the office of President shall be filled in the order of Vice President/Individual Events (administration), Vice President/Debate (membership), Secretary, and Treasurer. Vacancies in positions other than President shall be filled by election within thirty days, with each member school being eligible to cast one vote for each vacant position.

**ARTICLE VI: OFFICERS**

All members of the executive committee shall be responsible for the enforcement of all provisions of this constitution and all regulations enacted under their authority.

A. PRESIDENT: The president or a member of the executive committee shall be responsible for representing the league at the fall and spring meetings of the National Catholic Forensic League moderators' meeting and for

conducting all communication with the national organization. The president or designee shall also be responsible for the purchase of all league trophies and awards. The president should be present at all league tournaments.

B. VICE PRESIDENT/INDIVIDUAL EVENTS (VP/IE): The VP/IE shall act as the president in case of the temporary vacancy of that office or for the unexpired term of that office if it becomes vacant. The VP/IE shall also perform such other duties as may be requested by the President.

C. VICE PRESIDENT/DEBATE (VP/D): The VP/D shall be responsible for recruiting eligible schools for league membership and distributing and collecting league membership materials. The VP/D shall also perform such other duties as may be requested by the President.

D. SECRETARY: The secretary shall be responsible for all administrative correspondence directed by the president, including a written record concerning business of the executive committee. The secretary shall also take and distribute minutes of all other league meetings. The secretary will also be responsible for keeping records of regular-season tournament participation on the part of individual students for the purpose of verifying their eligibility for subsequent regular season and Grand Final participation. The secretary shall also be responsible for compiling and distributing to all league coaches a current address/email/telephone/fax list of PBCFL members. The secretary is in charge of Congressional Debate tournament preparation.

E. TREASURER: The treasurer shall be responsible for the collection of all membership fees and Grand Final guarantee fees. S/He is responsible for the collection and distribution of all other league monies and for keeping of a financial record that shall show all league income and receipted disbursements.

#### **ARTICLE VII – INITIATIVE/REFERENDUM**

A. All ballots shall be prepared by the Executive Committee and mailed or emailed to member schools.

B. Each member school shall be entitled to one vote in all elections; that vote shall be cast by the head forensics moderator, or an assistant forensic moderator, or by a duly appointed proxy.

C. All ballots shall be returned to and tabulated by the secretary. Ballots may be returned by email and may either bear the signature of the person casting the ballot or the designated email address of the person casting the ballot.

#### **ARTICLE VIII – GENERAL**

A. Financial Records

All financial records of the league shall be open to review by any member moderator.

B. Expenses of the National Moderators' Meeting

The league treasury shall bear reasonable expenses incurred by the President (or the President's designated representative) as a result of the attendance at the fall meeting of the NCFL (when it can afford to). If no student member of the President's school qualifies for the Grand National Tournament, the league treasury shall also bear reasonable expenses incurred by the President's attendance at the spring meeting of the NCFL. If at least one student from the President's school qualifies for the Grand National Tournament, the league treasury shall bear only such reasonable expenses incurred by the President's attendance at the spring meeting that are over and above the amount which the President's school would incur as a result of facilitating that school's participation in the tournament. All such treasury expenditures shall be receipted/documented. \$30 a day will be provided for food for the fall meeting.

#### **ARTICLE IX – AMENDMENTS**

Amendments may be made to this constitution when supported by two members of the Executive Committee and ratified by a majority vote of member schools. Ballots cast on amendments shall be counted thirty days after submission of the amendment in the case of amendments which are proposed at any time other than the regular PBCFL fall and spring meetings.

#### **ARTICLE X: FORENSICS ETHICS & CIVILITY CODE**

A: Ethical Conduct. Ethical behavior is expected of members, students, coaches, judges, faculty and adults who participate in all forensic activities sponsored by the League. This includes, but is not limited to, the use of library resources and evidence, rendering judgments, and accurate recording of results.

B: Civility Code. The Executive Committee shall maintain a Civility Code. All individuals attending events sponsored or sanctioned by the League shall follow the guidelines in that document

C: Ethics Review. Allegations of behavior that is unethical or that violates the Civility Code must be submitted in writing to the President. Three members of the Executive Committee shall be appointed by the President to investigate such charges and make recommendations to the Executive Committee. In cases where the President makes or is the subject of a charge, the Vice-President/Individual Events shall receive the complaint, appoint the committee, and oversee the process. The recommendations of the committee shall be forwarded to the Executive Committee, which is hereby empowered to act on those recommendations at its next meeting.

## STANDING RULES

### **RULE 1: SANCTIONED EVENTS**

- A. PBCFL tournaments will offer competition in the following NCFE events: Policy Debate; Lincoln Douglas Debate; Public Forum Debate; Congressional Debate; Mixed Extemporaneous Speaking; Original Oratory; Dramatic Performance; Oral Interpretation; Duo Interpretation; Oratorical Declamation.
- B. Additional events (such as Spontaneous Argumentation, Impromptu Speaking and Extemporaneous Duo) may be offered at tournaments at the discretion of the Executive Committee.
- C. The Executive Committee shall maintain updated ballots for all of the above events.
- D. The use of computers, electronic storage and retrieval devices, etc is allowed in rounds of Policy Debate, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, and Congressional Debate, and in the Extemporaneous Speaking Preparation Room. They are not allowed in any other event. Connectivity to any person, machine, device, or server outside the competition room or persons other than the competitors in the round is not allowed. This includes the prohibition of the use of wired or wireless local, or wide, area networks; cell phones; personal digital assistants; Palm, Treo, or Blackberry type devices; etc. The establishment of such a connection will constitute a violation of this rule. Competitors violating this rule will be disqualified from competition.
- E. The PBCFL will make accommodations for students with disabilities in regards to the use of technology. Documentation of the disability must be provided in advance of a PBCFL tournament, and must be available for review by the Executive Board.
- F. Judges in Policy Debate, Lincoln Douglas Debate, or Public Forum Debate may use a computer to take notes/flow rounds while judging those events.

### **RULE 2: DOUBLE ENTRY**

In general, students may not double enter unless allowed by the Executive Board for specific tournaments and events. Should double entry be allowed, advance notice will be given by the Executive Board.

### **RULE 3: SCHOOL-SANCTIONED ADULTS**

- A. Each school attending an event sanctioned and/or sponsored by the PBCFL must be a member of the League and the Head Coach and/or Assistant Coach whose name appears on the member's application must attend the event along with other students and adults.
- B. If the Head Coach or Assistant Coach is unable to attend an event sanctioned and/or sponsored by the League with their students, the Head Coach must send a letter from the principal of the school on official letterhead designating an adult to be responsible for the group. This school-sanctioned adult must be at least 21 years old and out of high school. The President must receive this letter five (5) calendar days before the start of the tournament.
- C. Members who fail to submit this documentation may be excluded from competition at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Emergency circumstances may warrant an exception from this rule; the Executive Committee shall have the authority to grant exceptions.

### **RULE 4: JUDGING RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. At PBCFL tournaments, at least one adult from each school must be available to judge all events for the entire tournament.
- B. Judges for all tournaments sanctioned by the PBCFL are required in the following ratios:
  - 1. One (1) judge per two (2) entries or fraction thereof in Policy Debate.
  - 2. One (1) judge per two (2) entries or fraction thereof in Lincoln Douglas Debate.
  - 3. One (1) judge per two (2) entries or fraction thereof in Public Forum Debate.
  - 4. One (1) judge per five (5) entries or fraction thereof in Speech/IE events.
  - 5. One (1) judge per ten (10) entries or fraction thereof in Congressional Debate.
- C. The PBCFL strongly encourages all coaches to train judges from their schools. The PBCFL shall make training materials available to all members.
- D. At tournaments with "novice-specific" categories, judges for those events may be high school juniors and seniors with at least 150 National Speech & Debate Association (NSDA) points or equivalent experience. Verification of student points must be brought to registration.
- E. In cases where a school does not provide enough judges either through its own resources or through arrangements with other schools, the coach may be required to make student entry drops until the ratio is correct. These student and judge drops will incur the appropriate drop fees. Missed judge calls or refusal to accept a judging assignment may also result in the requisite number of competitors from that school being eliminated from the tournament.

- F. No-show judge penalties are covered in Rule 6, Paragraph E.
- G. Any requests by coaches to block judges from a competitor or school will not be allowed.
- H. All coaches will be included in the judge pool and are expected to pick up ballots as needed.
- I. The full Executive Committee shall be empowered to forbid member schools from sending judges to tournaments if the Executive Committee has ruled that said judges have demonstrated incompetent, inappropriate, or generally demonstrated malfeasant behavior in a previous league tournament.

#### **RULE 5: LEAGUE TOURNAMENTS**

- A. All league tournaments shall be hosted by member schools on dates that shall be determined at a spring or fall moderators' meeting. This meeting shall be held no later than three weeks prior to the first tournament or September 1, whichever comes first.
- B. The secretary shall prepare and distribute a tournament calendar no later than one week prior to the first tournament.
- C. No school shall host more than two tournaments during a given season. If needed, each participating member school shall host at least one tournament in each two-year period of membership.
- D. At least one of the offered categories in all regular season tournaments other than the one immediately prior to Grand Finals must be restricted to novice only. This determination should be made at the fall moderators meeting. A novice student is defined as any student who is in their first year of debate competition.
- E. The Grand Finals tournament shall offer competition in all Grand National tournament categories. If fewer competitors are entered than the league is allotted to send to Grand National, and if the category is offered at Grand National then the competitors in this case must:
  - 1. Satisfy the pre-requisite of participation in two local PBCFL tournaments during the same year, and
  - 2. Present a bona fide competitive record in the event entered at other recognized tournament competitions in that same year.
- F. Host schools and moderators shall provide:
  - 1. Adequate classroom facilities for all events offered;
  - 2. An auditorium or other room large enough to accommodate registration, the general meeting, and the awards ceremony;
  - 3. A results tabulation room with at least one photocopy machine and supplies (paper, toner, developer, computer/Internet access) adequate for tournament needs;
  - 4. A moderator/judges' lounge
  - 5. Refreshments for moderators, judges, and the tab room.
  - 6. School maps.
  - 7. An administrator and/or school police that is either present or on call.
- G. The League President or an official designee shall post invitations on The Joy of Tournaments website. Invitations should include:
  - 1. Categories of competition to be offered and applicable restrictions.
  - 2. Host's school and personal phone numbers, fax number, and email address.
  - 3. Website registration procedure with a deadline of Tuesday, at 4:00 p.m. the week of the tournament for entry, numbers in each category, and a procedure for sending in and receiving Congress legislation.
  - 4. Meal information with selections and cost.
  - 5. All drops should be made on-line only without penalty on the Wednesday prior to the tournament or with penalty after 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday prior to the tournament.
  - 6. A tournament time schedule showing at least the times for registration, the first round, and the awards ceremony.
  - 7. Directions to the school and to at least one hotel (for Grand Finals only).
  - 8. Telephone numbers for the school and the hotel.
  - 9. A statement of league policy concerning membership and entry fees.
- H. Failure to provide the requisite number of judges will result in students being dropped from a tournament. All drop fees will be added to the school's invoice for that particular tournament.
- I. The PBCFL does not offer judges for hire.
- J. All regular season league tournaments shall offer four rounds of competition.
- K. All individual events and Congressional Debate will be randomly sectioned/paired. Lincoln Douglas, Public Forum, and Policy Debate will be paired as follows: Rounds 1 and 2 will be randomly paired, Round 3 will be powered high-low in brackets based on Rounds 1 and 2, and Round 4 will be powered high-low in brackets based on Rounds 1, 2 and 3.

L. At least three members of the Executive Committee shall be present at all league tournaments from the beginning of registration until the end of the awards ceremony. All members shall be present at the Grand Final tournament. The President and the Executive Committee shall assist the tournament host with the tournament preparation.

M. During the tournament the Tab room is open only to officers and those coaches/designees assigned specific duties by the league president. Other coaches or designees shall not have access to results or ballots until after the tournament.

N. All members of the Executive Committee present at a given tournament will conduct the registration process and collection of fees.

O. Members of the Executive Committee present at a given tournament shall serve as the final authority in the arbitration of any grievance/challenge involving the conduct of the tournament, the conduct of any member moderator, the conduct of any student member, the conduct of any judge, or the alleged violation of rules and regulations pertaining to any category of competition.

P. National Catholic Forensic League rules and regulations shall apply to competition in all categories except where superseded by these by-laws.

#### **RULE 6: FEES**

A. For regular tournaments, there is no school fee. The entry fee shall be \$7 per student. A student who is double-entered (when applicable) pays only one fee.

B. Any drop between Wednesday 4 p.m. and the tournament shall result in a penalty of \$10 per dropped individual, plus forfeiture of the \$7 registration fee.

C. All registration fees for the current tournament will be paid on the day of registration or by the registration deadline of the next tournament, which will be by Tuesday at 4 p.m. the week of that tournament. All drop fees for the previous tournament will be paid before the team is allowed to register for the next tournament(s). A school that does not meet the "Tuesday prior" deadline shall have the following financial penalties assessed: \$25 for the first day late (Wednesday); \$35 for the second day late (Thursday); \$50 for the third day late (Friday); and \$100 if not paid until the day of the tournament (Saturday). If the entry fees, drop fees and late fees are not paid, the school will not be permitted to register for future tournaments until all past owed fees are paid in full.

D. Pre-ordered meals will also be available for students, coaches, judges, parents, etc at all tournaments sanctioned by the PBCFL. Lunches at a PBCFL tournament will be available at a cost of \$6 each. When applicable, Friday dinners shall be available at a cost of \$7. All meal fees for the current tournament will be paid on the day of registration or by the registration deadline of the next tournament (if the host coach approves late payment), which will be by Tuesday at 4 p.m. the week of that tournament. All meal fees for the previous tournament will be paid before the team is allowed to register for the next tournament(s). A school that does not meet the "Tuesday prior" deadline shall have the following financial penalties assessed: \$25 for the first day late (Wednesday); \$35 for the second day late (Thursday); \$50 for the third day late (Friday); and \$100 if not paid until the day of the tournament (Saturday). If the entry fees, drop fees and late fees are not paid, the school will not be permitted to register for future tournaments until all past owed fees are paid in full.

E. A \$50 penalty for any no-show judge that results in the reassignment of a ballot in any round will be imposed on the school. "Hidden judge" drops will incur a fine of \$50 fine per round the judge was assigned and missed. Judges who are present at least one round but who fail to show for subsequent rounds shall incur a \$50 per missed round fine assessed to the school for whom they are judging.

#### **RULE 7: COACH RESPONSIBILITIES**

A. Member moderators shall be responsible for the conduct of their school's judges, chaperones, and student members both in and out of competitive rounds. They shall also be responsible for:

1. The training of their judges (judge training is offered by the league at the first two tournaments).
2. The suitability of material to be in competition both in terms of "good taste" and also in terms of league rules and regulations.

3. The strict enforcement of and adherence to all event rules.

4. The strict enforcement of and adherence to all elements of this constitution and its by-laws.

5. Supervision of the entire team during the awards ceremony.

6. Supervision of all students until each student has left the host school premises.

7. Enforcement of all behavior and dress code guidelines as outlined by the league.

B. As a minimum, each school will purchase the same amount of student lunches as the number of judge lunches being purchased.

C. Each school is permitted to bring up to eight observers, who are dressed in competition attire, given name badges, and have assigned consequences if they do not follow the dress code and behavior guidelines.

D. Each coach in attendance at at PBCFL tournament is required to actively participate by either working the tournament (tab, extemp prep, ballot check-in, etc.) or judging.

#### **RULE 8: PROTECTION OF PROPERTY**

A. No contestant or student observer shall enter or remain in a contest room without a judge present. The penalty for violation of this regulation shall be immediate disqualification from the tournament.

B. Vandalism of property by any person at a PBCFL tournament shall result in immediate notification of school and/or local police authorities. The Executive Committee shall notify the principal of the school associated with the vandal(s) in writing and insist upon appropriate remuneration. In the case of vandalism by a contestant, the additional penalty of immediate disqualification from the tournament shall also apply.

C. If vandalism of host school property occurs and no individual or school can be held culpable for the damage, all schools in attendance at the tournament shall be assessed a vandalism recovery fee equal to the total amount of damage divided by the number of schools in attendance. Nonpayment of the vandalism recovery fee shall constitute just cause for denial of membership renewal.

#### **RULE 9: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT**

A. The purpose of the PBCFL behavior guidelines is to ensure that all students maintain a level of professionalism and decorum in accordance with forensics, league activities, and school events. Since speech and debate tournaments are school-sponsored events, all school rules and regulations apply. Any infraction of these rules will result in consequences outlined by the student handbook. Additionally, the locations of our competitions are on school campuses and, therefore, all areas and materials must be respected and maintained accordingly. The following guidelines are to be adhered to by both competitors and observers.

1. No plagiarism (as outlined in PBCFL guidelines).
2. Students must have a copy of their piece with the ISBN information on them.
3. Cell phones, game boys, PDA's or electronic devices may not be used in any round or session.
4. No sleeping during competition.
5. Students should be on task during competition rounds and sessions (ex. using cell phone, brushing hair, playing games, etc. are not acceptable).
6. No gum, food or drinks (other than water) in competition areas.
7. Students may not leave the round/session for any reason other than an emergency (A student may not leave to socialize, make phone calls, etc.).
8. "Visiting" other rooms during competition is prohibited.
9. No unnecessary talking or socializing during competition or awards ceremony.
10. Adhere to "one clap" rule during the awards ceremony.
11. No outbursts, inappropriate or offensive comments/remarks about competition, schools, coaches or judges during the tournament at any time.
12. Students should not be at the check in table during morning registration; coaches or designated school representative only at check in.
13. Students should be picked up or leave promptly after the tournament.
14. Students must remain in one central location with coach or school designated adult when waiting to be picked up after tournament.
15. No profanity.
16. No excessive public displays of affection.
17. Students may not leave the tournament site/campus during the tournament. Each PBCFL tournament is a closed campus. Leaving for any reason (lunch, etc.) during the course of the tournament day will result in disqualification from the tournament and consequences at their respective schools. Remember that local PBCFL tournaments are considered a school function – all school rules still apply.

B. The student agrees to adhere to the behavior guidelines of the Palm Beach Catholic Forensic League. The student understands that if he or she is in violation of the guidelines, he or she will not be allowed to participate in competition.

#### **RULE 10: STUDENT ATTIRE CODE**

Proper attire must be worn at each tournament competition. No jeans or excessive jewelry should be worn. No Mohawks, multi-colored hair, dangling walled chains, spikes, etc. are allowed. Nothing should detract from your speech or performance. Maintain a *professional* competitive image at all times. The student understands that if he/she is in violation of dress code guidelines, he/she will *not* be allowed to participate in competition.

A. Male attire should be as follows:

1. Collared, button down dress shirt (short sleeves or long) is to be worn.

2. Tie (with regular collared shirt).
  3. Shirts must be tucked in.
  4. Pants must be worn at waist level with a belt.
  5. Dress slacks or khakis are acceptable.
  6. Suit jacket or sport coat must be worn.
  7. Dark socks are to be worn.
  8. Dress shoes or loafers are acceptable.
  9. No jeans.
  10. No tennis shoes or flip flops.
  11. No baseball caps or hats of any kind.
- B. Female attire should be as follows:
1. Skirts with blouses, suits with slacks or skirts, or dresses are acceptable.
  2. Shirts or blouses should not be sheer or low cut (no cleavage or bra should be visible).
  3. Pants and skirts must be worn at waist.
  4. Pantyhose are optional but encouraged.
  5. No shirts or slacks which are too tight or too revealing.
  6. No halter or spaghetti strap or strapless tops.
  7. No bare-midribs.
  8. No jeans.
  9. No mini skirts (must be at least 2 inches above knee or longer).
  10. No flip flops, tennis shoes, sandals, spiked heels, or stilettos.
  11. No hats.
  12. Accessories should be professional and should not distract from performance (ex. bracelets that make noise, large hoop or dangling earrings, oversize belt buckles).

#### **RULE 11: ADDITIONAL STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. No student member shall use an original oration, a non-original oration, or a selection of poetry, prose, or drama during a given league season which has been used by such student in any tournament of a previous season(s).
- B. No school shall substitute a non-registered competitor in the place of a registered competitor on the day of competition. This includes "event-shifting."
- C. No student in a debate event shall switch sides without approval from the tab room. Violation of this bylaw shall be punishable by disqualification from the tournament and re-ranking of all affected competitors. If the problem is discovered after the results are announced the results will be recalculated.
- D. No varsity member(s) may compete in a novice event, and no junior or senior may compete in Declamation. Violation of this bylaw shall be punishable by disqualification from the tournament and re-ranking of all affected competitors. If the problem is discovered after the results are announced the results will be recalculated, and any trophy or ribbon awarded to the violator must be returned to the PBCFL for proper distribution.
- E. Any student found guilty of committing global or patchwork plagiarism of their speech or presentation will be disqualified from the tournament. Plagiarism shall be defined as the taking, in part or whole, the work of someone else and using it as your own. This definition will be adhered to in all original speech and debate events including Lincoln Douglas, Public Forum, Policy Debate, Congressional Debate, Extemporaneous Speaking and Original Oratory. Citations and sources should always be used in any speech that is given when information is presented from another source.
- F. All script verification information (Author, Title, ISBN/URL) must be entered on The Joy of Tournaments website during the registration process. Students whose information is not entered by the coach shall be dropped from the tournament, and drop fees shall be assessed. In addition, any student found guilty of presenting a work in interpretation (DP, OI, Duo, Declamation) that does not have an ISBN, URL, or has not been published will be disqualified from the tournament. All member students competing in memorized, non-script categories of competition shall bring to each league tournament a written copy of their presentation and shall present said copy upon demand to the Executive Committee. Failure to present said copy shall result in disqualification from the league tournament involved.

#### **RULE 12: SPEECH EVENTS – DEFINITIONS AND RULES**

All speech events will follow National Catholic Forensic League rules and procedures, unless otherwise approved by the league.

- A. Speaker points for speech events will be limited to 90-100 per entry per round, unless an egregious scenario transpired. The league officers will determine this on a case-by-case basis.
- B. Ties in speaker points are prohibited.

### **RULE 13: DEBATE EVENTS – DEFINITIONS AND RULES**

All debate events will follow National Catholic Forensic League rules and procedures, unless otherwise approved by the league.

- A. Speaker points for debate events will be limited to 25-30 per entry per round, unless an egregious scenario transpired. The league officers will determine this on a case-by-case basis.
- B. Ties in speaker points are prohibited.

### **RULE 14: CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE – DEFINITIONS AND RULES**

Congressional Debate will follow National Catholic Forensic League rules and procedures, with the following exceptions:

- A. Tabling of legislation is prohibited, unless it is the legislative item being debated as the morning session is coming to a conclusion. Should a chamber wish to continue debate on this item, it may table discussion to break, but must pick the item up when returning from lunch.
- B. All legislative items brought up for debate must go through a minimum of one complete cycle (three speeches).
- C. All speeches must be a minimum of one minute in length; anything shorter receives a “zero” score.
- D. Any presentations considered “joke” speeches shall receive a score of “zero” and shall result in the legislator being disqualified from the tournament.
- E. Unless otherwise noted, the morning session of Congressional Debate shall last a maximum of 2.5 hours, which includes setting the docket, voting on presiding officers, etc. Each session should have two full hours of actual debate; the clock begins once the first author/sponsor speech begins.

### **RULE 15: AWARDS FOR STUDENTS**

- A. The President or designee shall make arrangements for the purchase and engraving of all league trophies and awards. Such purchase and engraving shall accommodate the following:
  - 1. At least one trophy shall be awarded in all categories of competition at all league tournaments.
  - 2. 1-6 entries = 1 trophy, 1 ribbon; 7-12 entries = 2 trophies, 2 ribbons; 13+ entries = 3 trophies, 3 ribbons.
- B. The President shall be empowered to undertake any action which does not violate the league constitution or its by-laws and which is not specifically dealt with in those documents provided such action is approved in advance by all other Executive Committee members.

### **RULE 16: ELIGIBILITY FOR GRAND FINALS – “The Barbara Dale Lauder McCall National Championship Qualifier Tournament”**

- A. No student shall be allowed to compete in the Grand Finals tournament if he/she has not attained league membership by the NCFL deadline AND if he/she has not competed in at least TWO PBCFL tournaments that season. One league tournament consists of four (4) rounds or a complete Congressional Debate day where the individual earned points.
  - 1. Competition at a reciprocal CFL tournament may not count toward the two-tournament requirement.
  - 2. Additionally, competition at a Florida Forensic League (FFL) regional tournament, a National Speech & Debate Association (NSDA) tournament, or any other non-PBCFL function, may not count toward this two-tournament requirement.
- B. Each member school that participates in the Grand Final Tournament shall pay a \$75 guarantee at the time of registration (in addition to the entry fees). This money can be refunded or said \$75 may be applied to membership dues for the next school year if a given school does not qualify for participation in the Grand National Tournament. If a given school does qualify for the Grand Tournament, this money shall be applied to tournament expenses. However, if a given school qualifies but fails to send its full-qualified delegation to the Grand Tournament, this money shall be used to pay any penalties incurred by the league.
- C. Any school which qualifies students to Nationals shall ensure that those students attend that tournament. Violation of this rule shall empower the Executive Board to deny membership in the league to that school for the next competition year. The fine for each dropped competitor, payable to the League, is \$600, part of which shall be used to pay for the transportation expenses for the alternates. Dropped competitors shall immediately surrender their qualification trophies to the League.
- D. If designated by the league, the student(s), the parent(s), and the coach must all sign (and get notarized) an Oath of Intent attesting to their understanding and acceptance of these rules:



1. If a student qualifies to the NCFL Grand National Tournament as a representative of the Palm Beach Catholic Forensic League, s/he will attend the Grand National Tournament.
  2. The student asserts that s/he is earnestly registered for the local Grand Final tournament with full intentions to attend the Grand National Tournament.
  3. The student's coach explained any and all monetary and academic obligations, and is ready to accept all responsibilities.
  4. If the student is the only or last representative of his/her school to remain qualified for Grand Nationals, any such withdrawal will result in the loss to his/her school of the \$75 Grand National Guarantee Deposit.
  5. Failure of the Executive Committee to agree that any reason the student may present for a failure to attend Grand Nationals is valid according to their sole judgment means that s/he will no longer be able to compete in any future PBCFL or NCFL tournaments in this or any other years.
  6. The student's behavior and performance will comply with all Palm Beach Catholic Forensic League rules and guidelines (including its behavior and attire contracts).
  7. The student will follow all rules and expectations as set forth in the NCFL and PBCFL constitutions, bylaws, and ballots for the event in which s/he is competing.
  8. Any school which qualifies students to the Grand National shall ensure that those students attend that tournament. Violation of this rule shall empower the Executive Board to deny membership in the league to that school for the next competition year. The fine for each dropped competitor, payable to the League, is \$600, part of which shall be used to pay for the transportation expenses for the alternates. Dropped competitors shall also immediately surrender their qualification trophies to the League.
- E. All judges in the Grand Final Tournament must have judged at least two prior tournaments in the categories (Individual Events, Lincoln Douglas, Congressional Debate, Public Forum, Policy Debate) of their assignments. The non-school judges provided by the league need not meet this requirement if they are otherwise qualified. Former debaters are eligible to judge, provided they are at least one (1) full year out of high school.
- F. Schools whose coaches or official school representatives do not register on-site for the Grand Finals tournament by the time postings are announced shall be dropped from the tournament and are liable for any and all drop fees associated with this action.

**RULE 17: GRAND FINALS – “The Barbara Dale Lauder McCall Grand Final National Championship Qualifier Tournament”**

In years in which PBCFL membership is more than 13 schools, the procedures below will apply to the Grand Final Tournament. In years with 13 or fewer schools, the Executive Committee will have the power to determine beforehand the format/procedures.

- A. Power-matching is the assignment of rounds based on the win/loss record of the debaters/teams in the tournament. The League uses the following power-matching options:
1. Straight Power: The top-ranked entry debates the second-ranked entry; the third-ranked entry debates the fourth-ranked entry; the fifth-ranked entry debates the sixth-ranked entry, etc. When the win/loss brackets are uneven, the bottom entry in a higher bracket will be paired against the highest entry from the next bracket down.
  2. High-Low Powering Within Brackets: Teams with the same win-loss record are “within a bracket;” rounds are paired with the top-ranked entry in its bracket meeting the lowest-ranked entry in its bracket. If there are an odd number of entries in a bracket or school restrictions preclude the exact powering of a bracket, the highest rank entry in the bracket will be paired against the highest ranked entry in the next lower bracket. This system is also called “Power Protect within Brackets.”
  3. Power Protect: The top-ranked entry is paired against the lowest-ranked entry, the second-ranked entry is paired against the second lowest-ranked entry, etc. This procedure will only be used in the elimination rounds. No brackets will be shifted in this system to prevent two contestants from the same school from being paired against each other.
- B. Byes are necessary when there are an odd number of teams or debaters entered in the tournament. A team or debater with a bye assigned for a round does not compete in that round. In the first two rounds of debate events, byes will be assigned as the result of random draw. Whenever possible, there will be only one bye per school in the randomly paired rounds. In power-matched rounds, the bye will always be assigned to the team or debater with the lowest competitive record. Byes cannot be refused and are counted as a win. When receiving a bye, a team/debater will have ranks and speaker points for the bye round determined by averaging the ranks and speaker points gained in all non-bye preliminary rounds.
- C. Public Forum Debate, Lincoln Douglas Debate and Policy Debate will be conducted in the following manner:
1. All will debate in four (4) qualifying rounds, at least 2 rounds on each side of the proposition.
  2. Rounds 1 and 2: random pairing.

3. Round 3: direct power pairing (high-high), based on W/L and ballots from Rounds 1 and 2.
  4. Round 4: high-low power within bracket based on W/L and ballots from Rounds 1, 2 and 3. Side constraints.
  5. Round 5 (quarterfinal “Front Brackets”): pairing will be made in bracket with the top team meeting the bottom team. The front-bracket final rounds will be paired (powered high-low) 1-8, 2-7, 3-6, and 4-5. Ranks will be used first to break ties in Policy Debate, and points will be used to break ties in Lincoln Douglas Debate and Public Forum Debate. The bracket is not to be broken from this point onward. It will serve as the basis for pairings for all future rounds. Thus, debaters and teams from the same school may meet, and debaters and teams that have met previously may also meet.
  6. The winners of the front-bracket final rounds are national qualifiers in the order of their cumulative win-loss/rank/point records.
  7. Back-brackets to determine fifth and sixth place winners will debate the loser of the 1-8 final (front bracket) round against the loser of the 3-6 final round, and the loser of the 2-7 final (front bracket) round against the loser of the 4-5 final round.
  8. The winners of these back bracket rounds will be national qualifiers in the order of their cumulative win-loss/rank/point records, with the front-bracket winners preceding them in final rankings. When the league is allowed to send five contestants to nationals, 5th place will go and 6th place will be 1<sup>st</sup> Alternate; in the event the league can send six contestants to nationals, then 7th and 8<sup>th</sup> places will be 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> alternates. In the event that the league can only send four contestants to nationals, the four front -bracket winners go to nationals and the other four will be alternates respectively depending on their record.
- D. Congressional Debate will have two preliminary sessions. Two scorers will judge each preliminary congress chamber and rank the top six legislators independently of each other in each session. A third judge (parliamentarian) for each session may be added by the Executive Board if there are enough Congressional Debate judges available at the tournament. The Executive Board will determine prior to the first preliminary round how many from each chamber will be eligible to advance to the “Super Congress” final session, based on the number of chambers and legislators competing at the tournament. The Executive Board has the option to advance additional students to the final session based on judge ranks earned by students. Three judges will critique the final session. At the end of the Super Congress, each of three judges will list the six students they believe should advance to the Grand National Tournament in the order of their preference. The selection of the six national qualifiers will follow these dictates:
1. Any student(s) who appear on all three judges’ lists will advance to Nationals.
  2. Any student(s) who appear on two of the judges’ lists will advance to Nationals.
  3. To fill the remaining spaces, students will advance according to the highest number of preference on the judges’ ballots.
- E. IE qualifiers for the Grand National Tournament shall be based upon their cumulative performance in the five preliminary rounds, with a semi-final round of some or all categories of individual events competition at the Grand Final Tournament as determined by the Executive Board. The lowest judge rank will be dropped from preliminary rounds to determine advancement to break rounds. If needed, there will be a final round to determine the alternates. The complete tie-breaker system is noted in Rule 19a below.
- F. Written copies of material to be used in the Original Oratory, Declamation, Dramatic Performance, Duo Interpretation, Declamation and bills/resolutions for Congressional Debate to be submitted for the Grand Final Tournament must be in the hands of the President (or designees) no later than three (3) weeks prior to the Grand Final Tournament.
- G. The Executive Committee shall examine all copies mentioned above and render decisions relating to the suitability, plagiarism, and Grand Final Tournament rules no later than two (2) weeks prior to Grand Finals.
- H. All revisions as a result of script review must be in no later than one week prior to the start of Grand Finals.
- I. No challenges relating to the above-mentioned categories shall be entertained by the Executive Committee or tolerated during the course of the Grand Finals tournament unless such a challenge is made based upon a given student member deviating from the script submitted to the Executive Committee. Said challenge must be made directly to – and only to – the Executive Committee.
- J. All legitimate challenges and Executive Committee rulings shall be made before elimination rounds begin in all affected categories in the Grand Finals tournament.
- K. Any school that enters Congress competitors to the Grand Final tournament must enter legislation to be debated during the Grand Finals tournament.
- L. Any student that qualifies for nationals in Declamation, Dramatic Performance, Duo Interpretation, Oral Interpretation, or Original Oratory must use the same piece from Grand Finals at the Grand National tournament.

## **RULE 18: BREAKING TIES IN DEBATE EVENTS**

Cumulative ranks shall serve as the primary method of determining placement in all individual events categories in all League tournaments. In determining seeding and place (rank) in the tournament, ties may occur. They are to be broken in the following manner:

1. Win/Loss Record
2. Head-To-Head
3. Opponent's Won/Loss
4. Speaker Points
5. Opposition Speaker Points

#### **RULE 19: BREAKING TIES IN SPEECH EVENTS**

Cumulative ranks shall serve as the primary method of determining placement in all individual events categories in all League tournaments. In determining seeding and place (rank) in the tournament, ties may occur. They are to be broken in the following manner:

1. Total Ranks (Lowest Cumulative Rank)
2. Sum of Inverted Reciprocals, with each rank converted to decimals as follows:  
--1<sup>st</sup> = 1.00      --2<sup>nd</sup> = 0.50      --3<sup>rd</sup> = 0.33      --4<sup>th</sup> = 0.25  
--5<sup>th</sup> = 0.20      --6<sup>th</sup> = 0.17      --7<sup>th</sup> = 0.14
3. Head-To-Head
4. Total Points

#### **RULE 19a: BREAKING TIES IN SPEECH EVENTS – GRAND FINALS**

IE qualifiers for the Grand National Tournament shall be based upon their cumulative performance in the five preliminary rounds, with a semi-final round of some or all categories of individual events competition at the Grand Final Tournament as determined by the Executive Board. The lowest judge rank will be dropped from preliminary rounds to determine advancement to break rounds. If needed, there will be a final round to determine the alternates. In determining seeding and place (rank) in the tournament, ties may occur. They are to be broken in the following manner:

1. Drop Worst Preliminary Rank
2. Total Ranks (Lowest Cumulative Rank)
3. Sum of Inverted Reciprocals, with each rank converted to decimals as follows:  
--1<sup>st</sup> = 1.00      --2<sup>nd</sup> = 0.50      --3<sup>rd</sup> = 0.33      --4<sup>th</sup> = 0.25  
--5<sup>th</sup> = 0.20      --6<sup>th</sup> = 0.17      --7<sup>th</sup> = 0.14
4. Head-To-Head
5. Total Points

#### **RULE 20: BREAKING TIES IN CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE**

Cumulative ranks shall serve as the primary method of determining placement in all individual events categories in all League tournaments. In determining seeding and place (rank) in the tournament, ties may occur. They are to be broken in the following manner:

1. Judge Preference
2. Highest Number of First-Place Judge Ballots
3. Total Judge Ranks
4. Average Speaker Score
5. Total Speaker Points

#### **RULE 21: DEBATE TOPIC SELECTION**

The PBCFL shall use the National Speech & Debate Association topics for Policy Debate, Lincoln Douglas Debate, and Public Forum Debate. However, alternate topics may be approved in advance by the Executive Board.

#### **RULE 22: GRAND NATIONALS: ALTERNATES, DROPS AND BONDS**

A. An alternate is the next-place contestant/team/group from the Grand Finals tournament who did not advance to the Grand National championship tournament. The alternate contestant/team/group may be invited to participate at the Grand National championship tournament if one of the qualifiers withdraws. At Grand Finals, a First Alternate and Second Alternate shall be designated for each event where enough entries allow such designation.

B. Before students may officially register for the Grand Finals tournament, both competitor and parent/legal guardian must sign and submit to his/her coach the PBCFL official Oath of Intent form (if mandated by the league that year). This signed and notarized Oath of Intent formally acknowledges that participation in Grand Finals commits the competitor to participate in the Grand National championship tournament if so qualified.

C. After qualifiers are determined at Grand Finals, each school which qualifies a student or students to attend the Grand National Tournament will be required to pay a bond to the league to offset costs of the tournament. The respective school's bond will be based on a graduated system. A school that qualifies 1-3 students will pay the league \$250. A school that qualifies 4 or more students will pay the league \$500. This money must be received by April 8. The balance due to the PBCFL for Grand National expenses (hotel, registration, etc.) is due no later than 21 days before the start of the national championship tournament.

D. Failure of a school to be paid in full by the noted deadline shall result in the school and its competitors being dropped from the national championship tournament, liable for all past monies owed to the PBCFL, and payment of the \$600-per-dropped student outlined in the Oath of Intent. The school shall be prohibited from re-joining the PBCFL and/or participation at PBCFL tournaments until all overdue balances are cleared.

**RULE 23: TOURNAMENT SOFTWARE**

*The Joy of Tournaments* shall be used by the PBCFL for registration, tabulation and verification of tournament competition.

**RULE 24: RULE AND BY-LAW CHANGES**

All provisions of this constitution and its by-laws shall become effective immediately upon adoption unless otherwise stated.