

# **Stoa WA Tournament Philosophy and Goals**

Stoa WA endeavors to support those homeschool families who train their children through speech and debate to better communicate a biblical worldview. While we use a variety of different activities to accomplish this goal, the primary way we do this is through the administration and oversight of tournaments.

We affirm that sponsoring NITOC modeled tournaments (as defined on the second page) is the best way to accomplish this goal. Within this context of tournaments, we are motivated by the following values:

## **Value: A tournament environment of understanding and cooperation, honesty and integrity**

When policies and procedures are consistent from tournament to tournament (e.g. the handling of rules violations, judge orientation questions, and ballot push policies) parents and students understand the expectations of tournament behavior, rules, and participation, resulting in an environment of cooperation and understanding.

The use of experienced staff from multiple clubs in key staff positions (Tab, Tournament Director, Judge Orientation, Ballot Push) is the best way to ensure that an environment of honesty and integrity is maintained. This combination of experienced staff and multiple club representation helps prevent the undesirable consequences that can result when club bias or inexperience plays into decision-making.

## **Value: A strong community that supports each other**

When all clubs work together to host tournaments under a common calendar and model, the result is an increased sense of community through shared work. This coordination of schedules and procedures also results in more effective use of staff, resources and time, while decreasing staff/family burnout, which also strengthens our community.

## **Value: Providing families with the best preparation for their NITOC experience**

Following NITOC operational procedures and policies at local tournaments results in students and parents who know what to expect (and thus will have a better experience) when they attend NITOC.

A Stoa WA tournament includes the following: Stoa WA is financially responsible for the event, retains registration income from the event, advertises the event; Stoa WA equipment and supplies are available for the event, and representatives from multiple Stoa WA clubs staff tournament positions.

A Stoa WA tournament is NITOC modeled. This includes the Stoa USA requirements (debate and/or IE events with the minimum number of rounds for [SpeechRanks](#), more than one club participation, [transparent tabulation procedures](#), all participants must be Stoa USA members, [Stoa USA resolutions](#) must be used, and the events must follow all [Stoa USA event rules](#)).

A NITOC modeled event also includes other parameters not explicitly written in the Stoa USA rules but which are common to NITOC modeled tournaments around the country. These include 1) use of the Stoa USA judge orientation, 2) staff who are experienced (at a NITOC modeled tournament ) in the lead positions of Tournament Director, Tab, Judge Orientation, and Ballot Push, and 3) an advisory/adjudication committee which includes experienced staff from multiple clubs..

While operating within this model, a Stoa WA tournament can still be customized to include unusual features, such as immediate judge feedback, use of specific types of judges, etc., and clubs can still fundraise through student or judge hospitality food. These unique factors should be included when a tournament director presents a proposed budget and outline for a tournament to the Stoa WA Board for approval.

Other tournament policies and procedures, which are based on experiences both in state and across the country, can be found in the *Stoa WA Tournament Administration Handbook*, and we highly recommend they are followed.