



# POLICY DEBATE: PROPOSAL FOR A MIDDLE SCHOOL EVENT

National Federation of State  
High School Associations



Take Part. Get Set For Life.™

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## PROPOSAL FOR A MIDDLE SCHOOL EVENT

- **Call it CX Middle School Debate:** The name is significant, meaning that we will be debating the national policy debate resolution as selected by the National Federation of High Schools. Cases will be limited to one of the four novice topics.
- **Limit the Time:** The New Jersey after school leagues have, for years, used a time structure that allows a policy debate on the national topic to be completed within a 45 minute time frame. This better allows for rounds that fit within the rest of the events scheduled at a tournament. It also puts policy debate into a frame that allows a practice round to be completed within a normal high school class schedule.
- **Rules to Level the Playing Field:** This proposal involves judging being done by regular high school teachers (hired judging is unnecessary), persuasive speaking is prioritized, prompting and scouting is limited.




## THE STRUCTURE OF MIDDLE SCHOOL UIL POLICY DEBATE

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- Constructive Speeches
    - 1AC: 5 Minutes
      - Cross-Examined by 2NC: 1 Minute
    - 1NC: 5 Minutes
      - Cross-Examined by 1AC: 1 Minute
    - 2AC: 5 Minutes
      - Cross-Examined by 1NC: 1 Minute
    - 2NC: 5 Minutes
      - Cross-Examined by 2AC: 1 Minute
  - Rebuttal Speeches
    - 1NR: 3 Minutes
    - 1AR: 3 Minutes
    - 2NR: 3 Minutes
    - 2AR: 3 Minutes
  - Prep Time: 4 Minutes (Total Debate Time: 40 Minutes)
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## AN EARLY START ON POLICY DEBATE

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- **Policy Debate Is the Heart of Our History:** UIL started with policy debate and the UIL remains committed to this activity because it promotes critical thinking and research on topics of major state and national interest.
- **Support from the National Federation of High Schools:** NFHS provides major support to the topic selection process – a year-long, directed process of finding the most important and debatable topic of national interest, culminating in a 3-day conference where delegates from each state and national organization select a slate of 5 topics to be submitted to a national vote. The NFHS also provides a host of instructional materials to support debate on the national policy topic.
- **Tournament Friendly Event:** High School CX debate takes at least an hour and a half; all other forensic events now fit within a one hour time block. This creates tournament scheduling problems. This event would fit within the normal time block.





## ADVANTAGES?

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- **A Place for Judge Training:** Judging policy debate can sometimes seem intimidating. This new event will also provide a training ground for new judges, committed to learning along with the students. No reason to hire judges for this event; any high school teacher can serve as a judge with just minimal training.
- **Preparation for High School CX Competition:** This is a starting ground to allow students to sample this activity and see what policy debate has to offer. Some students will say “no thanks,” but others will find this event exciting. It is a great thing when the thrill of competition brings students into an activity that will help them think, do research, and organize arguments.



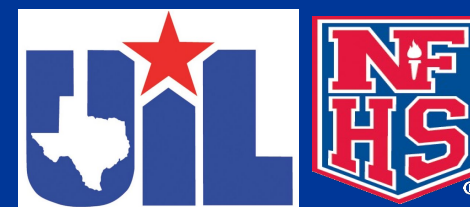

## THE UIL ADVANTAGE

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- **Training for UIL Rules in CX Debate:** The UIL rule book imposes a number of restrictions that lower the barrier to entry: Judges are instructed to penalize overly-rapid delivery; teams are not allowed to prompt their partners while they have the floor; scouting is restricted.
  - **UIL District, Region, and State Championships Are a Huge Deal for Your High School and Community:** For Texas high school administrators and for Texas community groups, winning a state association championship is a much bigger deal than winning a TFA tournament or even placing at the NSDA national tournament. Texas school boards, principals, and community groups know about the UIL – they don't have to be convinced about its significance.
  - **Numbers Don't Lie:** The UIL state policy tournament process begins with 2,283 teams, or 4,566 debaters (2019). Remember this number is very conservative: It includes public high school students, and is limited by the fact that schools can only enter 3 teams in districts even though many schools have more.
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**UIL AND NFHS HAVE MADE A MAJOR  
COMMITMENT TO POLICY DEBATE: LET'S  
KEEP IT ALIVE!**



[www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)