

LDE Committee Report

The Texas FFA State LDE Committee was called to order by Chairman Chase Carroll on Wednesday, July 26th, at 9:48 A.M. Area 7 had both Tara Poerner and Kaylee Musgroves present at the meeting.

After introductions were made, several items were discussed regarding qualifications of judges at the state-level, as well as contest-specific recommendations made by contest superintendents. Below is the list of concerns presented to the committee:

1. Qualification of judges
 - a. The committee discussed creating a yearly workshop at ATAT that would assist teachers in learning the ins and outs of each LDE, how to read the rubric, how each contest is trained and judged, etc. A sub committee was created to help plan this event.
 - b. Areas will continue to require the 3rd place team of each Area LDE Contest to be sent to judge at the state level.
 - c. Jennifer Jackson assured the committee that there WILL be a judges meeting before each heat at the state-level, as well as for the finals.
 - d. A representative from Area 1 made a motion to allow 5 judges in each LDE contest (only Ag Issues currently utilize 5 judges), but did not pass.
 - e. A motion was presented by a representative from Area 1 to allow Retired Ag Teachers and Industry personnel to judge Job interview AND Spanish Creed Speaking at the state level, which passed and will await approval at the September board meeting.
2. Contest Specific Recommendations:
 - a. It was recommended by the FFA Broadcasting LDE superintendent each team must arrive 30 minutes prior to their contest time. There was a motion presented to propose this rule, but with no sort of accountability system, it was withdrawn by the maker of this motion.
 - b. It was recommended by the contest provider that the highest and lowest scores for Ag issues be dropped in an effort to try and stay as consistent and fair as possible when awarding points. No motion or further discussion was presented.
 - c. It was noted that at the National-Level, Ag Issues teams are allowed to wear costumes when giving their presentations. It was discussed to allow Ag Issues, Ag Advocacy, and PR to wear costumes at the state-level, but there was much opposition and little support by the committee to allow this change to happen. The Board of Directors has said they would entertain removing the rule for official dress for Ag issues in the future if that is the wish of the LDE Committee. No motion was presented to amend this rule.
 - d. There were several items discussed regarding the Broadcasting LDE. These items are as follows:
 - i. From an Ag Teacher whose team participated at the state contest:
 1. There needs to be a more clear definition of the term “non-commercial audio broadcast” (rule 7)
 2. Separate the two intentions here: moderators/discussion leaders and statement of originality. With respect to Statements of Originality, specify clearly what you need from the chapters here. Submit these documents electronically (rule 8)
 3. Does language need to be added to tell teachers and members that the same script from previous years can be used, totally word-for-word, provided that writing originated in that particular chapter? (rule 9)

4. A confusion still exists with who can assist with microphone checks. It was suggested that only one team advisor/designee may assist with microphone checks.
 5. There was also a bit of confusion regarding the amount of time given for equipment testing. The rules state 3 minutes, but the issue was certain judges did not know when this 3 minutes should start.
 - ii. With all of these concerns, the Texas FFA Board of Directors representatives present at the meeting assured us that the judges meeting would clear up much of this confusion, and that we could discuss these items again during a rule-change year.
3. Miscellaneous
- a. A motion was made by an Area 11 representative to have the awards ceremony on Saturday evening at 6:00 P.M. in the White Ballroom. This motion passed, but SHSU must coordinate with Texas FFA to see if this is doable. Again, these motions must be approved by the Board of Directors, and the contest host must have the space and time available for this to occur.
4. Area Representatives Concerns:
- i. Area 1
 1. Why can you only adjust the volume on the master volume and not each microphone for the radio contest?
 - a. SHSU will look into this for next year's contest, however there was much opposition to this rule/procedure change by many of the Area representatives.
 2. Creed rooms for heats were very congested (holding rooms and outside heat rooms)
 - a. SHSU will try and relocate to help with spacing)
 3. Release of Area materials shared early and concerned about the integrity of the materials (released before the contest to other areas/schools)
 - a. SHSU is trying to find a way to make it more secure.
 - ii. Area 2
 1. Unclear instructions for speaking events (creed) students. They were deducted points before the judges said "you may begin".
 - a. Jennifer Jackson ensured the committee that the judges meeting before the contest would help clear up this issue.
 - iii. Area 3
 1. Why do job interview materials need to be turned in prior to the contest if they are not graded until the state contest?
 - a. Judging Card personnel did not respond, but Jennifer Jackson and the SHSU rep are working on ways to get those materials to the judges for pre-judging.
 - iv. Area 6
 1. It was recommended that for the skills contest, the scores for the heats were carried over into the finals.
 2. It was moved and seconded to add 2 sheets of blank paper at the end of the quiz booklet for the quiz contest. This motion passed.
 - v. Area 7
 1. Judges and the contest superintendent were not following the Ag Advocacy rules in regards to the number of questions that were asked

per team. None of the teams in the heats were asked the correct number of questions, and the contest superintendent did not enforce these rules.

- a. Jennifer Jackson again assured the committee that the judges meeting would help clear up any sort of confusion, and that the contest superintendent would be more mindful of the rules.

vi. Area 8

1. There was not enough space for warm ups in the chapter conducting heats.

- a. SHSU is looking into other locations to provide more room.

vii. Area 10

1. Crowded rooms when performing PR and various contests in heats and finals

- a. SHSU will provide more space if available

2. They also suggested having a Greenhand FFA Broadcasting contest at the state-level

viii. Area 11

1. The general rules and Ag Issues rules for submission dates are inconsistent.

- a. Alyssa Ewell of judging card said that the submission date can stay the same since you can register a team without uploading materials. Judgingcard will cut off by a certain time on the submission date, but your team needs to be registered first in order to submit those materials.

5. Additional items

- a. A question was posed as to what happens when and if judges back out and how that is communicated with the areas. The Board of Directors representatives informed us that the Area coordinators along with the State Staff would help find judges.
- b. The final item discussed was to allow the recording of the finals heats of each LDE contest at the state-level (PR, Advocacy, Issues, and Chapter Conducting) in an effort to help aid teachers in understanding those contests more. These recordings could then be purchased or distributed by the state staff. There was much opposition to this idea.
- c. Invitational Chapter Conducting Contest Idea
 - i. It has been discussed to have an invitational Chapter Conducting contest, nothing like LDE contest, more educational than competitive, open to the public, but still a contest. This contest would be more skills based.

6. Dates for the State LDE Contest: December 1st and 2nd, 2023 at SHSU.

7. The meeting was adjourned at 11:42 A.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Tara Poerner and Kaylee Musgroves