

# Technology Student Association (TSA) High School Competitive Events Guide

for the 2017 and 2018  
National TSA Conferences

With Correlations to Science,  
Technology, Engineering, and  
Mathematics (STEM) Standards





# COMPETITIVE EVENTS PROGRAM

## LEVELS OF COMPETITION

- A. The breakdown of grades noted below is used to designate categories for curricular event entries. Each category level has its own unique competitive events guide.

Middle School/Junior High School: Grades 6, 7, 8, and 9

High School: Grades 9, 10, 11, and 12

Ninth graders must compete at the level in which their chapter affiliates. For example, if the ninth grade is housed in a 9-12 high school, students must compete in high school events. If the ninth grade is housed in a 6-9 or 7-9 school, ninth grade students must compete in middle school events.

- B. If the school has a K-12 configuration, or a configuration other than the examples above, contact national TSA for clarification and approval regarding the appropriate school designation.

## GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

- A. It is the intent of TSA to involve as many members as possible in competitive events and provide recognition in a setting of fair play practices using TSA event guidelines.
- B. Other than for the VEX event, TSA members, advisors, and chapters must be currently affiliated with TSA in order to enter any competitive event.
- C. TSA membership rights extend through the year of graduation. It is permissible for students who graduate midyear to compete at the national conference that immediately follows their end-of-year graduation.
- D. Students must be registered and be in attendance with an adult chaperone at the national conference in order to enter and become a finalist in any event.
- E. It is the individual responsibility of each participant to obtain all rules and guidelines for competitive events. Lack of knowledge or understanding about a particular event is neither reason nor excuse for an individual to request an accommodating adjustment or change.

 General Rules apply to *all* competitive events and are in addition to each event's specific guidelines.

 Visit this site (<http://mlaformat.org>)—just one of many—to learn about MLA style.

- F. It is essential that students and advisors routinely check the TSA website [www.tsaweb.org](http://www.tsaweb.org) for updated information about TSA general rules and competitive events. This information is found on the website under Competitions/Competition Updates. When students participate in any TSA competitive event, they are responsible for knowing of all updates and changes related to that event.
- G. The TSA competitive event limit is six (6) per conference participant, individual and team events combined.
- H. Team members in an event must be affiliated with the same chapter. To enter a team event, the chapter designates only that it is participating; names of the individual team members are not necessary. Unless otherwise designated in a competition's eligibility guideline, the maximum size of a team is six (6) members.
- I. Entries (projects and/or products) may be submitted for one (1) year, and one (1) competition, only. An infraction of this rule results in disqualification.
- J. For all entries that require documentation, materials (comprising a "portfolio") must be secured in a clear front report cover; visit this [site](#) for a sample report cover.
- K. Entries must be started and completed during the current school year. All entries must be in English. Unless otherwise specified, no identifying information—other than an ID#—is to be included on an entry. Exceptions to this rule are those events that require content aligned with a school or community; such an exception will be noted in the guidelines for specific events.
- L. Unless otherwise noted, for all events that require a display, the size of the display may not exceed 15" deep x 3' wide x 4' high.
- M. Participants must provide—and bring to the test site—two (2) pencils (sharpened standard #2/HB grade with an eraser, or #2 mechanical with an eraser) for any competition that involves the use of a pencil (e.g., for taking a written test, for producing required sketches).
- N. For all applicable competitive events, citations or references must follow Modern Language Association (MLA) style.
- O. All entries must be the original work of the student participant or student team. All ideas, text, images, and sound from other sources must be cited. If copyrighted material is used, proper written permission must be included. Failure to follow this procedure results in disqualification.

- P. All competitive events with a semifinalist component will have a minimum of twelve (12) semifinalists. Semifinalists (individuals or teams, as applicable) will compete against one another to determine the top ten (10) finalists in an event. The decisions of judges related to competitive events are final.
- Q. Students must check in and pick up their event entries at the times and places noted in the conference program, or as announced at the national TSA conference.
- R. TSA is not responsible or liable for any personal property, equipment, or materials brought to a national TSA conference for use by a participant or attendee.
- S. When a conference event scheduling conflict could prevent an individual from participating in an event, the individual has the right to decide which event is eliminated.
- T. During a conference, should a documented emergency arise in a team event that involves written and semifinalist segments, team member substitution may be allowed if approved by the event manager and coordinator.
- U. All events are judged in accordance with the stated event criteria as noted in this competitive events guide. Concern about any event during the national TSA conference should be submitted in writing to the Rules Interpretation Panel (RIP) at the conference. The RIP will render a decision at the conference. The decisions of the RIP at the national conference are final. (For more information, refer to the Rules Interpretation Panel section at the end of this guide.)
- V. Hazardous materials, chemicals, lighted or open flames, combustibles, wet cell batteries, and other similar substances are not allowed at the national TSA conference. Competition entries or presentations by participants must not include racial or ethnic slurs/symbols; reference to gang affiliation; or vulgar, violent, subversive, or sexually suggestive language or images. In addition, entries or presentations should not promote products that students may not legally buy, such as tobacco, alcohol, or illegal drugs. Images of guns, knives, or other weapons are discouraged and may be cause for disqualification.
- W. Recording devices are not allowed at conferences in certain competitive events. CRC manager and event coordinator approval is required before any event may be recorded.

 An Internet search about copyrighted materials and copyright fair use is recommended if ideas, text, images, or sound from other sources are incorporated into an event entry.

For information about the use of TSA's logo, go to the TSA website at [www.tsaweb.org/Trademark-Policies](http://www.tsaweb.org/Trademark-Policies).

 Rule (Y)

highlights what has always been true – student participants must be in attendance for the duration of the national TSA conference.

- X. Out of courtesy to other conference competitors and to avoid any perception of impropriety, no electronic communication devices of any kind are permitted during competition. Cell phones, iPads/tablets, electronic readers, etc., *must* be turned off.
- Y. Anyone who wishes to attend the national TSA conference must complete conference registration. All adult advisors, chaperones, and student participants must be in attendance for the duration of the conference.
- Z. National TSA provides guidelines for student and team entry content, but it does not bear responsibility for content choices made by participants. Entries are evaluated on the basis of the event's official rating form.
- AA. Rules violations and disqualifications: A rules violation that gives a conference contestant an unfair advantage will result in a twenty percent (20%) deduction of the total possible points for an event. The manager of an event also has the right to disqualify a contestant when this type of incident occurs. The event manager must sign off on both a twenty percent (20%) deduction and a disqualification.
- AB. TSA may choose to keep national TSA conference student entries. Such entries may be used by national TSA for promotional purposes. Should that occur, credit for any such entry would be noted by TSA. The *2017 & 2018 High School Technology Activities, National TSA Conference Competitive Events Guide* contains a rating form/rubric for each competition. Rubrics have been embraced by STEM educators because they provide a clear way to evaluate subjective assessments. The use of descriptors (minimal, adequate, and exemplary) for each criterion being measured in rubrics allows them to impart consistency and greater understanding to the evaluation process.

### THE OFFICIAL TSA COMPETITIVE EVENT RATING FORM/ RUBRIC

The TSA rating form/rubric adds universal rigor and relevance to TSA's competitive events, addresses the desire of students to have quality feedback about their performance in these events, and provides a way for TSA members to better prepare for competitions, for advisors to carefully assist them in the process, and for judges to effectively evaluate participants and their entries with consistency.