



Club Speech Contest Guide for Contest Chair

Arthur L. Farnsworth, DTM

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Thank you for volunteering to serve as the contest chair for the upcoming club speech contest. The position of contest chair comes with important duties and responsibilities before, during, and after the contest. The goal of this Club Speech Contest Guide for Contest Chair is to identify those duties and responsibilities, provide a timeline so you can properly plan in advance of the contest, and guide you through the contestant briefings before the contest begins.

Note: This document is based on the author's experience, and various documents, including the Speech Contest Rulebook, published by Toastmasters International (T.I.). The Speech Contest Rulebook ("Rulebook") is the final authority, and thus if any conflict exists between the information presented herein and the Rulebook, the latter prevails.

Revision History

Document date	Revision date	Revision Notes
02 Mar. 2021	23 Nov. 2024	Update links, rev. dates, implement short form footnote citation format
02 Mar. 2021	16 Jan. 2024	Remove “Speech” in titles for International and Humorous contests, update document rev. dates, improve eligibility assistant information.
02 Mar. 2021	22 Jan. 2023	Implement Rulebook section changes, add roster and e-mail eligibility check options and other eligibility information, fix Appendix I tables.
23 Feb. 2020	20 Jan. 2021	(not highlighted) Begin overhaul of this to create contest chair's guide.

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Planning for the contest

When the contest date is announced, you, as contest chair, and the chief judge¹ must begin work. You should first access the Speech Contest Rulebook and familiarize yourself with its contents. This guide will assist you, but as mentioned above, the Rulebook is the final authority.

Your next task at this point is to reach out to club members to recruit people to fill the following roles: contestant, ballot counter, timer, sergeant at arms, etc. Coordinate this effort with the chief judge, because he is also in contact with the same club members, asking them to be voting judges or a tiebreaking judge. When you are enlisting people, you need to be aware of the eligibility requirements, which are summarized in the table below:

Table 1: Eligibility Requirements

Role	Contest Type ²	Eligibility	Rulebook section
Ballot counter	All	Paid member	2.E
Chief judge	All	Paid member	2.D.1
Contest chair	All	Paid member	2.E
Contestant	Evaluation, Humorous, Table Topics, Tall Tales	Is a paid member of a club in good standing ³	2.A.1
Contestant	International	Is a paid member of a club in good standing <i>and</i> has earned certificates of completion in Levels 1 and 2 of any Pathways path or has earned the Distinguished Toastmaster award	2.A.1 <i>and</i> 2.B.1
Sergeant at Arms	All	Paid member	2.E
Test speaker	Evaluation	Paid member	2.E
Tiebreaking judge	All	Paid member	2.D.1
Timer	All	Paid member	2.E
Voting judge	All	Paid member	2.D.1

Club Speech Contest Guide for Chief Judge

T.I., Speech Contest Rulebook, July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 (Rev. 09/2024), Item 1171,

§1.A.

Policy 2.0 (Club and Membership Eligibility) §4.C.

Contest chairs, chief judges, voting judges, tiebreaking judges, timers, ballot counters, sergeants at arms, and test speakers may not compete in the contest type at which they are serving.⁴ Also, “Officials . . . may not compete in the contest at which they are serving as an official.”⁵

The eligibility of the contestants and contest officials must be checked prior to the contest, and eligibility checking is logically the task of the contest chair or the chief judge. There are three ways to check eligibility, as described below. Note that there are two types of eligibility, membership and education, with membership eligibility being the baseline requirement (applicable to all participants) and education eligibility being applicable in certain circumstances (see Table 1, above). Details are provided in the three sections below.

Checking eligibility with the club roster

At the club contest level, checking eligibility with the club roster is easiest and quickest. Both types of eligibility can be checked using the roster. The roster is located in the Club Central section of the Toastmasters International Web site, and thus only club officers who are logged in to the site have access. Thus, if neither the contest chair nor the chief judge is a club officer, either a club officer will have to perform this task or a request will need to be submitted to T.I.

Consider the club roster extract below:

I CLUB ROSTER		
Sort By: First Name ▾		
<hr/>		
Arthur L. Farnsworth	DTM	Paid Until: Mar 31, 2023
Secretary		
Treasurer		
PN-00:		
Pathways Enrolled		
<hr/>		
A: De r	EC1	Paid Until: Mar 31, 2023
PN-0:		
Pathways Enrolled		

T.I., Speech Contest Rulebook, July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 (Rev. 09/2024), Item 1171, §2.C.7.

Checking membership eligibility with the club roster

Membership eligibility is checked using the Paid Until dates, highlighted in green boxes above. If the member is paid through at least the contest date then he is a paid member, or a “member in good standing.”⁶ Note from Table 1 that at the club level, this is all that is required for one to be eligible for all contest roles except for contestant. Now we need to know if we have a “club in good standing.” Per Toastmasters International Policy 2.0 (Club and Membership Eligibility) Section 4.C, “A Member Club is considered paid and in good standing when its dues have been received by World Headquarters for the current dues period for a minimum of eight (8) members—at least three (3) of whom were members of the club during the previous renewal period.” How do we check that? Access the Membership Management page in Club Central, click the Sort and Filter button, set “Filter by” to “Paid,” and click the Apply button. On the results screen, count the number of member profile “cards” which appear. Another way is to access the T.I. Dashboard, enter the club number at the upper left part of the screen, then refer to the “To Date” number in the Membership box.

At the time of this update (16 January 2024), our club has 17 paid members, which satisfies the “minimum of eight” requirement. If it comes down to the second clause, the “at least three” clause, you will need to examine the member renewal history or use one of the two other methods, as described in the sections below.

We have a member in good standing of a club in good standing, which means that this member is also eligible to serve as a contestant in the following contest types: Evaluation, Humorous, Table Topics, and Tall Tales. What about the International contest? Note from Table 1 above that in this case, contestants must also pass an educational eligibility check.

Checking educational eligibility with the club roster

The educational award level follows the member’s name, as highlighted in red boxes above. The first member is a DTM, so he is eligible to be an International contestant, but the second member has only completed level 1 of the Pathways Effective Coaching path, so he is not eligible, as he has not completed level 2.

Checking eligibility with the Eligibility Assistant

- ⚠ The Eligibility Assistant can *only* check if a person is a paid member of a paid club, or a current district leader. To check education eligibility, one must use the club roster method described above or submit a request to T.I.
- ⚠ The Eligibility Assistant can only be used to check members in your club. If you are enlisting aid from members of another club, you will either need them to provide proof of eligibility or you will need to get that from Toastmasters International via phone or e-mail.

The Eligibility Assistant is located in the Leadership Central section of the Toastmasters International Web site, and thus only club officers who are logged in to the site have access. Thus, if neither the contest chair nor the chief judge is a club officer, either a club officer will have to perform this task or a request will need to be submitted to T.I. The person who performs the eligibility checks will also need a current copy of the club roster, which is also accessible only to club officers in Club Central. It is advised to have this club roster copy present at the contest. Use the steps below to check eligibility of contestants and contest officials using the Eligibility Assistant.

1. If you need to obtain a copy of the current club roster, log in to the Toastmasters International site and access it via Club Central | Membership Management (<https://www.toastmasters.org/my-toastmasters/profile/club-central/club-roster>).
2. Browse to <https://www.toastmasters.org/leadership-central/eligibility-assistant> (or log in to the T.I. site and access it via Membership | Leadership Central | Eligibility Assistant). The following screen appears:

ELIGIBILITY ASSISTANT

This tool allows club and district officers to check membership status, club status, and if a member is serving as a club or district officer. This information can be used when determining whether or not members are eligible to compete in speech contests and/or be a proxy.

Please note, club officers can only check the eligibility of members within their own clubs. The same restriction applies to district leaders. For example, an area director can only check members within their area, a division director can only check members within their division, and a district director can only check members within their district.

Be sure to review the [Speech Contest Rulebook](#) (Item 1171) for the complete list of eligibility requirements.

To verify the eligibility of members in recently chartered clubs, or for additional questions regarding eligibility, please contact Education Services at speechcontests@toastmasters.org for further assistance.

Search for a member

Member ID

Last Name

☐ Check Myself

Search

Resources

[Speech Contest Rulebook](#) [Policy 2.0](#)

- Using the club roster, enter the member ID and last name for each member whose eligibility is being checked. After clicking the Search button, a screen like the following is shown:

Member Profile - Arthur Farnsworth

Checked on Feb-12-2020

Send results by email

First Name	Last Name	Member ID
Arthur	Farnsworth	583272

Club Information

Club Name	Club ID	Current Positions	Member Status	Last Payment Received	Paid Until	Renewal Period	Club Status
We The Speakers	9376	Treasurer	Paid Paid	Feb-21-2019 Sep-02-2019	Sep-30-2019 Mar-31-2020	April October	Complete as of Mar-4-2019 Complete as of Sep-9-2019

This shows that the selected member, in this case the author, has membership paid until March 31, 2020. **Note:** You will, of course, be looking at current data, not the stale data above. As long as the member is paid through the contest date, he is eligible.

- Repeat the process with all members you wish to check.

Checking eligibility via e-mail to Toastmasters International

Compose an e-mail addressed to SpeechContests@toastmasters.org that contains the name and Member ID number for each person to be checked, if only membership eligibility is to be checked; or contest type, official role, member name, and ID number if education eligibility is to be checked. Below is an example of the latter:

To: SpeechContests@toastmasters.org
From: Your name, contest chair
Re: Eligibility check for upcoming club contest

Hello:

<MyClubName>, club # <MyClubNumber>, is submitting the following list of people so that their membership and education eligibility may be checked in advance of our upcoming contest on <ContestDate>.

Name	ID number	Contest type	Role
Joe Blow	12345678	International	Contestant
Betty Boop	23456789	International	Voting judge
Sam Snead	34567890	Tall Tales	Voting judge
Tom Thumb	45678901	Tall Tales	Contestant
Melanie Melody	01234567	International	Tiebreaking judge
Imalsoa Member	56789012	Evaluation	Ballot counter

Thank you for your assistance in preparation for our contest.

Regards,
<YourName>

Before the contest begins

Your primary duty on the day of the contest is to, during the time allotted on the agenda, brief the contestants. Refer to the Contestants' Briefing section of the Contest Chair's Checklist in the Rulebook for details. Please note that as it is the responsibility of the contest chair in the contestants' briefing to "acquaint contestants with the exact speaking area,"⁷ but the chief judge and her team are to "be advised of the speaking area before the contest begins,"⁸ you should determine the speaking area and tell the chief judge before her briefings so she can pass that information on to her team.

Briefing the contestants

Refer to the Contestants' Briefing section of the Contest Chair's Checklist in the Rulebook for details. Provide from the contestants folder each contestant a Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality (Item 1183) and a Speech Contestant Profile (Item 1189).

Completing the Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality

At the top of the form, contestants should enter the club number and district number. They should then review the eligibility criteria, which are largely extracts from the Rulebook, and sign the form and print their name. In the Originality section at the bottom of the form, contestants should check the box for each contest in which they are competing, the box for the appropriate contest level (club), and enter the date of the contest. For the Humorous, Tall Tales, and International contests, the speech title is entered. Lastly, contestants sign the Originality section and print their name.

T.I., Speech Contest Rulebook, July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 (Rev. 09/2024), Item 1171, Contestants' Briefing Item 5.

T.I., Rulebook, §4.F.1.

Completing the Speech Contestant Profile

This form primarily exists to provide information to the contest chair for the contestant interviews, but if the form is forwarded to the next contest level (area), it also provides the area director with helpful contestant contact information. Thus, it is suggested that this document, for each contest's first and second place winners, be included with the Notification of Contest Winner form (Item 1182) when that form is sent to the area director.

During the contest

Refer to the During the Contest section of the Contest Chair's Checklist in the Rulebook for details. Much of this information is found in the Contest Chair Script.

After the contest

Refer to the After the Contest section of the Contest Chair's Checklist in the Rulebook for details.

Appendix I - Documents used by contest chair

This appendix contains the item number, title (with link to the document on the Toastmasters International Web site), and latest revision date of all documents used by the contest chair.

Item #	Title	Rev.
510A	Speech Contest Certificate First Place	11/29/2023
510B	Speech Contest Certificate Second Place	11/29/2023
510C	Speech Contest Certificate Third Place	11/29/2023
510D	Speech Contest Certificate of Participation	11/29/2023
1168	Results Form	10/2020
1171	Speech Contest Rulebook	9/2024

Appendix II - Documents used by contestants

This appendix contains the item number, title (with link to the document on the Toastmasters International Web site), and latest revision date of all documents used by the contestants.

Item #	Title	Rev.
1183	Speaker's Certification of Eligibility and Originality	11/2022
1189	Speech Contestant Profile	10/2020