

# 2019-20

# RULES

GOVERNING

POWER OF THE PEN  
INTERSCHOLASTIC  
WRITING TOURNAMENTS

**Prepared for the Use of Participating Schools Only**



POWER<sup>®</sup>  
OF THE  
PEN

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# The Rules

## Background and General

In 1986, when the first interscholastic writing event was held at Nordonia Middle School in Summit County, Power of the Pen was a single event involving 17 schools from the immediate area. Since that time, it has evolved into a statewide program.

As Power of the Pen developed its present profile, the procedures which govern the way in which its events are conducted went through a similar evolutionary process. At first, flyers, information sheets, and verbal instructions sufficed to communicate policies and procedures in order to achieve the shared goal of a successful program. When a special problem arose, it was addressed on the spot, appropriately noted, and the solution was incorporated into the set of flyers, information sheets, or verbal instructions for the next event.

The next stage was the compilation of a comprehensive *Manual*. Directed to Writing Team Coaches (and other interested parties), this publication described in detail all the steps in the tournament process as well as all the “whys and wherefores” of the program – from initiating a pre-tournament registration to incorporating a recommended post-tournament follow-up activity in the classroom.

When the State Committee came into being in 1989, one of its first tasks was conducting a review of the tournament procedures in effect. In so doing, it began to assume responsibility for “making new rules” or “changing old ones.”

It should be noted that there are, in fact, several parties responsible for establishing new, or refining existing, procedures:

- (1) *Executive Director*: Generally speaking, the Executive Director addresses a specific problem which is not otherwise covered under the program’s procedures but necessitates an immediate administrative response. Whenever a question comes up that would seem to lead to a procedural change, it has been the Executive Director’s practice to consult fully with (a) those who are specifically and most directly affected; and (b) a sampling drawn from the State Committee membership (see below) – or others – who seem knowledgeable but who are not directly involved. This latter consultation has been made in order to lend a sense of objectivity and perspective to the decision.
- (2) *Board of Trustees*: In a narrowly defined number of instances, the Board of Trustees has exercised its prerogative, as granted under the Articles of Incorporation, to mandate specific program procedures which support its primary task of providing financial oversight for the program as a whole. In most cases, the Board of Trustees respects and approves the recommendations of the Executive Director, Regional Directors, and Coordinators who are most familiar with the issues.
- (3) *State Committee*: The principal policy-making body at the level of program operations has become the State Committee. Since 1991, the State Committee has assumed an increasingly significant role in reviewing, approving, drafting and/or rescinding procedures pertaining to:
  - (a) specifically, the format of the State tournament
  - (b) generally, all principles and, as applicable, parameters governing
    - i) contestant, school and judge eligibility
    - ii) tournament gridding and scoring

iii) qualification and disqualification of contestants and judges

iv) contestant recognition and awards

It is anticipated that as Power of the Pen evolves into a national program, the State Committee will assume even greater significance as a policy-making body.

Members of the State Committee now include the Executive Director, members of the Board of Trustees (*ex officio*), Regional Directors, Tab Room Supervisors, and Host School Coordinators

The State Committee meets usually twice a year – in November or December, and in April or early May prior to the State Tournament.

The Rules stated in this rule book attempt to distill the major procedures governing Power of the Pen tournament activities into a single, cohesive statement. They are issued, however, with the following provisos:

- (1) All rules and procedures are subject to change. The growth rate for the program (school and contestant enrollments; number of tournaments) through 1996 was averaging about 20% per year. That was a phenomenal growth rate. As the program continues to evolve, it is not unreasonable to expect that a certain amount of parallel growth-related change will continue in its rules and procedures. The present statement contains the rules and procedures as they apply in September 2019.
- (2) The criteria underlying any rule or procedure – especially as it impinges upon an individual Student/Contestant or his Teacher/Coach are
  - a) what is good, fair, and right – for as many students (first) or teachers (second) as possible
  - b) what is possible and practical within the constraints of the program
  - c) what makes good common sense.

Actions based upon these criteria take precedence over any rule or procedure that may otherwise seem relevant.

- (3) All rules and policies are subject to annual review by the State Committee. Suggestions for change and requests to depart (for good reason) from stated policies and procedures may be submitted in writing to the Executive Director of Power of the Pen, or to the President of the State Committee.

**The Rules are structured in this section as follows:**

I Eligibility and Qualifications

A Schools and Students

B Judges

II Registration and Participation

III Tournament

A Participants

1 Contestants

2 Judges

3 Runners

B Alternate Contestants

C Gridding

D Scoring

E Awards

F Regional and State Qualifiers

IV The State Tournament

V Fees and Financial

VI Organizational; Other

## **I Eligibility and Qualifications**

### **A Schools and Students**

- » Any student enrolled in the 7th or 8th grade of a public, parochial, or independent school is eligible to participate in Power of the Pen tournaments. [I A 1] *To clarify, only 7th graders may compete on a 7th grade team and only 8th graders may compete on an 8th grade team.*
- » A school may enter up to a maximum of 12 students, but no more than 6 at each grade level, in a Power of the Pen Initial Tournament. [I A 2]

§ I A 2.1: No more than one full team (12 students) may enter from any one school building. (But see § I A 2.3)

§ I A 2.2: A school may not enter 12 of one grade instead of 6 of each grade.

§ I A 2.3; No team may be comprised of students from more than one school unless the Seventh and Eighth grades are housed in different buildings.

- » Contestants must write on site, in rooms to which they are assigned, at the date and time that the tournament is held. [I A 3]

Exception 1: So as not to exclude student participation by those whose Sabbath happens to fall on the day of a District or Regional Tournament, Writing Team Coaches are permitted to make special arrangements with the Central Office whereby such students may prepare submissions under carefully controlled conditions in advance. The school must then, however, supply the required number of judges the day of the tournament. Because the State tournament is structured with an on-site qualifying threshold after Round 3, this same accommodation is a practical impossibility after Regionals. [I A 3.1]

Exception 2: To make reasonable accommodation for contestants whose special handicap or disability prevents them from participating on site, at the date and time and in the manner otherwise set forth, Writing Team Coaches are permitted to make special arrangements with the Central Office in advance whereby such students may prepare submissions under carefully controlled and mutually agreed upon conditions. [I A 3.2]

### **B Judges**

- » At an Initial (District) Tournament, each school must supply one qualified Judge per grade level team to accompany the contestants and judge at the event. [I B 1]
- » The minimum qualifications for a Judge at an Initial District Tournament are that he/she must be either a certified teacher or a parent with a college degree, and be sufficiently trained to make evaluations in the Power of the Pen tournament environment. The Writing Team Coach is automatically qualified to judge tournaments by virtue of his/her role in the process and is authorized to train others to judge at the District level. Although Judge orientation sessions are held before each Initial Tournament, it remains the responsibility of the Writing Team Coach to provide preliminary training that will allow another person to participate fully and productively. Requirements include a study of the Coaches' Manual, an understanding of the concepts that underlie holistic evaluation, and some experience in reading and evaluating papers. [I B 2]
- » At each follow-up Regional Tournament, each school must provide 1 qualified Judge for each 1-3 contestants, at each grade level. [I B 3]
- » In order to serve as a Judge at a follow-up Regional event, the individual must have either  
(a) served as a Judge at an Initial tournament

- (b) attended a POP sanctioned training session in holistic evaluation. [I B 4]
- » At the State Tournament, each school must provide 1 qualified Judge for each 1-3 contestants registered at each grade level. [I B 5]
- » In order to serve as a Judge at a State Tournament, the individual must have either
  - (a) served as a Judge at a District or Regional tournament
  - (b) served as a Judge at a previous State tournament
  - (c) attended at least one POP sanctioned training session in holistic evaluation. [I B 6]
- » A school must register and supply the required number of Judges for any given tournament, or pay a POP-supplied Judge Fee or Penalty Fee. [I B 7]
- » The following statement shall appear on the registration forms at the District, Regional and State tournaments: “All judges provided by [school name] are trained in holistic grading or are experienced Power of the Pen judges, and, I/we, as writing coach(es), have read the POP rule book.” [I B 8]

§ I B 8.1: If a school brings a Judge that is not qualified to judge and signs the Registration Form attesting erroneously to that Judge’s qualification, the school shall be disqualified from receiving an award at the event. That school, in addition, will be fined \$75 for a “Same Day Judge Drop” at District and Regional tournaments; \$100 at the State Tournament.

- » At a District event, each school must provide all of the required number of Judges. At a Regional or State event, each school must provide at least 50% of the total required number of qualified Judges. At the State level, however, a school may apply to the State Office for an exemption from this blanket requirement under special circumstances. [I B 9]
- » If a Judge has committed in writing on the Registration form to attend and does not show up on the day of the tournament, the Judge shall be fined \$75. [I B 10] At the State level, however, a school may apply to the Executive Director for an exemption from this blanket requirement under special circumstances.

§ I B 10.1: The judging commitment remains the same regardless of student drop(s) after the registration. Failure to honor the judge commitment will result in a \$75 per Judge Drop fee at District and Regional tournaments; \$100 at the State Tournament.

- » Schools that list a qualified Judge on their Registration Form are expected to bring the same Judge to the event. Changes in Judges must be reported to the State Office in advance of the tournament- in the same way that Drops must be reported in advance. Non-approved Judges at an event will be assigned to the Tab Room. Schools will also pay \$75 for a “Same Day Judge Drop”. [I B 11]
- » Schools which fail to show up at an event, having registered with clear intent to participate, will not only forfeit fees paid to date with no refund, but may also be fined an additional sum equal to, but not more than the initial fee for entry at the District level. No school will be permitted to participate in Power of the Pen in subsequent years until any such fine is paid or the issue is otherwise resolved. [I B 12]

## **II Registration and Participation**

- » Schools are expected to attend the District and Regional for which they are registered. Requests to depart from this assignment must be presented in writing. These requests will be considered by the Executive Director. [II 1 ]

- » Schools are required to meet all deadlines for registration and notification of participants’ names. POP cannot guarantee that schools which do not meet these clearly established deadlines will be programmed into the event. [II 2]
- » Each Region is made up of designated suggested counties; schools in these counties are encouraged but not required to sign up for a District tournament in that Region. Coaches should note the dates of the District, Regional, and State tournaments before selecting their District event. Schools attending a District event are required to attend the Regional associated with that same District. Each tournament site has limited spaces. If the site closest to your school is filled, you may sign up for another District tournament, as long as spaces are available. [II 3]
- » Writing team coaches must update their online profile with contestant drops at least 96 hours in advance of the tournament date in order to avoid penalty fees for late drops (for example, 9 a.m. on Tuesday for a Saturday tournament). For the State tournament, schools must adhere to the deadlines provided at the time of State registration in order to avoid drop fees. [II 4]

### III Tournament

#### A Participants

##### 1 Contestants

- » Contestants must be accompanied at each level of competition by a teacher-judge or supervisor who remains present for the full time of the competition. Students who are “dropped off” at an event without an all-day on-site supervisor will be disqualified. [III A 1 (1)]
- » Contestants at each level of competition may bring into the writing room only the following materials: a pen and blank paper for writing sloppy copies. Contestants are also permitted to use a dictionary and/or thesaurus at District, Regional, and State competition. Contestants at *all* levels of competition are strictly forbidden from bringing books, papers, or any materials into the writing rooms to assist them in writing. Written notes of any kind – such as famous quotes, vocabulary words, ideas for plot development – are forbidden. No electronic devices of any kind may be used by a contestant in a writing room: cell phone, laptop computer, Apple watch, etc. A contestant discovered with these materials out during the writing round will receive default scores of 6 Rank Points, 75 Quality Points in the offending round. [III A 1 (2)]
- » District and Regional rounds are 40 minutes in length, beginning at the time a Judge says “Start” and ending when the Judge says “Stop.” [III A 1 (3)]
- » A contestant who arrives late for a round of competition may write within the amount of time remaining for the rest of the contestants in the section, but under no circumstances can he/she be given additional time to complete his work. [III A 1 (4)]
- » A District or Regional contestant who does not complete his work within the allotted time period must turn his writing in “as is” for evaluation, even if it is incomplete. In the case of a contestant who has completed a rough draft but has not had time to transcribe it into final copy, the rough draft is to be attached to the official entry ballot for the Judge’s evaluation. This rule does not apply to State. [III A 1 (5)]

§ III A 1 (5) a: A Judge at the District or Regional level cannot penalize a contestant’s entry on the grounds that the contestant has not completed transcribing the final draft copy.

- » A contestant may not leave a writing section before the end of the 40-minute time period unless special permission has been granted because of illness, the need to go to the rest-room, or a teacher's written request for the student to be picked up early by parents. [III A 1 (6)]
- » A contestant who is unable to continue participating in the tournament because of illness (or for any other reason) cannot be replaced by an alternate once the first round is completed. The contestant's school, however, cannot be penalized with a drop fee. [III A 1 (7)] (See also III B 1, III D 2)

§ III A 1 (7) a: For any round(s) that a contestant fails to submit a paper, and for whatever reasons, nominal scores are entered under his/her Code number by default – Rank Points 6 (or 5), Quality Points 75.

- » Plagiarism is the deliberate appropriation of someone else's words and/or ideas and the attempt to pass them off as one's own. Plagiarism is in direct conflict with the essential thrust of Power of the Pen. Power of the Pen invokes the following penalties once an act of plagiarism has been established beyond a reasonable doubt:
  - » If a violation occurs at any level of competition, the contestant is prohibited from advancing to any higher level of competition during that current tournament season.
  - » If the violation is detected after he or she has received an award based on plagiarized work, the contestant must relinquish that award and any right to publication of the plagiarized work.
  - » If the school, by virtue of the offending contestant's scores, receives a Team award, that award must be relinquished to the next lower ranking school or school team – if a re-tallying of the scores so warrants.
  - » Power of the Pen respects the privilege of the Writing Team Coach, or the School administration of the contestant in question, to impose any additional sanctions deemed appropriate. [III A 1 (8)]
  - » The purpose of Power of the Pen is to challenge young writers. Prompts issued at the tournaments in each of the three rounds of writing (four at State) are designed to evoke different responses. Students who deliberately adapt a single response in a way that appears to meet the requirements of two or more different prompts, but in essence remains one response rather than two (or three), shall
    - » receive default scores of 6 Rank Points, 75 Quality Points in the offending rounds
    - » be disqualified from receiving a Best of Round award
    - » be disqualified from advancing to the next higher level of competition during that current tournament season

If any such violation is detected after the tournament is over, penalties shall be applied by the State Office conjointly with the Writing Team Coach(es) of the student involved. Any team and/or sweepstakes award(s) thereby affected shall also be stripped and re-awarded.

- » The same penalties apply in cases of plagiarism.
- » The severity of these penalties is intended to encourage adherence to the highest standards of integrity and intellectual honesty in all student writing produced for Power of the Pen. [III A 1 (9)]

- » Rude, disruptive, and/or disrespectful behavior on the part of any student in attendance at an event- Contestant, Runner, or Student Volunteer – cannot be condoned nor will this program approve or condone rude behavior from any parent or Coach. If any problem arises, the Regional Director will file a report with the Executive Director for appropriate action. [III A 1 (10)]

#### 2 Judges

- » Writing Team Coaches are expected to serve as Judges, or in other staff capacities, when called upon at Power of the Pen tournaments. [III A 2 (1)]
- » Schools which bring Judges to a Regional or State tournament who are not properly qualified (see I B above) risk the disqualification of their contestants. [III A 2 (2)]

#### 3 Runners

- » The role of Runner is to act as a liaison between writing rooms and the Tab Room, not to render hospitality courtesies for adults. No ballot runner will be required to serve food or coffee to Judges during the course of a tournament. [III A3 (1)]
- » If a Ballot Runner or student volunteer who has been recommended for service at a State Tournament fails to fulfill his/her contracted commitment, the affiliate school will be prohibited from bringing any Runners to State in the subsequent year. [III A3 (2)]

### **B Alternate Contestants**

*General:* Alternates may attend and participate in Initial District Tournaments only – subject to conditions below. There is no provision for alternates in Regional and State Tournaments because the contestants are limited to those who qualified in earlier tournaments.

- » Alternate writers may attend District competition and replace registered contestants who drop at the last minute. If they are not used to replace official writers, two alternates per grade level may write unofficially, provided that classroom space permits. However, as extras they cannot receive official tournament materials. Because of the constraints of time, their written work cannot be evaluated by the Judges during the time of the tournament. [III B 1]

### **C Gridding**

*General:* The assignment of contestants and judges to individual sections is called “Gridding.” This activity is programmed by computer just before the time of the tournament. A complete description of Gridding can be found in the Manual along with a full description of the parameters followed by the computer program. The “rules” that follow summarize only the most important of these.

- » Every effort shall be made so that each writing section consists of no more than 6 and no less than 5 contestants. [III C 1]
- » A Judge cannot judge a contestant from his own school. [III C 2 ]
- » A Judge cannot judge the same contestant twice. [III C 3]
- » If the enrollment at the tournament is sufficient, a contestant will not meet the same contestant twice in the course of the tournament. [III C 4]
- » If the enrollment at a tournament is such that contestants must meet the same contestant from another school more than once, they are not judged by the same Judge (see also III C 3 above). [III C 5]

- » If the enrollment at the tournament is sufficient, a contestant will not meet more than one contestant from any given school. [III C 6]

### **D Scoring**

- » General: A full discussion of tournament scoring will be found in the section “Participating in the Tournament.”

- » In all scoring computations, at all tournament levels, Rank Points are converted as follows:

1 = 100

2 = 95

3 = 85

4 = 70

5 = 60

6 = 55 [III D 1]

- » A Judge cannot assign the same score – in either Rank Points or Quality Points – to more than one contestant in the same Section of a Round [III D 2]

- » Winning contestants at each grade level, for both District and Regional tournaments, are determined by the highest cumulative total of Rank Points. [III D 3]

- » Contestant ties at District and Regional competitions are broken as follows:

(1) the highest number of Quality Points

(2) if tied contestants have met in any round, the contestant that received the higher scores will receive the award.

(3) how each contestant performed against his/her top three competitors in all three rounds.

(4) by looking at all three rounds of writing and checking to see which competitor scored the highest individual quality point score.

- » Winning school teams, at both the 7th and 8th grade levels, are determined by the highest aggregated total Rank Points for all team contestants. [III D 5]
- » Winning school team ties are broken by the highest aggregated total of Quality Points for the Team. If this does not break the tie, duplicate awards are made. [III D 6]
- » Sweepstakes Scores for Regional Tournaments are computed by aggregating the 7th and 8th Team scores. Winners are determined by the highest total number of Rank Points. Ties are broken by the highest total number of Quality Points. [III D 7] (vide infra)

§ III D 7.1: Only Rank and Quality Points from those contestants whose average scores fell in the Superior range at the District event will be added to Regional team scores. The points for the Sweepstakes Trophy will be computed with one-third weight from the District and two-thirds from the Regional.

- » Non-conferencing Regional judge pairs in Rounds 1 and 2 are required to keep their Rank Point awards for each contestant within two points of one another, and their Quality Point awards for any given contestant in any given round within five points of one another. For instance Rank Point

scores of 1 and 3 for the same paper are acceptable; a 1 and a 4 are not. Similarly, Quality Points of 90- and 85 for the same paper are acceptable; 90 and 84 are not. [III D 8]

- » Achievement designations for District, Regional, and State Tournaments are computed by taking the average number of Quality Points assigned in each Round by each Judge:

100-94 Superior

93 - 82 Honors

81 - 75 Merit [III D 9]

- » In the rare event when a coach determines that a judge's evaluation of a piece in the District or Regional tournament does not recognize the excellence of a written work, the coach may submit the writing in question to the Power of the Pen office. If the piece is deemed excellent and the writer's other two pieces are excellent as well, then the writer may be qualified to go on to the next level of the competition. [III D 10]
- » If on-site illness prohibits a contestant from completing one (or more) round(s) of a tournament, he will receive minimum Rank and Quality Point Scores as defaults for the rounds which he does not complete. [III D 11 ]

### **E Awards**

- » Students are responsible for recording their code numbers clearly. If a student records the wrong code number and consequently fails to win a trophy he/she deserves, it is the school's responsibility and not the responsibility of POP to correct the error. [III E 2]
- » A school or contestant which is not present at an Awards ceremony to claim an award will forfeit it to the next highest deserving candidate.

Exception: Individual contestants at District and Regional levels of competition may arrange to have someone accept the awards for them in the event that they must leave early.

Contestants MUST be present, and appear on stage, to receive an award at State. [III E 3]

- » Power of the Pen will not provide duplicate awards at program expense in cases where Writing Team Coaches have issued the wrong Code Numbers to their contestants.

In cases such as the above, where schools whose teams, or individuals, have received trophies or other awards improperly through a local avoidable error, such schools are expected to relinquish them to the rightful school, and/or solve the problem otherwise at the local level and not at program expense. [III E 4]

- » Students whose work is published in the current *Book of Winners* are eligible to receive prestigious awards such as the Promising Young Talent Award only if their affiliate school has maintained membership in Power of the Pen for the current program year. If a school fails to enroll in Power of the Pen the year that the award is being issued, its students forfeit their eligibility for these additional honors. [III E 6]
- » It is the responsibility of the Writing Team Coach to see that Best of the Best compositions slated for publication are properly edited, typed, and sent in digital format to the State Office with a digital photo at least 1 mb in size attached. When these requirements are not fulfilled, Power of the Pen will not guarantee either the honor of publication or the awards that a recipient would otherwise be eligible to receive. [III E 7]

## F Regional and State Qualifiers

*General:* It is impossible to project too far in advance precisely what percentage of contestants will qualify for Regional or State Tournaments. But because of the intense interest in this aspect of the program, the methods by which the percentages are being calculated are referenced below. These “formulas” have almost reached the status of being “rules.”

- » A fixed percentage of the top scoring contestants from District events determines who qualifies for the Regional Tournaments with which they are associated. This percentage varies with (a) the total number of contestants in all the District tournaments associated with a given Regional, (b) the total number of contestants the Regional host school can accommodate; and (c) a “break point,” if one exists, in the scoring data stream from the specific District tournament in question. The percentage hovers fairly consistently around 50%. [III F 1]
- » A fixed percentage of the top scoring contestants from all Regional events determines who qualifies for the State Tournament. This percentage varies with (a) the total number of contestants in all Regional tournaments, (b) the total number of contestants the State host school can accommodate – approximately 300 per grade level for State competition; and (c) a “break point,” if one exists, in the scoring data stream from the specific Regional tournament involved. The percentage hovers fairly consistently around the top 20%. [III F 2]
- » A fixed percentage of the top scoring contestants from all Regional events determines who qualifies for the State Tournament. This percentage can vary based on a number of factors, but it hovers around the top 20%. [III F 3]
- » A contestant who receives a Superior rating at a Regional event may only automatically qualify for State level of competition if the Superior rating falls within the first 22% of contestants in each grade level. [III F 4]

## IV The State Tournament

The format for the State Tournament is ratified by the State Committee, and may vary slightly from year to year.

- » The standard format for the State Tournament is a morning session of three 35-minute rounds attended by all contestants, and one (or more) 30-minute final round(s) in the afternoon attended by qualifiers from the morning session. [IV 1]  
§ IV 1 a: The final round(s) at State will be 30 minutes.
- » Each Round is actually evaluated by 2 Judges, although a larger panel to draw from may in fact be assigned. [IV 2]
- » All Judging is by a single conferenced ballot. (All Quality Point computations are factored by 2 to reflect this conferenced judging.) [IV 3]
- » Qualifying and winning contestants are determined by the highest number of Quality Points. Ties are broken by the highest number of Rank Points. [IV 4]
- » The top fifty-four contestants from each grade level – approximately 18% – qualify after Round 3 to continue to the Final Round in the afternoon. [IV 5]
- » Final school standings – both Grade Team and Sweepstakes Totals – are calculated as the sum of the following:

1. Quality Points earned by all contestants in Rounds 1 through 3 -- provided the total falls within the Superior range – regardless of whether the contestants continue through the Final Round(s). Score totals which fall below the Superior range are ignored in the computation. (Note: Weighting is applied to bring achievement in the morning and afternoon Rounds into closer balance; i.e., the sum of Quality Points (extended values) awarded in the Final Round are multiplied by a factor of 1.5 and added to the sum of the Quality Points (extended values) from Rounds 1, 2, and 3.)
2. A bonus addition of 100 Quality Points for each contestant qualifier in the final rounds.

*Note: Quality Point awards for the Final Round do not enter into the equation. [IV 6]*

- » Superior transfer points earned at the Regional level by students who are not registered and paid to attend State shall not be counted towards the State championship trophy. [IV 7].
- » In the event of unexpected computer problems, scores and winners will be based on the first three Rounds, or the number of rounds completed [IV 8].

## **V Fees and Financial**

- » Schools must pay their registration fees, issue a purchase order number, or otherwise make appropriate arrangements for payment with Power of the Pen prior to the date of the tournament in order to participate in the tournament. Keep in mind that a purchase order number is not a payment. A purchase order number signifies intent to pay. Make sure the school treasurer receives an invoice so that a check may be sent to Power of the Pen. The check is the payment. In the case of follow-up Regionals and the State Tournament, penalty fees that may have been incurred at a previous tournament must likewise be paid in advance or appropriate arrangements made. In the case of the State tournament, prepayment of State conference fees is required in order to confirm reservations for housing and/or board. [V 1]
- » Schools must provide or pay for the required number of judges needed at the State tournament. Judges who fail to show or to notify Power of the Pen in advance of an emergency need for a judge will be assessed \$100, and they may also risk disqualification of their State qualifiers.[V 2]
- » If a school drops more than 50% of its registered contestants at a District tournament without notifying Power of the Pen at least two weeks in advance of the event, a \$100 penalty may be assessed. The severity of the penalty is to underscore the impact that a massive withdrawal imposes on the tournament experience and the jeopardy it creates for an otherwise smoothly running event. If circumstances seem to warrant, an offending school may argue its case for partial relief to the Executive Director in writing. [V 3]

## **VI Organizational; Other**

- » Rules that govern POP are subject to annual review by the State Committee. [VI 1]
- » The State Committee meets twice annually, in the fall and in the spring. The principal meeting is generally scheduled shortly before the State Tournament. [VI 2]
- » Members of the State Committee are composed of the Executive Director, members of the Board of Trustees (ex officio), Regional Directors, Host School Coordinators, and members of the State Committee's Standing Committees (ex officio). Writing Team Coaches are eligible to serve as members of the State Committee by declaring their willingness to serve in some capacity as a program volunteer. [VI 3]

- » When circumstances warrant, a Volunteer of the Year Award may be given when outstanding service merits such recognition upon the recommendation and approval of the State Committee. This award will be entitled: Distinguished Friend to Young Writers. [VI 4]
- » Outstanding teachers whose service has exceeded the role of coach and who have made significant contributions to Power of the Pen's strength and development may be nominated for special recognition. Nominations submitted will be given consideration by the State Committee. [VI 5]



POWER<sup>®</sup>  
OF THE  
PEN

P.O. Box 442  
Richfield, Ohio 44286  
937-206-1753  
[info@powerofthepen.org](mailto:info@powerofthepen.org)