

Competitions



How do Competitive Events Work?

TSA has 70+ middle and high school events. Overviews of each of them can be found in the “Competitions and Programs” tab on the National TSA website. Once affiliated, chapters get access to the current year’s Competitive Event Guides (CEGS), documents that detail event rules and procedures. Some events require parts of the project to be submitted digitally before the conference via a student membership site, so ensure you know if your events do! Deadlines for pre-submission can be found in the Conference Guide on the state and national site for their respective conferences. Additionally, event regulations may be updated throughout the year, so make sure to stay informed with those through email updates or the state and national websites.

The CEGS will also specify the allowed team size and the eligibility requirements for competing in an event at the national level. For example, Dragster Design allows two competitors from every chapter at the national level, whereas Debating Technological Issues only allows the top three teams from each state.

Some events involve basing projects off a certain theme or problem that changes every year, which can be found in the “Themes and Problems” section of the national site. Based on pre-conference submission or an on-site preliminary round (details found in CEG), 12 semifinalists are posted in random order. The semifinal round, as detailed in the CEG, then helps determine the top 10 placements. The CEG for all events must be followed exactly and any deviations not allowed through any state or national websites may result in a loss of points or disqualification. The rating form (rubric) for each event can also be found in each CEG and the “Exemplary performance” descriptors should be followed for teams looking to earn maximum points.

If there is any confusion about the CEG or competitors have any additional questions about their event, they can contact the Event Coordinators, who can be found under the “Competitive Events” tab on the state website.

Students may compete in up to six total events, but should carefully consider the time frame they have to work with and how much effort each event requires when signing up for events. Members who do 5-6 events have more opportunities for recognition, but have to divide their time and energy much more. Additionally, some events, such as large project-based ones, typically require more preparation time than others. However, the most important factor to consider when choosing events is the field a student is interested in. At [this link](#) is a personality quiz created by the 2023-24 State Reporter to help students figure out which events could be right for them!

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Event Management




Small chapters may only be competing in a few events while larger chapters could have teams for almost all of them. Regardless, managing different events is always a problem for chapters. Before your “TSA season” really begins, officers should consider:

- How will you assign teams/individuals to events when more than the allowed amount of people are interested in doing them?
- How will you monitor event progress and ensure each team is staying on track?
- What is the process for ordering materials for projects?
- How will you lead productive weekly meetings?
- How will you ensure each team member is contributing to their events?


Ultimately, event management is a decision for each chapter to make and there’s no one-size-fits-all solution. However, here are some strategies used by chapters in the past:

DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL




The chapter officer team requires each event team to create a schedule of tasks they need to do to complete their project and when they want to finish them by. They’ll share the schedule with the officer team and check each task off as they complete it.

SOUTHEAST HIGH SCHOOL




Every member is required to submit a weekly form detailing how they feel about each of their events, event progress, logging two hours of work, and entering any other comments. The chapter officer team uses that data to create a chart of overall chapter welfare.

MIDDLETON HIGH SCHOOL



The Middleton chapter has a system of “TSA Pre-checks” where members present what they have so far in each event and other members compare it to the rubric. This allows teams and officers to see what needs to be improved on.

PALMETTO HIGH SCHOOL



Chapter officers keep a chapter notebook to record what events everyone is doing and progress for those events. They also do 3-4 “event check-ins” per month to make sure everyone is staying on track and help struggling teams.