

Chapter A1 – Intent and Philosophy

This chapter sets forth the foundational principles underlying the operation of Christian Communicators Northwest (CCNW). CCNW was not founded with an expectation of trying to serve all Christian homeschooling families. It is intended to be a focused, limited organization that practices and maintains its founding principles so that it can provide a consistent educational opportunity for families that share its goals and values.

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A1.1 Mission

The mission of Christian Communicators Northwest (CCNW) is to assist Christian parents who are home educating their children in Oregon or Washington with the development of critical thinking and communication skills, to help equip these children to be faithful and effective servants of the Lord Jesus Christ by preparing them for giving a defense of their faith to everyone who asks for a reason for the hope that is within them, and to do so with grace, seasoned with salt.

A1.2 A Christian Organization

I. General

Having been founded by Christian homeschooling families for Christian homeschooling families, CCNW exists to build up the Church of Jesus Christ through the challenging activity of team policy debate. It is the goal of CCNW that all CCNW activities and interactions will reflect Biblical truth and grace. In pursuit of this goal all key CCNW leaders must be in agreement with the CCNW Statement of faith below, and conform to the participation requirements set forth in Chapter A2 of this Manual.

II. Statement of Faith

We believe the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired, inerrant and infallible Word of God, and the final authority for faith and life. (2 Timothy 3:16)

We believe that there is one God, eternally existent, in one essence, yet three coequal persons, the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 4:4-6, Matthew 28:19, John 14:9-11, John 15:26)

We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 16:16, Mark 8:27-29, Luke 9:18-20), His virgin birth (Luke 1:29-35), His sinless life (1 John 3:5), His miracles (Acts 2:22, John 3:2), His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood (Romans 3:25, 1 Timothy 2:5-6, 1 Peter 1:18-19), His bodily resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:3-5), His ascension (Luke 24:50-53, Acts 1:9-11), and His personal return in power and glory (Acts 1:11, John 14:2-3).

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all men; the saved to eternal life, and the unsaved to judgment and everlasting punishment. (John 5:28-29, John 5:24)

We believe that all men are sinful by nature, and that salvation is the gift of God given to man by grace and received by personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 3:22-24)

We believe that we should live in such a manner as to not bring reproach upon our Savior and Lord. (Matthew 5:16, Philippians 1:27)

We believe it is our obligation as believers to witness by life and word to the truths of the Gospel and proclaim these truths to all mankind. (Matthew 28:19-20)

III. Christ-Like Character

For an organization to function as a Christian organization, those that make up the organization must live consistently with their stated beliefs. They must walk their talk. If CCNW participant's lives do not reflect the character of Jesus Christ, and his continuing presence in their thoughts, attitudes and actions, all Statement's of Faith, and mission statements and goals will be rendered less than meaningless. As such, it is the intent of the League to continually exhort all participants to remember that they belong to Christ and serve as his ambassadors to each other and the watching community that surrounds them.

IV. Participation by Non-Christians

The participation requirements set forth in Chapter A2 provide narrowly limited opportunity for participation by non-Christians. Where such opportunities exist, the non-Christian participant must be operating under the direct and immediate leadership of a recognized Christian CCNW leader. Furthermore, non-Christians participating in CCNW must agree to recognize the Christian character of the organization and to conduct themselves in a manner that does not compromise the desired Christian nature of the program.

A1.3 Education and Competition

CCNW wants to foster good, well argued debate rounds between teams with good evidence, logic and communication skills. Ideally all CCNW participants should aspire to develop their skills to the highest possible level. As brothers and sisters in Christ CCNW's goal is to have everyone acting like iron sharpening iron, helping each other as much as possible.

Within that framework CCNW encourages and reminds everyone that it is the development of the skills and abilities that is the goal. Winning rounds and awards are designed to provide some visible measure of accomplishment and reward for the significant effort invested in debate. But, they are not the real goal.

Therefore, all CCNW participants must always be on guard for manifestations of an overly competitive spirit that gets in the way of the real educational purposes. Everyone loses in some way if somewhere along the path the desire to win, or an unrealistic expectation of perfection, gets in the way of helping one another through the learning process.

A1.4 Style of Debate

I. General

CCNW intends its debate program to function on consistency in all areas believing that such consistency enhances the educational experience. The program is designed to be as simple and straightforward as possible. This helps ensure new debaters are working from the same principles as experienced debaters, and experienced debaters have the opportunity to develop a solid understanding of and ability to effectively use the key fundamentals underlying all good debate.

II. Rules Based

In general CCNW debate practices shall be understood, accepted, and followed as mandatory rules or standards. The intent of CCNW is to use standardized debate theory and protocol as a central part of the educational environment. CCNW expects all participants to pursue mastery of these principles and practices.

It is not acceptable in a CCNW debate round to debate whether CCNW's handling of a particular debate concept or protocol is correct or superior/inferior to other approaches. CCNW debaters are make use of the concepts and protocols as they are set forth by CCNW. If it becomes evident that changes to the CCNW rules are needed such changes will be issued by the CCNW Board. Until official notice of a change is issued, all CCNW participants shall use the rules and standards as published.

The rules for CCNW debate are set forth in Chapter A3 of this Manual.

III. Argumentation Focused on Subject Matter

CCNW is endeavoring to train its debaters to be able to understand complex subjects in depth, and to be able to debate the substance of these subjects with effective argumentation. The core of CCNW argumentation is based on the Stock Issues, discussed below, which provide a standardized, comprehensive decision criteria. To win a CCNW debate round the debaters must clearly explain how real world issues and concepts correlate to the Stock Issue decision criteria.

In order to ensure that an in-depth, substantive exchange of ideas is possible, CCNW uses narrow Resolutions, discussed below. The narrow Resolution helps ensure that the Negative Team has a reasonable opportunity to anticipate and prepare for the proposals that will be advanced by the Affirmative Team.

IV. Stock Issue Paradigm

The Stock Issue Paradigm uses four specific criteria to determine if a proposal merits acceptance. The first Stock Issue, Topicality determines whether or not the Affirmative Team is presenting a proposal that is addressing the required topic, and thus deserves to be considered on its merits. If the Affirmative Team is off topic, the Negative Team cannot be expected to be prepared, and thus no legitimate debate can occur.

The other three Stock Issues look at the policy considerations of the Affirmative proposal. The Stock Issue of Significance determines whether or not the Affirmative proposal established an important reason for making a change to the current situation. The Stock Issue of Inherency determines whether or not the Affirmative's plan for change is necessary, or whether the reason for making the change will be addressed without the Affirmative Plan. The Stock Issue of Solvency determines whether or not the end result desired by the Affirmative will occur, and whether that overall final situation is worth pursuing.

V. Narrow Resolution

For a substantive, in-depth debate to occur both sides must have a solid knowledge of the important issues. Since the Negative Team is responsible for being prepared to respond to all legitimate (Topical) issues, unless the number of possible Affirmative Cases is limited to a relatively small number the Negative Team is saddled with a virtually impossible task.

When the number of possible Affirmative Cases is small, it becomes likely that a Negative Team will debate the same, or very similar Cases more than once during the course of the year. This provides both the Affirmative Team and the Negative Team the opportunity to evaluate arguments presented the first time the Case is debated, and work to improve them for subsequent debates.

A1.5 Limited Debate Year

CCNW believes that team policy debate is one of the best possible educational tools available to older homeschooled students. At the same time, CCNW recognizes that debate can become an all-consuming passion for those involved. To help CCNW families maintain a balance between participation in debate and other responsibilities and activities, the CCNW debate year will be specifically restricted to the period from November through May. The season will begin in early November with the announcement of the resolution. No competitive events will be scheduled until mid-January at the earliest and no events will be scheduled after the end of May.

A1.6 Affordable Participation Costs

I. General

“Debate should not be a rich man’s sport.”

Many homeschooling families operate on a modest, single family income while trying to serve a vast array of needs of which home education is just one. Because CCNW believes strongly in the value of debate it wants to make it financially accessible to as many homeschooling families as possible. Since much of the cost of debate arises from expenses related to travel, CCNW has chosen to limit the number and length of its events. In addition to simplifying program administration, restricting the CCNW program to the states of Oregon and Washington ensures that all events can be reached by driving, and the trip to get there will be no more than a day’s drive.

CCNW also wants fathers to have the opportunity to be involved. Lengthy trips and long events can make it difficult to achieve this goal as they can result in lost work days for the father.

II. Event Length

No CCNW debate event will be more than two days long.

The description, including length, is described in Chapter B2, Event Standards and Requirements, of this Manual.

III. Number of Events

CCNW will not schedule more than five (05) events, including Club Work Days, Round Robins, and Tournaments, during the debate season.

IV. Geographic Restrictions

Participation in CCNW is limited to families living in Oregon and Washington. (Please see Chapter A2 of this Manual for more complete participation requirements.) As mentioned above, the purpose of this limitation is to help keep the program to a manageable size and to keep travel costs reasonable.

“Participation” in this context means having full recognition by CCNW and a full expectation of equitable treatment in league decisions, such as the location and scheduling of events.

Should any desire to do so, at the discretion of the Tournament Director, those from outside Oregon and Washington may be given an opportunity to participate once all known CCNW participants have been given a reasonable opportunity to secure their rightful place.

V. Sharing Travel and Hosting Burdens

Debate events can not occur without costs falling on someone. In general there are two different types of costs. For the hosting club there are the costs of time and energy involved with putting the event together and seeing it through. For everyone else, as described above, there are the costs of travel.

It is CCNW's goal to rotate events around through the league to help balance and share the various costs as equitably as possible. CCNW recognizes that perfect balance is not possible, if for no other reason than different families weighing the various hosting and travel costs differently.

A. Benefits of Hosting and Event

1. The event can serve as a recruiting tool. Other local families get to see CCNW debate first hand.
2. All family members of the host club are nearby and can readily watch their debaters debate.
3. Costs of travel are avoided.

B. Benefits of Traveling to an Event Hosted by Others

1. All of the event preparation, judge recruiting and pre-event work is taken care of by others (the host club).
2. All of the work during the event (except fulfilling judge and timer responsibilities) is done by others (the host club).

A1.7 Relationship to Other Debate Leagues

CCNW does not view itself as being in competition with any other team policy debate league. It is organized with a central goal of providing a highly structured debate environment, and a secondary goal of retaining control of the activities at a local level (limited to Oregon and Washington). Families looking for debate environment that is less restrictive on types and styles of argumentation, and/or association with a national organization can find those features elsewhere. Thus, CCNW views itself as complementing the overall situation by providing an alternative for Christian homeschooling families in Oregon and Washington.