### Breaking Brackets Amendment

#### Proposal –

The wording for section C. 3. a. of the standing rules of the NDT should be amended to allow for breaking brackets in the event that two teams from the same school are set to meet in the outrounds of the National Debate Tournament.

Rationale:

1. Competitive years and debate careers shouldn’t end without a debate. Many have.

2. commitment to the purity of the bracket seem outdated given point inflation and the decline of community speaker point norms.

The language for the amendment is taken directly from Bruschke in a manual for running a tournament. I am, of course, open to friendly amendments and suggestions.

**Standing Rules for the Operation of the National Debate Tournament**

**(as of November 28, 2016)**

C. Determination of Participants in and Scheduling of Elimination Rounds.

1. All teams with a win-loss record of 5-3 or better shall qualify for the elimination rounds, up to a total of 32 teams. If the number of qualifying teams exceeds 16 but is less than 32, a First Elimination Round will be held with a partial bracket so that the number of remaining octafinalists will equal 16.

2. Seeding. The criteria for determining the seeding for elimination rounds shall be administered in the following order: (1) wins, (2) ballots, (3) adjusted combined speaker points (dropping high and low ballots), (4) continue dropping high and low ballots down to twelve remaining ballots, (5) flip of a coin.

3. Pairings shall follow a standard seed-protect bracketing.

a. Teams representing the same school shall be placed into the bracket according to their seeding. Coaches of the teams involved shall be consulted on the conduct of a debate round between the teams from the same school.

b. Teams which have met in the preliminary rounds shall switch sides. In other debates the flip of a coin shall determine sides, unless the teams agree on opposing side preferences.

#### Proposed amendment

3. Pairings shall follow a bracket of seed matching.

1. When teams from the same school are matched, the lower seed of the two teams should be switched with the team one seed spot below them. For example, if seeds 3 and 14 are scheduled to debate in octo-finals, seeds 14 and 15 are switched. In the event the same-school debate occurs with the #1 seed, the lower seed must be moved up rather than down one spot.

b. Teams which have met in the preliminary rounds shall switch sides. In other debates the flip of a coin shall determine sides, unless the teams agree on opposing side preferences.