



NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS

## NEWS RELEASE

### ***New Policy Debate Quarterly Features 2020-21 Debate Topic of “Criminal Justice Reform”***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

Contact: James Weaver

INDIANAPOLIS, IN (May 8, 2020) — The almost-century old publication for high school debaters has a new name. After 93 years as *The Forensic Quarterly*, the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) has re-titled the publication *The Policy Debate Quarterly (PDQ)* to more accurately describe its content.

And the first PDQ will feature material on the upcoming 2020-21 National High School Policy Debate Topic – “Criminal Justice Reform.” The NFHS annually selects the National High School Policy Debate Topic and publishes four issues of *The Policy Debate Quarterly*.

“Criminal Justice Reform” was selected over “Climate Change” in a vote that included ballots from 32 states and the District of Columbia, the National Speech and Debate Association, National Catholic Forensic League, National Association for Urban Debate Leagues and the National Debate Coaches Association. In claiming 59.5 percent of the vote, “Criminal Justice Reform” was the preferred debate choice for 19 states, the District of Columbia and two of the four national organizations.

“The NFHS Debate Topic Selection process is rigorous to find timely and deep topics for some of the most intelligent and ambitious student participants,” said James Weaver, NFHS director of performing arts and sports. “The process begins with 15 topic papers and ends with a year-long topic that is debated around the United States and the world.”

For the past 93 years, *The Forensic Quarterly* had been a credible, highly respected resource for the high school debate community and is well known for its thorough yearly assessment of the national debate topic. Under its new moniker chosen by the NFHS Speech, Debate, Theatre and Academics Advisory Committee, *The Policy Debate Quarterly* will continue to provide the same quality content.

"This name change will help the publication be more visible moving into its next 100 years," Weaver said. "The *Policy Debate Quarterly* is an integral part of high school policy debate and the national debate topic."

*The Policy Debate Quarterly* focuses on the affirmative cases, topic terms, counterplans and negative responses related to the national debate topic. Over the course of four annual issues, debaters and coaches are introduced to the topic for the upcoming year, provided with research topics and methods including an annotated bibliography, and given in-depth insight on the topic's positive and negative stances. The first two issues for 2020-21, which are now available on the NFHS website ([www.NFHS.org](http://www.NFHS.org)), are focused on introduction and research.

For more information and to purchase print or digital copies of the first two installments, click on the following link: <https://www.nfhs.org/nfhs-for-you/speechdebate-theatredirectors-judges/policy-debate-quarterly>.

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#### **About the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)**

The NFHS, based in Indianapolis, Indiana, is the national leadership organization for high school sports and performing arts activities. Since 1920, the NFHS has led the development of education-based interscholastic sports and performing arts activities that help students succeed in their lives. The NFHS sets direction for the future by building awareness and support, improving the participation experience, establishing consistent standards and rules for competition, and helping those who oversee high school sports and activities. The NFHS writes playing rules for 17 sports for boys and girls at the high school level. Through its 50 member state associations and the District of Columbia, the NFHS reaches more than 19,500 high schools and 12 million participants in high school activity programs, including more than 7.9 million in high school sports. As the recognized national authority on interscholastic activity programs, the NFHS conducts national meetings; sanctions interstate events; offers online publications and services for high school coaches and officials; sponsors professional organizations for high school coaches, officials, speech and debate coaches, and music adjudicators; serves as the national source for interscholastic coach training; and serves as a national information resource of interscholastic athletics and activities. For more information, visit the NFHS website at [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org).

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