

MSDL Board Meeting Agenda

March 1, 2021 @ 7:30 pm

Via Zoom

The meeting was called to order at 7:36 PM by the president, Greg Cunningham

Board Members in attendance

Joyce Albert, Joe Bowden, Scott Caron, Josh Cohen, Greg Cunningham, Sue Hennessey, Lisa Honeyman, Jim Honeyman, Sheryl Kaczmarek, Tammie Ruda, Chris Sheldon and PJ Wexler.

1. Debate topic for March tournaments and States (Josh)

Josh put out a survey to league coaches and it came out in favor of the March PFD topic. It will be less stressful for programs to debate the March topic because States will be the only tournament that would use the April topic except for TOC - which most folks won't be attending. Thus, the board recommends that we use the March Topic area for PFD. We will be using the following topics at States:

Lincoln-Douglas Debate – 2021 March/April Topic

Resolved: The United States ought to guarantee universal child care.

Public Forum Debate – 2021 March Topic Area: U.S. Space Policy

Resolved: On balance, the benefits of creating the United States Space Force outweigh the harms.

In the future, Josh suggests that we explore the possibility of using our own topic in March since there are no circuit tournaments in March. But, that's something for another year.

2. Congress: repetitive legislations from other league tournaments (Lisa, PJ)

Students in Congressional Debate are complaining that they are being forced to debate the same legislation over and over again because a couple of students are submitting the same legislation to different tournaments (MSDL, NCFL Quals, NSDA Quals and tournaments like UPenn). We would like to propose that the MSDL Congress legislation submission rules be revised to include a line requiring that any legislation that students submit for debate at MSDL tournaments must not have been debated at any prior tournament during the current school year. The board agreed that this was a reasonable requirement.

PJ will write up suggested language for section 3.2.1 of the Bylaws to bring to the league at the annual meeting saying that all legislation that is submitted for debate at any MSDL tournament must be original and cannot have been debated at any previous tournament during the season.

3. Congress State bid for NY tournament (PJ)

Clarification: We count congress as a speech event when it comes to bids for states. NY counts it as debate. For the purposes of bids to our State Tournament, we will continue to consider congress as a speech event even though we are coordinating some tournaments with NY.

4. Prohibiting problem judges league-wide (Greg, Josh)

Josh told us a story about a problem judge from the Polar Bear tournament last Saturday. The judge was dismissed from the tournament because of several serious issues. The school who brought this judge will not bring them again.

We discussed the problem of judges who skip the judge meeting and then go on to doing things incorrectly that were covered in the meeting. For example, disclosing after rounds or not writing comments. We will try harder to follow up with schools that bring judges who are chronically having difficulties.

It was observed that recent graduates who come back to judge often need to watch their tone on ballots - and that they need to attend the morning judge meeting, even if they think they know everything there is to know about the activity. They often have a lot that they can learn.

5. Planning for states (Joyce, Josh, PJ)

We will have an equity officer at States. Kaz will check with the person they hired for Big Lex.

Josh & Joyce will prepare two separate invitations (one for debate and one for speech). The tournament invitation will be posted in a week to ten days. Registration will not open until after the "Spring Fling" tournament.

Greg will send a note to coaches asking for seniors to submit videos to include in the senior tribute. We'll run the senior tribute twice - once at each tournament awards ceremony (20-25 minutes).

Speech is on Saturday only -- Awards: Saturday
Debate is on both Saturday & Sunday -- Awards: Sunday

If you have any ideas about how to make awards more special, send those ideas to Joyce.

Group Discussion Topic: Environment & Energy.

We will award plaques/trophies for States (instead of medals).

6. Wildcards for States (Chris)

We will return to the usual two wildcard bids for speech and congress for existing programs. New schools (those who are in the first or second year) have a total of four wildcard bids for speech and congress.

Debate will return to using their rules from before last year, as well. JV bids will count towards Varsity in LD.

The bid rules will be in the invitations.

7. Fees for States Registration (Jim)

Jim sent out an update about where our finances stand to the board prior to the meeting. We started the year over \$4000 behind because of the costs associated with States 2020. But, we're back where we were before Covid happened and we're in good shape now.

Greg points out: "The reason we are having so much success in bringing our finances around is because Jim has been so diligent about getting schools to pay the fees they owe."

Proposal: Charge for States at the rate of \$6 per person per entry for speech & congress and \$10 per person for debate (because it's 2-days long). We will continue the practice of gift card give-aways at the awards ceremonies and maybe increase the number given at States.

8. Nomination Committee (Scott)

Scott is the chair and has assembled a committee. He will send a note out to the league about self-nominations for the six elected positions. Self-nominations need to be in by March 26 so we can run the election in early April.

9. Date for League Annual Meeting (via Zoom)

May 1, 2021 at 1:00 PM.

Next Board Meeting: March 22 at 7:30 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:21 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

--Lisa Honeyman

Clerk/Secretary