

MSDL Board Meeting Minutes

July 20, 2020 @ 7:00 PM

ZOOM meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:04 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, Chris Sheldon, PJ Wexler and Keith West.

1. Online tournaments for fall:

a. Budget (\$6 per room on Tabroom + medals/trophies)

We briefly discussed the pros/cons of using Tabroom (NSDA) vs Zoom and decided to use the Tabroom/NSDA system where possible.

In order to cover the expenses of renting rooms from the NSDA on Tabroom (\$6 per room per day), buying Zoom rooms (for prep/draw events) and awards, we will charge a set fee per entry. If there are 2 people in the entry, they each pay (so DUO and PFD are double the single student entry amount).

Since the event chairs/tournament directors have always determined fees for MSDL tournaments, they will do that for tournaments we run this fall/winter. If whatever they determine is the appropriate fee turns out to be insufficient to cover our expenses, they may need to adjust the fees for future tournaments.

We will sign up for a few Zoom accounts to have available in case of technical glitches.

b. Sweepstakes & awards: Do we announce team sweeps but forgo trophies? Create an online cumulative award?

Medals are more affordable to purchase and less expensive to ship than trophies. We can buy a lot of medals with the MSDL logo on them. They can be personalized with event name & placement by mailing stickers to coaches following each tournament. Those stickers can be placed on the backs of medals by coaches.

We decided that we don't need to purchase sweepstakes trophies for each tournament for this fall/winter. Instead, maybe we can announce the top placements for each tournament and post the results online. Then, once each semester, maybe we can do cumulative (physical) trophies? Maybe speech only, debate only and then maybe combined. We'll discuss this more at our next meeting.

c. Prep rooms on Tabroom or Zoom?

Joyce/Greg will look into how Tabroom works for prep rooms and then decide whether to use Zoom or Tabroom for prep in Extemp and Radio at tournaments. We'll revisit this topic at the next meeting.

d. Judge briefing/tech support on Zoom?

Chris pointed out that Zoom webinars were not necessary for the judge meetings. Using regular Zoom accounts would be fine and they cost a lot less. We'll decide how many zoom accounts to purchase at our next meeting.

e. Do we need to temporarily change any event rules? Duo/Multiple time limits? Turning camera off/on?

Temporary rules adjustments for on-line competition

MULT: Extend grace period to 60 seconds to compensate for latency issues

DUO: Extend grace period to 60 seconds to compensate for latency issues

DEBATE: Add 60 seconds of additional prep time for all debate events offered

CAMERAS: In general - while students are involved in competition, cameras must be on.

Observers don't need to have cameras on.

In debate, cameras must be on while students are speaking. Cameras on are encouraged when they are not speaking, but not required.

In speech the camera must be on for the entire time each performer/entry is performing. They may not use the camera as a "special effect."

Cameras must be on throughout the entire prep period in Extemp/Radio. During Group Discussion, cameras must be on throughout the discussion.

f. How do we support students with tech issues or difficult home environments.

If students find competing from home to be problematic, we can work with the student's coach to brainstorm options so that student may be able to participate. (Schools, places of worship, libraries etc. may be options).

Greg will reach out to coaches who participated during the season last year, but didn't participate at states, to see if we can do something to help them get involved this fall.

g. How do schools pay?

- Each school can either do a single electronic bank transfer or mail a single check

Schools will be asked to pay as soon as possible after a tournament, with an expectation of payment within 30 days. Jim & Greg will work together to track payments and reach out to coaches of schools that have not paid within the expected time.

After payment is received, students from that school will get awards.

h. Insurance/Liability (see attachments from email)

NJ purchased insurance to protect their board in situations where the league is running the tournaments. It seems sensible for us to have this sort of insurance. If the company that NY/NJ is using can sell insurance in MA, we may want to go through them. Greg will reach out to the National Federation to find out what they offer.

2. How to support schools? Do we post the conversation Sarah D. sent us on the website (https://zoom.us/rec/share/ytRnK5XBqH5lGo2OxwLbZ68CE7i7T6a81CEWrqFezU7L3p_wuvpN7FoXA2OJL5kU)

This video is about an hour long and requires a password. The intended audience is administrators/people who support speech & debate in schools.

Lisa will put the link on the MSDL website. If any of us is working with a school and we think this video would be helpful for them, we can refer them to that link.

Should we also include these links on a page: <https://www.nfhs.org/articles/nfhs-joins-52-other-national-organizations-to-support-arts-education-as-essential-for-students-during-covid-19-pandemic/>

<https://www.nfhs.org/articles/performing-arts-covid-19-resources/>

Lisa will look at them and post what seems helpful on our website.

3. National Movement to protect students (PJ): https://www.change.org/p/national-speech-and-debate-association-create-a-safer-speech-and-debate-community?utm_content=cl_sharecopy_23384925_en-US%3A1&recruiter=1122880111&utm_source=share_petition&utm_medium=copylink&utm_campaign=share_petition&utm_term=ffd6758db1974496beb02766eb23320e

Many of us have received a petition from students demanding that the NSDA take steps to protect students from competitors and judges who mistreat them. (It's important to note that many of the demands are not for things the NSDA has any power over.)

These issues are issues that we should think about, too.

Maybe we could provide 'ombuds' people to investigate situations if students bring them to our attention at tournaments. Joyce is willing to do that for debate since she has no vested interest in debate. She wants training, though. We'll look at the NSDA for some training. Schools may be providing some training this fall, too, that Joyce can access.

The tone we set, as coaches, has a huge influence on how students behave. The tone we set as an MSDL board is important, too.

We can do some things to help students feel heard - and we should do those things. Having an 'ombuds' person available for students to speak with is a start.

We also will write an MSDL equity statement similar to the NSDA statement. At NSDA Nationals the equity statement was on the ballots. Maybe we can do that, too. We can also be sure to address some of these issues in judge briefings.

Action: Kacz, Joyce & Chris will work on writing an MSDL equity statement.

4. NFHS Study

The NFHS is studying how far breath and vapor travel when people are talking, singing or acting. The news is not good. The letter "f" is the worst and singing is worse than speaking. Musical instruments (clarinet, trumpet etc.) are significant spreaders of vapor. The folks doing the study experimented with 'pantyhose' as 'masks' for instruments with some success.

The full study will be out soon.

5. Extemp committee (Lisa)

Lisa asked for volunteers to help write questions this year. Volunteers: Joyce, PJ, Chris, Jim, Lisa, Greg, Keith, Joe B. She'll also reach out to others who have helped in the past.

6. Impromptu committee (Sue)

Sue asked for some help with impromptu. Scott volunteered.

Next board meeting date: Monday, August 24 at 7:00 PM.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

--Lisa Honeyman

Clerk/secretary