

MSDL Board Meeting Minutes

December 18, 2023 @ 7:30 PM

ZOOM meeting

The meeting was called to order at 7:31 PM by the president, Amanda Parker

Board Members in attendance

Joyce Albert, Joe Bowden, Josh Cohen, Scott Caron, Lisa Honeyman, Jim Honeyman, Ryan Julian, Amanda Parker, Tammie Ruda, Chris Sheldon, and PJ Wexler.

1. Weather insurance - finalized budgets

We can submit one more revision to the expense budgets for all of the remaining tournaments in the 2023-24 season. It must be done 10-15 days before the first affected tournament. Therefore, finalized budgets for the remainder of the year should be submitted to Jim by December 22.

2. Opportunities for more in-depth speech judge trainings

There will be an extended *speech* judge training at the Newton South tournament on January 6. Head coaches should send Lisa Honeyman an email with the names of folks who would like to attend that training during the first time slot of the Winter Festival Tournament.

Are there other things we can do to help train judges so they are better able to run the rounds and so that their comments are more useful to students?

- Maybe more drop-in hours for questions via Zoom a few days before a tournament? (We talked about who might be available to do this and how to structure the sessions.)
- Maybe some updated/revised videos? And/or a series of short videos (2-3 minutes each) to post online that highlight the key things to look for when judging certain events. QR codes?

3. Impromptu idea - asking students & coaches to submit topics

PJ and Amanda will write impromptu topics as needed for tournaments this season. However, Amanda asks if it makes sense to give students an opportunity to submit impromptu topics for use at future tournaments to increase the diversity of prompt types? (Students wouldn't know when the topics would be used.) General agreement that we can give this a try.

4. Coordinating efforts across divisions for tournaments

Covering judging assignments & tournament support

Problem: We're having difficulty fielding enough judges to cover the judging needs of tournaments. Some parents in debate, especially, do not get a break and because of their bad experiences, they don't want to do it again. The small and medium sized tournaments are struggling in particular. One problem is that some teams are listing judges in PF or LD who are likely to be working in Speech TAB. That's a problem.

- If members of the board didn't list themselves as judges at tournaments, would it help?
- Should schools be required to list their adults in the divisions that they are working if they know they will be doing at TAB job?
- Maybe we need to ask schools to bring 1 judge per 4 entries rather than 1:5.

The discussion delved into the problems we are having getting enough judges, specifically, in LD and PF. Part of the problem is that LD is a smaller event and the various rules constraints make placing judges very difficult.

Going forward: If people are listed as judges in a specific pool, then they must be willing to be used in that pool if they are needed there in lieu of helping to run the tournament in another division.

Question: When the board is providing significant support in running a tournament, but not hosting the tournament, how can we streamline communications so that everyone who needs to know what is going on is kept in the loop?

Amanda will reach out to Melissa at Boston Latin to find out what the board can do to support her as she gets ready for the tournament on January 20. She (Amanda) will then communicate with folks who will be working in TAB in the different divisions to help coordinate things.

4. State Speech & Congress host still needed

Br. Cavet has offered CM for State Speech & Congress. (Hurray!) However, CM is a smallish school and doesn't have an auditorium where we can hold our final awards ceremony. Do we know if anyone else is interested in hosting? Over the next few weeks, folks will reach out to schools that might be interested to see if we can find a larger space, preferably one with an auditorium where we can host awards in a more formal setting than the gymnasium. However, we are hugely grateful to have a space where we can host our State Final tournament and will get back to CM soon with about whether or not we will hold States there.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:37 PM

Respectfully submitted,

--Lisa Honeyman

Clerk/Secretary

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 23, 2024 via Zoom