

MSDL Annual Meeting
Saturday, May 5th at 10:30 AM
Milton Academy, Room 229 in Kellner

Board Members Present:

Joyce Albert (Natick), Josh Cohen (Newton South), Greg Cunningham (Needham), Sue Hennessey (Acton-Boxborough), Jim Honeyman (Newton South), Lisa Honeyman (Newton South), Sheryl Kazmeraz (Lexington), Adam Nir (Needham), Amanda Parker (Natick), Marc Rischitelli (Shrewsbury), Chris Sheldon (Bancroft School) and Paul Wexler (Needham).

The meeting was called to order at 10:36 am by the president, Amanda Parker.

1. 2018-2019 [Tournament Calendar](#)

We voted to accept Walpole's bid to host the Novice Tournament on October 20.

Moved: Cunningham; 2nd Honeyman

For: 8; Opposed: 1; Abstain: 3

The rest of the proposed dates on the calendar were accepted unanimously.

(NOTE: The 2018-2019 calendar has been posted on the MSDL website.)

2. Revised requirements for 2018-2019 season. [Participation agreement](#) (Jim)

Jim explained the reasons behind the revised participation agreement. We need to know that the leader of a school (principal, headmaster etc.) approves participation by students who attend their school prior to a team attending a tournament. We have had issues with supervision of students at tournaments and need to know an adult has responsibility for their own students. This revised document also puts firm dates in for dues and lists penalties clearly.

Discussion:

- We discussed wording changes to make the document one we can use from year to year. (For example, remove specific dates).
- We need to clarify the CORI requirement part to put the responsibility on the sending school to be sure all adults meet whatever requirements that school has for adult volunteers. Suggested wording: "All adults meet the requirements for participation required by your school."
- Greg made some specific proposals for revisions to the document Jim presented.

Fourth bullet point - meeting requirements for participation.

Last bullet point - change date to December 1 of that year.

#4: Change December 8th to December 1. Late fees will be assessed to any schools that do not pay by December 1.

The modified document was approved by a unanimous vote of the board.

Jim Honeyman will make the proposed revisions to the new participation document. He'll send it to the board for a final check and then post it on the MSDL website.

3. Gender bias in our community. An issue that students have recently brought to our attention. We are going to look for an opportunity to discuss this issue more openly/broadly early next year. (Amanda)

- Solicitation for research to better understand the experience of girls in debate in the MSDL ([draft here](#)). (Josh) (Pgs. 6-7)
- At both state tournaments groups of students got together for a very positive dialogue on this issue. But, this is just a start.

Josh Cohen made a motion that we discuss the draft he put forward (see link, above). He reported that at the Debate TOC this year, one team conceded an octa-finals round and asked instead to have a discussion about gender issues in debate. They brought up a lot of compelling concerns. These are huge issues - not just in forensics - but in our general society. Josh proposes that we conduct some information gathering. Maybe host a symposium. He urges us, as a league, to help promote this discussion and hope to improve the situation. He proposes that we allocate grant money that could be used to put out a publication. It could be used for one or many research projects focused on this issue. (We want to foster the broadest possible participation.) We would need a subcommittee to decide who got the money and for what purpose(s).

Motion to amend proposal: Cohen; 2nd: Cunningham

Proposal: Allocate up to \$500, in total, to cover project-related expenses.

Passes unanimously.

Motion: Direct the board to create a sub-committee to clean up the proposal and present it to the board.

Motion: West; 2nd: Cunningham.

For: 11; Abstain: 1.

The motion passes.

Note: If you are interested in serving on this committee, contact Josh Cohen.

4. Committee Openings

If you are interested in serving on any of these committees, contact the relevant chair.

- **Grant Committee:** Greg Cunningham will chair and lead a group over the summer to discuss/draft policies for awarding grants in the future.
 - **History Committee:** PJ Wexler will chair and lead a group over the summer to compile MSDL History, and come up with a plan for an annual update to that going forward.
 - **Gender Bias Committee:** Josh Cohen will chair and lead this group. (See #3 (above) for details).
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5. Coach Training Opportunities

- **The Boston Debate League hosts a week-long coach training workshop over the summer. This year it will be at Suffolk University from August 6-10.** The BDL would be interested in hosting current and potential future MSDL coaches at their training for all or part of the week. When there are sessions focused on policy debate structure or topic education, the MSDL could have someone teach the basics of other more common MSDL events simultaneously in a different classroom. During the sessions on recruitment, team culture building, tournament logistics, etc. we could combine and have both BDL and MSDL coaches share information and ideas with each other. Any cost to MSDL coaches would be minimal, just to offset the cost of logistics/food/supplies that is incurred by BDL (probably around \$200 for the week). (Roger)
- **Would like to see one-day workshops for coaches** - one day for Speech coaches, and a separate day for Debate coaches, to share ideas, how to run practices, how to recruit, etc. Questions - how to set up and run, where, time, people, cost, etc. (Peter)

If interested in participating, contact Roger Nix and/or Keith West.

rnix@bostondebate.org

Discussion

Peter Zopes - there is a real need for these types of workshops for coaches to learn and improve their craft at low/no cost to the coaches. He would like to see what we, as a league, could do for coaches. He also sees it as an opportunity for community building. (Not necessarily for just one day during the summer).

Weston Elkins - the NSDA has a lot of on-line resources. Maybe we (the MSDL) can put together some webinars or videos that could be good resources?

Keith West - Maybe we can create a formal mentorship program, pairing experienced and novice coaches. (There was a lot of support for this idea).

Chris Sheldon - There is time between when prelims end and finals start at most tournaments. Maybe we could offer a seminar at each tournament during this time on a specific topic. This would provide professional development throughout the year.

Sarah Donnelly & Chris Sheldon have offered to coordinate seminars for next season. We will try to videotape these seminars, too.

- **Coach communication** - newsletters, forums at tournaments, and online message boards. (Amanda)

Amanda will send out a subscription so people can sign up to get newsletters and updates over the summer so people can opt-in. (Maybe Mailchimp or something like that.)

11:49 - Lunch Break

12:18 - we re-convened

6. Rules

- **Breaking ties to reach finals in speech events.** (Wexler)

Current practice as I understand it is:

- a) top six students in speech event reach finals,
- b) if there is a two way tie for sixth, both students make it,
- c) If there are so many students tied for sixth using rank the total number of students in finals would be eight or more only six make it, including in those cases where there is a two way tie for sixth including reciprocal, but an eighth person ties them both on ranks but has a poorer reciprocal score. In such cases, only one of the two students with the 'better' reciprocal score advance to finals, the difference between 6th and 7th being broken on quality points.

I would like to propose that in such cases, students who are tied by rank and reciprocals, advance to finals, with a cap of seven, notwithstanding any additional student who may be tied with them for ranks but have a poorer reciprocal score. Quality points would only be used to determine finalists in those cases where a tie based on both ranks AND reciprocals would otherwise enlarge the final pool to eight. I believe philosophically it is best to avoid using quality points as a tiebreaker whenever possible (and indeed, logistics seem the only good reason to not take all students tied on reciprocals as well as ranks into finals.) (PJ)

Motion: Wexler - Amend the Rules & Regulations document for States (as above) and then follow the process at other league sanctioned tournaments. This rules change would not apply to Multiple.

2nd: Rischitelli

The motion passes unanimously.

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- **Modification of MSDL rules and regulations, Section 1.2, bullet four**, requiring that when middle school students compete in an MSDL tournament, they "must do so as part of a separate team from a high school, even if the high school is the same school or school system as the middle school." This discussion seeks to articulate the rule's purpose and to explore if there may be alternatives, as the current rule complicates tournament operations. (Josh)

Some schools go 7-12 and practice together etc. They shouldn't be debating against each other. The software we use to tabulate at tournaments (Tabroom) cannot set up conflicts so that teams won't be paired with others from entire schools. Because debate is live-paired, this rule can lead to errors. He suggests that in the context of debate, this rule be changed.

We discussed the pros and cons of including middle school students as part of a high school team and the philosophical implications of approving this proposal. After much discussion we ended up with:

Motion by Cohen:

For the purposes of computer entry and pairing only, students in middle & high school debate may be entered at tournaments as the same school. But, for awards, the middle and high schools would be separated.

2nd: Nir

For: 8; Opposed: 1; Abstain: 3

The motion passes.

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- **Reform of the state tournament bid rules as they apply to PF and LD debate.** The discussion aims to articulate the goals of the bid rules and to explore whether there are reforms that would preserve those goals while better serving the educational mission of the activity. [Proposal here.](#) (Josh Cohen & Sheryl Kazmeraz) (Pg. 8)

Proposed revision of bid rules for MSDL state debate championship tournament

Background

It is our understanding from past discussions of the MSDL state championship bid rules that they aim to accomplish to ends:

- Ensure that the participants in state championship tournaments have a demonstrated level of skill in their event; and
- Incentivize participation at MSDL tournaments.

The current rules require debate entries in LD and PF to have a winning preliminary round record at one MSDL tournament (or a top-8 finish - which usually implies a winning record). For PF, the bid must be earned with by the actual entry wishing to participate at states. In other words, the two debaters who wish to debate together at states must debate together when they earn their bid.

Additional bid opportunities will help to address the following challenges faced by members of the debate community.

- While the growth of LD debate is encouraging, the number of schools participating in this event remains limited, especially at states. That makes it necessary for debaters in large programs to debate other students from their own school, detracting from the value of the tournament opportunities.
- There are 2-3 fewer MSDL opportunities each year to earn LD bids than there are to earn PF bids.
- The vast majority of PF tournaments have no novice or JV division (I believe 2 of 9 MSDL tournaments had novice divisions this past year).
- Debate partnerships change over time, especially among novice debaters because many students who start debate leave the activity without finishing their first year. That can leave committed debaters without a bid partner at the end of the year.

The following proposals aim to provide additional opportunities to debaters who wish to compete at states, consistent with the goals that the existing bid policy aims to promote.

LD Debate

Any student in Varsity or Novice LD will qualify for the state championship tournament if he or she earns a winning record in LD at an MSDL-sanctioned tournament. In addition, any student in Varsity or Novice LD will qualify for the state championship tournament if he or she participates in three MSDL sanctioned tournaments in LD during the course of the season, regardless of the win-loss records at those events. Entries in the LD novice division at States must be novices, as defined by MSDL rules and regulations.

PF Debate - State Novice division

A pair of debaters qualifies for the state championship tournament in Novice PF if:

- Both debaters are novices, as defined by the MSDL rules and regulations and,

- The two debaters have a winning preliminary round record in PF at an MSDL-sanctioned tournament, debating together as a pair.

Or:

- Both debaters are novices, as defined by the MSDL rules and regulations and,
- The two debaters have debated together in PF in at least one MSDL-sanctioned tournament and,
- Each debater has debated in PF in at least four MSDL-sanctioned tournaments.

PF Debate - Varsity division

- The two debaters have a winning preliminary round record in an open or varsity PF division at an MSDL-sanctioned tournament, debating together as a pair and,

Or:

- The two debaters have a winning preliminary round record in an open or varsity PF division at tournament that awards Tournament of Championship bids, debating together as a pair and,
- Each debater has debated in at least four MSDL-sanctioned tournaments in PF.

Motion: Cohen - bid rules change as listed above

2nd: Sheryl

For: 10; opposed: 0; Abstain: 2

The motion passes.

- **Revising rules for Multiple** (Chris) Proposed: This event requires the use of a manuscript; students may speak **or sing lines of text** only if they are holding a manuscript. A group of 3-8 students will present a scene or scenes from published material (play(s), work(s) of prose, and/or work(s) of poetry). The material must be found in printed literature and may be either serious or humorous in nature. The students may use vocal skills, facial expressions, and/or hand gestures to develop a narrator and character/s; however, the focus of the performers should be off-stage. The students may only make eye contact during their own written introduction. Similarly, except during the introduction, students may not touch **each other** nor may they touch the binders of other students. If lines from the selection are used in the introduction, the contestants must adhere to the rules of the event. The presentation should include an introduction that cites the name(s) of **all** piece(s) and the author(s). The cutting should provide a cohesive scene or storyline (containing a definite beginning, middle and end). Theatrical props and costumes are prohibited, with the exception of reader's stands, chairs, tables or stools. Furniture may be simultaneously moved by more than one student, but if used as a hand prop, no more than one student may touch furniture at one time. Students are prohibited from placing chairs or stools on top of tables. Teams must provide any/all of their own furniture.

Motion of proposed revision (above) - Sheldon

2nd: Cunningham

For: 10; Against: 0; Abstain: 2

The motion passes.

- **Standardizing time signals.** We'd like to simplify time signal requests to decrease the burden on judges and encourage students to better manage their presentation time. In prepared events, students may **opt in for "2 down" (2 at 8:00, 1 at 9:00, fist at 10:00) or "1 down" (1 at 9:00, fist at 10:00)**. In Extemp and Impromptu, students may opt in for "5 down". If a time signal is requested but

missed by the judge resulting in a time violation, the judge should report that to the TAB room, where the tournament director will determine if the time violation will stand or be waived. (Parker)

Discussion

One could argue that, for prepared events, a time violation penalty should never be waived, as the competitor has had ample pre-round prep time to craft a presentation that fits within the time guidelines. On the other hand, for limited prep events, one could argue that the penalty should be waived if the judge muffs the time signals. In these events, it's a one-time presentation wherein the speaker uses an outline and adjusts based on the signals given by the judge.

Motion: Rischitelli

2nd: Sheldon

For: 10; Against: 1; Abstain: 1

The motion passes.

7. Events

o **Event committee update** (Joyce)

Joyce presented the Events Mission Statement that was developed by the Event committee during the past year.

Mission Statement

The MSDL offers a range of events in four categories: Oral Interpretation, Platform/Public Address, Limited Prep, and Debate.

To be sanctioned as one of the MSDL's official offerings, an event must develop a student's presentation skills as well as at least two of the following skills: argumentation, critical thinking, writing/editing, interpretation of text, characterization, storytelling, and/or research/analysis.

Each event is intended to be unique unless a differentiation in genre or skill level clearly increases the educational/competitive benefit for students and therefore justifies similar events of a particular type.

Motion to accept: Nir

2nd: Cunningham

For: 10; Oppose: 0; Abstain: 2

The motion passes.

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- ### o **Official sanctioning of the event Programmed Oral Interp as an MSDL event.** Its popularity has been significant in the 2017/2018 school year and would meet our definition of acceptable events for the MSDL. Follow NSDA rules: *Using a combination of Prose, Poetry, and Drama, students construct a program using at least two out of the three genres. With a spotlight on argumentation and performative range, Program Oral Interpretation focuses on a student's ability to combine*

multiple genres of literature centered around a single theme. Competitors are expected to portray multiple characters. No props or costumes may be used except for the manuscript. Performances also include an introduction written by the student to contextualize the performance and state the titles and authors used in the program. Time: 10 minute maximum, including introduction (30 second grace); no minimum. (Patrice)

Discussion:

Raises the bar for kids who love prose & poetry. Done well, the event combines the power of oratory with the creativity of interp and also has an element of movement. It's a national event. As a local event it has only been offered at a few tournaments, so kids have not had much incentive to invest their time and energy.

These genres were never intended to be combined. From an educational point of view, it does not respect the genres as they were intended. Maybe original poetry would allow kids to be more creative and not force them to blend material that was never intended to be blended? This event promotes genre confusion.

This event has been around for a very long time, but we've never felt the need to offer it locally before. Way now?

NSDA has adopted this as a national qualifying event. It is offered at a lot of national circuit tournaments, too. We can change with the times.

The kids who are well coached and who are successful, can transcend the genres. There is an art to putting together a successful POI.

Promotes critical thinking, research & analysis and presentation skills. Kids have to make a cohesive argument in a compelling and persuasive way.

This event has become something that is all about "watching kids do clever things with binders." Students are putting their creative energies to use in a misguided way - which is all about playing tricks with binders.

"Weaving," when done well, is brilliant and a creative wonder. It is almost never done well. We don't pay enough attention to author's intent in this league and adding another weaving event is not in the best interests of students.

Allows you to blend fictional and non-fictional works to create an argument.

To what extent are we charged with teaching communication and expression rather than teaching literature? How important is author's intent?

If we adopt POI, do we need to follow NSDA rules as written?

Where is the line between fact and fiction?

There was focused discussion about possibly adopting the event, but prohibiting the use of binder as prop.

Is this reading event where kids can use a binder as a prop or a memorized event where kids are given a binder to use as a prop? (At the national level, it has already become the second part.)

Amendment: A binder cannot be used as a prop.

Motion: Wexler; 2nd: Nir

For: 9; Opposed: 2; Abstain: 1

Motion to add POI as amended by Kazmeraz

2nd: West

For: 6; Opposed: 2; Abstain: 4

The Motion Passes.

POI is now a sanctioned MSDL event. The binder cannot be used as a prop.

- **Adding INFO as a MSDL event.** Follow NSDA rules: *Students deliver a self-written speech on a topic of their choosing. Limited in their ability to quote words directly (150 words maximum), Informative Speaking competitors craft a speech using evidence, logic, and optional visual aids. All topics must be informative in nature; the goal is to educate, not to advocate. The speech is memorized. Time: 10 minute maximum, including introduction (30 second grace); no minimum.* (Marc)

Discussion

INFO gives our students an opportunity to be competitive nationally. This event is quite different from what OO currently is. Oratory has developed into its own expected style. INFO is a “breath of fresh air” as far as presenting something that is intended to educate, not to advocate.

When POI and INFO have been offered locally, neither has been embraced by students, but that may be because of limited opportunity to perform - and an interest in getting bids in MSDL events.

How much becomes about the visual aide? Is this just one more thing that we have to train judges on? How do we judge the visual aides? The judging is about the use of aide.

Are resources a barrier to this event? Are fancy visual aides necessary? Are they even helpful? Do students actually have to have visual aides?

Visuals - you don't have to have visual aides. It may be possible to do a somewhat extemporaneous speech while reading off visuals - which undermines the value of the event.

Presentations - Most adults when presenting for their jobs, use Powerpoint. We don't allow kids to do that in this event. So, does this event really provide useful real-world skills?

INFO without visuals is not any different than OO as the MSDL defines it. With visuals, this could become the most powerful event we offer.

Nationally, OO is a persuasive speech. You are trying to persuade people of something. INFO is research based, fact based, teaching. In practice locally, OO is almost exclusively persuasive.

Giving this kind of speech well is very important for science presentations.

Proposed - Wexler: No visual aides allowed.

2nd- Cunningham:

For: 2; Opposed: 9; Abstain: 1

The motion fails.

Proposed: We adopt INFO as an MSDL event with rules as written above: - Rischitelli

2nd: West

For: 7; Opposed: 2; Abstain: 3

PASSES - INFO is added as an MSDL event

- **Remove Novice Reading as a league event and add the requirement for each tournament to have a break-out JV Oral Interp final round.** The JV OI Final would consist of the top ~~six~~ three non-advancing novices ~~equally~~ from ~~PR, PO, KL, PL~~ ~~Prose and Poetry~~. Advancing to this final will also earn one state bid in their respective event regardless of preliminary rank totals. (Marc)

Discussion

Is separating out novices so that they only see novices advantageous to what we want to do to teach kids to get better? Could we have a break-out final round for non-advancing novices instead?

Do we need to limit the break-out event just to PO and PR? What about PL and KL? Could we just do "top 6" novices in reading events.

It is less intimidating to a brand new student to compete only against other kids who have no experience. It can increase participation. Does eliminating NR discourage new programs and new students from participating?

We don't really have evidence that offering NR has brought more schools into the league.

The Novice Tournament is a good way to get league novices involved in the activity - and to get them over their initial fear.

It's easier to sell this activity (forensics) to kids if they experience some success early on.

After their first year, kids can get discouraged if they no longer get trophies.

Can we figure out a way to enforce the 2 breaks limit in NR?

Is there anything to prevent individual tournaments from offering a novice division that doesn't provide bids for States?

The breakout round is a way to be encouraging.

What about making the top 6 overall, from all 4 reading events: PR, PO, PL, KL, eligible for this JV final round. All events have 5-6 participants per round. These kids have all been in rounds with 5-6 people.

Could we modify the proposal to leave it up to the tournament director, based upon entry, to determine how the final competitors will be selected to advance to the JV final round.

Proposed Amendment: It is the tournament director's prerogative to determine which of the events: PR, PO, KL, PL and what mathematics will be used to have students advance to the JV final, based upon entry numbers.

Motion: L. Honeyman; 2nd: Wexler

For: 0

Against: 6

Abstain: 6

Motion Fails.

Proposed Amendment: Take the lowest cume of all of the novice scores in PR, PO, PL, KL to advance to the JV final round.

Motion: Albert; 2nd: J. Honeyman

For: 8

Against: 1

Abstain: 3

Motion Passes.

Motion to vote as amended - Rischitelli

2nd: Cunningham

For: 6

Oppose: 4

Abstain: 2

Motion Passes.

Novice Reading will no longer be an MSDL required event. Instead, a JV OI Final round will be held at MSDL sanctioned tournaments. It will consist of the top six non-advancing novices from PR, PO, KL, and PL. A student who advances to this final will earn one state bid in their respective event, regardless of preliminary rank totals.

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- **Remove Play Reading as a league event.** The '17-18 season saw an average of 15 entries in Play and this was somewhat artificially elevated by 25 entries at the Holly. Mardi Gras saw only 11 entries in the event. The majority of those in the even use it to prepare to move into Dramatic Performance (DP). Eliminating the event will encourage early memorization and advanced blocking as there will not be an "out". DP could benefit from this decision as numbers there may increase making it more competitive. (Rischitelli)

Discussion

DP grows as the season progresses. Do we do our students any favors by not making them be prepared in DP at the beginning of the season?

When coached well, DP and PL are different events. DP is acting. PL is "interp" because you are holding a binder.

At States there were 16 PL entries, and 17 in DUO, but we are not suggesting that we drop DUO.

PL can be a good training ground for DP, just as DEC can be a training ground for OO.

We now have 4 other binder events (PR, PO, KL, POI), do we need a 5th? We have lots of places for kids who want to do “reading” events.

Eliminating PL should help improve DP.

Are we taking away opportunities from students? Will we lose students if we take away PL? PL offers an avenue for entry to new students and new programs.

PR, PO, KL - all designed to be read. But PL was designed to be memorized & performed. Why do we have kids read PL?

Staged readings are a “thing” in the theater world. It’s not useless or meaningless skill.

Could PL be read in our PR event? What about monologues?

The newer program coaches speak to the importance of PL in the offerings list.

Moved: Rischitelli

2nd: Nir

For: 2; Opposed: 6; Abstain: 4

The motion fails.

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- **Remove Radio Broadcasting as a league event.** It is long past its relevance and we have removed creativity from the event. Speech education has evolved beyond its historic inclusion of specific vocational training. Three of seven tournaments in the '17-'18 season had single digit entries in this event. (Marc)

Discussion

Radio is an entry-level event that makes participation easy. It’s non-intimidating and requires a low level of prep. RB allows some kids to build confidence. Students can do this while doing other activities. They don’t actually have to talk “in front of” anybody.

Easy to coach this event.

There are a lot of public speaking jobs in radio, doing weekly podcasts etc.

Maybe re-brand the event as “Podcast” or have students add some commentary? Give it some chops.

Why do we offer an event that allows kids to do no real work and still get recognized?

Do we really believe that kids can’t do anything more challenging? Are we selling these students short?

How can we be a public speaking league and offer an event that doesn’t require a student to look anyone directly in the eyes when they speak?

Maybe RB should be a novice event? That addresses the issues of “entry level.”

Motion - Rischitelli; 2nd - Sheldon.

For: 3; Against: 7; Abstain: 2

The motion fails.

Joyce suggests that we form a committee to look into ways to modify or replace RB in the future.

- **Add Extemporaneous Debate as a league event to be offered at sanctioned Speech tournaments. This event would replace Group Discussion.** [Attachment with proposed rules](#), guidelines for judging and other recommendations (author: Joe Bowden). If amendments to the document cannot be agreed upon at the meeting, this proposal includes creation of a sub-committee to use this document to finalize the rules for official Board approval and league posting before September. Short argument: This proposed event addresses most, if not all, of the concerns expressed at last year's meeting by those opposed to eliminating Group. Arguably it includes all of the benefits extolled about Group but places it into a competitive format. (Risचितेली)

Discussion

Some voiced concerns about the impact of a new debate event to be offered and tabulated at Tournaments that are focused on speech events.

Some programs *really* value group discussion as an event and speak passionately about why they think it's important to keep as an MSDL event. They talk about the development of important life skills.

There is recognition about the amount of sexism in this event. Also recognition about how people are not always kind in rounds.

Is this another event where we sell students/schools short by keeping it just so that there is a low entry point into forensics?

Who would judge this new event? Is this something speech judges could handle? (Speech judges do judge this event at nationals successfully).

This proposal addresses the concern that *discussion* should not be competitive by replacing it with an event that is clearly intended to be competitive.

Should we maybe try it for one year to see how it goes?

Group discussion actively teaches kids a harmful lesson: that one can "win" a discussion. It teaches that a discussion is a place where you advance your own concerns rather than working with others to reach consensus.

The fact that most of the judges will be speech judges means kids can't "spread". If they do, they'll lose.

This event does not require massive research and massive prep work.

We're talking about two things at once:

- Group Discussion (should it go?)
- Is Extemp Debate an event we want to adopt?

Extemp Debate gives kids an opportunity to "taste" debate before jumping in. That's what GD does for some. So in that sense, this is a good substitute. BUT, we don't want Extemp Debate to take kids away from PF or LD.

Change the focus.

Maybe we can tweak GD again. For example, add as judging criteria:

“Does not come into debate from an adversarial perspective.”

“Respects the ideas and time of others”

“Allows position to evolve during the course of the discussion.”

Marc - Amendment: Trial Period of One Year to be reassessed at next year's league meeting.

Second: J. Honeyman

For: 2; Against: 8; Abstain: 2

Move for original motion - Rischitelli

Second: Nir

For: 2; Against: 8; Abstain: 2

The motion fails.

Joyce will work with Weston to clarify rules on the GD ballots.

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- **Creation of a list of optional league events from which sanctioned tournaments must choose. League rules regarding inclusion of all events at a sanctioned tournament will be changed to include a list of mandatory events to be offered and a list of optional events from which a tournament must offer at least half but can offer more or all.** Other proposals aside, recommend the optional list include Play, Radio, Group, Children's Lit, Impromptu, Novice Extemp and if added as events, POI & INFO. Decisions on optional events must be made on the Sanctioning Request Form and the Board can request changes as a prerequisite for sanctioning in order to balance the offerings of optional events across a season. (Rischitelli)

Discussion

This would allow the tournament directors some flexibility. Maybe, because of space concerns, tournament directors could offer fewer events and then expand things like PFD at speech tournaments.

Tournament directors would list events to offer on tournament sanctioning request forms. The board would need to be sure that all events are offered often enough for kids to get their bids.

This seems like a way to kill events without actually killing them. Is that our intent?

And - why the events on this list? Where did this list come from? Are we creating two different levels of forensic events? Why?

Reality: We are experiencing serious space issues. We'd like to be able to offer more PFD opportunities at speech tournaments. But tournament directors are using rooms to offer events that maybe they don't value as much.

We're offering new and wonderful events. The problem is, that we don't want to get rid of anything.

Limited double-entry is a possible way to make more space.

Caps don't do enough - It causes kids to shift to other events rather than sit out a tournament. It also disproportionately hurts large programs.

Motion: Rischitelli

2nd: Wexler

For: 1; Against: 9; Abstain: 2

The motion fails.

Motion to adjourn: Cunningham

Cohen: 2nd

Passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm

Respectfully submitted,

--Lisa Honeyman

clerk/secretary

MSDL 2018-2019 Tournament Schedule

October 2018 (conflicts in October: SAT 10/6, ACT 10/27)

10/20 - Novice Tournament @ Walpole (Speech & Debate)

10/27 - Festival of Imagination @ Dighton Rehoboth (Speech Only)

10/26-27 - Averill Invitational Debate Tournament @ Manchester-Essex

November 2018 (conflicts: SAT 11/3)

11/10 - Gracia Burkill @ Natick (Speech Only)

11/17 - Little Lex @ Lexington (Debate Only)

December 2018 (conflicts: SAT 12/1, ACT 12/8)

12/8 - Lincoln Sudbury Showdown (Speech & Debate)

12/15 - The Holly Festival @ Natick (Speech Only)

January 2019

1/12 - Winter Festival @ Newton South (Speech & Debate)

1/19-21 - Big Lex @ Lexington (Debate Only)

February 2019 (conflicts: ACT 2/9)

2/1-2 - NSDA Quals

2/9 - NCFL Quals

March 2019 (conflicts: SAT 3/9, Drama Festival 3/2, 3/16, 3/30)

3/2 - Mardi Gras @ Shrewsbury (Speech & Debate)

3/9 - Brandeis High School Debate Tournament (Debate Only)

3/16 - March Merryness/Spring Fling/Oscars @ Needham (Speech & Debate)

3/30 - State Debate at Chelmsford

April 2019 (conflicts: ACT 4/13, MICCA 4/6)

4/6 - State Speech at Acton-Boxborough