

Massachusetts Speech & Debate League

Newsletter

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Happy November!

Well I don't know about you, but I certainly don't have any idea where the first two months of the year have gone. With one speech and one debate tournament under our belt we move into November with two strong tournaments coming up: Dighton-Rehoboth on November 9 and the Gracia Burkhill tournament (at Natick High School) on November 16. The invitations with all the details for both tournaments are on the MSDL website for you to view.

Please make sure you pay your dues to the league as soon as possible. If you can bring your dues with you to the next tournament that would be great. Checks should be made out to the Massachusetts Speech & Debate League.

With one tournament down there have been a few things I have noticed that should be covered. We have trimmed down the tab staff so that most all coaches judge rounds at tournaments. We still need to have a few people in the tab room, but in general we are keeping the group small and allowing the majority of coaches to judge all day.

Registration in the mornings is tough. If everyone would please print a copy of the invitation and remember to call or text the number given in the invite on Saturday morning it would help greatly. We can't print registration forms or panel the tournament without those phone calls. If everyone could get this done as soon as they are on the bus, we could move along faster at the start of the day. With this in mind, to help the tab staff, if you don't have a question or change when you get to the tournament, wait patiently in the cafeteria and we will announce that registration is open. In this way, without interruption, we have the ability to just process all changes/drops and get everything printed. You can print out your student entry sheet in advance so that they have their numbers for competition. This makes paying the entry fee just a completion of your schools entry and not something that has to be done for the students to get into rounds.

If a team comes with only a parent, please make sure the parent understands the obligations of the day. Even if all students have dropped from the tournament, all judges are usually needed for finals. No school should leave before finals are posted in case one of their judges is used. If all judging requirements are fulfilled and all students are out of the tournament, a school that is leaving early may ask for their ballots. Understand, however, that ballots may not be sorted completely and that whether or not to release ballots before awards are announced is at the discretion of the tournament director. If the director will give the ballots to a school that is leaving early, the school must leave the building and look at the ballots on their way home – not while still at the tournament.

To all future tournament host sites, it has been great that in the invitations this year the actual address of the school is listed – not just directions. In this day and age of using GPSs to get where you want to go, the address is very helpful to everyone. We have the ability to give it to parents, bus drivers and anyone driving to the school without too much worry of them getting lost! Thanks to the current school invitations and if future ones could list it too, that would be great.

Debbie Simon and I have travelled to a few schools already and done judge training for parents. If you would like us to come to your school, please send me an email. We would be very happy to come.

Remember, too, that Debbie will be at most tournaments to do judge training for a small group of new judges. Let Joyce Albert know in advance if you have a parent or two that would like training on the day of a tournament.

If you have any thoughts, issues, or questions do not hesitate to contact any of us. We look forward to seeing you in the next few weeks.

Susan Marianelli
Milton Academy
President Massachusetts Forensic League

