

## MSDL Board Meeting Minutes

April 30, 2024 @ 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, Sheryl Kaczmarek, Amanda Parker, Michael Plunkett, Tammie Ruda, Chris Sheldon, and PJ Wexler.

### 1. Equity review

Amanda invited Scott & Tammie to share their impressions of how this year went, issues that came up, etc. They didn't have anything specific to share today. They will send out a note to the board summarizing how the year went. At the annual meeting, Scott will do a brief "pitch" inviting more people to join the committee next year.

### 2. Updating Rules & Procedures to Google Doc for easy review and better managing updates/revisions.

Amanda is working on moving our current Rules & Procedures document into a Google Doc so we can use it going forward. She's not quite done, but hopes to get it up and running soon.

### 3. Consideration for next year: microphones for all meetings for accessibility purposes

As we move towards providing more accessible spaces, the MSDL recommends that host schools provide microphones for presenters where possible for Judge meetings, student meetings, etc. If we do use microphones, we need to be sure everyone using them knows how they work.

### 4. Disaster planning: Anyone want to take this on?

We're in the exploratory stages of looking at what emergency preparedness planning for speech & debate tournaments would look like. (Including how we will communicate with folks in an emergency.) At this point, we need a committee to do some initial research, looking at what other organizations (like the MIAA) have in place so we have a place to start. The exploratory committee will be chaired by Michael Plunkett and will include Michael Plunkett & Ryan Julian. Others are invited to gather information and send it to Michael & Ryan, as well. We will begin the process in a more focused manner in the fall.

### 5. Follow up from States:

Based on rules, we should only be allowing full members schools to our state tournaments. And no middle schools. Not certain this was the case this year. Should it be going forward?

We need to be clear in our state tournament invitations that the MSDL State Tournaments are only open to students in grades 9-12.

Shrewsbury (Mardi Gras), Needham (March Merryness), and Lexington host tournaments where middle school teams are invited to participate with high school teams, as long as they compete for their own school. There is also a middle school league where middle schoolers can compete in speech events, but not debate. (In an ideal world, the middle school league would offer PFD and we would not need to accommodate them in the MSDL.)

Accommodating middle schoolers in the MSDL has presented some challenges. In particular, in order to prevent middle schoolers from competing head-to-head in debate with high schoolers who attend the same school (for example, Boston Latin), it is easiest to register them as part of the same team. However, if we are going to allow middle school debaters (only) to compete for a school other than their own middle school, we need to change our rules because they currently explicitly forbid middle school students from competing on high school teams at our tournaments. (Josh has been assigned the task of creating the new language for our rules document.)

- Novice status in debate & speech are currently different - should we equalize?

Question 1: Do we believe that generally speaking, novice status in speech & debate should be different or the same?

Proposal: They should be the same.

If this proposal passes, Section 3.3.2.2 in the debate rules will be removed.

Summary: If this motion passes, for all events, if a high school student has competed in any MSDL Speech or Debate tournament in a previous year when they were in high school, they are no longer considered a novice. (Rules are a bit different if a student competed in middle school.)

The board voted with the following results, but we agreed not to make the changes and, instead, take this proposal to the membership at the general meeting on May 4, 2024.

9 for, 2 opposed, 2 abstain

Question 2: Do we allow people to retain novice status in an event if it's their first year in that event? For example, our current rules allow students to enter NX if they have never done Extemp in the past even if they have competed in another event. In order to be consistent with what we are doing in debate, should we eliminate this exception?

Motion: Remove from "Section 3.1.2.10 Novice Extemp" the line that states ". . . with the exception that such status shall be calculated in Extemp specifically, not forensics as a whole."

The board voted with the following results, but we agreed not to make the changes and, instead, take this proposal to the membership at the general meeting on May 4, 2024.

6 for, 4 opposed, 3 abstain

- Expenses - We've lost money on States each of the last two years.

2023: Both tournaments combined \$6428 - \$5426 = \$1002 loss

2024: Both tournaments combined \$8518 - \$6369 = \$2149 loss

6 schools have not yet paid. Once they pay, 2024 States will be \$1632 in the red.

We might want to consider increasing entry fees for the State tournament in the future.

## 6. Annual meeting planning

- Food - 13 in person RSVP's (I expect at least a few others)

Do we want to provide a full lunch or heavy snacks? We could keep it simple and order a bunch of pizzas and a few salads, some chips, cookies, veggies & dip, crackers & cheese. We'll also need assorted drinks, napkins, plates, utensils, etc. Other options?

Needham High School - Room 728 at 10:30 am

About ½ of the folks who have responded to the survey will be in person and about ½ on Zoom.

We have the building from 10:30 am - 2:00 pm.

We'll have pizza, a few salads and some snacks for lunch.

Ryan & Tammie will help with the Zoom logistics

- [Agenda](#) & other meeting logistics
  - Amanda will send out agenda tonight/tomorrow morning
  - Timing?
- Tournament sanctioning

**October 25-26** - Tim Averill Invitational (Online)

Events offered: BQ, LD, Policy Debate, PFD

Offer to host NSDA Districts in February

**November 2** - Fall Fest @ Revere

Events offered: ALL MSDL Speech, BQ, Congress, LD, Policy, PFD, Special Events

**November 16** - Gracia Burkill @ Natick

Events offered: ALL MSDL Speech Events, Congress, PFD

**November 23** - Little Lex @ Lexington

Events offered: LD, Policy Debate, PFD

**December 7** - St Nick's Showdown @ Arlington

Events offered: ALL MSDL Speech, BQ, Congress, LD, PFD

**December 14** - The Holly Festival @ Natick

Events offered: ALL MSDL Speech, Congress, PFD, Special Events

**January 11** - Winter Festival @ Newton South

Events offered: ALL MSDL Speech, Congress, PFD

**January 18-20** - Lexington Winter Invitational (Big Lex)

Events offered: LD, Policy Debate, PFD

Offer to host NSDA District Congress

**January 31 - Feb 1** - NSDA District Quals @ Concord Carlisle

**Not a MSDL tournament, but helpful for MSDL members to be aware of**

Events offered: NSDA main events

**February 8** - NCFL Quals @ Shrewsbury

**Not a MSDL tournament, but helpful for MSDL members to be aware of**

Events offered: All NCFL events

**March 1** - Mardi Gras @ Shrewsbury

Events offered: ALL MSDL Speech, Congress, LD, PFD, Special Events

**March 15** - March Merryness @ Needham

Events offered: ALL MSDL Speech Events, BQ, Congress, LD, PFD, Special Events

**March 29** - Probable State Debate Tournament - need host school

**April 5** - MSDL State Speech & Congressional Debate @ Walpole - [note: ACT Date](#)

Events offered: ALL MSDL Speech, Congress

**Vote to sanction MSDL State Tournament list as is passed unanimously.** (Note that National Qualifiers are not in our realm to approve.)

Open weekends October - March:

- 10/5 (SAT)
- 10/19 - Novice Tournament? - need host (PSAT)
- 11/9 (11/11 Veterans' Day)
- 1/4/25 (1/1 NY Day)
- 1/25
- 2/15 (Harvard Weekend - Feb Break)
- 2/22 (Feb Break)
- 3/8 (SAT)
- 3/22 (private school spring break)
- 3/29 (private school spring break) - possibly State Debate - need host

Tournaments missing?

- Novice 10/19 - need host - possibly Sharon/Wincester?
- Lincoln Sudbury (Amanda emailed 4/30)

- Boston Latin (No Melissa next year)
- State Debate - need host 3/29 greatly preferred

8. Setting next year's calendar - board meetings

Board meetings will be primarily on Mondays with an occasional Tuesday.

9. Summer projects

BIA Guide

Revising HOF form to a Google form, establishing deadline for submissions

The meeting was adjourned at 9:41 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Honeyman

Clerk/Secretary

Next meeting: Annual Meeting

Saturday, May 4, 2024

10:30 am

at Needham H.S. Room 728