

2023-2024



**SPEECH
DEBATE & THEATRE
COACHES INFORMATION**



Missouri State High School Activities Association

1 N. Keene Street, Columbia, MO 65201 ♦ P.O. Box 1328, Columbia, MO 65205

Phone (573) 875-4880 ♦ email@mshsaa.org

♦ www.mshsaa.org ♦

Dr. Jennifer Rukstad, Executive Director

Stacy Schroeder, Senior Associate Executive Director

Craig Long, Chief Operations/Financial Officer

Toni Hill, Assoc. Exec. Dir. James Melton, Assoc. Exec. Dir. Daryl Bradley, Asst. Exec. Dir. Doug Fessler, Asst. Exec. Dir. Lou Mazzocco, Asst. Exec. Dir. Marty M. Marsh, Asst. Exec. Dir.
Jennifer Bethmann, Coor. of Digital Media Stacey Slaughter, Coor. for Accounting Services Stephanie Turner, Coor. of Sports & Activities Jason West, Communications Dir.

To: Activity Administrators & Speech, Debate, & Theatre Directors/Coaches
From: Marty M. Marsh, Ed.S. & C.M.A.A.
Subject: 2023-2024 Speech, Debate, & Theatre Fall Rules Book Mailing

I hope this finds you having a great summer and you're energized and ready for the start of the school year and the Speech, Debate, & Theatre season. I am looking forward to working with you this year, and it is my desire that you find me approachable, open to assist you, and able to listen to your concerns in whatever communication means you choose to use. Furthermore, it is my hope that this upcoming season is a positive one for you and your students. Included in this link, please find the 2023-2024 Speech, Debate, & Theatre Rules Meeting Announcements.

This year all Speech, Debate, & Theatre materials are located in the Speech, Debate, & Theatre Manual, Rules Meeting Announcements, Online Rules Review, and MSHSAA website. The Speech, Debate, & Theatre Manual contains helpful information. The Speech, Debate, & Theatre Manual can be found on the Speech, Debate, & Theatre webpage.

Please allow me to highlight a couple of MSHSAA By-Law changes. Starting this year, all directors/coaches are required to successfully complete a Concussion In Sports course yearly and a First Aid/CPR/AED course every two years. Additionally, students will be required to fulfill the following two additional requirements:

- 4.1.5 Parental Permission: Prior to each year of interscholastic activity participation, a student shall furnish a statement, signed by the student's parent(s) or legal guardian (see By-Law 3.10.1.a), which grants permission for the student to participate in interscholastic activities. [Editor's Note: See also By-Laws 2.12.1, and 3.7]
- 4.1.6 Healthcare Coverage: A student shall not be permitted to practice or compete for a school until it has verification that he/ she has healthcare insurance coverage or a healthcare expense payment plan. [Editor's Note: See also By-Laws 2.12.1 and 3.8]

Located on the Speech, Debate, & Theatre tab on the MSHSAA website (www.mshsaa.org) you will find the following items:

- MSHSAA Speech, Debate, & Theatre Manual
- District Assignments (please check to make sure that your school is registered for the 2023-2024 postseason)
- State Championship Information & Results
- Informational Videos
- MSHSAA Speech, Debate, & Theatre Advisory Committee Information
- Sanctioned Events
- Special Report Forms
- 2023-2024 Speech, Debate, & Theatre Regular Season Tournaments

“MSHSAA promotes the value of participation, sportsmanship, team play and personal excellence to develop citizens who make positive contributions to their community and support the democratic principles of our state and nation.”



Missouri State High School Activities Association

1 N. Keene Street, Columbia, MO 65201 ♦ P.O. Box 1328, Columbia, MO 65205

Phone (573) 875-4880 ♦ email@mshsaa.org

♦ www.mshsaa.org ♦

Dr. Jennifer Rukstad, Executive Director

Stacy Schroeder, Senior Associate Executive Director

Craig Long, Chief Operations/Financial Officer

Toni Hill, Assoc. Exec. Dir. James Melton, Assoc. Exec. Dir. Daryl Bradley, Asst. Exec. Dir. Doug Fessler, Asst. Exec. Dir. Lou Mazzocco, Asst. Exec. Dir. Marty M. Marsh, Asst. Exec. Dir.
Jennifer Bethmann, Coor. of Digital Media Stacey Slaughter, Coor. for Accounting Services Stephanie Turner, Coor. of Sports & Activities Jason West, Communications Dir.

- MSHSAA Debate Ballot Order Form and Price list (Note: Individual Event Ballots and Theatre Ballots are now available online for your convenience located on the “Speech, Debate, & Theatre” page of the MSHSAA website.)

Each director/coach must complete the Speech, Debate, & Theatre Online Rules Review and Test on the MSHSAA website. Please make sure your Activity Director has you and your staff entered correctly on the website. A director/coach must go to www.mshsaa.org and login to their school account. Once in the account, the director/coach can access the review through the Online Rules Review link. Once the system has recorded a completed review; a director/coach will have to complete the Rules Test from the link provided. If a director/coach receives a “unapproved user” message, they may still access the Rules Review and test from the link. At this point, director’s/coaches should also contact their Activity Director to ensure their coaching status is rectified. Director’s/Coaches only have to complete one Rules Review and Test per school year. The Rules Review and Test must be completed during the following window: October 2nd through December 1st. Failure on the part of the director/coach to complete the Rules Review and Test will result in a \$50.00 fine.

Finally, please note that the 2023-2024 district and state entries will again be completed online at www.mshsaa.org. District entry deadlines can be found in the MSHSAA Speech, Debate, & Theatre Manual. All district and state entries must be completed prior to the published deadline to avoid a \$100 fine being issued to your school. District and state information can also be found in the MSHSAA Speech, Debate, & Theatre Manual. The 2023-2024 Theatre Championships will be held in Springfield, Missouri On Wednesday, April 17th and Thursday, April 18th. The Debate Championships will be Friday, April 18th through Saturday, April 19th, while the Individual Events Championships will be held on Saturday, April 20th.

In closing, if I can be of any assistance to you, please do not hesitate to call or email me at marty@mshsaa.org. Best wishes and good luck in the upcoming season!

“MSHSAA promotes the value of participation, sportsmanship, team play and personal excellence to develop citizens who make positive contributions to their community and support the democratic principles of our state and nation.”

2023-2024 MSHSAA SPEECH, DEBATE, AND THEATRE RULES ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. ONLINE RULES REVIEW FOR COACHES/DIRECTORS

MSHSAA By-Law 4.1.3 requires that all approved Speech, Debate, and Theatre coaches/directors and assistant coaches/directors to take the Online Rules Review (ORR) annually prior to the beginning of the season. If a school's coach/director or assistant coach/director fails to take the required ORR, a fine of \$50.00 applies to all who fail to take the ORR prior to the deadline. **The ORR for Speech/Debate/Theatre will open on October 2, 2023 – December 1, 2023.** All coaches/directors, assistant coaches/directors and student teachers (approved by the school) must complete the ORR prior to instructing and/or coaching students in Speech, Debate and Theatre events this fall. In the event that a student teacher (serving as an assistant coach) is added after the ORR deadline, contact **Marty M. Marsh** at the MSHSAA office (marty@mshsaa.org) for the ORR to be opened.

2. ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Speech, Debate and Theatre Advisory Committee serves to provide increased communication from the “grass roots” level between the MSHSAA member schools and the MSHSAA Board of Directors. Members of the Committee are appointed by the Board of Directors with the advice and counsel of S.T.A.M. High school coaches/directors should note that MSHSAA board districts include different schools and counties than those for district tournaments.

3. SPEECH, DEBATE AND THEATRE MANUAL

A Speech, Debate and Theatre Manual is published on the MSHSAA website (www.mshsaa.org) annually to provide a better understanding of the administration of MSHSAA sponsored events. This manual shall serve as a guide to the participating schools and to provide greater consistency. The regulations in this manual shall be considered official unless the schools are notified of any changes via e-mail or through the MSHSAA website.

4. ETHICS

Questionable language or non-verbal content in selections shall be approved by the local school administration prior to being performed at any contest. The ethics of coaches/directors and students are addressed in the MSHSAA Speech, Debate and Theatre Manual. It is the responsibility of all coaches/directors to ensure that good ethics are being practiced by both the coaches/directors and students at every event/contest. Students should develop original interpretations of their sections.

5. DISTRICT AND STATE TOURNAMENT ORGANIZATION

- A. The 2024 state championships will be held on April 17-20, 2024 @ Missouri State University.
NOTE: Reader's Theatre and One-Act Plays will be held on April 17-18, 2024.
- B. Informational material for the 2024 state championships will be posted on the Speech, Debate and Theatre page of the MSHSAA website as the information becomes available.
- C. Schools qualifying to the state championships **will no longer** receive a “Schedule Letter” via email indicating performance times. Instead, speech/debate performance times will be released at 7:00 a.m. on the date of competition.
- D. The district and state entry process is online through the MSHSAA website (www.mshsaa.org) (schools shall be invoiced for entry fees) via the “District Entries” and “State Qualifiers” link on the school's homepage.
 - 1) **District Substitutions:** A school may make substitutions to its district tournament entries by submitting the substitutions in the competitor's names and/or the selection titles in writing to the district manager.
 - 2) **State Substitutions:** Substitutions at the state tournament may be made in case of an unforeseen emergency in **group** events, but not in individual events. All substitutes must be eligible for entry in the event which they are substituting beginning at the district tournament.
 - 3) **Late Entries:** Entries submitted after the initial district entry deadline, but before 7 days prior to the district tournament, may be accepted provided that the school pays a late penalty of \$100. A late fee for additional entries submitted by a school that entered by the published deadline shall not be assessed if such additional entries are received *more than seven days* prior to the start of the district tournament. No additional entries will be accepted seven days prior to the district tournament.
 - 4) **State Entries:** The entry process is online through the MSHSAA website. Although students may qualify at a district tournament, they are not considered entered at the state tournament until their school has submitted/verified entries (schools shall be invoiced for entry fees).
 - 5) **State Dropped Entries:** Coaches/Directors are to report any known drops for the state tournament to the MSHSAA office on or prior to the Tuesday following the close of a school's district tournament. A school shall be fined \$100 for each entry dropped or withdrawn from the state tournament. The deadline for

submitting changes in selections for the state tournament is the Tuesday after the last district tournament concludes.

- E. **Disqualification At District/State Tournament:** If a disqualification occurs prior to the elimination rounds, the entry is removed from consideration for the elimination rounds. If the disqualification occurs after the elimination rounds have been posted, then the forfeit rule would be enacted. Regardless of when a disqualification occurs, prior ranks and records would not be adjusted.
 - F. **Repetition:** A selection shall not be repeated by a student who gave that selection in an interscholastic speech event in any previous school year (grades 9-12). However, another student of the school may use the selection in question in regular season contests in any subsequent year.
 - G. **Debate Judges:** For the district tournament, each school shall be prepared to provide one judge for each debate event entered. All coaches/directors who have students entered in debate events are required to be available to judge **one round beyond** the elimination of their school's debaters at the district and state tournaments. If a school coach/director cannot judge for any reason, the school coach/director must provide a qualified approved school coach/director/assistant coach/director as a replacement. Please note the editorial change this year maintains the requirement that coaches/directors have to be available to judge one round beyond the elimination of their schools' debaters at the district/state tournament, however eliminates the requirement that one judge on each debate judge panel must be a school judge. Schools shall be assessed a fine of \$50 each round for failure to fulfill their judging assignments at the state tournament. **If a school has no state qualifier, they are not expected to provide a judge.**
 - H. **Individual Event Judges:** For the district tournament, each school shall be prepared to provide one judge for up to five entries and a second judge for six or more entries in speech events. Approved school coaches/directors shall serve as judges for individual events at the state tournament. This may be the head coach/director or an assistant coach/director that serves in this position. Non-school personnel **are not** to serve as judges during individual events competitions. Schools shall be assessed a fine of \$50 each event for failure to fulfill their judging assignments at the state tournament.
 - I. **Judging:** When judging, coaches/directors shall provide complete written comments on all ballots in order to make the experience educational. A clear reason for a decision is required on all ballots.
 - J. **US/International Extemporaneous Speaking:** Each school qualifying in U.S. Extemporaneous Speaking and/or International Extemporaneous Speaking shall submit, along with its entries, a list of five (5) U.S. Extemporaneous topics and/or (5) International Extemporaneous topics which will collectively assist with the pool for extemporaneous topics for the district/state tournament. In total, 30 questions shall be written and used for both U.S. and International Speaking events at the district/state tournament. U.S. topics shall deal with domestic matters and International topics shall deal with foreign matters. Schools qualifying for either extemporaneous speaking division at the district/state tournament are also requested to submit topics to the tournament manager via the district/state entry verification process on the MSHSAA website.
 - K. State tournament invoices are only viewable by the schools AD's.
6. **EVENT INFORMATION, REGULATIONS, RESTRICTIONS, REMINDERS and CHANGES**
- A. **Event/Contest Scheduling Exception:** For contests held on Monday through Thursday nights, you may combine a maximum total of six rounds of competition to equal one tournament. Partial contests shall be rounded up so that a student who has participated in less than six rounds of weeknight contests will be deemed to have used 1 full contest of their 11 eligible tournaments, meets or festivals.
 - B. **Copyright Restrictions:** It shall be the responsibility of each coach/director and each school to enforce the copyright law. Copies of rights and royalties for both the district/state qualifying events shall be attached to entries on the MSHSAA website prior to the tournament. Copies of rights and royalties for district events shall also be submitted to the district manager. **When using a royalty piece for One-Act Play or Reader's Theatre, the school must obtain a letter stating that they have permission to change the piece.**
 - C. **Electronic Devices:** Internet connectivity may be allowed at a tournament's discretion so long as the tournament reasonably attempts to provide access to all competitors. Use of the internet at a tournament should be placed in the invitation. Internet connectivity will be allowed at the state tournament in all debate rounds and the preparation room for Extemporaneous Speaking. For additional information about electronic devices and internet access, please see Appendix E and F of the Speech, Debate, and Theatre Manual. Please note the following change will be implemented during the 2023-2024 school year: "Availability of Evidence: Contestants electing to use a computer have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence planned to be read in a speech prior to the speech for inspection by opponent and/or judge (any evidence added or removed from the speech can be edited after the speech). Evidence must be provided in a format readable by the opposing team and the judge."
 - D. **Limitations:** A student may participate in no more than four different events, with no more than three being individual events at the district tournament including Reader's Theatre, One-Act Play, and Debate. No student shall act in both Reader's Theatre and One-Act Play events or participate in more than one debate event. No

- student shall participate in both U.S. Extemporaneous Speaking and International Extemporaneous Speaking.
- E. **Policy Debate:** The MSHSAA member schools shall use the debate topic selected by the discussion and debate committee of the National Federation of State High School Associations. The 2023-2024 Policy Debate topic is:
- 1) 2023-2024 Debate Topic – Economic Inequalities
Resolved: The United States federal government should substantially increase fiscal redistribution in the United States by adopting a federal jobs guarantee, expanding Social Security, and/or providing basic income.
Each debate team will be allowed 8 minutes of preparation time during the course of the debate to be divided as it sees fit. No grace time will be given for debate speeches.
- F. **Lincoln-Douglas Debate:** The MSHSAA member schools shall use the topics developed by the NSDA. See the MSHSAA Speech, Debate and Theatre Manual for details on topics. All topics will be posted on the Speech/Debate page of the MSHSAA website. Note: The NSDA Novice LD Debate Topic is not permitted to be used at any regular season debate tournament/invitational.
- 1) The topic for the Lincoln-Douglas Debate shall be the bi-monthly topic chosen by the NSDA, which is released on the first day of the previous month.
 - 2) The district and state tournaments shall use the NSDA topic for the month in which the tournament is held. No grace time will be given for debate speeches. Each debater will be allowed a total of four minutes of preparation time during the course of the debate to be divided as he/she sees fit. Please note the language change for Lincoln-Douglas Debate that states “No plan arguments should be presented by either debater.”
- G. **Public Forum Debate:** The MSHSAA member schools shall use the topics developed by the NSDA. All topics will be posted on the Speech, Debate and Theatre tab of the MSHSAA website (www.mshsaa.org).
- 1) The topic for Public Forum Debate shall be the designated topic for that month as chosen by the NSDA. This topic is generally released on the first day of the previous month.
 - 2) The district and state tournaments shall use the NSDA topic for the month in which the tournament is held. Each team will be allowed a total of 3 minutes of preparation time during the course of the debate to be divided as it sees fit. Each team will be given 3 minutes for the summary speech. No grace time will be given for debate speeches.
- H. **One-Act Play and Reader’s Theatre:**
- 1) Coaches/Directors should review the Speech, Debate and Theatre Manual for rules regarding time-limits for set-up, rehearsal, performance and striking. Also note regulations on make-up, costumes (uniforms are not costumes) and properties.
 - 2) Reader’s Theatre and One-Act Play performances at the district and state tournaments will be bound by the facility restrictions for all host sites used. The host school should be prepared to provide a qualified sound and light technician to operate/assist with the board, if requested, at the district and state tournaments. Students and coaches/directors approved on the MSHSAA Roster of Coaches/Directors from each performing school have the obligation to advise/operate both lighting and sound technical aspects of the performance during both the district and state tournaments.
 - 3) Individuals assisting with the set up or tear down of a set shall be an approved school coaches/directors or students listed on the school eligibility roster and listed on the district and/or state entry form as a technician.
 - 4) A student may be a performer in either One-Act Play or Reader’s Theatre and also be eligible to be part of the technical crew in the event for which they are not performing.
 - 5) When using a royalty piece for One-Act Play or Reader’s Theatre, the school must obtain a letter stating that they have permission to change the piece.
 - 6) Be aware that some performances may contain content that some individuals may find emotionally difficult. Contest warnings should be outlined on the entry form.
 - 7) Individual mics are not to be used by performers at the district or state tournament.
 - 8) Live sound effects may be used but music may be used only as background or to establish mood.
 - 9) District Theatre Managers should consult Appendix H of the Speech, Debate, and Theatre Manual for a One-Act Play/Reader’s Theatre Checklist.
- I. **Debate Event Changes:**
- 1) Prep time in debate events will officially end when the files are shared with an opponent.
 - 2) A school’s stronger team need not be designated its “A” team.
- J. **Duet Acting/Duo Interpretation:** Duet Acting and Duo Interpretation are not the same event. Duet Acting is theatrical acting, whereas Duo Interpretation is interpretation. The result of modifying a Duo Interpretation performance to fit the criteria of Duet Acting will result in disqualification.
- K. **Individual Events:** In the final round a 30 second grace period may be given for audience reaction for all events except Radio Speaking and Extemporaneous Speaking.
- L. **Awards:** To align Speech, Debate and Theatre with other activities, the following awards will be presented at the district and state tournament:

DISTRICTS:

- Medals, 1st through 8th place will be presented in events where one student competes against one other student (Lincoln-Douglas, Dramatic Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, Prose, Poetry, Storytelling, Radio Speaking, US Extemporaneous Speaking, International Extemporaneous Speaking, Informational Speaking, and Original Oratory)
- Medals (2 per event/place) 1st through 8th place will be presented in multi-person events (Policy, Public Forum, Duet Acting, Duo Interpretation). NOTE: No medals are given at the district level for One-Act Play and Reader's Theatre.
- Team Championship Plaques will be awarded for places 1st and 2nd in Speech competition, Debate competition, Reader's Theatre and One-Act Play.
- Sweepstakes points should be awarded in cases where only one team entry is made.

STATE:

- Medals, 1st through 8th place will be presented in events where one student competes against one other student (Lincoln-Douglas, Dramatic Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, Prose, Poetry, Storytelling, Radio Speaking, US Extemporaneous Speaking, International Extemporaneous Speaking, Informational Speaking, and Original Oratory)
- Medals (2 per event/place) 1st through 8th and Trophies (1st and 2nd place) will be awarded in multi-person events (Policy, Public Forum, Duet Acting, Duo Interpretation).
- Medals (12 per event/place) 1st through 4th place and 1st and 2nd place trophies will be presented in Reader's Theatre and One-Act Play. NOTE: Medals for additional cast members can be purchased through the MSHSAA website.
- Team Championship trophies (1st through 4th place) in Speech competition and Debate competition will be awarded according to a point system (see Speech, Debate and Theatre Manual).

7. PROVISIONS FOR INTERSCHOLASTIC SPEECH

The MSHSAA Official Handbook contains the by-laws and policies pertaining to participation and competition in Speech, Debate and Theatre by member schools (By-Law 4.3 is specific to Speech, Debate and Theatre).

- Certification of Eligibility:** Schools shall submit eligibility rosters via the MSHSAA website no later than the day prior to the first interscholastic Speech, Debate and Theatre event of the season.
- Responsibility of Supervision:** No individual student, team or activities group shall be permitted to participate in interscholastic events without being accompanied and supervised by a member of the school faculty or administrative staff (all coaches/directors must be approved through the MSHSAA website process).
- Sanctioning of Tournaments:** All interstate tournaments and tournaments sponsored by a non-school organization or college/university must be approved by the Board of Directors and the National Federation of State High School Associations. Sanction applications must be submitted to the MSHSAA office via the MSHSAA website by tournament managers.
- Video/Audio taping or recording:** Per MSHSAA policy, the practice of audiotaping, videotaping, audio recording and/or video recording any Speech, Debate and Theatre performance(s) at any interscholastic speech and debate event/contest shall be considered unethical and shall not be allowed.
- Removal of team from a contest:** Per MSHSAA by-law, any school whose coach/director removes a team from a contest in protest may be required to appear before the Board of Directors at its next meeting to show reason why the school shall not be suspended.

POINTS OF EMPHASIS AND COACHES/DIRECTORS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- All coaches/directors shall read and review the *Speech, Debate and Theatre Manual*. The manual is located on the MSHSAA website (www.mshsaa.org) on the Speech, Debate and Theatre page, which is accessed through the "Activities" tab at the top of the homepage.
- The rules governing Speech, Debate & Theatre in Missouri are proposed by the Advisory Committee, approved by the Board of Directors and adopted, by the member schools. To protect the integrity of the activity and each respective event, the rules of each event must be followed throughout the regular season, as well as the district and state tournament.
- The MSHSAA SDT Advisory Committee made four recommendations that will be considered by the membership during the 2023-2024 school year. They address the following items: 1) by-law 4.3.3; 2) minimum contest limits for schools and individuals; 3) the separation of Speech/Debate from Theatre; and 4) SDT using the classification system outlined in the MSHSAA Handbook. Coaches/Directors are encouraged to follow these issues throughout the 2023-2024 school year, providing input/feedback to school administrators as they vote on these ballot items.



MISSOURI STATE HIGH SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

WWW.MSHSAA.ORG • 573.875.4880

1 NORTH KEENE ST. • COLUMBIA, MO 65201



@MSHSAAORG