

Board Members Present Chris McDonald – current president
 Cort Sylvester – president-elect
 Zach Prax – treasurer
 Katie Scholz – secretary

Annual Reports/Discussion Items

- **Financial Report/Treasurer's Report – Prax and Sylvester**
 - Account is doing well – around \$13K, after transactions (grant program, etc.). 5 schools received grants (4 for \$1500, 1 for \$1000). Is encouraging new programs to start
 - Endowment – current balance is around \$240K (end of March), with some investment loss, reflects payout of annual grant (~ 3% payout) – this year's grant was \$9600. Looking to maintain endowment levels, expect \$9K in January 2019.
- **Membership Activity/Elections – McDonald**
 - Activity: healthy, would like more coaches to be members (must be members to vote).
 - Need to go through CTAM records and ensure that membership records reflect those interest in being members
 - In the fall: Elections – 6 year term (2 years as president-elect, 2 years as president, 2 years as past-president)
 - Past president / current president + 1 at-large member serve as State Tournament Jury
 - Elections will be held in the fall, nominations and ballots to come out.
- **Awards Report – Brynteson/McDonald**
 - Robyn Madson was coach of the year – yay!
 - All-State awards – 8 in each type of debate. Promotes in-state debate, currently board is happy with the process. The next 3 years' worth are paid for already.
 - Continue to support Tamar Kaplan Award (purchase tear-drop trophy) and helping with \$500 toward the scholarship (foundation provides \$1000, total of \$1500).
 - Last year awarded to Ava from Blake School.
- **Grant Activity – McDonald**
 - 5 grants awarded
 - Awarded as \$1000 upfront, with an additional \$500 awarded for participation at Sections. 4 schools received full \$1500, one did not attend sections.
 - Moorhead is an example of a school that would not have had debate without the grant.
 - Grants available for next year – 1 school has applied, 6/1/2018 is the deadline for next season's award.
 - Currently, had new programs representing all types of debate.
- **Tournament Calendar – McDonald/Brynteson**
 - Confirmed with several schools that tournaments will be held this year.

- Wayzata looking for new debate coach, will run the Jamboree (9/22). Very early this year.
 - Format will be the same as last year.
 - Lots of teaching / learning for novices and training for judges
- 9/29: Rosemount (with Congress)
- Newly confirmed: Minneapple, Concordia, Coon Rapids (11/3)
- Currently planning to see tournaments every weekend
- Trying to balance opportunities
 - Would LOVE more schools to go to Duluth
- 11/17: Everyone is welcome
- UDL-only (December 7-8th, Policy only)
- Hopkins – need to check back in about that tournament date
- **Section/State Tournament Rules and Procedures – McDonald/Brynteson**
 - State Tournament
 - MSHSL will take back control of judge selection – will be done through MSHSL through electronic voting system
 - In order to judge at 2019 state tournament, by 9/1/2018 – must be a paid, registered judge with MSHSL
 - Judges sign a statement affirming no conviction of crimes, not an official background check.
 - Still no training for debate judges, no registration test. Used to have a requirement to judge 20 rounds. Cost is \$15 for two years (going forward).
 - Will get some details – may need to wait until June 1 before registration for 2019 can take place.
 - May need to do training.
 - Will NEED to be the listed contact for debate. If not reflective of current coaching status, contact school’s AD – they need to correct it. They need to change the contact with the MSHSL. Only one vote per school.
 - Schools can have multiple potential judges at the State tournament. BUT only one VOTE will be accepted per school for State Tournament judges.
 - Section Tournaments
 - Will NOT be the same as State (for now. See below for potential discussion / training)
 - Prep time changed

Discussion/Action Items:

- **Policy Proposals**
 - **Background Checks for all coaches**
 - Policy debate community has been discussing.
 - Currently, schools have background check requirements for coaches.
 - Want to have mandatory reporting training that goes with that for coaches.
 - Want to have safe spaces for students

- Is it possible to get MSHSL to require it of coaches through the MSHSL website? (Maybe) *Chris McDonald*
- MN Law: questionable whether coaches that are NOT teachers are mandatory reporters. May not apply to non-teachers coaches?
- There are limits on what MDTA can enforce / require.
- Also helpful to have discussions about what boundaries should exist between students / coaches, what that means.
- This would be an appropriate role for MDTA – to facilitate training, encourage attendance at trainings.
- Potentially identify what “best practices” might be for Head / Assistant coaches.
- Possible to get existing UDL video on MSHSL website? MDTA website? Or a secure YouTube channel?
- **Background Checks for all judges (Policy Debate)**
 - Request came from Policy debate community. But not limited to that.
 - MDTA can encourage, but probably not able to make that a mandatory requirement.
 - Big issue: who will pay? Volunteer judges / ‘paid judges’ – issue of whether judges / schools will pay for. Low-level are \$28, higher-level are more expensive.
 - Will only pull permanent records. If criteria is not clearly identified, will not limit judges. Some activities may allow for discretion to allow volunteers with result of background checks.
 - “Verified Volunteers” – cost is \$12, 24-48 hours to return. Once in the system, can be used for other organizations. Worthwhile investment for regular, returning judges.
 - Cost will be expensive on a district-wide basis / school-wide basis.
 - It is a norm to have those who volunteer to coach background checked. However, volunteer judges usually not required by districts to be background checks.
 - Often schools are finding judges for Saturday tournaments on Thursday / Friday – would not be able to have enough judges at most tournaments if background check required.
 - Bigger issue: we don’t want to hire “creeps” but we end up being desperate. May need to change community norms. “Creep” isn’t a background-check searchable term. May need to find a different way to encourage available judges.
 - Could MDTA money be used to pay for background checks? (Edina estimated cost of \$3K) Covering multiple school districts would eat up all operating funds.
 - Different districts have different requirements for volunteers. Not every district / school may have ability to use lower cost portion.

- May be possible, instead, to use safe boundary trainings / civil rights training as a stopgap.
- If encouraging as a best practice, should encourage volunteers to be checked through the school / district procedure, NOT as on their own. Would recommend coach / program be insulated from doing the checks – then the school is more likely to hold the legal responsibility.
- May be other options to address students having an advocate without using background checks, may be better to find a way to have students be able to report issues.
- Have MDTA encourage schools to require background checks for judges.
- Note: we can encourage, as the MDTA, but we cannot require / enforce.
- Can we send judges through the UDL process? Or have a MOU between UDL and other programs?
 - Two potential issues: FICRA violation (procurement of background checks – if you are not obtaining / using the background check data, then not likely within class of those subject to liability, BUT if using as a condition of employment does put you there); if something goes wrong, are you protected? More layers between coach and body doing background check is better, but not a guarantee. Pushes the liability to the UDL.
- Can we make an admin requirement for Tabroom for registration?
- Double-check with districts (e.g. Blake requires one through their skills)
- **Creation of Tournament Ombudsperson Committee**
 - Rotating in nature (full proposal available on white pieces of paper) – product of earlier meeting.
 - Issue: (in mid-90s) had something similar, purpose was to be a place to go to if there was a concern. Tournament designated-individuals to handle process issues at a tournament.
 - Here: would have more specific committee concerned with unethical / unprofessional conduct, would have some more extensive training in dealing with more sensitive issues – e.g. harassment, safety.
 - Could have 3 (or more, or rotating).
 - Asking organization to recognize that there are situations at tournaments where students don't feel safe, need to have a safe place to go to address their concern. Have it be a publicly known, consistent group of people.
 - Similar to tournament jury?
 - It could. Currently jury is concerned with rules violations only
 - Would be broader – would deal with ethical issues. But, MSHSL has seen the State Tournament Jury as serving a similar role.
 - Would like to have it better defined.
 - Issue was: these people were not in the tab room, not in the judge pool at that time. We don't currently have any extra human bodies.
 - At MDTA, board members serve a similar function.

- MDTA could offer training to those interested in those roles (Becky from Wayzata willing to help serve as a resource).
- Want folks at tournaments to have additional training than the average coach. E.g. sexual harassment, mandatory reporting, etc.
- **Creation of anonymous sexual harassment and student safety reporting system**
 - At District 196 – there is a “reportit.com” – most schools probably have something similar. But, there can be issues with false reports.
 - Discussing student safety. If no jury system available, can put together an online form, put on MDTA / everywhere that would allow for immediate reportability.
 - Issue can be the adults that are interacting with the students.
 - Need to have some level of security. Need to determine who has access to the form submissions.
 - Not an either / or with regard to ombudsman role.
 - Privacy / legal concerns?
 - Hard part: what do we do with the submitted form? Need serious legal advice.
- **Creation of Diversity Committee**
 - A lot of things on agenda are because there are problems in the community – safety, approachability, equity / inclusion problems. How to include more women? People of colors?
 - Would like MDTA to create a committee for longer-term evaluation / suggestions. How do we help people of color, women, non-binary, LGBT be active in the community? Be in the judge pool? Can be demoralizing / a turn-off to those in the community.
 - Need to get serious about: (1) inclusion, (2) approachability
 - Too many women being confronted and yelled / screamed at by individuals in this community.
 - Good committee to create. Need to reach out and get a group put together.
 - Also an issue of the community growing leadership. Who is being elevated into leadership positions? JV/N tournaments – who is coming to judge? What alumni are coaching / judging? How do we open up doors to diversity?
 - Also note: need to get the rest of the community to acknowledge that it is a problem.
 - Conversation for committee: how do we reward / penalize (shame?) – can we give awards?
- **Tournament Procedures Proposals**
 - Opening announcements – who’s on Ombudsman committee
 - 10-minute judge discussion about what is / is not appropriate; emphasis on learning requirement for students

- Strikes – may be more difficult, but there is a judges’ meeting at the State Tournament – could add additional information to State Tournament judge meeting.
- Best practices recommendation: recommend that members have judges meeting.
- Judges have such an important impact on students. The role of judges is to teach them how to do better next time. This is a good first step to having a positive tournament. Judge is there to be an educator, not a criticizer
- Nice just for returning judges as a refresher.
- Can look into adding info to tabroom “role of the judge is to be an educator” – can add that to the ballot that the judge sees.
- Would be nice to put it on the schedule of the day.
- Could also hand out on a piece of paper with standards for judging. Might be a good idea to have shared resources available for judges – it will affect whether students do or do not return. Can discuss what is toxic in community (no comments on dress, e.g.). Also discuss how to be explicit in what feedback is good feedback.
- Could maybe use a release form – have judges agree and sign. Could have to upload it for each judge (a judge release form)
- Very common in speech to have meetings before round one.
- Link / form for MDTA website? Where to get the judge release form?
- Can focus discussion each week on community building. Focusing on the role of self-esteem building.
- Can’t prohibit judges from returning, but can note to future tab staff that they aren’t a recommended judge
- **Proposal that all State Judges be required to be active judges on local circuit**
- **Release results of debate judge balloting including identification of school specific votes**
- **Creation of a Judge Voter Guide for State Judge Balloting**
- **Removal of any judges who haven’t judged debate in past 5 years from ballot**
- **Accountability benchmarks for balloting by schools (gender, race, etc)**
- **Lower years out of high school to judge state debate from 4 to 2 years**
- NOTE: for most of these, MSHSL is taking the process back. Not a lot of options that we will have.
- Pulling it back to standardize with all other sports / activities
- Issues with enforcement too – how to enforce # of times a judge has judged. People used to just do their judging at sections (now they’re already hired). Could, in theory, turn judges away at State.
- MSHSL wants to clean up the ballots – will include a bio for all people involved, will have to put your information down for inclusion on the judge ballot.
- **Novice Policy Debate Meeting and Survey Results**
 - Leave to Policy community to address.

- **Update Section/State Rules on electronic retrieval of evidence during rounds to reflect common practice of evidence sharing between teams**
 - Currently different rules about evidence retrieval, evidence sharing during a debate.
 - Currently: teams don't share with jump drives, instead they share either when called for (hand computer over), on circuit they share electronically. For policy, they share electronically. WANT a rule that applies to all, when it can.
 - Evidence sharing: norm is electronic sharing in LD, Policy.
 - NSDA rules for PF – can grab it from a google drive. Not required for PF to do e-mail chains. Idea is that they can access internet for retrieval of evidence.
 - MSHSL will likely adopt the rule that we propose.
 - Also an issue with students who don't / can't get computers.
 - May need to also add a “not allowed to contact anyone else outside the round.”
 - We have a requirement that you have to provide evidence when called (e.g. you have to hand over your computer).
 - Issue with enforcement for sure. Need to just have a standard rule.
 - Goal was to prevent in-round coaching.
- **Update Section/State Rules to allow the Tournament Jury to quickly change mistakes/typos in the rules manual in order to avoid problem**
 - Already dealt with
- **Recommendations**
 - *Consider these discussions for moving into the fall meeting. Could be incorporated into the fall meeting rule changes.*
 - *Also consider: communication – what needs to change on the MDTA website? What needs to be communicated out?*
 - *How to deal with these – vote? Defer? Leave as action items?*
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 - **Tabulation Staff – Actively seek apprentices to learn tabulation**
 - **Create a How to Tab Manual**
 - **Tournaments should allocate and enforce mandatory 30 minute meal time**
 - **Provide contact information for coach who is with team at tournament to the tournament directors**
 - **All metro policy tournaments should end by 9 PM**
 - A problem with JV/N State as-is. Likely not possible. Will have to be a tournament-by-tournament decision.
 - Food option for tournaments that go into dinner time? (JV/N State, Central NSDA, Highland Park)
 - **Coach knowledge of school safety procedures**
 - **Standardization of tournament experience**
 - Best practices for tournament? E.g. when to have judge meeting? Mealtime? How to have a consistent student experience? Ending time?

- What practices have to change to make sure everything fits into a reasonable schedule?
- o **Limit RFD's to 10 minutes**
- o **Adopt 10 minute flex prep time rule (Policy Debate)**

Motions

- Resolved: MDTA encourages all programs complete background checks for all judges (volunteer or otherwise) according to their individual district policies. (as a best practice)
 - Motion Carries (14 to 5)
- Resolved: Create Subcommittee with standards / training for jury members, safe space, also consider gender balance – with an idea of having a resolution before the fall meeting that makes execution clear. (item C)
 - Motion Carries on voice vote.
- Resolved: Refer issue of anonymous form creation / submission to Subcommittee review of legal / privacy issues. Refer to Becky for creation of a proposed form and proposal for dealing with submitted concerns. (item D)
 - Motion Carries – everyone agrees Becky will lead.
- Resolved: Create a committee for diversity to explore ways to promote inclusion, safety, diversity in debate.
 - Motion carries
- Resolved: Ensure that, at JV/Novice State, MSHSL State, tab staff try to have Diversity on each panel and in tab staff (double check of panels before posting).
 - Motion carries
- Resolved: create standards for judging, recommend a judges' meeting at tournaments as a best practice, recommend requiring judge release forms available for tournaments.
 - Motion carries
- Resolved: adopt the TOC language recommended from Shane.

For Policy, Public Forum, Congress and Lincoln Douglas Debate, use of laptop computers, tablet computers, smart phones and other electronic devices able to access the internet are permitted during events. The use of computers during debates is permitted for ~~both~~-flowing and ~~research purposes including~~ retrieval of evidence stored on hard drives ~~and accessing resources via the internet and cloud-based storage~~. Students should not attempt to use electronic devices to initiate or respond to contact with outside parties during a debate or to conduct original research. The penalty for violation of this rule is loss of the debate in question and zero speaker points assigned to the offending debater. This rule recommends, but does not require, that all text messaging devices and cell phones be turned off during debates. It is meant to restrict the debaters from initiating or responding to any outside contact during a debate round for the purposes of receiving coaching or assistance. Example: A student's cell phone ringing during a debate would not violate the rule. A student calling, emailing, chatting text messaging or responding to any contact from their coach during a debate would violate this rule.

 - Motion carries with two nay votes

- Resolved: require contact information for coach / team leader on site.
 - Motion agreed.
- Resolved: review How-to-Tab manual on Tabroom, update to reflect current practice.
 - DJ appointed.
 - All in favor.

Action Items

- New MSHSL module for Mandatory Reporting through Coaches' Clipboard (Chris McDonald). Would need to encourage / require coaches to take.
- Potential Training session (Augsburg?) for those who haven't had the training before.
- MSHSL – background check requirements for judges? Recommendations? (Chris McDonald)
- Jury Member training? (contact Becky from Wayzata) – What would be covered? What additional training would jury members need? Maybe discuss with attorney with education law experience?
 - Becky in Charge. Interested persons should contact Becky.
 - Action item: create a document that we can approve in the fall – something shareable with all tournament hosts
- Anonymous reporting system
 - Also Becky, will require legal advice.
- Creation of Diversity Committee (Robyn Madson)
 - Robyn will look into interest, ensure that multiple types of debate are represented.
 - Tiana too!
- Review State Judge meeting talking points.
- MDTA JV/N meeting – add clear judge meeting guidelines. Encourage coaches to go to meetings.
- Judge release form – Amy from UDL will take the lead in putting together a form.
- Obtain research guidelines from Shane Stafford to implement into State Tournament Rules (Chris McDonald, Shane Stafford)
- How-to-Tab manual (Cort Sylvester, Bob Groven) – review what's on Tabroom AND another initiative on how to tab / troubleshoot.
- Review TABROOM How-to-tabroom (DJ BRYNTESON elected)