

## MHSAA ONLINE/VIRTUAL TOURNAMENT PLAN

### OVERVIEW

- MHSAA will adopt the rules and regulations used for the NSDA 2021 National Tournament with a few exceptions in order to make it work for the Mississippi Tournament Schedule.
- The NSDA/Tabroom/Campus tournament system will be used for online tournaments
- **Live Events** All events will be live for all MHSAA online tournaments. Schools must follow their own covid guidelines for Duo Interpretation/Duet Acting. If the situation dictates, a tournament director may decide that Duo Interpretation and Duet Acting may be filmed instead of done live.
- Impromptu will be reintroduced into the schedule
- Team Events - (Duet Acting, Duo Interpretation, Policy Debate, Public Forum Debate)
  - ***Team Event Rules may change at any point in time until we return to In-Person/Traditional Tournaments.***
  - Duo/Duet Teams should be prepared to switch to virtual rules as used at the NSDA National Tournament.
  - Teams may either appear split screen or together on a screen for Policy, Public Forum, Duo and Duet.
  - Rehearsal should be done following individual school districts' rules and regulations of social distancing.
- Entry Limits -
  - Debate Events are limited to 6 entries per event with no waiting list entries added.
  - Live Speech Events are limited to 10 entries per event with no waiting list entries added.

## **Tournament Schedule**

### **Monday Before**

7:00 pm Deadline for entries to be entered on [www.tabroom.com](http://www.tabroom.com)

### **Tuesday Before**

7:00 pm All Judges must be finalized. Changes will incur a fee.

### **Friday**

4:00 pm All schools competing in Live Events must check-in

4:30 pm **Round 1- CX**

**Session 1- Congressional Debate**

5:00 pm **Round 1 - LD, PFD**

**Session 1 - Congressional Debate**

6:00 pm **Round 2 - CX, LD, PFD**

6:30 pm *Session One of Congressional Debate Ends*

7:00 pm **Round 3- LD, PFD**

**Session 2- Congressional Debate**

7:30 pm **Round 3- CX**

**Round 4 - LD, PFD**

8:00 pm **Round 4 - LD, PFD**

9:00 pm **Round 5- CX, LD, PFD**

*Session 2 of Congressional Debate Ends*

### **Saturday**

8:00 am **Finals- Congressional Debate**

9:00 am **Flight A Round 1**

**Quarterfinals- CX, LD, PF**

10:00 am **Extemp Prep- Round 1**

*Finals of Congressional Debate Ends*

10:30 am **Flight B Round 1**

12:00 pm **Flight A Round 2**

**Semifinals- CX, LD, PF**

1:00 pm **Extemp Prep- Flight B Round 2**

1:30 pm **Flight B Round 2**

3:00 pm **Finals - CX, LD, PFD,**

**Semifinals Flight A**

3:30 pm **Extemp Prep- Semifinals**

4:00 pm **Semifinals - Flight B**

5:00 pm **FINALS - Flight A**

6:00 pm **FINALS - Flight B**

7:00 pm Awards Ceremony Online

## ONLINE RULES/REGULATIONS

*(adopted from the NSDA Online Instruction Manual)*

# Overarching Event Procedures

## Backdrops and Recording Equipment

Competitors may not use green screens, virtual backdrops, on-screen text, or professional equipment enhancements such as professional lighting kits or professional-grade camera recording and audio devices (including things like softboxes or using an auditorium's lighting system) during their performance in any event. Specific guidelines for MHSAA recording submissions will be forthcoming; performances cannot be submitted as a separate video file. Submissions or recordings may not be edited using any software; all submissions must be non-stop footage of the entire performance done through the permitted submission platform. The camera being used must remain stationary throughout the entire performance, and no zooming or panning is permitted. Other individuals may be present while filming, but audience interaction (laughing, applause, etc.) must not be included in the performance. Competitors may determine how close or distant the camera is set up in order to maximize both verbal and nonverbal communication. If possible, it is recommended that students and judges remove items that may be distracting in the background. Backdrops of a solid color with no special markings may be used by competitors and judges. Best practices for performance spaces and recording strategies can be found at [speechanddebate.org/nationals](http://speechanddebate.org/nationals).

## Tabroom.com

All events will use online ballots through Tabroom.com. Every judge and competitor in all MHSAA Tournaments is required to create a Tabroom.com account prior to the tournament registration deadline. Competitors and judges must be able to log in to Tabroom.com to earn access to their competition rooms and/or ballots. Having an account also will allow tournament staff to notify participants of pairing releases, schedule updates, and important tournament notifications. Including valid contact information (email address and phone number) in the Tabroom.com account is important so tournament staff can attempt to reach any missing competitors or judges prior to forfeits or fines for judge no-shows. [Review this information](#) on setting up your school on Tabroom.com.

## Judge Obligations and Entry Fees

1. **Judge Quotas:** Each school must provide judges for each event based on a specific quota:
  - A. INDIVIDUAL EVENTS: One judge for every ten entries or fraction thereof.
  - B. DEBATE EVENTS
    - i. 1 judge for every 2 Lincoln-Douglas Debaters
    - ii. 1 judge for every 2 Public Forum Teams

iii. 1 judge for every Policy team. If at all possible, schools with policy entries should provide judges with policy judging experience, and should indicate which judge(s) have such experience in the judge notes.

2. **Entry Fees**

- A. \$10 per entry in Individual Events other than Duo Interp and Duet Acting
- B. \$12 per Duo Interp or Duet Acting entry
- C. \$10 per Lincoln-Douglas debater
- D. \$12 per Public Forum or Policy Debate team
- E. \$10 per Congress entry

3. **Uncovered entries (meaning, judge quota is not met)**

- A. Debate -- \$25 per uncovered entry
- B. Individual events -- \$5 per uncovered entry.
- C. Complete buyouts are not allowed. This means all schools must provide at least one judge in debate (if entered in debate) and at least one judge in IE's (if entered in IE's).

4. **All entry fees will be fixed as of the Monday of the tournament. Drop fees will be assessed for any drops after that point. Drop fees will be double the entry fees for any given entry. Judge fees for uncovered entries will be fixed as of the Tuesday deadline. Please email the tournament director with information regarding any drops as early as possible to avoid penalties. PLEASE NOTE: A judge who misses a ballot assignment will incur a \$20 fine for their school, which must be paid prior to the release of the school's ballots.**

## Judging Process- All Events

- a. All judges will be judging live.
- b. Judges that are pre-assigned rounds should show to their assigned virtual room 15 minutes before. Judges should wait until tab has cleared them before beginning their round.
- c. Once the round is completed, judges should virtually turn in their ballots.
- d. If a judge is called from the pool, they are required to go to their rounds immediately.
- e. Judges will turn in ballots immediately like they were at a regular tournament.

## Technology Requirements

Competitors and judges are required to have internet access and a device with a microphone and a webcam throughout the duration of the competition. This could include a smartphone, laptop, tablet, or desktop computer with an integrated or external microphone and camera. Competitors and judges should keep their cameras on during each round to create accountability, immediately notice any connectivity issues, and allow students to monitor judge reactions to their performances. Judges will be instructed not to allow video/sound equipment quality, physical location, or other elements not in control of individual students to affect their decisions. Equity is a core value of the National Speech & Debate Association. We understand that many students and judges do not have equal access to the internet and technology.

## Participant Security

All Participating Students from Mississippi should have the **MHSAA Media Release Form** on file with their coach. Out-of-State competitors should also have their state's equivalent or may contact the host for the form if the home state does not have an equivalent.

Participant security is a top priority for the organization. Tabroom.com and Classrooms.cloud will abide by the [NSDA Privacy Policy](#). Classrooms.cloud is the platform created by the NSDA.. The platform uses the Zoom.us network of video conferencing. A number of restrictions will be used to protect participants in the Classrooms.cloud platform. Students and judges will use their Tabroom.com account info to login to the competition site. Only Tabroom.com accounts associated with the National Tournament will be permitted entry to the competition site. All classrooms will require an additional password for participants to enter before they may join a competition room. The ability to use Zoom backgrounds will be turned off. The ability to share screens and file share through the chat will be limited where possible. All judges and competitors will be given a strict naming convention that must be used in each round (e.g., Judge - J104 - Lauren - she/her (pronouns optional)) so that all-round participants may be easily identified. Any participant not using that naming convention will be removed from the room and sent to the ombudsperson to learn appropriate procedures. Finally, tournament staff and volunteers will have a small, dedicated number of rooms that they are responsible for monitoring. They will constantly rotate through rounds and can quickly remove anyone violating tournament policy. Participants may report disruptions to the tournament helpline, where staff will be prepared to send volunteers into the room to handle the problem immediately. We understand many parents and school districts have security and privacy concerns. We will do our best to accommodate these issues and strive to eliminate as many barriers as possible to participate in Nationals.

## **Debate Events**

**(Policy, Lincoln-Douglas, Public Forum)**

## **Round Procedure**

All debate events will be held live. The general expectation is for speakers and judges to have the video turned on to maximize visual and audio cues for listeners and viewers. However, should bandwidth or other technical issues occur, judges are encouraged to accommodate to maximize the participation of all involved. There will be five preliminary rounds for all debate competitors. Fifteen minutes prior to each round, students and judges will report to their room on the schematic from Tabroom.com. Judges will do a roll call to make sure each student is present, everyone will test their audio and video, judges will ensure the naming convention has been followed, and an email chain will be created if that is how students agree to do evidence exchange. Any tech issues should be resolved in this 15-minute period. The first speaker must begin speaking promptly at the round start time. Judges will be given a time that decisions must be submitted, and they will submit their decision via Tabroom.com immediately after each debate. To keep rounds on time and ensure students and judges finish each day at a reasonable hour, judges should not disclose or explain their decisions. Instead, judges will be encouraged to write a reason for decisions and comments on the online ballot after their decision has been submitted.

## **Coin Flip**

The coin flip applies to all rounds in Public Forum. Tabroom.com will automatically flip a coin for the two teams where applicable. Thirty minutes prior to the round when teams are to report to their competition room for check-in, teams in both flights will be notified via text and email from Tabroom.com which team won the coin flip. The winner of the coin flip will choose either their side or speaker position in Tabroom.com. Once chosen, the other team will make the remaining selection in Tabroom.com. If the winner of the coin flip does not make a selection after 5 minutes, the choice will revert to the other team. If no one makes a decision after 5 minutes, Tabroom.com will randomly assign sides and speaking positions. These choices will be locked on the judges' ballots; judges will no longer need to tell Tabroom.com which debaters are on which sides in what order. The purpose of automating this coin flip is to avoid confusing procedures about who conducts the coin flip on video and guarantee that the judges' ballots are always correct based on student decisions.

## **Evidence Exchange**

NSDA evidence rules require that all students have evidence immediately ready to go when requested. If evidence is paraphrased, it is required that the competitor has the specific text from the original source which is being paraphrased clearly indicated and immediately available. If it takes teams more than one minute to find and send evidence that is requested, the team looking for the evidence must take preparation time to find it. Any reading of evidence produced at a team's request must be done within the requesting team's preparation time. These requirements are to ensure that we stick to the schedule and avoid keeping students and judges in the competition longer than their commitment.

Debaters must send original sources via PDF or Word document; no links directly to online articles may be shared due to paywalls, subscription restrictions, and the inability to highlight the sections read or paraphrased. **Evidence must be shared as a PDF or Word document through a link in the virtual room chatbox or through an email chain.** Students who plan to use the email option are recommended not to use their personal email address, and instead, to create a debate-only account to use. The email chain must be created in the 15 minutes prior to the debate in order to be used. Judges should be added to the email chain if they so request.

## **Partner to Partner Communication**

Students debating in partner events should prepare for the possibility that they will not be in the same physical location as their partner during the National Tournament if CDC recommendations do not change. Debaters should establish and test a means of messaging their partner during the round. This may be through instant messaging, a phone conversation, or whatever debaters deem prudent. Debaters should not plan to use a separate communication platform that requires computer video or computer audio as that will disrupt the online debate round.

### **Outside Assistance**

Participants in all tournaments will be reminded of their commitment to the NSDA Code of Honor. During the course of a round, receiving outside assistance from any non-participant in the round, including coaches, teammates, and family members, is strictly prohibited. Any allegations of a rule violation should be submitted to the tab room to determine a course of action.

### **Student Attendance in Debate Rounds**

All judges and participants are required to meet in the competition room 15 minutes prior to the round start time of each round. Tournament staff will do their best to reach out to students and their coaches if a student does not show up at round check-in time. Rounds must start at the posted start time. Students who are late to round start time risk forfeiting the round.

## **Congressional Debate**

Congressional Debate will run similarly to an in-person tournament. Each school may submit up to four (4) pieces of legislation which must be emailed to the MHSAA Coordinator by 4:00 pm on September 11, 2020. Chamber size will be reduced to around 12-13 students to make it easier for presiding officers (POs) to manage the group. Each session will be 2.5 hours long to standardize the number of speeches per student, accommodate technology challenges, and allow for recesses. Students will use the hand raise function in the virtual competition room to be recognized and the thumbs up/down function to vote. Direct questioning will be used through preliminary and elimination rounds to minimize the time and complexity of students' question periods. Recency will be randomly set prior to the first session and each subsequent session to ease the process of determining who should speak. The Congressional Debate event staff will work to coordinate the need for additional POs to accommodate the smaller chamber sizes.

# Live Main Speech Events

## Event Rules & Procedures

### Main Speech (DI, HI, POI, OO, INF, DUO, DUET, Prose, Poetry, Dec, Expos, Storytelling)

- Main speech event preliminary and elimination rounds will be held live.
- Every competitor will have the opportunity to submit a link to a recording of their performance on Tabroom.com by the Monday of the tournament. This recording will be used as a backup in case a student is unable to perform live due to unresolvable technical difficulties during a round.
- If a competitor experiences technical difficulties which dramatically impact the judges' ability to evaluate the first attempted run of the performance in a round, the competitor will be given a total of 20 minutes of tech solution time (the equivalent of two performances) to resolve the technical issues and perform again.
- If it is not possible to resolve technical issues in that time, tournament officials will provide a link to that student's pre-recorded video (if uploaded) for the judges and other competitors in that round to watch. If a student did not provide a backup video, the student will be ranked last in the round, similar to if irresolvable tech issues were to occur in a round of debate or Extemp.
- A student may use their backup video an unlimited number of times during the preliminary rounds and early elimination rounds.
- In the rounds of semis and finals, the backup video may not be used, though the time to resolve technical issues will be extended to 30 minutes before a forfeit is issued.
- Attendance is mandatory in speech rounds. Students and judges will report to their competition room 30 minutes prior to round start time to take attendance and do a tech check.
- If a student is unable to perform live in a particular round for reasons unrelated to technology, they should report to the Tab Room to learn if there are alternative options for competition in that round.
- When a backup video is used, judges will be given this instruction: *To ensure a more equitable experience for our participants, students were given the option to proactively submit a prerecorded video in case of unforeseeable circumstances out of their control. PLEASE JUDGE THIS PERFORMANCE JUST AS YOU WOULD IF IT WERE LIVE. Please be sure your decision-making process and comments do not relate to the fact that the video was recorded in advance, but are related ONLY to the content and quality of the presentation or speech itself.*

### Recording Rules for Main Speech Backup Video Submission

- Recording links are optional and must be added to Tabroom.com by the Monday before the tournament
- Students may record their performance using any video recording site or software available to them (Zoom, Quicktime, camera or video app on a computer, etc.). Hold on to this original recording, as it may be needed later! Then, they will upload their recording to a site that creates a link to the video (YouTube, Google Drive, Vimeo, etc.).

- Coaches will collect links to the students' video recordings and copy/paste them into the student's entry in their Tabroom.com registration.
- Coaches and students should be mindful of privacy. These links will be accessible to judges and other students in the tournament. We recommend that coaches create a private team account to submit videos without students' identifying information. For example, an "XYZ Speech Team" YouTube channel with unlisted videos or a Google drive account under the school's name.
- Coaches should double check that permissions on the video are appropriately set to allow anyone with the link to view it. After coaches paste the link in Tabroom, they should click it to confirm that the link works.
- Professional equipment enhancements may not be used. Professional equipment includes professional lighting kits, professional grade camera recording and audio devices, and softboxes. Students are welcome to film their recording on their school's auditorium stage, but the use of stage lighting is not permitted. Lavalier/lapel microphones and ring lights are permitted.
- Recordings may not be edited using any software; all submissions must be non-stop footage of the entire performance.
- Students recording split-screen Duos may not record their performances separately and edit them together.
- A non-competing person may turn the camera on and off for the performer but may not cover the lens or manipulate the camera in any way during the performance.
- Students may not trim a recording, even to remove the seconds that they walk to and from the recording device to push start/stop.
- The length of the recording must not exceed the time limit with the grace period.
- Competitors may not use green screens, virtual backgrounds, or on-screen text.
- The camera being used must remain stationary throughout the entire performance, and no zooming or panning is permitted.
- The camera must remain on throughout the duration of the performance; a student may not turn off their video at any point during their recording.
- The use of lighting tricks like shadow puppets are not permitted.
- Students may move closer to and further from the camera to simulate zooming, though the camera must remain stationary.
- Students may cover the camera with their hands or body.
- Students may move out of frame during the recording.
- Other individuals may be present while filming, but audience interaction (laughing, applause, etc.) must not be included in the performance.
- Competitors may determine how close or distant the camera is set up in order to maximize both verbal and nonverbal communication.
- If possible, it is recommended that students and judges remove items that may be distracting in the background. Backdrops of a solid color with no special markings may be used by competitors and judges.
- Best practices for performance spaces and recording strategies can be found at [www.speechanddebate.org/online-competition-tips](http://www.speechanddebate.org/online-competition-tips).

## **Informative Visual Aids**

The rules surrounding visual aids in Informative Speaking have not changed; students may not use virtual visual aids. Visual aids, if used, should be physical.

## **Duo/Duet**

Based on CDC regulations and the requirements of each school's district, students may either record duo/duet in a traditional fashion or use the "split-screen method." No penalty will be incurred for either use. Students in Duo/Duet should also turn in backup recordings to use in case of wifi issues. All decisions regarding Duo and Duet should be run through the individual school's administrator.

## **Extemporaneous Speaking**

EXT will be performed live. There will be two preliminary rounds for all competitors. Competitors may determine how close or distant the camera is in order to maximize both verbal and nonverbal communication. Judges will be instructed to judge a student's performance, not whether they are sitting, standing, or walking. The general expectation is for speakers and judges to have the video turned on to maximize visual and audio cues for listeners and viewers. However, should bandwidth or other technical issues occur, judges are encouraged to accommodate to maximize the participation of all involved.

### **Extemp Draw Procedure**

Prep rooms will be split by division and speaker order if needed. If separated by speaker order, all of the first speakers will report to Speaker 1 Prep, all of the second speakers will report to Speaker 2 Prep, etc. They will report to their prep room and use the automatic draw system found in the prep room to select their question when it is time to begin. Each speaker will select a question in their room from a set of three questions in the round's topic area. First speakers will prep with their cameras on and microphones off. The proctor will stop prep when appropriate and send them to their competition rooms. Ten minutes after the first speakers have drawn, proctors for the second speakers will be notified that they may draw and use the same process, and so on. Each set of speakers will receive three unique questions to their speaker position. Judges will wait in the competition room until all speakers have performed. Judges should give time signals as usual, though competitors will be warned to time themselves because issues with time signals will not be grounds for protest. Judges will complete an online ballot that includes a ranking and optional reason for the decision (RFD) and individual comments.

### **Student Attendance in Extemp**

Proctors will notify tab staff if a student does not show up for prep, and the tab staff will alert the appropriate judge not to wait for them. All participants are required to meet in the prep room at their assigned time. Students who are late to round start time risk forfeiting the round or missing part of their preparation time.

## **Impromptu Speaking**

Impromptu speaking will be offered this year. Judges will be given topics through email or sharing and will give THREE topics to each speaker based on speaker order- the first student who speaks will get the topics labeled "Speaker One," the second will get "Speaker Two," and down the list. The topics will be given in the chat function on Canvas.