

MFL Board Meeting
February 26, 2006

The meeting was called to order at 1:02 by the president, Chris Palmer.

Present: Joyce Albert, Debbie Simon, Amanda Parker, Holly Loell, PJ Wexler, Patrice Jean-Baptise, Chris Palmer & Lisa Honeyman

We started with the Consent Agenda. It was passed unanimously, without discussion.

1. CURRICULUM COMMITTEE REPORT.

Joyce reported that there was no significant response to the e-mail solicitation regarding events. She said that there are a few areas that we need to focus on.

(1) We need to decide upon multiple rules/bids for States (later on the agenda).

(2) We need to clarify rules for sources of material

DS asks that at States we ask coaches to submit their sources for material so we can gather data about where coaches are finding their material so we can figure out how to clarify the rules. Also, it will be helpful for new coaches to know what the options are.

(3) We need to clarify rules for Radio Broadcasting.

How much extraneous material may be brought in? Is there a deeper philosophical issue about what Radio Broadcasting should be? How much of this event should be interp and how much reporting? (Some are using voices for characters on location etc.) Others are getting credit for creativity in creating interesting radio station formats etc. Patrice asks, "What is the goal of this event? What do we want our students to get out of this event?" HL asks if the purpose of the event is to provide opportunity for kids who don't want to do interp, who are interested in the skills of an actual news broadcast? JA reminds us that students who have been paid to be radio broadcasters cannot enter the event. This suggests that it is intended to be a real radio broadcast format. There was much discussion about these issues. Specifically, we need to decide how much extraneous material will be allowed in the event. We need to clarify before States.

QUESTIONS:

- (a) Can you prepare transitions and bring them into the prep room on paper?
- (b) What percent of the time can the transitional material take?
- (c) Are extended advertisements allowed? (When a newspaper is used, ads may be present – but what if no advertising text is present?) "Brought to you by. . ." or "Sponsored by . . ." may be different from an extended advertisement.
- (d) How many stories should students cover?

Joyce asks if advertisements belong in Radio Broadcasts? LH says she does not think it belongs. This is a 5 minute news broadcast, not 5 minutes of radio time to be used for ads and broadcasting. PJB says limiting advertising also limits creativity. DS suggests that as a stop-gap

measure, we could limit the amount of 'extra' material allowed. HL says we could also suggest on the ballot that preference be given to students who give comprehensive coverage of the news over those that gave limited coverage. AP says when she judges the event she looks for a complete broadcast. PJB says that we might suggest that at least some % of the broadcast must be news. CP says this way we provide guidelines for judges without opening ourselves up to disqualification challenges.

We agreed upon this wording: "Transitional material may consist of an opening, a closing and a sentence between news stories. 80% of the broadcast should consist of news content, including sports and weather."

For next year (long-term solution) we need to consider the deeper questions, for example, whether students should be allowed to use multiple characters. PJB suggests we write a small survey to distribute at States, when all coaches will be present. PJB will draft a questionnaire and distribute it to the board for approval. LH asks that we decide on rules BEFORE the next season starts.

2. DVD INSTRUCTIONAL PROJECT

Debbie Simon – Should we read the rules text on the instructional DVD? We need an agreed-upon script. The handbook becomes the script? We need some financial support to create this because DS does not have the technical ability to do the cutting. The DVD committee can record, but we need to either be taught how to do this or find someone who will do this for us.

There was general discussion about whether or not we really want to undertake this project. Is giving a copy of the DVD plus the rules booklet enough?

JA says each coach might give every judge a packet – with a rules booklet, stop watch, numbers for draw, etc., like Susan does for her judges. We need to emphasize how coaches prepare their judges. Can we prepare a prototype packet to give to head coaches as an example of what they can give to their judges? Include a filled out ballot, the judge manual, sample comments for different types of categories etc.

DS – A meeting with the coaches at the fall business meeting is needed. Everyone has a stake in the judging and we need to discuss the issues. Talk about ballots and what is helpful and what is not. We have a responsibility, as adults and coaches, to address the issue of what our students get out of the ballots. AP reminds us that quality of judges comes up at the SAB meeting constantly.

DS – Point of view – we need to be careful that we are not dictating what people must do or inadvertently advocating for a particular style or perspective when/if we create the DVD.

JA – Should we play the DVD at tournaments so that judges can watch them in the lounge?

DS – reminds us that the tape includes DUO with only 2 characters, not multiple characters. If you show only one thing, they may have in their mind that this is how it has to be.

JA – maybe we should add a little more – monologue vs. multiple char, narrative poetry vs. multiple pieces, duo with 2 chars or multiple chars. Etc. How much should we include?

CP – As an interim should we come up with a written guide to the DVD that discusses some of the issues. A sort of “Read Along Guide” for the DVD? Once we get the script right, we can add it to the DVD.

DS and LH will write the text and bring it back for approval.

3. NEW PROGRAM HANDBOOK

Patrice and Lisa have not had a chance to work on this. They will talk about it and get back to the board at a later date.

4. TOURNAMENT HOSTING HANDBOOK

Joyce is working on it.

Chris is also working on a guide to using the software.

5. DEBATE RULES

Lynne is not here to report.

There was some discussion about Policy Debate and whether or not there are enough schools doing it to continue requiring it as an MFL event at sanctioned tournaments. We may only offer one division of open policy at States for both novice and varsity students.

6. POLICY TOPIC SELECTION

Up in the air at this point.

7. 501(c)3

Judy Crocker is continuing to work on this with Chris and Rob. It will be a while until this is finalized (maybe a few years.)

8. INDEPENDENT SCHOOL STUDENT ISSUE

Can students compete if they do not use the name of their school as long as the school backs their participation? We will need a letter from such a school saying they will allow a student to compete. The school needs to take responsibility for CORI checks as well as other liability issues. In any event, a school or a parent needs to come to the Board to request this sort of accommodation. So far, this issue has been brought to two different board members by students only. We cannot proceed with a student as the contact.

10. CRITERIA FOR DEB SIMON AWARD

Can you be awarded it twice? How many per year? What is the criteria?

DS: Should be for service “above and beyond.” Being on the board is not “above and beyond” so it should not be awarded to board members unless they do something “above and beyond” while they are serving.

How many? Perhaps, “no more than (some number) per year? We don’t have to give them every year.

We agreed upon the following criteria:

1. Awarded by Board Vote.
2. For service “above and beyond” – other than coaching.
3. For forensics in Massachusetts.
4. Limited to no more than 3 in any given year.

11. STATES

Will be at Westford Academy where there are 70-75 available rooms. We may need to 4 or 5-flight it to accommodate both speech & debate. The hope is to have debate start on Friday night and continue over into Saturday.

Because no entry caps, it may be larger than in past years and will take longer because of multiple entry.

BUDGET – Total \$2000 for States

- Trophies – try for \$1600-1800 quote
- Rest for flowers, cake etc. to recognize out-going seniors.

LH suggests that if we have to run in 5 time-slots because of space issues, we might be able to allow triple-entry in multiple. In fact, can we allow triple-entry in other events if students have qualified? After some discussion we decided upon the following entry limits:

ENTRY LIMITS

- Group, Congress, Policy Debate – no multiple entry of any type
- Draw events can double, but not in draw events or multiple
- LD and PFD can double, but not in multiple or in both of these two events
- All others can triple enter in events in which they are qualified (multiple counts as one entry)
- The same material cannot be used in more than one event

SWEEPS FORMULA FOR 2006 STATES

An issue for future years? Maybe do away with sweepstakes awards at States? DS – says that they did away with it in the middle school division and it made a big difference. We need to ask the membership about this as well as the possibility for double-entry awards?

Small schools vs Large schools. Do more to encourage programs during the year, Recognize growth over years. How do we do this?

We decided upon this formula for 2006 State Finals:

Sweepstakes for Speech - top 16 entries in any events will go towards sweepstakes. Congress is part of speech.

Sweepstakes in Debate – 6 pts for win, 3 pts for a loss – Limit it to the top 3-4 per category. We will leave this to Lynne’s discretion as the chair of Debate, but she needs to decide soon, so we can get the information out to everyone at once.

Sweepstakes awards will be given separately for speech and debate.

JOBS FOR STATES

3 chairs will do their parts.

Joyce does Radio and Group.

Debbie does seniors and cakes

Extemp Topic Committee – PJ, Patrice, Chris, Lisa

- Domestic – Lisa
- Foreign – Patrice
- Economic – PJ
- Globalization - Chris

GROUP DISCUSSION – Joyce will work on the specific wording, but these are the general topic areas.

- Rebuilding of New Orleans question
- Nuclear Proliferation
- Who is responsible for reality TV ethical issue
- Improving the MFL

INVITATION

Coordinated by Chris.

Put out ASAP.

PJ will put out a call for legislation.

Chris will also put a bid list together. PJ will get the congress list to Chris.

12. MULTIPLE – Short term

For every two bids, each team gets a slot in States for 2006. It doesn’t matter who was in the multiple or what the script was.

MULTIPLE – Long term

We need to talk about multiple in more depth for future years.

13. GROUP DISCUSSION

Lisa presented proposal from 2003 (which was never resolved), advocating the elimination of Group discussion as a required MFL event. Many feel that the ballot is vague and allows judges sometimes reward bad skills. It is an event that offers safety in the public address area. Many use it for getting new kids & new programs involved.

JA – not ready to eliminate event. Wants to talk to other coaches and examine ballot and event more closely. The issue on the ballot of “building consensus” may be at the heart of this issue.

It will be added to the questionnaire that will be presented to coaches at States.

14. SEMI FINALS

Worked at NSHS with limited events. We can suggest that tournaments offer semis in larger events, but no one is comfortable requiring it at this point. There are judging, time & space issues. We will put it in the handbook as an option.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Auditing Breaks to Finals

We need to develop an audit process to be sure we have sent the correct students to finals.

Chris suggests we break in teams, so that a pair of people is responsible for each event.

LH suggested we print out a hard-copy of the list of competitors in order so that a second person/team can check (not on the computer screen) before postings go out.

2. Prices for food at tournaments

A concern was brought to the Board about the price of food charged at a recent tournament. The prices were higher than usual and students ran out of money for lunch. We need to give tournament hosts a price idea so that students will have enough money with them for lunch. We can include this in the tournament manual. Perhaps a \$5 suggestion for lunch. – a student should be able to get enough to eat and something to drink for at most \$5.

3. Poetry thing from yesterday

We need to award the student who was accidentally advanced to finals as well as anyone tied for the bids for putting her through the issue. We also need to go back to all other tournaments and award bids to anyone who was improperly advanced as well as anyone else who tied with them.

4. Cross-Ex in Final rounds of Extemp?

Many extemp students have no ideas what it is. Only NFL schools understand what it is. Maybe consider it as an allowable option, but not at States this year.

5. Students going into unauthorized areas of schools during tournaments

This has been an issue at recent tournaments, including Lexington yesterday. Hosts need to be sure to point out where unauthorized areas are. Perhaps they should clearly post signs in areas where students should not be. This is in our “Rules of Professionalism” and students need to follow the rules.

PW motions that we adjourn. JA 2nds.
The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Honeyman

VP/Secretary