

MHSAA ONLINE/VIRTUAL TOURNAMENT PLAN

OVERVIEW

- MHSAA will adopt the rules and regulations used for the NSDA 2020 National Tournament with a few exceptions in order to make it work for the Mississippi Tournament Schedule.
- The NSDA/Tabroom tournament system will be used if we can adapt it for MHSAA and make it cost-effective. There is a back-up plan to use if this does not happen.
- **Pre-Prepared Filmed Events** will include Declamation, Dramatic Interpretation, Duet Acting, Duo Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, Informative Speaking, Original Oratory, Poetry Interpretation, Program of Oral Interpretation, Prose Interpretation.
- **Live Events** will include Congressional Debate, Extemporaneous Speaking, Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Policy Debate, Public Forum Debate
- The Novice LD topic will be used for the full fall semester.
- Impromptu Speaking WILL NOT be offered during online tournaments. To make up for this issue, every school will be given three (3) Wild Card entries *for Impromptu only* at the 2021 MHSAA State tournament (in addition to the usual five Wild Cards given every year).
- A student may enter only one (1) Live Event per tournament. This includes Extemporaneous Speaking. In addition, a student competing in a live event can also enter up to 3 Pre-Prepared Filmed Events, but no more than 2 in either flight
 - Flight A - Dramatic Interp, Duet Acting, Original Oratory, Program OI, Prose Interp
 - Flight B - Declamation, Duo Interp, Humorous Interp, Informative, Poetry Interp
 - ****NOTE - Rules will return to the official MHSAA Handbook when we return to In-Person/Traditional Tournaments**
- Team Events - (Duet Acting, Duo Interpretation, Policy Debate, Public Forum Debate)
 - Duo/Duet partners will use the split-screen format used at the NSDA National Tournament. The rules and guidance are listed below in this plan.
 - Policy/Public Forum Partners will appear separately on live calls in competition, that is, they should not be sharing a computer screen, regardless of location.
 - **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.
 - 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.
 - Pre-Prepared Filmed Events are limited to 10 entries per event with no waiting list entries added.
 - Extemporaneous Speaking is 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

Tuesday Before

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

Thursday

4:00 pm All preliminary round ballots for ***Pre-Prepared Filmed Events*** will be delivered. Judges will have until 10:00 am Saturday morning to complete their ballots.

Friday

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

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

Session 1 - Congressional Debate

7:00 pm **Round 2** - CX, LD, PFD

8:00 pm Session One of Congressional Debate Ends

9:00 pm **Round 3** - CX, LD, PFD

Saturday

8:00 am **Round 4** - CX, LD, PFD

Session 2 - Congressional Debate

Round 1 - Extemp Prep

8:30 am **Round 1** - Extemp Speaking

10:00 am All Preliminary Ballots for Pre-Prepared Filmed Events should be turned in

Round 5 - CX, LD, PFD

Round 2 - Extemp Prep

Round 2 - Extemp Speaking

11:00 am Session Two of Congressional Debate Ends

12:00 noon **Semifinals** - DI, DA, OO, POI, PR, DEC, DUO, HI, INFO, PO

1:00 pm **Quarterfinals** - All Debates (*only needed if 16 or more entries in the event.)

Semis Extemp Prep

1:30 pm **Semifinals** - Extemp

3:00 pm **Semifinals** - CX, LD, PFD, Congress Finals Begin

FINALS - DI, DA, OO, POI, PR

3:30 pm **Finals** Extemp Prep

4:00 pm **FINALS** - Extemp Speaking

5:00 pm **FINALS** - CX, LD, PFD

FINALS - DEC, DUO, HI, INFO, PO

7:00 pm Awards Ceremony Online

ONLINE RULES/REGULATIONS

(adopted from the NSDA Online Instruction Manual)

Overarching Event Procedures

Internet Rules

The pilot internet rules for debate, Congress, and Extemp will be used at the 2020 online National Tournament. [Read the rules online.](#)

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.

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 release, 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 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

1. Individual Event Judging Procedure (with the exception of Extemporaneous Speaking)

- a. Individual Event judges (with the exception of Extemporaneous Speaking) will receive their judging assignments by 4 pm on Thursday. An email will be sent out to coaches and judges.
- b. Judges will have until Saturday morning at 10 am to turn in their virtual ballots. Any judge that does not turn in their ballots by then will incur a fee for their team.
- c. Individual Event Judges signed up for Saturday rounds will need to report to the online judge pooling room by 10:00 am. Role call will be held to determine if judges are not present. We will be calling replacement judges for any individual events from prelims at that time. Judges will be “released” by the judge assignment person ONLY after it is confirmed all judges have begun rounds.
- d. Judges will need to be in the “pooling room” 30 minutes before each out round (see schedule for semifinals and finals on individual events except Extemporaneous Speaking). Judges will be called from the pool and will only be released from the pool once all rounds have begun. Judges that adjudicate out rounds will be required to complete the out rounds immediately and in real time. They will have an hour and half from assignment to complete their rounds.
- e. Any judges that are signed up but do not report to pooling or judge their assigned rounds will incur a fine for their team.

2. Debate/Congress/Extemporaneous Speaking judges

- a. Debate, congress and extemporaneous speaking 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. Judges will be expected to show at the judge pooling room 30 minutes before every round if they are not pre-assigned a round.
- e. Judges are only released from the pooling room once tab has cleared that all rounds have begun.
- f. Role call will be taken, and judges who do not show up will incur a fine for their team.
- g. If a judge is called from the pool, they are required to go to their rounds immediately.
- h. 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 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.

Recorded Main Speech Events

Main event speech rounds, excluding Extemp, will not be performed or judged live in preliminary rounds. Competitors will submit one recording of their performance through a secure site prior to the competition. This one recording will be judged throughout preliminary rounds, elimination rounds, and finals, if applicable.

Recording Process

Before the Monday Registration Deadline, competitors may record their performance, watch the recording, and re-record their performance as many times as they would like. However, once the performance is submitted (by hitting the submit button), that recording will be considered the official tournament entry for the contestant and cannot be re-recorded and submitted. The recording system will be set to stop all recordings at a preset time limit of 10 minutes and 30 seconds. However, some smartphone operating systems (iPhones and Apple tablets, in particular) may prevent recording beyond the set time limit of 10 minutes. Competitors should test and use the systems that best fit the length of their performance and audio and visual quality. The system can accept both SD and HD video recordings, though to submit an HD recording will require good internet access and may take significant time to load. Once they have their best recording, they will submit their final performance. It will be saved by code in a database within the NSDA competition site. Students will receive a

confirmation email that their recording has been submitted and no errors in the upload have been detected. There will be no audit of the uploads by NSDA staff; competitors must check that their recording's video and audio is working prior to submission. If a competitor does not upload any file during the submission window, they will not be scheduled in the tournament and entry fees will not be refunded.

Informative Visual Aids

Students are encouraged to watch the 2020 NSDA Informative Speaking Finals to see best practices for how to incorporate Visual Aids in filming.; no rule changes will be made to accommodate virtual visual aids.

Duo Interpretation/Duet Acting

If at any point during the season partnered events are no longer able to perform and provide for the safety and security of students, competitors in these events will be given the following two options:

This recording must be submitted through the Duo Submission Form supplied by NSDA Classroom Connect (if system is use) before the deadline for registration passes. Recording files must be no longer than 10 minutes and 30 seconds in length and no larger than 250 MB. MP4, MOV, WEBM, 3GPP, 3GPP2, FLV, WMV, and MPEG files will be accepted. Unlike other events, videos for Duo (and only Duo) can be recorded on the platform of students' choice. *Note: meeting platforms such as Zoom have proven to have the capability to create the side by side split screens and video file necessary for submission.* However, each partner MUST record their portion of the Duo from a different room (via a separate window) than their partner. This rule also applies to Duos who share the same residence. Submissions may not be edited using any software; all submissions must be non-stop footage of the entire performance. The cameras being used must remain stationary throughout the entire performance, and no zooming or panning is permitted. No green screens, virtual backdrops, on-screen text, or professional equipment may be used. Our staff will move recordings into the same National Tournament competition platform as all other speech events to be adjudicated. [View this sample Duo split-screen recording.](#)

Extemporaneous Speaking

EXT will be the only speech event 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.