



***Massachusetts Speech and Debate League  
State Debate Championship Tournament  
Friday, March 24 through Sunday, March 26***

The Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Speech and Debate League is pleased to announce the State Debate Championship Tournament. The tournament will take place over three days – both online and in person:

Day	Date	Location	Events
Friday evening	March 24	Online	Lincoln Douglas and Public Forum – Rounds 1 and 2
Saturday all day	March 25	Acton-Boxborough Regional HS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lincoln Douglas, Public Forum – Rounds 3 to 6, octofinals, and quarterfinals, semifinals</li> <li>Policy rounds</li> <li>Big Questions rounds</li> <li>Ceremony – Awards and farewell to seniors</li> </ul>
Sunday evening	March 26	Online	Lincoln Douglas and Public Forum finals, if needed

**Note:**

- Policy, Lincoln-Douglas, and Public Forum will offer a Varsity division and a Novice division. Big Questions will offer one, open division.** Debaters can compete in the Novice division if they did not debate in more than one interscholastic high school tournament in Policy, Lincoln-Douglas, Public Forum, or Big Questions prior to the current academic year.
- Policy and Public Forum entries must consist of two debaters.** This tournament does not allow debaters to compete solo (“maverick”) in these events. Lincoln Douglas is one person per entry. Students can enter in Big Questions as either one- or two-person teams.
- Only MSDL member schools can compete.** Schools must have submitted their signed participation agreement and paid their annual dues (school status posted [here](#)). We welcome schools from adjacent states to join the MSDL and participate at the MSDL State Debate Tournament if they have no state championship tournament of their own. Middle school students are invited to participate in this tournament, subject to bid requirements (below) and Section 1.2 of the MSDL Rules and Regulations ([here](#)).
- Competitors must also satisfy bid requirements** (see Section 1, below).
- Venue for Policy and Big Questions:** Depending on how many schools and teams register for Policy and Big Questions debate, the league may, in consultation with participating schools move the venue for these events.

**Resolutions:**

<b>Policy (CX)</b>	<b>2022-2023</b> – <i>The United States federal government should substantially increase its security cooperation with the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in one or more of the following areas: artificial intelligence, biotechnology, cybersecurity.</i>
<b>Lincoln Douglas (LD)</b>	<b>March/April 2023</b> – <i>The justices of the Supreme Court of the United States ought to be term-limited.</i>
<b>Public Forum (PF)</b>	<b>March 2023</b> – <i>The Republic of India should sign the Artemis Accords.</i>
<b>Big Question (BQ)</b>	<b>2022-2023</b> – <i>Humans are primarily driven by self-interest.</i>

**Version: March 6, 2023**  
**Please check back for revisions. Changes will be noted on the last page**

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## **1 Qualifying to compete at States – Earning a bid**

This section describes how debaters qualify to compete at States:

- Section 1.1 describes the criteria for qualifying to compete at States for CX, LD, and PF.
- Section 1.2 details other resources, including the list of MSDL league tournaments this year and a link to the records for those tournaments (Section 1.2.1), and the number of wildcard entries your school may enter (Section 1.2.2)
- Section 1.3 explains how to enter documentation for qualification of your debate entries.

### **1.1 Criteria for qualifying to compete at states**

#### **1.1.1 CX – no need to qualify**

Any debater can compete in CX at the State championship. There are no prior requirements.

#### **1.1.2 LD**

LD entries may qualify in any of the following ways:

- (1) *Earn a winning record at an MSDL sanctioned tournament in LD during the current academic year.* Earning a winning record in a Varsity, open, or JV division earns qualification to debate in Varsity or Novice LD at States. Earning a winning record in the Novice division earns qualification to debate in Novice LD at States.

OR

*Rank among the top 8 entries at an MSDL sanctioned tournament in LD during the current academic year.* Earning a top-8 spot in a Varsity, open, or JV LD earns qualification to debate in Varsity or Novice LD at States. Earning a top-8 spot in Novice LD earns qualification to debate in Novice LD at States.

- (2) *Enter as a wildcard entry.*
- (3) *Meet alternate criteria* – Compete in the LD varsity, open, or JV divisions at any 3 MSDL sanctioned tournaments during the current academic year. To debate in the LD Varsity division at States, the debater must have competed in a Varsity, open, or JV division in LD at an MSDL sanctioned tournament at least 3 times during the current academic year.

#### **1.1.3a PF Varsity**

A PF team of two debaters may qualify to debate in PF Varsity at States in any of the following ways:

- (1) *Earn a winning record together, as a team, debating together as a pair, at an MSDL sanctioned tournament in PF during the current academic year.* Earning a winning record in a Varsity, open, or JV division earns qualification to debate in Varsity PF at States.
- (2) *Enter as a wildcard entry.*
- (3) *Meet alternate criteria* – By (a) earning a preliminary round winning record in a varsity, JV, or open divisions at a Tournament of Champions qualifier tournament, *debating together as a pair*, and (b) for both partners – debating individually (with other partners) or together in PF at four MSDL-sanctioned tournaments during the current season (see Section 1.2.1)

### 1.1.3b PF Novice

A PF team of two debaters may qualify to debate in PF Novice at States in any of the following ways:

- (1) *Earn a winning record together, as a team, at an MSDL-sanctioned tournament in PF during the current academic year.*
- (2) *Enter as a wildcard entry.*
- (3) *Meet alternate criteria* – By (a) debating together, as a pair, in PF at an MSDL-sanctioned tournament during the current season; and (b) for both partners – debating individually (with other partners) or together in PF at four MSDL-sanctioned tournaments during the year (see Section 1.2.1).

### 1.1.4 Big Questions

Any debater can compete in BQ at the State championship. There are no prior requirements.

## 1.2 Other resources

### 1.2.1 List of and records for MSDL-sanctioned tournaments for 2022-2023

To look up a record at a tournament, (1) click on the link in the right column of the table below, (2) click on the RESULTS tab, (3) select the debate division (e.g., Novice LD or Varsity PF) from the drop-down menu on the right, and (4) click on the blue “Prelim Records” button or on the blue “Prelim Seeds” button, also on the right.

Date	Tournament	Link
10/28/22 to 10/29/22	Averill Tournament ONLINE	<a href="#">Here</a>
11/12/22	Gracia Burkill at Natick HS	<a href="#">Here</a>
11/12/22	Butternut LD and BQ Tournament	<a href="#">Here</a>
11/19/22	Little Lexington	<a href="#">Here</a>
12/03/22	Lincoln Sudbury HS	<a href="#">Here</a>
12/17/22	Holly Festival at Natick HS	<a href="#">Here</a>
01/07/23	Newton South HS	<a href="#">Here</a>
01/14 to 01/15/23	Lexington Winter Invitational (aka “Big Lex”)	<a href="#">Here</a>
01/21/23	Keith West at Boston Latin School	<a href="#">Here</a>
03/04/23	Mardi Gras Tournament at Shrewsbury	<a href="#">Here</a>
03/18/23	March Merryness at Needham	<a href="#">Here</a>

### 1.2.2 Wild cards available for each school

Schools receive wildcards as follows:

- “New” schools may each send a total of four wildcard entries across the LD and PF divisions. A new school is one that has not competed in CX, LD, PF, or BQ debate in the MSDL during any of the previous four years academic years (including the current year).
- Other schools may each send a total of two wildcard entries across the LD and PF divisions.

### 1.3 Recording qualifications for your LD and PF entries

Enter qualifying information for each entry into (1) Tabroom and (2) a supplemental spreadsheet.

#### Entering information into Tabroom

- For each entry, Tabroom prompts for qualifying information, including a TOURNAMENT, and a RESULT

#### **Qualifiers (1 Required)**

Qualifier	Tournament	Result
* Qualifier 1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<a href="#">Save Details</a>		

- For teams that qualify on the basis of a winning record or (in the case of LD) a top-eight finish at an MSDL-sanctioned tournament (item (1) in Sections 1.1.2, 1.1.3a, and 1.1.3b) – Enter the name of the tournament and the preliminary round record. For example, for a team that earned 3 wins and 2 losses at the Winter Wonderland tournament, enter “Winter Wonderland” into the TOURNAMENT field, and “3-2” in the RESULT field. For an LD debater who finished in 4<sup>th</sup> place at Mardi Gras, enter “Mardi Gras” in the TOURNAMENT field, and “4<sup>th</sup> place” in the RESULT field.*
- For teams entering as a wildcard (item (2) in Sections 1.1.2, 1.1.3a, and 1.1.3b) – Enter “Wildcard” in the TOURNAMENT field and “Not applicable” in the RESULT field.*
- For teams that meet alternate criteria (item (3) in Sections 1.1.2, 1.1.3a, and 1.1.3b) – Enter “Spreadsheet” in the TOURNAMENT field and “Not applicable” in the RESULT field. Fill in the needed information in the spreadsheet (see immediately below).*

Entering information into the spreadsheet – only for teams qualifying using the *alternative criteria* (item (3) in Sections 1.1.2, 1.1.3a, and 1.1.3b)

We have created a spreadsheet template for each school to record qualification information.

- First, copy to your own computer the state debate championship Google Sheets workbook template ([here](#)).
- Select the appropriate sheet by clicking on one of the tabs at the bottom of the displayed sheet (PF-N for Public Forum Novice, PF-V for Public Forum Varsity, LD-N for Lincoln-Douglas Novice, and LD-V for Lincoln-Douglas Varsity)
- After entering the qualifying information (see above), rename your copy of the spreadsheet as <<School>> - MSDL Bids - 2023 (e.g., “NewtonSouth – MSDL Bids - 2023”)
- Share the link to your spreadsheet to Joshua Cohen at [jcohen1964@gmail.com](mailto:jcohen1964@gmail.com)

## 2 Judges

### 2.1 Judge qualifications

- Varsity and open divisions: Judges must have left high school prior to the current academic year and be at least 19 years of age.
- Novice division: Any varsity-qualified judge can judge in the novice division. In addition, current high school students can judge in the Novice division if they competed in high school debate (CX, LD, or PF) for two or more years prior to the current academic year.
- The tournament will use electronic balloting. ***All judges must have accounts on Tabroom.com.*** For more information on setting up accounts, see [here](#). All Saturday judges must bring internet-capable laptop computers or tablets.
- Judges participating on Friday or Sunday must in addition have devices capable of connecting to the NSDA Campus Platform (see test [here](#)) and be willing to have their cameras on during competition.

### 2.2 Number of judges owed

#### On both Friday and Saturday

- For each debate format, schools must provide 1 judge for every 2 entries in CX, LD, PF, and BQ, rounding up. For example, a school with 5 PF entries provides 3 PF judges.
- Schools must cover their obligation for each format (CX, LD, PF, BQ) separately. For example, a school with 6 PF teams must bring 3 PF judges. A school with 5 PF entries and 1 LD entry (i.e., also with six debate entries in total) must provide 3 PF judges and 1 LD judge.
- A school with both novice and varsity entries for a debate format must provide enough varsity-qualified judges to cover their varsity roster. For example, a school with 6 PF teams must provide 3 PF judges. If 3 of the school's teams are Varsity, the school must provide at least 2 judges qualified to judge varsity. The other judge(s) provided by the school can be qualified to judge novice only.

#### On Sunday (schools with LD or PF entries only)

- If an entry advances to the second elimination round on Saturday (see Section 4), that entry's school must provide one judge for that debate format for Sunday. For example, if 3 PF teams and 1 LD debater from a school advance to the second elimination rounds on Saturday, that school must provide 1 PF judge and 1 LD judge for Sunday. If any of the entries advancing to the second elimination round are competing in the varsity division, the judge participating on Sunday from that school must be qualified to judge varsity.
- If no entries from a school advance to the second elimination round on Saturday, that school need not provide any judges on Sunday.

### 2.3 How long judges must stay at the tournament

- Friday night judges must be available to judge from 5:45 PM to 9 PM (up to 2 debates).
- Saturday judges must be available from 8:15 AM to 7:30 PM.
- Sunday judges must be available for one debate round. Sunday novice division judges must be available from 5:00 PM to 6:45 PM, and Sunday varsity division judges must be available from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM.

## 2.4 Penalties for missing judges

- We cannot run the tournament without judges. If a judge must leave before the end of their obligation, that school must provide a qualified replacement, or be potentially subject to a \$50 missing judge penalty.
- If a school does not cover its judge obligation, its debaters may be disqualified from competing.
- If a school does not designate a judge for Sunday, the school's entries may not be able to advance to second elimination round on Saturday.
- The tournament does not have judges available for hire. Please do not view fines imposed for missing judges as a fee that covers your school's judge obligation.

## 2.5 Entering judges into Tabroom

- Judges can participate on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday, or on more than one day. To specify a judge's availability, click on "All rounds" in the **Availability** column in an event's judge list.

PF Varsity Judges		0 judges owed	+ Add Judge
Name	Availability		
Joshua Cohen	All rounds		

- You will then see three rows – one each for Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. In the far-right column, click on the AVAILABLE button, and it will change to UNAVAILABLE. (You can click on the UNAVAILABLE button to toggle it back to AVAILABLE). In the example below, Joshua Cohen will NOT judge on Friday but will be available to judge on Saturday and Sunday. If no teams from Joshua Cohen's school advance to the second elimination round on Saturday, he will NOT judge on Sunday. If teams from Joshua Cohen's school do advance to the second elimination round on Saturday, then he must be available to judge on Sunday.

### LIMIT JOSHUA COHEN'S AVAILABILITY

Timeblock	Fee if under	Available
Friday - Unavailable	\$100	Unavailable
Saturday - Unavailable	\$250	Available
Sunday - Unavailable	\$0	Available

Toggle the "Available" button to mark a judge as not available for a given time block.

- Click on the "Return to" button to the right. You will see the change you made to the Availability column. You will also see a warning above this table if you no longer cover your obligation.

PF Varsity Judges		0 judges owed	+ Add Judge
Name	Availability		
Joshua Cohen	Partial Availability: Friday - Unavailable		

### **3 Fees and registration**

#### **3.1 Cost per entry**

- CX: \$20
- LD: \$10
- PF: \$20
- BQ: \$10

#### **3.2 How to pay**

- Payment must be by check (personal checks are fine) and must be paid the morning of the tournament when you arrive.
- Please make payment with a single check for your registration.
  - The league will **not** accept individual checks from each debater on your roster.
  - The league will **not** accept cash.
- The check should be payable to the Massachusetts Speech and Debate League
- Be sure that the check clearly indicates your school's name (which sometimes does not match the town or city specified on the check's address).

#### **3.3 Registration instructions**

Team registration	Due Tuesday, March 21 at 5:00 PM	Enter on Tabroom.com ( <a href="http://www.tabroom.com">http://www.tabroom.com</a> )
Judge registration	Due Thursday, March 23 at 5:00 PM	Enter on Tabroom.com
Team changes	Due Tuesday, March 21 at 5:00 PM	Enter on Tabroom.com
Team drops	Due by Tuesday, March 21 at noon	Before March 21 at 5:00 PM, make drops at Tabroom.com. After that time, email <a href="mailto:jcohen1964@gmail.com">jcohen1964@gmail.com</a>

*Although there is no registration fee, we ask schools to avoid as much as possible registering entries that do not intend to compete. The league must reserve online competition spaces early in the week running up to the tournament and must pay for those spaces even if we do not use them.*

#### **3.4 Registration Confirmation**

- Friday, March 24 – *Online registration opens at noon.* Navigate to your team's Tabroom entry for this tournament. Click on the ONSITE tab and follow the instructions to confirm your competitors and judges will be ready to go. If you need to make any changes after that time, you must contact the tournament administrator (Josh Cohen – [jcohen1964@gmail.com](mailto:jcohen1964@gmail.com)). Be sure to identify your school and provide contact information so that we may reach out to you.
- Saturday, March 25 – Schools with only CX entries will compete only on Saturday – send an email to [jcohen1964@gmail.com](mailto:jcohen1964@gmail.com) confirming your entry. Be sure to identify yourself, your cell phone number, and your school in your email.
- Saturday, March 25 – Schools with entries that competed on Friday evening need not register again. If there are any changes, however – e.g., a student becomes sick – then email [jcohen1964@gmail.com](mailto:jcohen1964@gmail.com). Please identify yourself (including your cell phone) and your school in your message.



## **4 Schedule details**

### **4.1 Online registration**

- Registration opens at noon for teams with entries in Lincoln Douglas or Public Forum Debate – See Section 3.2, first bullet point.
- For teams competing only in CX debate – See Section 3.2, email confirmation of registration on Saturday morning (see Section 3.2, second bullet point).

### **4.2 Policy**

- Saturday – 8:15 AM – Judge briefing
- Saturday – Four preliminary rounds, starting at 9:00 AM and concluding by 6:30 PM.

### **4.3 Lincoln Douglas and Public Forum**

#### Friday evening – March 24 - Online

- Optional judge briefing at 5:00 PM. All judges in online judge lounge by 5:25 PM.
- Round 1: Posted at 5:30 PM, start round by no later than 6:00 PM.
- Round 2: Post at 7:15 PM, start round by 7:30 PM

#### Saturday – March 25 – At Acton-Boxborough Regional High School

- Mandatory judge briefing – all judges: 8:15 AM
- Round 3: 9:00 AM
- Round 4: 10:30 AM
- Round 5: 12:00 noon
- Round 6: 1:45 PM
- 1st elimination round: 3:15 PM
- 2<sup>nd</sup> elimination round: 4:45 PM
- 3<sup>rd</sup> elimination round: 6:15 PM
- Awards: 7:30 PM
- Depart: 8:15 PM

#### Sunday – March 26 - Online

- Novice final rounds in LD and PF, if necessary: 5:00 PM
- Varsity final rounds in PF and, if necessary in LD: 7:00 PM

### **4.4 Big Questions**

- Saturday – 8:15 AM – Judge briefing
- Saturday – Four preliminary rounds, starting at 9:00 AM and concluding by 6:30 PM.

## **5 Miscellaneous**

### **5.1 Sweepstakes**

Sweepstakes awards will be conferred based on a school's overall performance in CX, LD, and PF.

### **5.2 Computer Use for debaters**

- Competitors – Do not assume that you will be able to use the internet at Acton-Boxborough Regional HS at any time. Competitors must have materials they may need downloaded onto their computer, including cases and evidence.
- Do not assume that you will be able to access an electrical outlet during debate rounds.
- In round – MSDL rules apply. Competitors may retrieve information from the internet (if it is accessible) but may not communicate with anyone not in their round – i.e., they may only communicate with their opponents and the judge. ***Competitors may not access any document that someone not participating in the round can modify.***

### **5.3 Conduct and Care of Host School**

Judges and Debaters – Please remember that we are guests at Acton-Boxborough Regional High School. Finding a school to host the debate championship tournament is challenging, so please respect the building. Other than rearranging student desks for the round, please leave each room exactly as you found it.

#### Room rules

- NO students may enter any room before the judge arrives.
- Judges and debaters may not use the teacher's desk, chair, or touch anything on a teacher's desk. Tournament participants may not use any classroom supplies (paper, pens, etc.).
- Judges and debaters may not touch any items on desks, tables, or other surfaces.
- Judges and debaters may not use, move, or unplug any electronic device – even temporarily. Only outlets with nothing plugged in may be used.
- Judges and contestants may not erase or write anything on any whiteboard. Do not write on Smart Boards; doing so can cause costly damage.

#### Enforcement

Members of the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School community will be checking on and photographing rooms before and after rounds.

Any violation of these rules can result in a forfeit.

***The Massachusetts Speech and Debate League fosters a culture of diversity and inclusion. We expect all members of our community to treat one another with respect. Should you have any issues, please come to the tab room and ask to speak with a member of the MSDL Board.***

***Standard rules of professionalism, etiquette, and respect for our hosts and their school shall apply at all times.***

**Version: March 6, 2023**  
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**We look forward to seeing you at the tournament!**

Sincerely,

*The MSDL Board*

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**Acton-Boxborough Regional HS**

Acton Boxborough Regional HS  
36 Charter Rd  
Acton, MA 01720

Check back here for any special instructions.

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**LIST OF REVISIONS since March 6**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Page(s)</b>	<b>Revision</b>