

***Massachusetts Speech and Debate League
State Championship Tournaments
Speech & Congressional Debate
Saturday, April 11, 2026***

The Board of Directors of the Massachusetts Speech and Debate League is pleased to announce the State Finals in Speech and Congressional Debate. The tournament will be hosted on April 11th at Catholic Memorial under the direction of the MSDL Board. Catholic Memorial is located at 235 Baker Street in West Roxbury.

Qualification

Only MSDL member teams and their qualified students are invited to compete. In Speech, a student is considered “qualified” for a category if they have received two bids in that category at any MSDL-sanctioned tournament this season. For Multiple Reading, qualification is according to the MSDL Rules and Policies as follows: The State qualification for Multiple will be by piece and one more than 50% of the cast in that piece. Alternatively, 100% of a cast may qualify together and may enter with another piece. In order to qualify for States, casts and pieces must receive two bids. A list of qualifiers is available on the MSDL website.

Novice Extemporaneous Speaking is not offered at States. Students who earned bids in Novice Extemporaneous Speaking may apply at most 2 bids in Novice Extemp towards 1 bid in Extemporaneous Speaking at States. So, students may qualify in Extemporaneous Speaking if they have 2 bids in Novice Extemp and 1 bid in Varsity Extemp.

There will be a final round in Novice Oral Interpretation for the top six non-advancing competitors in Children’s Literature, Play Reading, Poetry Reading, and Prose Reading.

For Congressional Debate, a list of qualifiers is available on the MSDL website.

Entries & Wild Cards

In Speech, entry is subject to the following limitations:

1. A student may not enter more than three events in which they have qualified, *including* Multiple Reading.
2. Students entered in Group Discussion or Congress may not double or triple enter.
3. Each student may only enter once in any given event.
4. Students entered in a prep room draw event may double – but not triple enter. Students may enter only one prep room draw event.
5. A student may not use the same material in more than one event.

We will make every effort to make the day easy on every student. However, *students should think carefully about the choice to double or triple enter*. Students will be held responsible for making it to all their rounds of competition before the rounds are finished. Students in draw events will be responsible for coordinating with the prep room staff at the beginning of the day.

In Congressional Debate, students will be split into the appropriate number of chambers with specific assignments generated by the Tabroom program.

Schools receive two wild card entries to use combined between Speech and Congressional Debate. Wild card entries are not subject to qualification. A **new school** is a school that has not competed in the MSDL in the preceding four years. A new school may enter up to four wild card entries to be used combined between State Speech and Congressional Debate during its first two years of competition.

Multiple

A student may participate in only one Multiple. Please include the names of the students in the Multiple from the drop-down menu on Tabroom.

Novices

A “novice” competitor is defined as any student who has not competed in high school forensics in a previous school year. A student who competes in two or fewer high school tournaments while in middle school retains novice status; but if a student competes in more than two high school tournaments, that student cannot be considered a novice. Please make sure to indicate all novices in your student roster online. Special recognition will be given to the top-ranking novice in each category.

Congressional Debate Legislation

Congressional Debate Legislation is due to Joe Bowden by Tuesday, March 31st at 5pm. Please email bills and resolutions to Mr. Bowden (preferably in Word or Google Docs format) at joe.bowden@gmail.com. Legislation will be published approximately ten days prior to the tournament.

All schools participating in State Congressional Debate are expected to submit legislation. One piece of legislation per school will be chosen. Legislation should be of a quality befitting a State Championship competition. Schools are encouraged to submit legislation as soon as possible to allow for review and suggestions for revision.

Extemporaneous Speaking

Preliminary round questions will cover international, national, and economic topics. All questions will be derived from online and print editions of current political and news magazines and newspapers. The final round topic area will be: Massachusetts.

Group Discussion

The Group Discussion topic area will be Current Topics in Sports with focus on the 2026 FIFA World Cup, US hockey at the 2026 Milan Cortina Olympics, paying college athletes, sports betting, and sportsmanship.

Judges

Schools must provide one judge for every five Speech and Congressional Debate entries, or fraction thereof. All judges must have graduated from high school at least six months prior to the date of the tournament. Given that this is our State Finals Tournament, we urge coaches to bring experienced judges, who are qualified to judge high-level competition. **At a minimum, schools must bring judges who have judged or competed at one speech tournament.** Coaches should spend time with their judges in advance of the tournament reviewing the events to ensure that they are prepared for the competition.

A \$50.00 penalty will be imposed for each missing judge. This penalty is not to be used in lieu of your requirement; if we do not have sufficient judges, we may have to reduce your entry numbers in line with your numbers of judges.

All judges are expected to stay through Finals. Missing judges or judges who leave early seriously compromise the smooth operation of the tournament. If you have a judge who must leave before the end of the day, you must find a replacement for that judge. Any judge who is not available to judge a round of their obligation may incur the \$50.00 missing judge penalty.

Fees

Entry fees are \$10 per entry in all events except Duo, which is \$20. There is no fee for Novice Oral Interpretation Final entries.

Any school that has not paid its 2025-2026 dues will not be allowed to participate in the state tournament. Drops not reported before 8:00 AM on the morning of the tournament will cost \$10 each.

Registration Instructions

Registrations must be entered on Tabroom (www.tabroom.com) by 5 p.m. on **Tuesday, April 7th, 2026**. Because we have to verify bids, *we cannot accept any late adds after Tuesday the 7th of April*. Drops should be emailed to jeba78@verizon.net.

Registration Confirmation

Saturday morning confirmation should be texted to 508-397-5143. All schools should confirm their registration, whether or not you have drops, and advise us of any last-minute drops on the morning of the tournament by texting or calling 508-397-5143 between 7:30 and 8:00. This helps us to get the tournament started promptly. When texting, please be sure to include your school name. MSDL rules and the smooth operation of the tournament require all schools to check in before 8:00 AM or face a \$25 fine.

Awards

Awards will be presented to all finalists. The top novice in each speech category will also receive special recognition. Team Sweepstakes awards will be presented to the top eight speech schools based on their best 16 scores from any category. These scores will be computed by using preliminary ranks and final placement.

MSDL Double Entry Awards

To recognize students for excellence in different disciplines, the MSDL will award an additional honor, the MSDL Double Entry award, to students who achieve merit in two distinct events.

Double entry awards will be given to the top students in events in two of the following divisions:

Interpretation: DP, DUO, PR, PO, POI, KL, PL, MULT

Debate: Debate, Congressional Debate, GD

Limited Preparation: VX, RB, IMP

Platform: OO, DEC, INFO

Approximate Schedule

8-8:30 Registration
8:30 Judges Meeting
9:00 Speech General Meeting and Postings
9:15-5:00 Competition Rounds
5:30 Senior Reception
6:00 Awards

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

We look forward to seeing you at the tournament!

Sincerely,

The MSDL Board

PLEASE TEXT 508-397-5143 to confirm your registration by 8:00 on the morning of the tournament.