

KSCA Virtual Speech & Drama Proposals to the Executive Board- **APPROVED**

December 11, 2020

KSHSAA Staff supports the KSCA proposals. All survey results for Proposals 1-10 are above 70% and supported by KSCA.

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to outline several proposals which have received support from Kansas speech and drama coaches which are designed to enable virtual competition in speech and drama for the Spring 2021 competition season. None of the proposals are intended to create lasting change beyond the current COVID-19 pandemic.

The surveyed items reflect feedback from 178 coaches representing all six classifications (23 6A / 20 5A / 25 4A / 33 3A / 33 2A / 45 1A).

Proposal 1 – Allowing Reuse of Material

Enforcement of KSHSAA Speech and Drama Regulations, Sec. 8 B (duplication of material from a prior season) shall be suspended for any material which was only used between January and March 2020. Such materials may be reused in competition for the 2021 season.

Survey Support: 70.63% overall

6A 45.45% / 5A 55.00% / 4A 68.18% / 3A 79.31% / 2A 78.13% / 1A 82.86%

Rationale: Students who competed last year had very limited opportunities to compete and very little notice of this change. In many cases they qualified for a state tournament which ultimately did not take place. This rule variance would permit those students to experience a complete season for the work they have already put in.

Note that many 5A and 6A schools expressed concerns about students duplicating work which they were able to bring to the NSDA National Tournament in June 2020. Based upon this feedback, we framed the rule above such that any students who competed at that event would not be able to duplicate their performance in 2021.

Proposal 2 – Virtual State Speech Held Synchronously

If KSHSAA determines that one or more state festival and/or champs events must be held virtually, those virtual tournaments shall be held in a synchronous format, meaning that students in all events will perform live for their judges. No events shall be pre-recorded.

Survey Support: 72.68% overall

6A 85.71% / 5A 57.14% / 4A 74.19% / 3A 68.75% / 2A 74.19% / 1A 74.47%

Rationale: While it does carry substantial technical challenges for KSHSAA and the tournament managers to overcome, a synchronous competition platform provides a more authentic experience which most resembles the in-person competition, in a world where these tournaments cannot be held in person.

Proposal 3 – Asynchronous Tournaments Allowed

Invitational tournaments which hold some or all events in an asynchronous (pre-recorded) format shall count equally for qualification to state festival and championships, provided that all other qualifying standards are met under section 8, p. 26 (festival) and section 4, p. 30 (champs).

Survey Support: 88.48% overall

6A 95.24% / 5A 100% / 4A 79.17% / 3A 93.33% / 2A 82.76% / 1A 85.37%

Rationale: Many invitational tournaments may choose to experiment with different delivery methods that are most appropriate to their own needs. In other states and national circuit tournaments, some have chosen to go fully asynchronous and others have opted for a hybrid approach. This option would preserve all tournaments as valid paths to state qualification.

Proposal 4 – One Tournament Per Day

Students may compete in a maximum of one speech and drama competition per day.

Survey Support: 84.62% overall

6A 91.30% / 5A 94.74% / 4A 88.00% / 3A 73.33% / 2A 73.33% / 1A 90.48%

Rationale: With asynchronous tournament options, it is imaginable that a student might want to enter multiple tournaments at the same time. While the eight-tournament limit will still serve as an upper limit, this practice could lead to unforeseen circumstances. This rule would align with NSDA practices for virtual competition.

Proposal 5 – Technology Equity Rules

KSHSAA shall adopt rules relating to equitable technology access, with an aim of preventing professional-style recording equipment from being used.

Proposed language from the KSCA, copied largely from the NSDA guidance from summer 2020, is attached in Appendix A.

Survey Support: 98.18% overall

6A 100% / 5A 94.44% / 4A 100% / 3A 96.55% / 2A 100% / 1A 97.62%

Rationale: In a virtual environment, every effort should be made to ensure that the judge is evaluating the student's performance rather than their access to resources.

Proposal 6 – Internet Use

Students should be permitted to access the Internet during virtual competition, but may not solicit the help of any additional person (except their partner in Duo, Duet, or IDA) during performance or preparation.

Survey Support: 96.39% overall

6A 100% / 5A 100% / 4A 91.30% / 3A 100% / 2A 89.66% / 1A 97.50%

Rationale: (1) Competing virtually requires an Internet connection, so without a rule change all students would be technically in violation. (2) With students competing from a variety of locations, enforcing restrictions on Internet use becomes impossible; having a rule that cannot be enforced only benefits those who would break it.

Proposal 7 – One-Act Play Virtual Platform

If One-Act Play cannot be held in person, it is recommended that KSHSAA seek out an appropriate virtual platform, possibly using a platform such as that used for Spirit Game Day in the fall.

Survey Support: 97.89% overall

6A 100% / 5A 100% / 4A 100% / 3A 100% / 2A 90.91% / 1A 100%

Rationale: The Spirit Game Day Showcase provides a potential model for One-Act Plays to continue to compete in 2021, even if in-person performances are not feasible.

Proposal 8 – Lincoln-Douglas Evidence Rules

The Internet Use Rules adopted for Policy Debate, including evidence exchange expectations, should be adopted for Lincoln-Douglas Debate. These rules shall supersede the existing rules regarding the use of electronic retrieval devices (section 6 and 10, p. 44).

The relevant language is attached in Appendix B.

Survey Support: 98.92% overall

6A 100% / 5A 100% / 4A 94.12% / 3A 100% / 2A 100% / 1A 100%

Rationale: Just as with policy debate, Lincoln-Douglas often involves the sharing of evidence between debaters and judges. This would align LD with other debate events and with national norms on virtual competition.

Proposal 9 – Supervision Rules

[adapted from debate language]

The supervision rule [KSHSAA Speech and Debate Manual, Speech and Drama Regulations (p. 24), Sec 5] should be construed to permit supervision to be done virtually, with no obligation for a school coach or advisor to be physically present. However, for all tournaments, a coach or appointed advisor must be available on call.

Rationale: In the event that virtual competition is needed, some schools' policies may prevent employees from being physically present where students are located, and students may need to compete from a variety of spaces.

Proposal 10 – Recording of Rounds

[adapted from debate language]

We recommend that KSHSAA ought to defer to local board policies regarding recording of online interactions. However, any recordings of copyrighted performance material should be deleted or removed by the tournament host soon after a tournament is complete.

Rationale: Emerging district policies are currently in conflict about whether adults are prohibited, permitted, and/or required to record their interactions with students. It should be understood, however, that tournament hosts should not keep performance material after the competition is complete.

COVID-19 Risk Considerations (Craig will be working with KSCA to finalize this section)

KSHSAA, in consultation with NFHS and KSCA as appropriate, should publish a list of event-specific considerations, particularly outlining recommendations for:

- 1) tournaments which choose to host in person, including, but not limited to:
 - a) use of common areas
 - b) prep areas for extemporaneous speaking and IDA
 - c) appropriate spacing within classrooms
 - d) appropriate spacing between partners while performing
 - e) mask usage by performers and judges
- 2) tournaments which choose to host virtually, including, but not limited to:
 - a) mask usage by performers in partnership events
 - b) appropriate spacing between performers in partnership events
 - c) students potentially being in separate locations while performing together

These recommendations should prioritize the safety of all participants, as well as equity among competitors from all schools. **These recommendations should also be revisited throughout the season as the situation with COVID-19 evolves.** KSCA stands ready to participate in the development of these guidelines as needed.

Appendix A – Technology Equity Rules

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. 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. No rule changes will be made to accommodate virtual visual aids.

Appendix B – Debate Internet Use Rules

Rules for online competition will supersede the existing technology rules for the duration of online competition due to coronavirus concerns.

A. Contestants may use electronic devices (including laptop computers, tablets, and/or cell phones) to access the internet during debate rounds with the following conditions:

1. Computers or other electronic devices may not be used to receive information for competitive advantage from non-competitors (coaches, assistant coaches, other students) inside or outside of the room in which the competition occurs. Information that would be restricted would include but not be limited to coach/nonparticipating competitor generated arguments, advice on arguments to run, questions to ask during cross examination, and other information not generated by the participating competitors.

2. Internet access may be used to retrieve files, exchange evidence and/or arguments, research arguments, and partner to partner communication. These electronic device guidelines do not limit communication between debate partners during the debate round.

B. Penalty: Contestants found to have violated these provisions will be disqualified from the tournament and will forfeit all rounds and merit points in that event.

C. Availability of Evidence: Upon request, contestants electing to use computers have the responsibility to promptly provide a copy of any evidence read in a speech for inspection by the judge or opponent prior to the speech being delivered.

D. Contestants electing to use computers are responsible for providing their own computers, batteries, extension cords, and all other necessary accessories. Tournament hosts will not be responsible for providing computers, printers, software, paper, or extension cords for contestants. Host schools may provide wireless internet access, but will not guarantee that contestants will be able to gain access when needed.

E. Contestants choosing to use laptop computers and/or related devices accept the risk of equipment failure. Judges and/or contest directors will give no special consideration or accommodation, including no additional speech time or prep time, should equipment failure occur.

Appendix C – KSCA Subcommittee

This document is the work product of the KSCA Subcommittee on Virtual Speech and Drama, including the following member coaches:

- Andrew Bauer, Halstead – KSCA 3A Classification Representative – co-chair
- Eric Skoglund, Olathe Northwest – KSCA 6A Classification Representative – co-chair
- Justin Cartwright, Coffeyville-Field Kindley – KSCA 4A Classification Representative
- Betsy Dutton, Sterling – KSCA 2A Classification Representative
- Tim Ellis, Topeka-Washburn Rural – KSCA First Vice President
- Megan Hagaman, Salina South – KSCA Treasurer
- Steve Harrell, Tonganoxie – KSCA Representative to KSHSAA Board of Directors
- Kelli Henderson, Great Bend – KSCA Secretary
- Chelsey Juenemann, Langdon-Fairfield - KSCA 1A Classification Representative
- Will Mercer, De Soto
- Jeff Plinsky, Lawrence – KSCA President
- Aaron Schopper, McPherson
- Curtis Shephard, Maize – KSCA 5A Classification Representative
- Russ Tidwell, Garden City