**Massachusetts Middle School Speech League**

**Spring Meeting: Saturday, June 2, 2018**

**Milton Academy**

1. Meeting called to order at 9:21 a.m.
2. Roll call: Spencer Harvey/RJ Grey Junior High, Nadia Amrani/Al Hamra Academy, Craig Powers/Shrewsbury, Lis Venetiou/The Pike School, Vivian Powers/Oak Middle Shrewsbury, Christina Manos/Sherwood Middle School, Yoshi Makishima/Milton Academy, Tim Brainerd/Wilson Natick, Kim Vanaman/Oak Hill Brown Newton, Debbie Simon/Milton Academy
3. Debbie Simon thanked everyone for their generosity and moving the league forward. She has had comments from people who want to start middle school leagues and use ours as an example. She’s excited for our next steps forward.
4. Meeting minutes
   1. Question for future about use of notes in competition. Intent of notes not to give our kids pressure and kids are getting rid of notes sooner than before. Rather leave it optional to use notes but judges don’t see it as optional.
   2. Craig has rules written out.
   3. If it’s drama then it’s not free verse/poetry but if it’s just lyrics then it could be free verse/poetry.
   4. We don’t have a guideline for where you can get material. We, as a league, need to have some restrictions for Mardi Gras, for example. Can’t download material. We just want them to perform at the MS level but if they’re taking it elsewhere then it’s not legal (yet). For spoken word poetry, they have a chapbook but often it’s just on youtube.
   5. Question about artistic plagiarism. Duo example from the Milton tournament. Hard to say the delineation of something that’s iconic and something that’s in the play that has to do it that way.
   6. What role do we want the middle school league to compete at? Contained within ourselves or conscious of some schools go to the high school tournament and/or nationals. Out of the realm to the high school level. Our rules do differ so that we need to be aware.
      1. Shades of gray including demonstration isn’t a nationals or high school event.
      2. Timings are different. 10 minutes. Don’t want to change our 7 minutes.
   7. Hurricane update: Debbie reached out to help was never contact again about it.
   8. Pictures for the web site. Slide show on opening page (similar to Kim’s dance studio). Available to us? Maybe. Upgrade our web site. Struggling with permission since we would need a waiver. Pike need to find out if waiver goes beyond borders.
5. Spencer moved. Craig 2nd. Passed minutes.
6. Send out minutes via email the week before. Come to the meeting with any corrections that need to be made. Approve at meeting.
7. Treasurer’s report (paper copy). Had to prepare a redacted version to Debbie.
   1. Took the balance 527.81 of last meeting. Then every financial transaction from that date until today. Final balance of the 427.81 as of 6/2/18. Future treasurer some of these checks have not cleared so the bank shows a higher balance.
   2. Video part 2 major expense.
   3. Every school that is on record as paying dues for the season.
   4. Debbie investigated donation to Houston and Florida but didn’t feel that money could be used in an effective way. The NCFL has service projects that everyone is donating to. The board could think of a project for the year. Figure out some way for that to happen. Shelter that provides food, money, etc. Not just financially. Canned goods and clothing. A giving league and not just a speech league.
   5. Spencer motion. Christina 2nd. Passed.
8. Calendar
   1. Sunday October 28, CM, Novice tournament 3 rounds, no finals
   2. Sunday, November 18th, Milton, Tournament, 3 rounds, no finals, no DE
   3. Sunday, December 2nd, Wilson/Al Hamra, Tournament, 3 rounds, finals, no DE
   4. Sunday, January 6th, Nashoba Brooks, Novice, Tournament 3 rounds, finals
   5. Sunday, January 20th (SD 1/27), Shrewsbury Tournament, 3 rounds, finals, DE
   6. Sunday, February 3rd, (SD 3/3), The Pike School, Tournament, 3 rounds, finals, DE
   7. Saturday, March 2nd, Mardi Gras, HS Tournament, 3 rounds, finals
   8. Saturday, March 16th, Needham, HS Tournament, 3 rounds, finals
   9. Sunday, April 7th, Oak Hill, 3 rounds, bonus fling round, finals, DE
   10. Sunday, May 5th, Milton, 3 rounds, finals, DE
   11. Will approve and finalize schedule in September.
9. Item #4. Protocol for students between rounds. Making sure that at tournaments it’s clear that students should be back in the cafeteria between rounds.
   1. Make it clear that timing to be released rounds will be announced in the cafeteria.
   2. Write into the rules of conduct that at the conclusion of rounds, the meeting place of rounds. Too nitpicky? Written for the kids or the coaches?
   3. Have it in the invitation that the first round starts at 9:30 then not list the subsequent times until finals.
   4. Make it consistent with announcements to judges and students.
   5. Hosting schools plan for the time between the 3rd round and announcing finals. Hosting schools need to do something in that time. Should not be wandering the hall.
   6. When use coaches in the tabroom cannot have them as supervisors for the students.
   7. Can the hosting school have a designated adult to be proxy for students?
   8. Christina doesn’t tab during own tournament.
   9. Step back to the culture of a tournament day. Setting expectations for students and coaches for tournament day. What are our expectations for our students over the course of a tournament. And not just what’s expected when you show up for a round.
   10. Reminder to students that finals is not a menu list. Have to attend the full round.
   11. Still miss the fact that we don’t do multiple. From the stage in between prelims. Duo with more than two people, have scripts and furniture. Can create a multiple event in our league and have it only in that space between prelims and finals.
   12. All adults present help uphold these.
10. Item #5 Artistic plagiarism. Initial discussion. Form working committee.
    1. Have something in the rules. Going to be vague. Totality of the performance, cutting, blocking, the way it’s presented, must be presented original to the student and the coach. Functionally then becomes a judgement call.
    2. What’s the harm in having students copy others? MS is when they begin to learn about plagiarism.
    3. Has to come from the coach and the philosophy of that team. League should have an integrity statement that your work comes from yourself and supervised by your coach. If there’s a challenge, then there’s a reason to defend the art, defend the choice. Ultimately, it’s the coach of the school for the challenge and to defend it.
    4. The coach will set that message of integrity to students.
    5. Larger team not coached by coach, it’s coached by HS students.
    6. Propose that Craig wordsmith something for the rules that he brings to the fall meeting and include it in the rules. Good to make sure we can articulate our reasons for our philosophy.
    7. We have not been up to this point picky in terms of absolutely everything and also not lenient.
    8. One thing to address in the fall. Need some sort of standardization of how we were dealt it. We need to agree on how to deal with protest when it comes up. Protocol committee of people in the league first, if the person who feels they were challenged were not dealt with fairly then it goes to the president/board.
11. Item #6 First Aid Kit
    1. At Mardi Gras student had an incident with a student cut her foot, needed 14 stitches, scar, on crutches. Couldn’t find a first aid kit. In your own school, if something goes wrong can’t get to it.
    2. Vivian now has a first aid kit. Not suggesting that we buy anything but suggesting that have access to a good first aid kit for every tournament or permission and access to supplies.
    3. Question of the legality of treatment. Up to coach or volunteers to aid students. Administering epi pen.
12. Item #7 Printer purchase to alleviate stress in tabroom.
    1. The HS has their own printer. One of the biggest headaches with trying to get the tournament underway is when we run into problems printing material that needs to go to the judges. Would be helpful so we’re not at the mercy of the school.
    2. Burden on someone to store it and make sure it gets there. On Craig and Gary to store and getting printer there. Have school as back up printer.
    3. How much and what kind of printer? Under $500. Haven’t investigated it yet. Craig will bring a proposal to fall meeting. With budgeting for ink.
13. Item # 8 Visual Glossary potential third training video
    1. Update: Had a number of parents thanking for the judging videos. Current proposal for what goes into a round. Talk at tournaments is a refresher/reminder. New judges even for the Milton tournament.
    2. Lingo; pops, facial expression, connection to audience that parents don’t have a clue even when reading description in the ballot.
    3. First step rewrite glossary from ballots and get it on the web site.
    4. Not proposing for next year, printer is priority. Visit this in the spring to make a video of showing skill present not present to add a layer. Clear pop and not a clear pop.
    5. Breaking up video so it’s by category. If someone wants to watch it is long. Someone will separate the existing video.
    6. The other is not to make the definitions prescriptive because it limits art and when you limit art you find a way around it.
    7. Everyone can keep a track of terms.
14. Item #9 Potential website enhancements. Thanks to Craig.
    1. Stats from Weebly 61 unique visitors per week. 150 page views per week.
    2. Well indexed.
    3. Link from event description to the portion of the video that shows event. Kim has already posted a time index. Youtube will let you link to particular time in the video. Straightforward. Craig will do it and let Kim know if he has questions.
    4. Parents appreciate the guest password links at tournaments to review videos after they know which tournaments they are judging.
    5. Simplifying language in the rules description document. Not trying to change the meaning but make it easier for new coaches in particular. Kim will check in with Craig to make sure meaning remains the same.
    6. Advantageous to have as much information on the web site as possible. Better than having people in the league owning the information.
    7. Get in touch with Charles Cheever who is our generously non-paying lawyer to transfer papers, officers, and signatures. Yoshi will be the best liaison for that because he’s a Milton grad and gives his services for free.
    8. Potential to balloting on line. Mark did it at Mardi Gras and it was impressive. Chris Palmer developing this. Lis liked that information got to tabroom quickly and Debbie cautioned that it allowed people not to comment. Vivian couldn’t access the ballots and the students could access the ballots themselves. Yoshi was able to print out the ballots fully.
    9. Education will be an issue in terms of the league and the judging pools. Including the bandwidth capable for it.
    10. Could think about doing a pilot at a tournament. Shrewsbury obvious place to do it because of bandwidth and the HS tournament has done it.
    11. Change the contact information for the treasurer on the data card, which is downloadable for the site and also wherever Spencer’s name is listed.
    12. Kim willing to be the contact new coach person. New board needs to decide that.
    13. Update list of members on web site. Can give Treasurer access to web site to add in names as they become members.
    14. Also, need to create job descriptions of each board member.
    15. Craig did a tremendous job with tabroom and web site. Gary as well.
15. Item # 10 Summer Speech Workshop Opportunities
    1. The Foley shouldn’t sponsor something on its own. But didn’t want to publicize them as MMSSL.
    2. Kim’s and Bren McElroy and MS debate/Summit debate. Kim has sent it out to us and we know her.
    3. If we send it out people assume that we’ve vetted it and it’s a quality program.
16. Election of slate of directors. Parliamentary procedure? We have a slate that’s been recommended by nominating committee of Debbie, Spencer and Vivian on the agenda.
    1. Tim moved to close nominations. Spencer 2nd. Extended to additional nominations other than the slate and there were none.
    2. Lis resigned as secretary. Craig moved that we accept resignation. Christina 2nd. Passed.
    3. Craig moves that the recommended slate of directors be approved. Vivian 2nd. Passed. Congratulations to all.
    4. Lis Venetiou, President
    5. Craig Powers, Vice President
    6. Yoshi Makishima, Clerk
    7. Christina Manos, Treasurer
    8. Kim Vanaman, At Large
17. Thank you to Debbie. Memory book. Flowers with vase. Amazon gift card.
    1. CM and Sacred Heart initial group.
    2. Should be an activity that everyone who wants to do it can do it. Make it accessible and keep it appropriate and fun for middle school kids. Really want to see the smiles when you walk in the tournament. Keep it fun. Make it joyous.
    3. Spencer is retiring in the fall. League to thank him in September.
18. Move to adjourn. Christina 2nd. 11:45.

Fall meeting: Saturday, September 8, 2018 at Al Hamra Academy 9-12.