



Highlights/Changes from June 8 KHSSL Board of Directors meeting for 2024-2025

The KHSSL Board had a productive meeting at SCAPA in Lexington on June 8. In addition to the normal reports about membership, finances, and the year's activities and tournaments, several new initiatives and important discussions began. I have highlighted the following items of interest below that the membership may be interested to read more about ([see the Minutes here](#)) or watch for information about this year.

- Henry Clay High School coach Ryan Ray and Julia Webb, a longtime coach from Bowling Green and Morehead, were voted into the Hall of Fame and will be inducted at State tournaments.
- The Junior State Speech tournament will not be able to be held at UK this year due to the renovation of White Hall Classroom Building. Negotiations are underway to hold the tournament in Lexington on our usual dates (February 21-22) at a local high school (evening Friday and all day Saturday); site will be announced in September.
- As a support for the Junior Speech division, whose numbers have not rebounded post-COVID digital meets like Senior Speech has, the Board decided to advance all students who participate in Junior Speech Regional tournaments (or are properly excused from competing) to the Junior State Speech tournament; Senior Speech students will still need to qualify from the Regional tournaments or from one of the other methods described in the Handbook (as modified for the 24-25 edition).
- Much discussion was held about how to help grow the state Debate tournament. While LD and Public Forum are slightly smaller or the same as they were a few years ago, Congressional Debate has taken a large hit since the State tournament was moved away from the State Speech tournament. I proposed adding Extemporaneous Debate (the hottest and largest event at NSDA Nationals each year) without success. The Board would like me to pursue putting the two tournaments back to adjacent dates at the same site and constructed two possible schedules for this mid-meeting with requests to pursue these if possible and if not to



make State Debate a one-day event. I am surveying the membership for their thoughts on these options and plan to announce the dates/sites for both Senior Speech State and State Debate in September when I announce Junior State Speech.

- Regional tournament news:
 - To better balance entry numbers at Regional Speech tournaments, five counties (Breckinridge, Hardin, LaRue, Meade, and Nelson) were moved from the Louisville Region to the Bowling Green Region.
 - Additionally, five of the Regions were renamed: Bowling Green is now Caves; Louisville is now Derby; Murray is now Lakes; Northern is now River; Upper Kentucky River is now Mountain; Appalachian and Bluegrass are unchanged.
- Broadcasting rules are changed for 3rd round only (both Divisions). Third Round will now be a bring-your-own-podcast round students will prepare for each meet based on topics announced in advance by tournament hosts. The membership will be surveyed for thoughts on retaining or adapting these changes post-State. I am currently writing the rules for this round and will publish them in the revised Handbook in August.
- Several new invitationals have been added to the schedule; coaches are encouraged to include at least one of the new meets in their competition plans this year.
- In response to requests from members, we will offer pre-orders for state tournament t-shirts immediately after Regionals; these shirts will include 2025 pre-printed on them (we have omitted the years previously to allow resale for shirts unsold); there will also be undated shirts on sale at State for those who do not pre-order.
- The Board is initiating a return to a practice of several decades ago – offering a Super Saturday (or series of them around the state) in the Fall to kick off the season, probably in October. A committee will put together the plans for these this year with



initial offerings in 2025.

- A KHSSL Alumni Association is being established. Hall of Fame Members Molly Seifert and Connie Hagans will spearhead this work.
- At the bequest / initiation of the Student Advisory Board (SAB), an opening ceremony (welcome) will be added into each State Tournament for all participants and will be managed by the SAB.
- The KHSSL Board plans to adopt at next year's annual meeting an Amendment to the Constitution that will allow official Board meetings to happen electronically provided that at least one annual meeting occurs in person; while these can happen in times of crisis or emergency (an addition made at the beginning of COVID), the Constitution does not allow for other such electronic-only meetings, and we'd like the ability to formally do so.
- Much discussion was held about the need for improved and expanded training for judges at KHSSL meets. A committee of the Board is working hard on these goals, examining new tools provided for free by the National Speech and Debate Association plus the National Federation of High Schools, and will provide more tools for schools by February.
- I was rehired as Executive Director for two more years with a five-day addition to my 85-day contract (now 90) for each year. My focus goals (per the Board) are Judging and Growth (especially Junior and Debate). I'm glad to be with you again.

Steve Meadows, Executive Director

20 July 2024