

Minutes of the 2023-24 Speech Advisory Committee

Wednesday, April 10, 2024

The [IHSA Speech & Drama Advisory Committee](#) meeting was conducted at 10:00 a.m. with the following [IHSA Division](#) voting members in attendance were: IHSA Division 1, Coach Lauren Wells-Mann, Chicago (High School for the Arts); IHSA Division 2, Coach Naz Ahmed, Hoffman Estates (H.S.); IHSA Division 3, Activity Director Marie Wojdelski, Harvey (Thornton); IHSA Division 5, Coach/Director Tony Kortas, Danville (H.S.); IHSA Division 6, Coach/Director Ken Carter, Chatham (Glenwood); IHSA Division 7, and Coach John Rickert, Waterloo (H.S.); IHSA Division 4, Principal Madeline Hawkins, Galena joined virtually. Additional state final managers and liaisons included: Jan Heiteen, [Individual Events](#) State Final Manager; Tom Witting, [Drama](#) State Final Manager; Andrea Gustafson, [ICTA](#) Representative; and Ben Stewart, [SpeechWire](#). IHSA Assistant Executive Director Susie Knoblauch conducted the meeting.

SPEECH: INDIVIDUAL EVENTS TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

1. XI Judging C. **Judges Fees**

Recommended: The host manager is responsible for paying all judges within the framework of the budget for the contest approved by the IHSA office. Judges' fees shall be paid as follows:

Regional: ~~\$20.00~~ \$25.00 per round

Sectional: ~~\$20.00~~ \$25.00 per round

State Final: ~~\$25.00~~ \$30.00 per round

Performance in the Round: \$10.00 per performance at all levels of competition.

A "round" is defined as each group of performances for which a judge completes a ballot.

Rationale: Judge fees have not been increased since 2013.

2. **Speech & Debate** State Series Terms and Conditions

Recommendation: Add debate entries to the speech state series.

Rationale: Chicago Debates and the Illinois Debate Coaches Association reported that debate numbers have increased. The [IHSA emerging activity](#) page indicates 84 schools with debate programs. With the recent partnership with Chicago Debates in 2022-23, the addition of the Pro Con Challenge, and program growth from schools after COVID there is interest to add debate events back with [107 schools participating](#) in Student Congress, Lincoln Douglas, Public Forum, Pro-Con Challenge and Policy Debate.

STATE SPEECH: INDIVIDUAL EVENTS DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. The committee heard an update from Jan Heiteen, IHSA Speech State Final Manager, regarding the 2024 IHSA Speech: Individual Events State Series. Heiteen was recognized and thanked for serving as the tournament manager.

2. The committee discussed the State Final Venue. Issues of no outside food, concessions (price and quality), and noise flooding into the competition rooms continue to be raised. The committee supported returning to high schools as competition venues once the PCC contract is up after the 2025-26 State Final. The IHSA will accept proposals from schools interested in hosting the Speech State Finals for 2026-27, 2027-28 and 2028-29.
3. It was recommended to continue with the current piloted time schedule running all final rounds at the same time at the Speech State Final.
4. The committee reviewed a proposal to move the radio prep time from 45 minutes to 30 minutes. Rationale included: 1) Prep packets have evolved over recent years which allows ease for students to organize their radio scripts more efficiently yet still provide ample time for script reading practice 2) Prep time would align with Extemporaneous Speaking and aid in contest management. The committee tabled this proposal at this time to solicit feedback from coaches.
5. The committee did not support a recommendation to remove the use of tables in Humorous/dramatic Duet Acting or Performance in the Round. The IHSA will continue to rely on competing schools to provide tables for competitors to use in these events.
6. The committee discussed the concern with “canned speeches”. Monitor and enforcement was discussed with a suggestion being made to have a coach listen to each speech in every round. This topic will be a Point of Emphasis (POE) for the upcoming season.
7. The use of headphones in prep rooms was discussed. The following language was reviewed: USE OF ELECTRONIC LISTENING DEVICES (headphones, iPods, noise-canceling devices, etc.) IN EXTEMP AND RADIO PREP - While we do not have a rule on this subject and it’s not addressed in the terms and conditions, by state association adoption this would be prohibited. This topic will also be a POE for the upcoming season.
8. The use of Artificial Intelligence was reviewed. The following statement will be a POE for the upcoming season. USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) such as ChatGPT will be considered a form of plagiarism. Any participants’ use of AI before, during, or after a tournament to generate a speech, MAY result in being ranked last, disqualified, or having their advancement revoked.
9. The committee reviewed contest procedures – violation, protests, warnings, ranked last & disqualifications.
10. The committee discussed Radio Speaking.
 - a) The use of Mic covers (aka pop shields): No additional equipment can be used by a competitor.
 - b) Microphone placement: Managers will be directed to place an X on the table where the radio-speaking microphone shall be placed. Speakers can move the microphone; however, the microphone needs to be placed back on the X to start each performance.
 - c) Timing: Two stop watches will continue to be used. As a point of emphasis coaches will be reminded that the hand raise is a courtesy. Speakers are responsible for performing within the allowable time limits.
11. The committee the use of “*The Moth*” YouTube Channel as publishing proof for DEC. The channel will not per permissible for proof of publication.
12. The committee reviewed Performance in the Round and recommended that a session be presented by ICTA regarding rules regarding: Preset, entering, aisles etc....
13. The committee discussed piloting the use of electronic critiques and ballots at Speech Regionals and Sectionals. The committee tabled the topic to solicit more feedback from coaches, competitors and judges.

14. The committee reviewed [IHSA Policy 14](#) - Guidelines for Adding and Deleting State Series Programs. Advocacy was discussed.
15. The committee reviewed [IHSA Policy 19](#) - Criteria for Increasing Classes.

DRAMA TERMS AND CONDITIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

Item 1: VIII. Tournament Rules B. Group Interpretation 6) Standards of Excellence d.

Recommendation: d. Uniformed dress is ~~permitted~~ required. Costuming is not allowed. Clothing that delineates specific character(s) worn by an individual or the entire cast shall be considered costuming. Clothing and accessories that are overtly representative of an era, setting, and/or movie/professional theatrical releases shall be deemed costuming and not allowed. All Group Interpretation performers must wear shoes.

Rationale: Clearer/more specific language has been added to curb the growing “costuming” trend in group interp.

Item 2: VIII. Tournament Rules B. Group Interpretation 6) Standards of Excellence f.

Recommendation: f. Live (in-person) sound effects may be used, but music and/or singing may be used only as background, to aid in transitions, or to establish mood. An electronic keyboard may be used but all sounds produced by the keyboard must be sounds that could be produced by a musical instrument and must be played live. No prerecorded/ preprogrammed music or sound effects are allowed.

While a book from a musical may be used, the production’s musical numbers may not be used to establish characters or to advance the plot. The lyrics, however, may be incorporated as spoken dialogue.

Rationale: The spirit of the rule is to permit student performers the creative ability to develop background music by either playing instruments and/or singing music. This clearer, more specific language clarifies that the use of pre-recorded vocal tracks (*pop music song by current artists*) would be prohibited. The intention is to have students create these elements live as much as possible. This is a live, creative performance.

Item 3: XI. Judging F) Judges Fees

Recommended:

1) Sectional

Contest Play: ~~\$20.00~~ \$25.00 per play judged

Group Interpretation: ~~\$15.00~~ \$20.00 per performance judged

2) State Final

Contest Play: ~~\$20.00~~ \$25.00 per play judged

Group Interpretation: ~~\$15.00~~ \$20.00 per performance judged

3) Short Film: \$10.00 per performance judged

4) Musical Theatre: \$10.00 per performance judged

Rationale: Judge fees have not been increased since 2013

Administrative Recommendation - Editorial

Item 1 - VI Tournament Structure and Time Schedules B) Contest Committee:

Recommendation: For the State Final, a Contest Committee composed of the State Final Manager, Short Film-Musical Theatre Manager, six Standing-Committee Members, the six Sectional Managers, and any additional support members shall be appointed by the IHSA Office to assist the Host manager in the running of the State Final.

Rationale: To have language that mirrors how tournament management is actually being conducted.

Item 2 - VIII. Tournament Rules B. Group Interpretation 4) Timekeeping d.

Recommendation: d. The time limit for group Interpretation is 30 minutes. In Group Interpretation, if a timer's watch reads 30:30.00 or less, it is not considered a time violation. For each full 30 seconds of overtime, the contestants' ranking from each judge will be lowered by one ranking. If both timers' watches confirm that a performance ran more than 30:30.01 minutes from the initial cue to the final performance element, the performance shall be penalized. For example, at 30:30.01, a performance is lowered one ranking from each judge. At 31:00.01, the performance would be lowered two rankings from each judge. This reduction is mandatory and will be administered by the contest management. The other performances' rankings will not be affected. At the State Final Round on Saturday only, no penalty will be assessed until one (1) minute beyond the specified time limit. For example, In Group Interpretation, if a timer's watch reads 31:00.00 or less, it is not considered a time violation. For each full 30 seconds of overtime, the contestants' ranking from each judge will be lowered by one ranking. For example, if both timers' watches read at 31:00.01, a performance is lowered one ranking from each judge. At 31:30.01, the performance would be lowered two rankings from each judge. This reduction is mandatory and will be administered by the contest management. The other performances' rankings will not be affected.

Rationale: This language did exist at one time and was lost somehow during revisions. This will keep language consistent with both Group Interp. and Drama

STATE DRAMA DISCUSSION ITEMS

1. Tom Witting provided an update of the Drama State Series. Tom was recognized and thanked for serving as the state final manager. Sterling High School served as the State Final host and was commended for their exemplary job in conducting the event. Tim Schlagel and the entire school staff provided amazing planning and leadership that directly contributed to an amazing State Final.

2. The safe use of the standardized pieces for group interpretation was reviewed. As a point of emphasis, directors will be reminded to safely stack blocks on top of each other and make sure all blocking minimizes risk to participants.
3. Tim Connors (Short Film and Musical Theatre manager) provided an update on the Short Film and Musical Theatre events. The submission deadline will be when the Drama List of Participants are due so the judges have time to complete adjudicating and the Short Films and Musicals that will be premiered at the Festival during the Drama State Final can be announced during Sectional Awards.
4. The committee approved awarding medals to the Critic Choice Award Winner in Short Film and Musical Theatre.
5. The oral critique format at the Short Film festival was reviewed. Commitments to Equity were discussed. [NSDA equity statements](#) were recommended. Oral critiques will continue with a point of emphasis being on growth.
6. The committee discussed the use of SpeechWire to adjudicate Short Film and Musical Theatre submissions. In conjunction with the IHSA, Tim Connors will work with Ben Stewart to implement this for the 2024-25 school year.
7. The committee discussed the use of SpeechWire and ways to improve the All Sectional/All State cast listing.
8. The committee approved awarding medals to the Critic Choice Award Winner in Short Film and Musical Theatre.
9. The committee acknowledged the continued growth of Short Film and Musical Theatre and recommended that these events stay in festival format.
10. The committee was updated on future Drama State Final hosts. Oak Lawn Richards High School will host in 2025. The IHSA will accept proposals for State Drama host site for 2026, 2027 and 2028.

ITEMS OF GENERAL DISCUSSION

1. The committee discussed the need to use recruit and assign more diverse judging pools. Knoblauch shared that judge recommendations come directly from coaches, so coaches can directly impact this initiative.
2. Andrea Gustafson presented an update on the Illinois Communication and Theatre Association (ICTA). The [ICTA conference](#) will be held September 19-21 at Harper College. Several IHSA rules sessions and coaching & directing sessions will be presented. The IHSA will continue to present rules session at this conference. The presentation will also be posted on the Speech & Drama menu pages. The committee encourages all coaches to become a member of ICTA.
3. Ben Stewart, SpeechWire, was commended for his continued support of IHSA events.
4. Sonny Patel provided an update from Chicago Debates.
5. Lauren Mann provided a report regarding the NFHS Speech, Debate and Theatre Committee.
6. Knoblauch reviewed NFHS Awards:
 - [Heart of the Arts](#) Award Nominees
 - [Outstanding Educator Coach/Director](#) Nominees - Speech & Debate; TheatreRecommendations of nominations for any of these awards can be directed to Knoblauch.
7. Knoblauch shared information regarding the NFHS Debate Topic Selection meeting and the NFHS Performing Arts Conference.

- [NFHS Performing Arts Conference](#) – Sept. 23-24, [Hyatt Lodge, Oak Brook](#).
- [NFHS Topic Selection Meeting](#) – Aug. 1-4, 2024, Des Moines, Iowa
- [NSDA – National Championship](#) – June 16-21, Des Moines, Iowa

8. Knoblauch acknowledged and thanked the following outgoing committee members Naz Ahmed and John Ricketts for their service on the advisory committee and for their support of the IHSA.