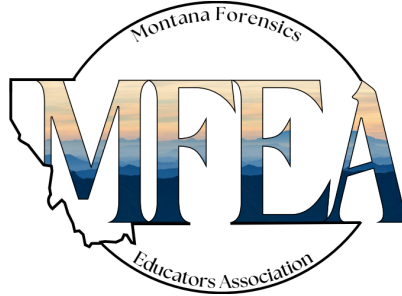


2026-2027 Speech, Drama, and Debate Proposals – All Items Approved Items

1- Board action needed: incorporate new MFEA [logo](#) (created by Allison Clark from Dawson) on the MHSA website, MFEA handbook, All-State certificates, and any other appropriate locations.

Passed AA, A, and B/C Interim Committees.

Passed the body.



2- Board action needed: Change language on page 0, 5.b., p. 45 IX.B.3., and p. 47 X.B.3. About MFEA dues.

Passed AA, A, and B/C Interim Committees with amendments

Passed the Body as amended

Page 0, 5.b., p. 45 IX.B.3, and p. 47 X.B.3 - Change to read:

- 5. Pay coaches' dues to the MFEA Treasurer.
 - a. Dues paid on or before December 1st are **\$40/coach**, after December 1st are **\$60/coach**.
 - b. ***Coaches whose dues are not received by the treasurer by Jan. 1 will not be allowed to enter the tab room at Divisionals or State (See IX.B.3, X.B.3).***
 - c. Mail dues to: Becky Nay, Huntley Project HS, 1477 Ash Street, Worden, MT 59088.

Also update IX.B.3 to read:

- 3. Results of competition shall be tabulated as soon as possible after each round. The tabulation room will be open to paid member coaches of the Montana Forensic Educators Association to observe the tabulation procedure. Those coaches who are not paid members **by Jan. 1** will not be allowed entrance to the tab room but will still be allowed to view feedback and results.

And X.B.3 to read:

- 3. Results of competition shall be tabulated as soon as possible after each round. The tabulation room will be open to paid member coaches of the Montana Forensic Educators Association to observe the tabulation procedure. Those coaches who are not paid members **by Jan. 1** will not be allowed entrance to the tab room but will still be allowed to view feedback and results.

Page 0, 5.b., p. 45 IX.B.3, and p. 47 X.B.3 - Current Language:

- 5. Pay coaches' dues to the MFEA Treasurer.
 - a. Dues paid on or before December 1st are \$35/coach, after December 1st are \$55/coach.
 - b. Mail dues to: Becky Nay, Huntley Project HS, 1477 Ash Street, Worden, MT 59088.

IX.B.3 Current Language:

- 3. Results of competition shall be tabulated as soon as possible after each round. The tabulation room will be open to paid member coaches of the Montana Forensic Educators Association to observe the tabulation procedure. Those coaches who are not paid members will not be allowed entrance to the tab room but will still be allowed to view feedback and results.

And X.B.3 Current Language:

- 3. Results of competition shall be tabulated as soon as possible after each round. The tabulation room will be open to paid member coaches of the Montana Forensic Educators Association to observe the tabulation procedure. Those coaches who are not paid members will not be allowed entrance to the tab room but will still be allowed to view feedback and results.

Rationale: It was difficult for Becky to verify paid dues while also preparing for Divisionals and State with her team.

3- Board action needed: Change language for p. 47 X.B.4 about semifinals for B/C tournaments.

Passed B/C Interim committee

Passed the body

Page 47, X.B.4 - Change to read

- 4. For Class A, any speech and/or drama event with 15 or fewer entries: raw scores will be used for preliminary rounds and Semifinals will not be held. (Note: remove truncate rank from all tiebreakers in Tabroom and this is an exception to procedures in VIII.B). It must be used for all events with fewer than 15 entries. Sweepstakes points for semifinals will not be awarded if they are not held.

For Class B/C, ***the top 12 competitors in each event will proceed to semifinals***. Rooms will be split evenly. For any speech and/or drama events with 11 or fewer entries, Semifinals will not be held. Sweepstakes points will NOT be awarded. Class B/C Quarterfinals will not be held in any debate event with 7 or fewer competitors. Sweepstakes points will not be awarded for Quarterfinals if Quarterfinals are not held. Class B/C Semifinals will not be held in any debate event with 3 or fewer competitors. Sweepstakes points will not be awarded for semifinals if Semifinals are not held

4 - Board action needed: p. 13 IV.A.2.d-e, Change dates for topic changes in LD and PF debates.

Passed Debate committee

Passed the body

Page 13 IV.A.2.d-e - Change to read:

- d. The LD and Legi topics shall switch from the September/October topic to the November/December topic on November **23** and to the January/February topic on January 1.

- e. The September/October Public Forum topic from the NSDA shall be utilized from the start of the season through November **22**. The topic shall switch to the November/December topic on November **23**, to the January topic on January 1, and to the February topic on February **1**.

Page 13 IV.A.2.d-e Current Language:

- d. The LD and Legi topics shall switch from September/October topic to the November/December topic on November 17 and to the January/February topic on January 1.

- e. The September/October Public Forum topic from the NSDA shall be utilized from the start of the season through November 16th. The topic shall switch to the November/December topic on November 17th, to the January topic on January 1, and to the February topic on February 2.

Rationale: Dates should match the calendar next year.

5 - Board Action Needed: p. 13 IV.A.1.b change language to reflect Policy debate topic change

Passed debate committee

Passed the body

Page 13, IV.A.1.b - Change to read:

- b. The policy debate topic for **2026-2027 is Resolved: The United States federal government should establish national health insurance in the United States.**

Page 13, IV.A.1.b - Current language:

- b. The policy debate topic for 2025-2026 is Resolved: The United States federal government should significantly increase its exploration and/or development of the Arctic.

Rationale: We need to change to a new topic for next year.

6 - Board Action Needed: p. 41 VIII.C.3. About clarifying side parity

Passed debate committee

Passed the body

Page 41, VIII.C.3 - Change to read:

- e. LD and Policy debaters shall be given an equal number of rounds for affirmative and negative within the tournament, as much as is possible. **Do not move any entry to a different bracket to achieve this.**

Page 41, VIII.C.3 - Current language:

- e. LD and Policy debaters shall be given an equal number of rounds for affirmative and negative within the tournament, as much as is possible. Do not break the bracket to achieve side parity.

Rationale: AA State interpreted this rule to mean don't move anyone within a bracket, which makes this rule functionally worthless. Clarification means their position within the bracket can be adjusted, but they cannot be pulled up or down a bracket.

7 - Board Action Needed: p. 18 IV.E.4.i about legislative debate amendments

Passed debate committee

Passed the body

Page 18, IV.E.4. - Change to add letter "i":

- ***i. The process for amending is as follows: speaker must have recency to amend. Speaker moves to amend. Within that motion, they must state the full amendment they wish to make to the quorum within a brief statement (as they would with any other motion). Refer to Robert's Rules of Order chapter on Amendments for specific wording and types of amendments. Motion must be seconded. After a second, one minute cross-ex will ensure (a justification of the amendment is not permitted outside of this one-minute cross-ex). Cross-ex counts toward recency. Determination of Germaneness is subject to this cross-ex and the vote on the amendment, not the PO.***

Page 18, IV.E.4. Currently does not have an "i".

Rationale: This is a grey area that causes much more strife than necessary. Our competitors have adapted to work within the rules, and it led to conflict. We should do everything in our power to add clarity.

8 - Board Action needed: Public Forum Ballot times chart update to match p. 15 IV.D.3

Passed debate committee

Passed the body

Change ballot to say, “4 minutes” for constructive speeches instead of “3 minutes.” See picture below:

Speaker 1	3 min.
Speaker 2	3 min.
Crossfire (1 & 2)*	3 min.
Speaker 3	4 min.
Speaker 4	4 min.
Crossfire (3 & 4)*	3 min.
Speaker 1 Summary	3 min.

P. 15 IV.D.3 Current language:

Time Schedule

1st Speaker - Team A	4 minutes
1st Speaker - Team B	4 minutes
Crossfire	3 minutes
2nd Speaker - Team A	4 minutes
2nd Speaker - Team B	4 minutes

Rationale: This is just ballot housekeeping to match the rulebook.

9 - Board Action Needed: Change language for Legi debate authorship speech length and remove rebuttals on p. 17 IV.E.4.e. Also, housekeeping to update Legi ballots to reflect these changes.

Passed debate committee

Passed the body

Page 17, IV.E.4.e - Change to read:

e) Each bill will be debated using the following format:

Authorship Speech	3 minutes maximum
Open Cross-Examination Controlled by Author	3 minutes maximum
Affirmative and Negative Alternating Speeches	3 minutes maximum
Open Cross-Examination Controlled by the Speaker of Each Aff/Neg Speech	1 minute maximum
Rebuttal Speech	2 minutes maximum

Page 17, IV.E.4.e - Current language:

e) Each bill will be debated using the following format:

Authorship Speech	5 minutes maximum
Open Cross-Examination Controlled by Author	3 minutes maximum
Affirmative and Negative Alternating Speeches	3 minutes maximum
Open Cross-Examination Controlled by the Speaker of Each Aff/Neg Speech	1 minute maximum
Rebuttal Speech	2 minutes maximum

Rationale: Authorship advantage is far too powerful. If your bill is selected, you have guaranteed 7 minutes of speaking time when many students in a round will only have 3. The natural advantage of having more preparation on a bill you wrote is sufficient to reward students who produced a well-written bill (assuming that well-written bills are more likely to be selected than poorly written bills). A rebuttal speech is unnecessary and undermines a productive debate. When students decide to vote on a bill, it is because they believe that they have exhausted debate on the subject and wish to move on. A two-minute speech, likely to do little more than repeat points that have already been stated, serves little to no purpose.

10 - Board Action Needed: change language on page 16 IV.E.1.d about Legi semifinals and finals.

Passed debate committee

Passed the body

Page 16, IV.E.1.d. - Change to read:

- d) Each round will have no more than eight competitors and last no longer than 75 minutes, to be timed by the judge. At the end of 75 minutes, the judge will announce the end of the debate, and the current presiding officer will immediately close the session. ***Semifinals and Finals will last no longer than 90 minutes, to be timed by the judge. At the end of 90 minutes, the judge will announce the end of the debate, and the current presiding officer will immediately close the session.***

Page 16, IV.E.1.d - Current language:

- d) Each round will have no more than eight competitors and last no longer than 75 minutes, to be timed by the judge. At the end of 75 minutes, the judge will announce the end of the debate, and the current presiding officer will immediately close the session.

Rationale: The 90 minutes is due to the larger number of students in SF and F compared to prelims which are not always 8 competitors. 75 minutes is not enough time.

11 - Board Action Needed: change language on page 8 II.E.1 to add a B/C rule for alternating debate years.

Passed debate committee

Passed the body

Page 8, II.E.1 - Change to include a new section and add asterisks in II.E.1 next to Policy and Public Forum Debate:

- The following events are approved for Classes AA, A, B, and C except as noted:
 - Extemporaneous Speaking - solo event
 - Impromptu Speaking - solo event
 - Informative Speaking - solo event
 - Memorized Public Address - solo event
 - Oral Interpretation of Literature - Humorous - solo event
 - Oral Interpretation of Literature - Dramatic - solo event
 - Original Oratory - solo event
 - Lincoln-Douglas Debate - solo event
 - Policy Debate - duo event *
 - Legislative Debate - solo event (Class AA only)
 - Duo Oral Interpretation of Literature - duo event
 - Program Oral Interpretation of Literature - solo event
 - Public Forum Debate - duo event *
 - Humorous Acting - solo and theatre event (Classes A and B-C)
 - Dramatic Acting - solo and theatre event (Classes A and B-C)
 - Classic Theatre - theatre event (Classes A and B-C)
 - Pantomime - solo event (Classes A and B-C)
 - Spontaneous Oral Interpretation - solo event (Class B-C only)

***On October 1 in years ending in an odd number, B/C schools will host Public Forum Debate as an event. On October 1 in years ending in an even number, B/C schools will host Policy Debate as an event.**

Page 8, II.E.1 - current language:

- The following events are approved for Classes AA, A, B, and C except as noted:
 - Extemporaneous Speaking - solo event
 - Impromptu Speaking - solo event
 - Informative Speaking - solo event
 - Memorized Public Address - solo event
 - Oral Interpretation of Literature - Humorous - solo event
 - Oral Interpretation of Literature - Dramatic - solo event
 - Original Oratory - solo event
 - Lincoln-Douglas Debate - solo event
 - Policy Debate - duo event
 - Legislative Debate - solo event (Class AA only)
 - Duo Oral Interpretation of Literature - duo event
 - Program Oral Interpretation of Literature - solo event
 - Public Forum Debate - duo event
 - Humorous Acting - solo and theatre event (Classes A and B-C)
 - Dramatic Acting - solo and theatre event (Classes A and B-C)
 - Classic Theatre - theatre event (Classes A and B-C)
 - Pantomime - solo event (Classes A and B-C)
 - Spontaneous Oral Interpretation - solo event (Class B-C only)

Rationale: Numbers in B/C are very low in these events and can't support them both at once. Alternating years should create more competition in the event being offered in any given year.

12 - Board Action needed: change page 8 II.D.14 to include a statement about judge training.

Passed Rules committee

Passed the body

Page 8, II.D.14 - Change to read:

- 14. Tournament directors are strongly encouraged to distribute approved judging instructions with each judge's comment sheet **and offer judge training.**

Page 8, II.D.14 - Current language:

- 14. Tournament directors are strongly encouraged to distribute approved judging instructions with each judge's comment sheet.

Rationale: Encouraging judge training will help our volunteer judges, who we greatly appreciate, to feel more prepared and improve their judging ability. It also gives them a chance to ask questions before tournaments.

13 - Board Action needed: Add page 38 VIII.B.1.d to address "no show" competitors in final rounds.

Passed Rules committee

Passed the body

Page 38, VIII.B.1.d - Add "d" to read:

- ***d. A competitor with a "no show" in finals will not place at the meet or receive sweeps points for finals but will still receive sweeps points in prelims. The competitor in 9th place will take the***

place of the missing competitor (If there are full sections).

Page 38, VIII.B.1 does not currently have a d.

Rationale: This happened at least 3 times in B/C tournaments this year. There should be a rule to dictate how to resolve it. Students shouldn't place or gain points for their team for a final round where they didn't compete.

14 - Board Action needed: Add page 36 VII.F.4 requiring phone signage at tournaments. Also, add this [option](#) for signage to the MFEA website as a resource.

Passed Rules committee

Passed the body

Page 36, VII.F.4: Add to read:

- ***4. At all tournaments, signs must be displayed notifying them that recording or picture taking of any performance is expressly forbidden.***

Page 36, VII.F.4 does not currently exist.

Rationale: We have codified this rule but many audience members (especially judges and parents) don't know about or follow the rule. This makes it easier to enforce.

15 - Board Action needed: Add p. 36 VII.D.8 concerning the procedure for judges leaving during performances.

Passed Rules committee

Passed the body

Page 36, VII.D.8 - Add to read:

- ***8. If, during the Divisional or State tournament, a judge(s) leaves the room during a performance, then a rerun must be permitted.***

Page 36, VII.D.8, does not currently exist.

Rationale: Before amendment, this rule was aimed at any judge interruption; a judge at a B/C meet was extremely disruptive during a performance. However, the wording was changed to only make a procedure for judges leaving the room (this also happened last season).

16 - Board Action needed: Add p. 10 III.11 after the current III.10 and renumber everything that follows.

Passed Rules committee

Passed the body

Page 10, III.11 - Change to read:

- ***11. Generative Artificial Intelligence: In events in which speeches must be the original created work of a competitor, students are prohibited from quoting or paraphrasing text directly from generative AI sources. Generative AI should not be cited as a source. The exception is that a student delivering a speech about the topic of AI may quote AI to illustrate their points about AI, in accordance with existing quoted word limits. While generative AI may be used to guide students to articles, ideas, and sources, the original source of any quoted or paraphrased evidence must be available if requested. In debate events, generative AI should not be cited as a source; while generative AI may be used to guide students to articles, ideas, and sources, the original source of any quoted or paraphrased evidence must be available if requested. In Interpretation events, students are prohibited from performing material created by generative AI sources. Generative AI should not be used as a source of material; while generative AI may be***

used to guide students to articles, ideas, and material, the original source of any material that is performed must be available if requested. This rule is superseded by event-specific rules related to usage of AI in the handbook.

Page 10, III.11. - Current language is only shifting down to become 12., 12. to 13., and so on.

Rationale: Generative AI language is already addressed in Extemporaneous speaking. It should apply to all speech, drama, and debate events.

17 - Board Action Needed: Housekeeping to remove a redundant phrase from the Dramatic Interpretation comment sheets.

Change dramatic interpretation comment sheet to read:

- ~~***Presentations should be appropriate for all audiences.***~~ Presentations should be appropriate for all audiences.

Current language:

- Presentations should be appropriate for all audiences. Presentations should be appropriate for all audiences.

Rationale: We don't need to say this twice.

18 - Board Action needed: Change language on p. 36 VI.A.9-10 to allow Classical Solo within theatre. This would also require minor housekeeping on the comment sheet to reflect the allowed group size.

Passed drama committee

Passed the body

Page 36, VI.A.9-10 - Change to read:

- 9. In ~~***Classical***~~ Dramatic, and Humorous Theatre: The event may include 2-4 performers in an entry with a maximum of three entries per school. The timing and sweepstakes points remain the same.

10. In Classical Theatre: The event may be serious or humorous in nature. Any published literature that is 75 years old or older as of January 1 of the calendar year in which the season begins shall be considered "Classical." Translations are acceptable. Cuttings shall not deviate from printed fact. The burden of proof lies with the coach. (The intent of this rule is to retain the classical integrity of the language). This event may include **1-4** performers in an entry with a maximum of three entries per school. The timing **rules of the** event are not changed. ***The sweepstakes points for solo competitors of the event would align with other solo events.***

Page 36, VI.A.9-10 - Current language:

- 9. In Classical, Dramatic, and Humorous Theatre: The event may include 2-4 performers in an entry with a maximum of three entries per school. The timing and sweepstakes points remain the same.

10. In Classical Theatre: The event may be serious or humorous in nature. Any published literature that is 75 years old or older as of January 1 of the calendar year in which the season begins shall be considered "Classical." Translations are acceptable. Cuttings shall not deviate from printed fact. The burden of proof lies with the coach. (The intent of this rule is to retain the classical integrity of the language). This event may include 2-4 performers in an entry with a maximum of three entries per school. The timing and sweepstakes points of the event are not changed.

Rationale: Classical Theatre is a unique event with no solo option. Rather than create a new event, it would be

a welcome option for students to compete in it alone if they choose.

19 - Board Action needed: change p. 22 V.B.2 about percentage of analysis in MPA.

Passed memorized committee

Passed the body

Page 22, V.B.2 - Change to read:

- 2. The speech shall consist of two parts, analysis and address. This analysis must be at least **twenty** percent (**20%**) by word count of the entire presentation and cannot exceed ten percent (10%) quoted material. The combined length of the analysis and address shall not exceed ten minutes. During the delivery of the speech no manuscript may be held by the contestant. Contestants using notecards or a manuscript may not receive first in the round.

Page 22, V.B.2 - Current language:

- 2. The speech shall consist of two parts, analysis and address. This analysis must be at least forty percent (40%) by word count of the entire presentation and cannot exceed ten percent (10%) quoted material. The combined length of the analysis and address shall not exceed ten minutes. During the delivery of the speech no manuscript may be held by the contestant. Contestants using notecards or a manuscript may not receive first in the round.

Rationale: There were many reasons. This requirement was changed to 40% in 2022, it has been tried, and many felt it took MPA in a less desirable direction. Making at least 20% doesn't stop more analysis, just allows less when appropriate.

20 - Board Action needed: Add language to all debate ballots concerning behavior of competitors.

Passed by the body from the floor.

Change PF, Policy, LD, and Legi ballots to add:

- ***Debaters should demonstrate professional behavior and decorum. If they do not, your decision should be negatively affected by this.***

Current ballots do not include this language.

Rationale: Increasingly, debate students focus on minor rules or style of debate rather than the actual art of the debate or occasionally insult each other. Acting in an unprofessional manner toward opponents should be considered negatively.

21 - Board action needed: update p. 34 VI.B.4 which does not mention sound effects being optional, though the minutes from 2013 and the comment sheets show it should.

Page 34, VI.B.4 - Change to read:

- A costume and makeup may be used. Wigs and props may not be used. The intent of the rule is that touching of costume or hair is considered a prop and therefore is not allowed. A stationary chair and background music (instrumental only) ***and/or recorded sound effects*** are optional. Instrumental music may not include human vocal sounds either actual or synthesized and must be self-actuated.

Current language on comment sheet for comparison:

- Instrumental background music and/or recorded sound effects are optional.

Page 34, VI.B.4 - Current language:

- A costume and makeup may be used. Wigs and props may not be used. The intent of the rule is that touching of costume or hair is considered a prop and therefore is not allowed. A stationary chair and background music (instrumental only) are optional. Instrumental music may not include human vocal sounds either actual or synthesized and must be self-actuated.

Rationale: comment sheets and the rule book have to agree.

22 – Board Action Needed updates. Proposed from the MHSA to align with other postseason events.
Handbook Language Addition to the MHSA Handbook

Section (37) Medical Care at Postseason Tournaments

D. Fine Arts events including Music and Speech, Debate and Drama would be included in having an updated EAP for all postseason events.

*Information sent to all schools or facilities hosting a MHSA postseason event

All schools hosting a postseason event are required to submit an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) to the MHSA. All judges and event staff must be provided with a copy of the EAP to ensure that every room with participants has a clear understanding of procedures in the event of an emergency

Non Action Items

23 - No board action needed, including creating a paper trail:

Passed by Short Prep committee

Passed the body

- We resolve that MFEA will purchase Extemporaneous questions for Divisionals and State from NSDA and those will be distributed the Wednesday prior to divisional and state.

24 - No board action needed, but including creating a paper trail:

Passed by the body from the floor

- Designate the divisional meet to nominate coach of the year for Class A, B, and C. AA must still use the State meet.