



## AUGUST 2020 UPDATE

### Introduction

Hello, KHSSL friends, and welcome back to another year of KHSSL competition. I will primarily be working on Wednesdays and Saturdays this year, and you can expect regular visits from me on Wednesdays in the future, just as you have the last two years. I realize that this is a very long email as I have a lot of information to share, so I am also making a copy of this email available on the main page of the KHSSL website ([www.khssl.org](http://www.khssl.org)) as "August Update" so you can easily find it. It's the first day of school here in Lexington, so for those of you who are starting up this week or who have already begun, welcome back! I know you have a LOT to do right now, so if it were me, I'd skim over this email and act on the immediate to-dos ([register for SPEAK](#), [register for KHSSL](#)) and then go through the rest as time allows more leisure. More info about dealing with this new year contained herein and in the Conclusion, especially.

### Point 1: KHSSL Business

- [Registration is now live](#) for this year for KHSSL. Deadlines and rates have changed a little this year, but overall it's the same, and it shouldn't take you too long to sign up, so why not do it today? Registering will trigger an invoice email you can pass along to the school bookkeeper if need be. You can pay online this year! <https://www.khssl.org/2020-2021-registration>
- The [updated KHSSL Handbook](#) is posted online, and [ballots](#) have been updated with rule changes. The summer Board meetings yielded a few changes, and I made a [cheat sheet](#) for you to what's different in the Handbook as well. You can also scroll through the Handbook and look for red for changes.
- **Minutes** for the summer's three Board meetings are [posted online in the usual place](#), and you may want to snoop around [the website itself](#) as I've added a few pictures and other fun elements as I've worked on it this summer.
- Latest version of the [Kentucky Tournament Calendar](#).

### Point 2: Support for you this year from KHSSL and elsewhere

- The KHSSL Board of Directors has assigned a committee to work on **Best Practices for virtual tournaments** -- everything from how to set up the tournaments and how to schedule them to how to best video performers. Special thanks to Rachel Page and Michael Robinson for co-chairing this committee's work, and it is well under way. Once it concludes (in the next couple of weeks), I've been charged with creating a Best Practices document -- which I'm combining with my How to Prepare for a Speech Tournament document -- and will get that posted for you on the KHSSL website with an alert in this weekly email. If you are concerned about how to manage the new Tabroom Campus system, that will be taught at both SPEAK sessions, so please sign up and join us there (see next item).

- **[SPEAK registration is now live.](#)** We are offering two separate Saturdays this year. October 3 will be the regular SPEAK date with special guests Pam and Joe Wycoff (Apple Valley HS, NSDA Hall of Fame, NSDA President) teaching Oratory with us in our first virtual conference. Other highlights of the day include Storytelling from Bria Stacy (Knott Central High's hilarious coach and a three-time Story champion in high school), Karen Feldhaus (Daviness County High) with a VERY useful session on how to coach and perform Improv Duo in a virtual setting, Rachel Page's overview of Tabroom Campus -- the platform nearly all tournaments will be on this year -- and a Congress combo not to be missed -- Helen Williams (Hazard) and Amy Zuccaro (Trinity)! It's going to be a FANTASTIC conference with snacks provided by -- your refrigerator! :) We are also hosting a day for new coaches on September 19 with sessions on how to find and cut scripts, fundraising, a debate overview, an introduction to Tabroom, a special talk from KHSSL legend Terri Branson, and assistance with speech/debate lesson plans and curriculum! Both sessions run six hours (also offer six hours of inservice PD credit) and are \$25 each or \$40 for both. I can't encourage you enough to take advantage of these sessions everyone needs, and if you are not brand new but still fairly new, coming to the newbie session would actually help as methinks the types of educated questions you'd ask would help the brand newbies. **[Sign up today!](#)**
- As getting started this year is quite different than other years, the National Speech and Debate Association has posted several helpful documents to help teachers get going this year. Check them out here (should be open to everyone).
  - **Recruitment Strategies in an Online World** <https://www.speechanddebate.org/online-team-recruitment-strategies/>
  - **Recruitment Letter** <https://www.speechanddebate.org/sample-recruitment-letter/>
  - **Press Release recruitment example** <https://www.speechanddebate.org/sample-press-release/>
- **LESSON PLANS** **[Click here to access my semester-long course of lesson plans](#)** I wrote up for NSDA last year (Speech 1 curriculum). If you are not an NSDA member, you can also contact me for these as they're my intellectual property to share as I like.
- **Amazing collection** of resources for new coaches (and old coaches, frankly) here on the NSDA website: <https://www.speechanddebate.org/new-coach-quick-start-guide/> **EVERYONE should check out this page of resources.**
- You can still see the **[NSDA National Finals](#)** (from this summer) livestream here. I'd love to showcase the Junior students who made the National showcase as well (**[we had several Kentucky kids who are featured in these](#)**) if anyone has the link.
- NSDA is offering numerous free courses on **[how to coach various events](#)**. Check them out!
- I've added several links to the **[Script Hunting page](#)** on the KHSSL website you may find useful.
- A VERY helpful new website for Extempers, the Extemp Bible, is now linked on the **[Limited Prep page](#)** on the KHSSL website. A link to Extemp Central there (and weekly practice questions) is also a vital helper for Extempers throughout the year.

### Point 3: Announcements

- The University of Kentucky is **hiring a full-time high school debate outreach coordinator** to launch a new project under its Digital Speech and Debate Initiative. This position will develop debate opportunities at the high school level in KY. <https://khssl.org/job-postings>. I think this is such an amazing give-back to the Commonwealth by UK Debate -- thank you Dave Arnett and UK Debate! I can't wait to get started helping this person help you!
- **Virtual judge training** is available here as a free course anyone can take. It will be the basis of KHSSL Judge Training when that gets launched eventually. Check it out here: <https://www.speechanddebate.org/judge-training/>
- Speaking of judge training, **SCAPA coach Katie Donahue is interested in creating a "helper" video to train parents how to judge virtual rounds**. If you'd like to help her do that, I can form a committee to do so (SUCH A GREAT IDEA). Please email me by next Wednesday so I can assemble you and get you started. Thanks, Lady Katie!
- As I am unable to travel to either the state leaders' conference this year (virtual if it's held at all) or to your schools for coaching and coach meetings, I asked the Board to allow me to use my travel money to do **a mailout to every school in the state**. I figured this was the time since our activity is full steam ahead while so many are paused. Thus, over the last ten days or so, I've stuffed 1365 envelopes with a letter describing KHSSL, a new brochure (special thanks to my brochure helpers Dustin Combs, Janet Martin, and Michael Robinson) about KHSSL, and (per Dustin's great idea) a free medical mask to grab their attention and make them read the letter. The last of the mailings go out in tomorrow's mail, and each principal in the state of a grade 4 - 12 school should receive one (your principals are getting them too with a note at the start of the letter thanking them for already being in the KHSSL family). I hope it gets us lots of new schools. I'm also so glad it's finished. Extra special thanks to KHSSL Hall of Famer Terri Branson, who stamped 800 of the envelopes for us! I've wanted to reach out to everyone for a long time. I hope it works. I'll be seeking your help next week with social media recruiting for the League, so stay tuned.
- I really had a great time visiting schools last year (from sitting on a tiny chair in a 3rd grade class at June Buchanan to meeting the Bryan Station Debate mascot, a live ferret who lives in the coach's room) and hope I was helpful. And while I can't do that this year with a pandemic going on, I can still visit your squad virtually whenever you like, **so if you want to set up having me drop in on a practice or a meeting, please reach out now or whenever you're ready** (which I know may be a while). I'm also very happy to **schedule one-on-one time with you** to work on plans for coaching specific events, talking through how to structure or plan something, or just for cheerleading if you need it. I work for you. Put me to work!
- As I said before, my **primary work days this year will be Wednesdays and Saturdays** (I'll be on call during all Saturday tournaments, for example), but feel free to reach out to me whenever you like by email; I'll reply within 24 hours for sure. Please save texting for Wednesdays and Saturdays unless it's urgent -- I work part time. Thanks in advance! :)

## Conclusion

This year is not going to be simple, but really, is any school year? As I told the principals in my letter to them, *there are multiple, research-proven benefits of our activity to kids of color, to kids in economic struggles, to shy smart kids, to all kids who need a place to learn confidence and find their feet.* Simply put, what you do for kids by giving them opportunities in speech and debate LITERALLY changes their lives for the better. You allow them to find their voices AND to give them the gumption to use them. Molly Seifert said in her video note to the KHSSL Senior Speech State kids last year that she "believes forensics kids will save the world." I agree with her, but I would add a second subject to that sentence -- *Forensics kids and forensics coaches will save the world.* You are my heroes and my sheroes. I am so so proud to work for you and to help you make these opportunities possible for kids. Please don't be shy to ask me to help you do so the way you need me to this year. We're United, and we'll Stand, even if we're standing together on a computer mouse and keyboard during a Zoom call. I believe in you and in our activity. We got this.

May the words be with KHSSL this year!

Steve