



March 17, 2020

Dear MIFA Members:

It is with a heavy heart that we announce that the Forensic Council (our governing board of directors) made the decision last night to cancel our in-person events for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. This comes in the wake of the CDC recommendation that all mass gatherings of 50+ people be cancelled for the next 8 weeks and related responses at the state and local levels. The cancellation specifically includes the following events:

- > High School IE Regional Qualifiers scheduled for April 18, 2020 at various locations around the state
- > Spring Middle Level IE State Tournament scheduled for April 25, 2020 at Bloomfield Hills High School
- > High School IE State Finals Tournament scheduled for May 1 & 2, 2020 at Eastern Michigan Univ.

We are planning to offer alternative, online, end of season tournaments for both Middle Level and High School students. The format for both will be similar to the OLIE, with students submitting a video of their performance for evaluation & feedback. How-to webinars are already in the works covering everything from registration to recording/uploading videos from home, to online judging. These events will be offered at a lower cost than typical regional/state tournament participation. We also plan to offer members access to our virtual meeting software and related tools to facilitate online team meetings and coaching sessions. Details will be forthcoming as soon as possible.

We understand the disappointment that comes with these decisions and the gravity of its impact on students. It remains MIFA's priority to look after the health, safety and well-being of our students, coaches, judges and volunteers. These cancellations were made after much discussion about possible alternatives and we hope that the online events provide an outlet for students to have a rewarding, educational experience.

Thank you for your understanding, patience and continued support of the MIFA in making this difficult decision. As we return to our daily lives, trust that we will continue to do everything we can to continue offering safe, responsible events that give students opportunities to grow through speech activities.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Becker". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "J".

Jonathan Becker  
Executive Director