The KESDA board held its annual fall meeting on September 14, 2019 in the Gatton Student Center on the University of Kentucky campus. Those in attendance were Dr. Ed Smith, Betsy Smith, Katy Cecil, Neomia Hagans-Flores, Helen Williams, and Rachel Retherford.

Reforming improv pairs is under discussion by both KHSSL and KESDA. Except for individual tournaments, which might choose to pilot new improv rules, current rules will remain in place for 2019-2020. Proposed changes call for little to no prep time and a variety of improv games requiring different skills—much like the different rounds of broadcasting focus on different abilities. Ed and Betsy will draw up a plan for the board’s consideration.

KESDA will be offering a debate tournament on December 14 at Georgetown College. Both middle and high school students will be invited to participate. Public forum, public policy, and Lincoln Douglas debate will be offered, provided there are enough entries. In addition, there will be a competitive Congress for high school students and experienced middle school students. A “teaching Congress” will be conducted at the same time.

Given the board’s overwhelming interest in improving improv, Ed will host an improv workshop in conjunction with the debate tournament.

In order to improve fairness in Congress, members of the board will set the docket for the KESDA tournament. It will be released the day of the competition. Also, legislation submitted for KESDA must be new; it cannot have been debated during the 2019-2020 school year.

Finally, the implementation of the judge bond at KESDA was debated without a clear resolution. Ed and Betsy will make draw up a possible plan and submit it to the board in hopes of effectively curtailing judging nuisances.