

Quebec Student Debating Association
Meeting – Wednesday, June 1st, 2005
Lower Canada College

1. Welcome/Call to order/Introductions (4:38pm)

Present:

Sara Rodier
Karla Gruodis
Catherine Grimanis
Padraic Scanlan
Cathy Evans
Brandon Uditsky
Noah Kochman
Shawna Katz
Sara Birks
Chris George
Elizabeth Cohene
Alice McLeod
Sandra Davis
John Commins
Tino Bordanaro
Erin Russett
Jeff Deeprise
James Phelan
Elana Galchinsky
Joane Shreyer
Rachel McCabe
Sharen McDonald
James Roy
Sandy Cross
Ryan Abrams
Alex Amar
Alex Blank

Bialik
Centennial Academy
ECS
ECS
ECS
Herzliah (Snowdon)
Herzliah (St. Laurent)
John Rennie
John Rennie
Lower Canada College (President)
Lower Canada College
Lower Canada College
MacDonald High School
Royal West Academy
Sacred Heart
Selwyn House
St. George's
St. George's
St. Thomas
St. Thomas
Trafalgar (Treasurer)
Weston School
Westwood H.S.
Westwood H.S. (Vice-President)
Marianopolis College
Marianopolis College
Observer

Regrets:

Judith Schurmann	Chambly Academy
Louise Chalmers	John Rennie
Denis Brault	Loyola High School
Christina Grivas	West Island College
Emilie Abbas	Grenville Christian College
Daryl Bambic	West Island College
James Rioux	Stanstead College
Isabelle Fahmy	The Study

Chair: Chris George

Minutes: Ryan Abrams

2. Roll Call, Introduce QSDA Executive and all Coaches, Identify Voting members (1 per member school)

Voting members are indicated in bold above.

3. Adopt minutes from September, 2004 meeting

- Correct spelling of Jeff Deeprise's last name.

MOTION to adopt minutes from September 2004. Moved by Sandy Cross and seconded by Karla. **PASSED Unanimously.**

4. Business Arising from Minutes of September, 2004

- No Business Arising

5. Membership Update - Rachel

- update membership list and contacts (Passed around) - Rachel
 - Registration fee is \$150.00 and waived for first year schools.
- update on possible new members for next year – Sandy
 - Sandy has recruited Beaconsfield and is looking for more members including Cooper Academy and Lindsay Place. Next year he hopes to find more members in the Montreal area.

6. Financial Update - Rachel

- Income comes solely from registration fees and expenses include registration for chaperones, tournament expenses, Web page (\$100 for domain), trophies (one has been lost – trophies should not go home with students.)
- Registration fee should stay the same for this coming season.
- Chris – more expenses this year (bus for provincials, extra trophies, etc.). However, same fee should be enough especially with new members.

MOTION to accept the treasurer's report. Moved by Sharen and seconded by Noah. **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

MOTION to keep the same registration fee at \$150.00. Moved by Rachel and seconded by John. **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

7. National Seminar 2005 – Chris

- Trouble finding students for the seminar, Quebec sent one less than the maximum this year for the first time.
- QSDA report to the CSDF AGM.
 - Event is possibly too long and should not overlap with religious holidays.
 - Seminar will be moved to the fall and will only take place for two more years and will then take on a new format.
 - National championships has become the more popular national tournament while the seminar is now gearing to younger debaters for a non-competitive atmosphere.
 - CSDF refunded all student's airfare this year.
 - QSDA did not have cross-ex debating at the provincial level even though it is a rule set by the CSDF. The CSDF did not abolish the rule but also chose not to interfere with the QSDA.
 - Noah – Events should not overlap with Jewish holidays including Friday nights and Saturday during the day (Shabbat). Chris – no other way to host some tournaments if not on the weekend. (i.e. Nationals)
 - Ryan – Maybe we should look into doing weekend tournaments having Saturdays as a touring day and possibly debates in the evening. Then all schools can participate.
 - Sandy – Should the QSDA pay for a one week substitute for chaperones to attend national tournaments. Chris – the National Seminar will be more convenient by reducing their length and moving them to weekends.
- Chris also presented his report from the National Seminar.

8. Junior High Nationals 2005 Report- Rachel

- More enthusiasm for Junior Nationals over seniors. Two of Quebec's teams broke into semi finals with Trafalgar winning the tournament (7-2 decision in finals). Four Quebec debaters were in the top eleven and placed 1st, 4th and 15th in team tabs. Three of the junior debaters also attended the seminar.
- Next years Junior Nationals will be held in Toronto.

9. QSDA's commitment to host 2007 Junior High Nationals

- QSDA will be responsible to host in 2007, billeting will be necessary for 56 students over four days.
- Chris – we need two volunteers to run a committee and possibly host the tournaments (No volunteers).

10. Senior National Championships - Chris

- There are two national events, the seminar is non-competitive while the championships are. Chris will be hosting and chairing the senior national championships at LCC and possibly one day at Trafalgar.
- The national championships will be held in early January and will select students for the Oxford debating tournament in March.
- Quebec will have the right to send more teams, spectators and judges.
- Chris- Can money that would otherwise be spent for chaperones be spent on the national Championships. LCC has already given some money for meals, and the accounting will be through the QSDA bank account.

MOTION to provide \$1000 for national championships. Moved by Chris and seconded by Rachel. **PASSED with one abstention and the rest in favor.**

11. North Americans Championships

- Harold Kyte's idea was to be practice for the world team. Chris outlined that this inaugural event will be hosted this year under the national championships board. North Americans will be held at Trafalgar in the fall and will be held in BP (Four teams in one room) style. Two or three teams will be invited from every province including American schools. Already supported by many schools. McGill attendance may also boost the championship's because it is a popular tournament.

12. Calendar of Events for the Year (Given in handouts)

- LCC will host the North American qualifiers unless there are any other volunteers (none).
- Stanstead will host the first junior tournament with all rounds being impromptu and with POIs. A bus may be necessary to transport debaters since it is far way. It will be a full day event.
- Shawna – can the workshop be earlier? Chris – we will help schools who need the seminar earlier.

- RYAN - Marianopolis tournament is tentative until rooms are reserved.
- See schedule for other details on <http://www.qsda.net>

13. Commitments to Hosting - Review lists of tournaments hosted recently

- Chris – QSDA rules state that as a condition of membership a school must host an event once every two years. School who do not host an event this year should do so next year.
- Should schools be pushed more formally to host high quality tournaments?
- Centennial would be eager to host next year given that this year will be their first in participating at many events.
- Jeff – workshops should not be enough for a school to host.
- Elizabeth Cohene – Should a motion be passed to acknowledge that a school could not host two consecutive workshops instead of a tournament.
- Erin – first year coaches sometimes have trouble hosting, this should be considered.
- Sandy – if no contract is drawn between public schools, some public schools may not be able to participate in QSDA events.
- Sarah – presently all events are considered equal, perhaps a motion to define the quality of tournaments should be moved and what a school must host as a condition of the QSDA.
- Sharen – Can a letter be sent to school heads to illustrate the need to host tournaments within the QSDA.
- Elizabeth – Perhaps the QSDA should offer a coaches workshop on tournament hosting.
- No motions at this time.

14. Relations with ADDEQ

- ADDEQ hosts French tournaments and sends French delegates to the seminar. They have 3-4 member schools and also members of the CSDF.
- Bilingual tournaments could be possible, the idea has already been tabled at a QSDA-ADDEQ meeting two months ago.
- Several QSDA (6) members show interest in a joint tournament and possibly workshops.

15. Debate Camp

- Pamphlets available – good quality debate instruction.
- No Quebec students have gone before.

16. QSDA Website

- www.qsda.net (Chris showed the website on overhead).
- Draw program is simple and avoids non-random draws. Chris will update to be more compatible with new computers.

17. McLeese Opportunities Fund

- McLeese has given a lot of money to debating through UCC.
- If any volunteers want to make a debate initiative they are welcome to draft a proposal. The money cannot be used for tournaments, WSDC, etc. The money may be used for new initiatives such as workshops or bilingual tournaments. For example, Queens received money for reviving debating in Kingston.
- Quebec has never used any of it.
- Shauna – money could be used to promote debating in public schools.
- Chris will investigate the possibility of applying for a joint event with ADDEQ.

18. Uniforms

- Chris – motion was passed in September that banned uniforms at QSDA events. It was enforced but not all schools approved of it.
- Sandy – the QSDA is not an organization run by private schools. You cannot have a rule that certain schools cannot comply with it. If there is any possible inequity then we should act. Inexperienced judges hand debates to private schools due to bias. Public schools can never have uniforms.
- Tino – I'm not pro-uniform, I'm pro choice. The QSDA should allow choice for all schools. The QSDA should not regulate debating. Basing policy on perception is not judicious.
- Jeff- The QSDA should try to establish a just system for every school and not support PR in independent schools. We cannot simply ignore the perception of inequity. Choice would result in all private schools wearing their uniforms while the public schools have no choice at all.
- Sharen – Public schools have sport uniforms, why not debating uniforms? Students feel solidarity in having team uniforms. Dressing, particularly with

girls, can be distracting whereas uniforms are not. Dress codes should be considered.

- Chris – LCC’s assistant head felt that debaters were not all dressed appropriately at the LCC provincials. A higher level of professionalism in dress needs to be adhered to, regardless of the outcome today, and schools need to be responsible for ensuring debaters are dressed appropriately.
- Padraic – This is a class issue. Uniforms identify private schools to judges. My experience tells me that uniforms do create bias. Private schools are disadvantaged at public schools and vice versa. To promote debating, we need accurate results and the uniform ban helps to eliminate inequities.
- John – I support Padraic, uniforms do not promote equity.
- Noah – We also need to consider judging pools. Parents will always sub-consciously look at uniforms.
- Elizabeth – Supports Padraic. There are certain stigmas associated with certain schools. Banning uniforms eliminates all these stigmas on the debating and judging levels.
- Jeff – Why not have a ban? What are the positives of having uniforms to promote competition.
- Tino – Uniforms are part of our school program. It is a question of principle. Class differences can be eliminated by dressing appropriately. Home school bias is the largest and banning uniforms will not help to eliminate this bias. My debaters have not had the opportunity to debate because of this rule.
- Chris - can we take the home school out of uniform?
- Tino – debaters know each other anyway and judges do as well.
- Erin – what was the QAIS decision because I am tied to vote in support of the QAIS.
- Tino – read the following email: "Please advise organizers that uniforms are optional at all QAIS PUBlic Speaking competitions for 2005-06; the decision is left up to each member school. This change will be reflected in the rules for the French and English competitions for 2005-06. Also advise your QSDA representative that their vote at the QSDA AGM should reflect the same approach with regard to uniforms for QAIS participants."
- Noah – what is the jurisdiction of the QAIS?
- Brandon – QSDA should not be interfering in QAIS, meaning that the QSDA should not ban uniforms. If we renew the ban we need to outline the consequences of schools showing up in uniform.
- Jeff - While judging, I did not know which school was debating which I feel increased fairness and accuracy in my ballot. I feel certain heads may be promoting their own school rather than debating. To promote debating we need to ensure a level playing field.

- John – uniforms do increase unfairness. By eliminating uniforms we are taking one variable factor of inequity out of debating.
- James – To debate you must promote fairness. Uniform bans shows kids the need for a level playing field.
- Alex Blank– Find a middle ground. Perhaps ban uniforms only where adjudication takes place but allow them for awards ceremony.
- Sharen – Supports Alex’s point. Dress codes and uniforms can be used in combination where uniforms are banned when judging is occurring. It is not favorable if we make a decision and have certain schools not adhere to the motion.
- Elizabeth – a possible solution can be to ban uniform in preliminary rounds only.
- Padraic – Two issues are present. Judging, fairness and working to increase equality is one. The other issue is whether the QSDA should have jurisdiction to enforce such a policy.

MOTION to ban uniforms and all school identifications in preliminary rounds of debate at QSDA sanctioned events. Moved by Sandy and seconded by Elizabeth.

- Rachel – are we really comfortable with excluding certain schools from participating.
- Alex – we should make two motions, lets pass the ban first and work on implementation afterwards.
- John – this may result in having two schools dictating the rules of debate.
- Tino – I propose freedom and choice. The QAIS asks for schools to have choice, how is choice dictatorial?
- Jeff – This discussion has occurred for a long time, many schools feel a ban will be advantageous to debating. Perhaps we should speak to the heads and explain the reasoning behind the ban.
- Chris- this has already been done.
- Jeff – has equity and level play been discussed. I am concerned that it hasn’t.
- Tino – In order for a policy to work it needs to be executable. What are the consequences?
- John – The QSDA will vote on behalf on what will be fair. Schools should respect the democratic decision reached by the QSDA.
- Tino – the process may be democratic but is not constitutional; QSDA does not jurisdiction over member schools.
- Padraic – Schools that enter the QSDA should agree to respect the decisions reached by the QSDA. If the QSDA is sanctioned to send debaters to nationals

then we must have some legitimacy as an organization. If you join the QSDA then you should abide by them whether you like them or not.

- Elizabeth - hasn't Sacred Heart participated in non-uniform in the past at QAIS public speaking?
- Tino – yes, but it is our choice. “Independent schools get to make their own rules”, I am advocating choice. Respect for the rule is reciprocal, QAIS is also legitimate and therefore its rules must also be followed.
- John – move to vote on the proposed motion and seconded by Shauna, the majority is in favor of voting immediately.

MOTION to ban uniforms and all school identifications in preliminary rounds of debate at QSDA sanctioned events. Moved by Sandy and seconded by Elizabeth. **The motion is carried 9-4-1.**

MOTION that all host schools refuse admission to debaters who are in uniform. This motion is moved by Brandon and seconded by Tino.

- Sharen – this motion can be quite harsh.
- Brandon – the first motion needs to be executable and clear.
- Sharen – If you disobey the rule, would you like to put the responsibility on the host to punish you?
- Brandon – This is not an issue of democracy because it is not within our jurisdiction.
- Noah – an administrator that disobeys the motion should be looked at.
- Motion to vote immediately by Jeff and seconded by John. The majority are in favour.
- Two attempts at voting resulted in ties, but the number of votes could not be reconciled with the number of eligible votes.
- Motion to vote by secret ballot by Tino.

MOTION that all host schools refuse admission to debaters who are in uniform. This motion is moved by Brandon and seconded by Tino. **(3-10 – 1) DEFEATED BY SECRET BALLOT.**

Chris suggested at we should move on and discuss further in September if necessary.

20. Constitution

- Chris – the constitution I have is from 1984. Is it time to re-write a constitution. I volunteer to examine any governing documents we already have and present something in September.

21. Elections

- President
 - Chris George is nominated by John and seconded by Sharen. Chris wins by acclamation.
- Vice-President
 - Sandy Cross is nominated by Shawna and seconded by Elizabeth. Wins by acclamation.
- Treasurer
 - Elizabeth nominated Rachel and seconded by Sharen. Rachel wins by acclamation.

22. Other Business

MOTION to allow Chris George to have signing privileges on the QSDA bank account. Moved by Rachel and seconded by Sandy. **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

23. Adjournment

MOTION to adjourn at 7:13 p.m. is moved by Noah and seconded by Sara. **PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**