



SWIFT

October 2026

SPEECH WORKERS OF IOWA FEATURE THEMSELVES

IHSSA + YOU **HELLO! HELLO!**

**What's
in this
issue?**

- **HALL OF FAME**
- **COACHES CONVENTION**
- **MEMBERSHIP DUES**
- **JUDGE CERTIFICATION**
- **IHSSA CALLBOARD**
- **CONTEST SITES**
- **NFHS COPYRIGHT**

"The philosophy of the IHSSA is built upon the belief that no form of activity is any more important than that of learning to communicate effectively."

A Lil' Acorn

Derek and I always gave our children full voice in selecting their Halloween costumes. Sometimes their costumes were determined by what we had on hand. Sometimes by the topography of the grade school playground. And sometimes by what first caught their eyes at Spirit of Halloween. Derek served as the "Assistant Costume Designer" and "Head of Special Effects" while I was "Producer."



Scout's first costume was the Wicked Witch. Next was a skeleton. Then, Dorothy. A ballerina. A Monster High doll. And a bat.

Lincoln's first Halloween costume was a dragon. Another dragon the following year (this time with a tail). Then, a very scary ghost. Optimus Prime. Darth Vader. And then... Slipknot.

I was uneasy about the Slipknot costume. Not because I didn't want him to be creative. Not because I wanted to choose his costume for him. And certainly not because I wanted to take away his voice. But I remember thinking, *"Really? This is what we're going with?"* Sure I wanted to celebrate Slipknot's origin story in Des Moines, as well as validate my son's interests in music. Simply, I wasn't quite ready for my sweet little Lincoln to show up at the neighbors (or my parents) with the slightly intimidating stage persona. Derek finally convinced me, *"I'll be right behind him."*

And that's the thing about raising kids and, in many ways, coaching them, too. We want to give them a voice. We want them to make choices. We want them to discover who they are.

We also have to push them a little just as much as they challenge us. Our students don't always see in themselves what we see in them. They may choose the piece that feels safe. The character they already know. The topic they know they can do.

And sometimes our job is to say, "I think you're ready for something more." (Or different.) Not to force them. Not to make the choice for them. But to gently stretch the edges of what they think they can do. The most important thing we can offer a student isn't the perfect piece, the perfect performance, or even the perfect result. It's the courage to try on something new.

Sometimes they surprise us as well as themselves.

And sometimes, just like with Halloween costumes, we realize they were ready long before we ever were.



Stacy S. Hansen, IHSSA Executive Director

2026 HALL OF FAME IHSSA INDUCTEES

LE COX Vinton-Shellsburg



Growing up the daughter of educators, Le Cox always knew she wanted to be a teacher. She loved school: correcting her mother's worksheets, helping in the school library, attending her dad's basketball practices, and often arriving early and staying late. She may not have discovered speech until high school, but she was already learning the time and dedication required of a speech coach. At Scranton and HLV High Schools, Le participated in speech and theatre. At Iowa State, she continued her involvement in theatre and Stars Over Veishea. After earning her BS in English, Le began teaching in Morning Sun, where she taught language arts and directed plays. Two years later, she joined the new Vinton-Shellsburg sharing agreement, where she began coaching speech alongside another new teacher, Eric Upmeyer. That partnership continued for 34 years. Le hosted countless WaMaC, District and State contests and served on the IE All-State and Judge Certification Committees. She also served as a Southeast District officer. In retirement, Le remains deeply connected to education and speech as a school board member, substitute teacher, athletics worker and, of course, IHSSA judge.

ERIC UPMEYER Vinton-Shellsburg

Some of Eric Upmeyer's earliest memories involve being led into a gymnasium to watch his older siblings perform on the stage. He also remembers his mother transforming the dining room into a theater. Eric entered UNI as a math education major, but a general education course, "Oral Interpretation of Poetry," rekindled his love of speech. After learning about the speech team, he joined that winter while still taking calculus, chemistry and computer programming. In 1986, he became an IHSSA-certified judge. During his sophomore year, an unexpected evening watching the foreign film *Z* helped Eric recognize that his true passion was story, literature and the human condition. He changed his major the next morning! Eric began teaching at Vinton-Shellsburg High School in 1989, where he formed a lasting partnership with head speech coach Le Cox. Together, they hosted numerous IHSSA contests and presented at Coaches Conventions. Eric entered the world of Public Forum Debate in 2004, served two terms on the State Debate Committee, and continues to coach, judge and mentor Vinton-Shellsburg's next generation of speech coaches.



Le and Eric will be honored at a reception and banquet Friday evening of the Coaches Convention.

2026 IHSSA COACHES CONVENTION

IHSSA + YOU: CRACKING THE CODE

Friday, October 9 & Saturday, October 10



	NORTH	CENTRAL	SOUTH	OTHER	NOTES
FRIDAY 9:30 AM	CONTEST MANAGERS MEETING		NOVICE COACHES FORUM ★ 9:30 - 11:00 Kimberly Cavalier, Molly Christensen, Christina Moyer, Noah Tiegs	CONVENTION REGISTRATION LOBBY 9:00 - 12:15 GALLERY LOBBY	EXPERIENCED COACHES FORUM HARVEST ROOM 9:30 - 11:00 Dirk Waller
10:00 - 11:30	BREAKOUT IE CONTEST MANAGERS	BREAKOUT LG CONTEST MANAGERS			COACHES CONVENTION FOR UNI CREDIT LOBBY 11:00 Marilyn Shaw
12:15 - 1:20		KEYNOTE ADDRESS ANGIE TOOMSEN ★		MINI SESSIONS	FRIDAY'S LUNCH: ★ MUST BE PRE-REGISTERED*** Lunch in the Garden Room 11:15 - 12:00 TICKETED LUNCH REGISTER ONLINE
1:30 - 2:30	CHARACTERIZATION Nicole Goodman, Ben Hirdler, ★ Reagan Hirdler	LIT PRO/POE/ PROSE Trisha Koenig, Robin Kudej	UNLOCKING STRONGER PERFORMANCES Angie Toomsen	1.SHORT FILM Matthew Colling 2. CREATIVE MINDSET Kevin Hosbond	
2:30 - 3:20	STUDENT LEADERSHIP Rylee Gehlsen, Cynthia Koster, Laurel Olsen	LG GROUP EVENTS Emily Klaumann, ★ Brienne Magill	VIDEOCASTING Molly Holkesvik, Ryan Runyon	1. SPONT SPEAKING Kenton Engels 2. DEBATE Jeremy Fitzpatrick	
3:30 - 4:20	STUDENT CARE ★ Vince Hrasky, Laura Travagiakis	TECH ADVICE Abby Avis	VISUAL AIDS Tara Rechkemmer	1. IMPROVISATION AJ Bleskacek 2. 8 th GRADE Kevin Seney	
4:30 - 5:15	SE	NE	NW	SW Harvest Rm	HALL OF FAME Meeting
6:30 - 7:00		HALL OF FAME RECEPTION Gallery Lobby ★		FRIDAY NIGHT IS A TIME TO DRESS UP and CELEBRATE. We suggest BUSINESS DRESS.	
7:00 - 9:00		HALL OF FAME BANQUET Garden Ballroom ★			
9:00 - ???		DESSERT/COFFEE Meadows Room ★			
SATURDAY 7:30 AM		BREAKFAST BUFFET, DOOR PRIZES, & MESSAGE Garden Ballroom ★			SWIFT PRESENTERS Sarah Bode Linda Brandt Mary Fasse-Shaw Jacob Gute Teresa Lawler Lyra McKnight Logan Pratt Layne Sheetz Shawn Starr Marcine Tracy Gabe Twedt Pam Wymer
9:10 - 9:55		SWIFT: Speech Workers of Iowa Feature Themselves Experienced, Intermediate, Novice Tracks ★			
10:20 - 11:10	USING AI FOR THE REAL REASONS Emma Bedard, Jacque Seidl	ONE ACT PLAY Kate Engelkes, Melissa Kaufman, Michael McNurlen	BALANCING YOUR JOBS ★ Kyle Weber		
11:15 - 12:05	BUILDING A SUCCESSFUL CULTURE Greg Ernzen, Debbie & Matt DeVore	WRITING YOUR OWN MATERIALS Kim Keller, Grant Freeman	ALL IE EVENTS Carrie Buddenhagen, Austin Pauling ★		
12:10 PM		MORE DOORPRIZES! Gallery Lobby ★		ALL CONVENTION CHECK OUT 9:55 - 10:15	
12:30 - 2:30	JUDGE CERTIFICATION ★				



The IHSSA Convention Committee meets throughout the year to plan an engaging, educational, and entertaining event! APPLAUSE APPLAUSE and GRATITUDE for extending their inspiration and creativity to us all!

IHSSA Convention Committee



DARRIN CROW

Cedar Valley Christian: SE

I love speech! I love Coaches Convention! So if I have the chance to help make both better by helping to plan convention? You bet! By being on the committee I get to meet great people, learn from these great people, and help make our speech world a better place.

ROBIN CROW

Cedar Valley Christian: SE

Robin is super excited to be on the Convention Committee because she loves to plan a great party! And because she has learned so much from coming to Convention every year. The expertise in the sessions is the best PD we could ask for!



WENDY BUSEMAN

Hampton-Dumont-CAL: NE

I enjoy serving on the IHSSA CCC because the convention is a great kick-start to the new speech season. I love getting to know coaches from other districts across Iowa. It's a great way to get involved in IHSSA and to meet people!

EMILEIGH EILDERTS

Hampton-Dumont-CAL: NE

I am so excited to serve on the Convention Committee. I love being able to showcase other coaches and their strengths as presenters. It is also a way for me to meet more coaches from across the state beyond my own district.



LINDEY KRUG

Fort Dodge: NW

One of my favorite things is the IHSSA Annual Convention. It gets me fired up! As the freshman member of the planning committee, I'm excited about being part of the spark for my fellow coaches.

MARISSA KUIKEN

Waukee Northwest: SW

Convention is a time to watch inspiration light up the room, and a chance to grow with my favorite people. Helping to plan a big celebration with the brilliant coaches of Iowa is a true honor!



IHSSA 54TH ANNUAL SPEECH COACHES CONVENTION

OCTOBER 9-10, 2026

GATEWAY HOTEL, 2100 GREEN HILLS DRIVE, AMES, IA

800.367.2637/515.292.8600

WWW.GATEWAYAMES.COM

CONVENTION

REGISTRATION:

ALL CONVENTION
REGISTRATION IS
ONLINE AT

WWW.IHSSA.ORG.

LINK: WWW.IHSSA.ORG/DEFAULT.A

WOW!

2 GRADUATE CREDIT HOURS!

YOU WILL BE ABLE TO
EARN 2 GRADUATE CREDIT
HOURS AT THE
CONVENTION. \$300
INFORMATION AVAILABLE
AT [THIS UNI LINK.](#)



[CLICK
LINK.](#)

CONVENTION
SPONSORS



[CLICK
LINK.](#)



[CLICK
LINK.](#)

**SIMPSON
COLLEGE**

[CLICK LINK.](#)



UPPER IOWA
UNIVERSITY
EDUCATION BUILT FOR LIFE

[CLICK
LINK.](#)

**POETRY
OUT
LOUD**



[CLICK LINK.](#)

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WWW.GATEWAYAMES.COM

IHSSA + YOU



cracking the code

COACHES CONVENTION
OCTOBER 9-10, 2026
GATEWAY HOTEL, AMES

SCHEDULE LINK:

FRIDAY, OCT. 9

PRE-CONVENTION: 9:30 AM

TICKETED LUNCH: 11:15 AM

KEYNOTE: 12:15 PM

SESSIONS: 1:15 PM

DISTRICT MEETINGS: 4:30 PM

FORMAL HALL OF FAME

DINNER: 6:30 PM

BE SURE TO TELL GATEWAY HOTEL YOU ARE ATTENDING THE IHSSA CONVENTION. GATEWAY WILL HOLD ROOMS UNTIL SEPT. 17. THEN, ALL ROOMS WILL BE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. RESERVE YOUR ROOMS EARLY.

COST:

\$150

LUNCH ADD ON:

\$25

HALL OF FAME
DINNER IS A TIME
TO
DRESS UP A BIT.
WE SUGGEST
BUSINESS ATTIRE

SCHEDULE LINK:

SATURDAY, OCT. 10

BREAKFAST: 7:30 AM

SWIFT SESSIONS: 9:00 AM

SESSIONS: 10:00

JUDGE

CERTIFICATION CLINIC:

12:30 PM

**NEED LUNCH ON
FRIDAY? BE SURE TO
PURCHASE A LUNCH
TICKET FOR FRIDAY.
LUNCH IS A TICKETED
EVENT. YOU WILL NEED
TO PURCHASE A TICKET
ON YOUR REGISTRATION.**



**SPECIAL
THANKS TO
THE IGHSAU**

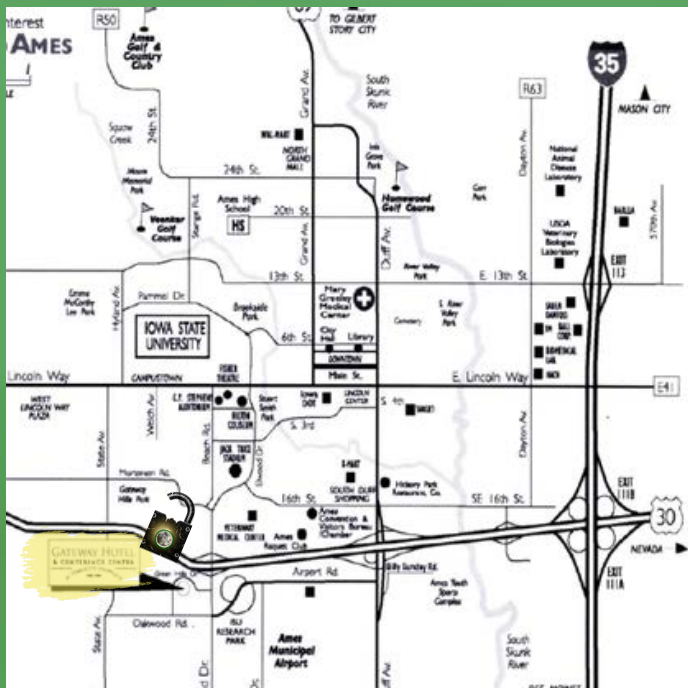
5 YEARS OF LESS?

IF YOU ARE COACH OF 5 YEARS OR LESS, PLEASE CHECK THE IHSSA WEB SITE FOR A POSSIBLE FREE CONVENTION REGISTRATION! INFO ALSO IN THIS ISSUE OF SWIFT! DUE: OCT. 1

WOW!

2 GRADUATE CREDIT HOURS!

YOU WILL BE ABLE TO EARN 2 GRADUATE CREDIT HOURS AT THE CONVENTION. LOOK FOR MORE INFO IN THIS SWIFT AND ONLINE AT WWW.IHSSA.ORG



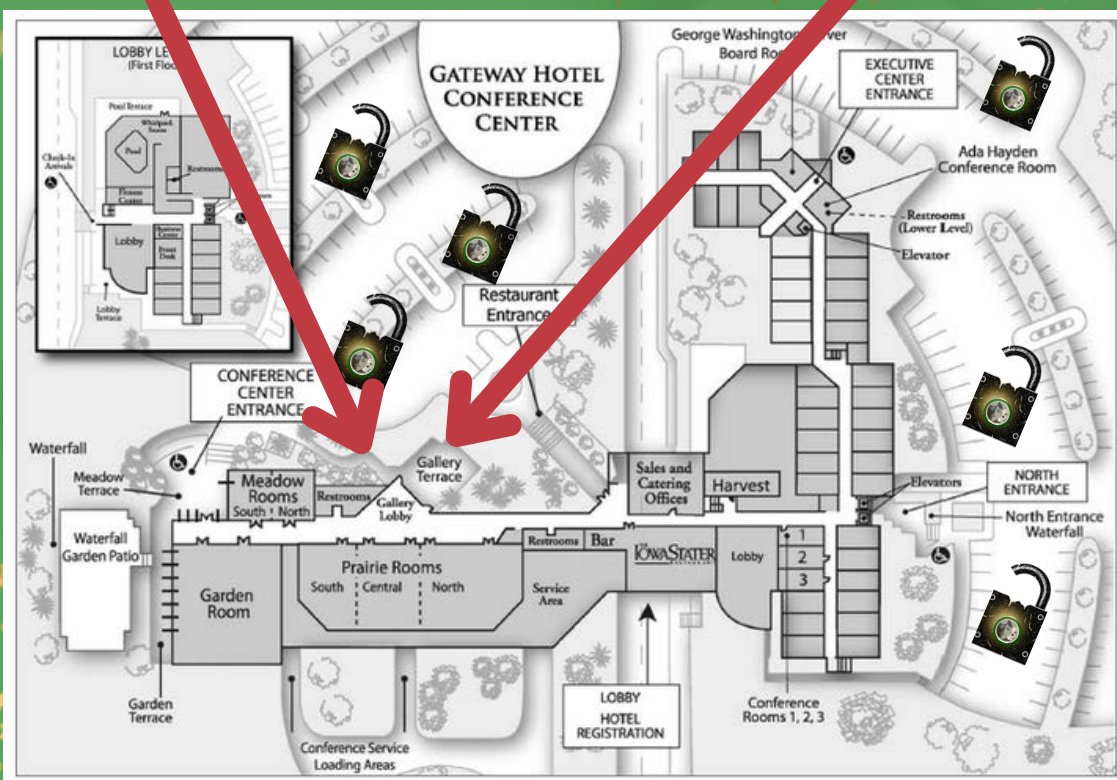
DIRECTIONS to the GATEWAY HOTEL:

Take HWY 30 into Ames.
Exit at 146 or Elwood Drive.
Head south on Elwood Drive.
Turn right (or west) on Green Hills Drive.
You can see the GATEWAY from the HWY.



NOTE: The GATEWAY HOTEL has fantastic "Express Checkout."
This will allow you to check out without going to the front desk
on Saturday AM. Inquire at the front desk upon check in.

**REGISTRATION on Friday morning is right inside
the GALLERY LOBBY.**



PARKING

is
FREE all
around the
hotel. Park in
the **NORTH** lot
for hotel or the
WEST lot for
Convention.



NEED Continuing Ed Credit?



UNI is partnering with the IHSSA to offer a 2 credit online course. \$300.

TITLE: Intertextuality as an Agent of Performance. October 19 - December 18.

Click [HERE](#) for UNI COURSE DETAILS.



FRIDAY NIGHT BANQUET

Friday night HALL OF FAME banquet is a time to dress up a bit. We suggest business dress. Feel free to put on your SPARKLE!!!

BREAKFAST @ CONVENTION

Breakfast starts at 7:30 AM. It is a buffet and will go until 8:15.

DOOR PRIZES, the RIGGLEMAN AWARD, an ADDRESS, and SWIFT sessions will follow.

NFHS: Teacher Satisfaction Survey



YOUR voice is IMPORTANT and NEEDED NATIONALLY! Please take the NFHS Teacher Satisfaction Survey. We want to know why you became a Speech/Debate/Theatre Coach! We will be using this information to help create recruitment efforts for younger generations to become teachers and advocacy efforts to help support current coaches in the future.

THEATRE TEACHERS [Survey Link](#)

SPEECH/DEBATE TEACHERS [Survey LINK](#)

Your
VOICE
MATTERS

CALLBOARD

October 22 - 24: Cedar Rapids Kennedy, DRACULA
November 5 - 7: Fort Dodge, CACTUS PASS
November 5 - 7: Sioux City North, THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST
November 5 - 7: South Tama County, SWEENEY TODD: DEMON BARBER OF THE BARBARY COAST
November 6 - 7: Bondurant-Farrar, RADIUM GIRLS
November 6 - 7: Center Point-Urbana, THE ELECTION
November 6 - 7: Garner-Hayfield-Ventura, THE ELECTION
November 6 - 7: MFL MarMac, MATILDA THE MUSICAL
November 6 - 7: Moravia, ALICE IN WONDERLAND
November 6 - 7: North Cedar, BRIGHT STAR
November 6 - 7: Oskaloosa, THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY HOLLOW
November 6 - 8: Anamosa, MEAN GIRLS
November 6 - 8: Des Moines Hoover, GIRLS IN THE BOAT
November 6 - 8: Don Bosco, SHAKESPEARE GOES TO GRAVEL GULCH
November 6 - 8: West Des Moines Valley, PRIDE & PREJUDICE
November 7 - 8: Earlham, TUCK EVERLASTING
November 7 - 15: Montezuma, NEWSIES
November 12 - 13: Boyden-Hull, WHO POISONED HIS MEATBALL?
November 12 - 13: Janesville, HADESTOWN
November 12 - 15: Carroll, GREASE
November 12 - 15: Sioux Central, CLUE: HIGH SCHOOL EDITION
November 13 - 14: Iowa Thespian Festival, UNI
November 13 - 14: Cedar Rapids Prairie, RADIUM GIRLS
November 13 - 14: Clarke Community, FIDDLER ON THE ROOF
November 13 - 14: East Union, MILLION DOLLAR MEATBALLS
November 13 - 14: Sheldon, SEUSSICAL
November 13 - 15: Columbus Catholic, ELEPHANT'S GRAVEYARD
November 13 - 15: Gilbert, SHREK THE MUSICAL
November 13 - 15: Spencer, HOW TO SUCCEED IN BUSINESS WITHOUT REALLY TRYING
November 14 - 15: Forest City, NEWSIES
November 20 - 21: Hampton-Dumont-CAL, BULLDOG SPEECH & DEBATE RUMBLE
November 21 - 22: Bedford, THE SOUND OF MURDER



Want YOUR EVENTS published?

SUBMIT YOUR SPEECH/THEATRE/DEBATE

DATES for our IHSSA Callboard at this LINK:

[IHSSA CALLBOARD DATES \(CLICK LINK\)](#)



CONTEST NOTES



**KELSEY DINKLA AT
BONDURANT-FARRAR**

JUDGE CERTIFICATION SITES are listed in this issue of SWIFT. We encourage all coaches to attend. When you as a coach get certified, you are truly supporting your students by gaining a better understanding of the IHSSA Constitution and the rules. Judge Certification is available at Convention on October 10. Too, we encourage you to look for individuals in our communities who would be fantastic judges for the IHSSA. It is the mission of the IHSSA to continually strive to represent all students' communities.



MEMBERSHIP DUES PAID?

Have you paid your 26-27 Membership Dues? Membership forms were sent from IHSSA Office mid August. These are due NOVEMBER 15, 2026. After this date, a \$15 penalty is assessed. Membership closes December 1. Let us work to have EVERY school in the state represented as a member of the IHSSA! If we can help encourage a school near you, please contact the State Office. [MEMBERSHIP FORM](#)

USERNAMES

The usernames/passwords for on-line forms are the same as last year. If you need a refresh, call the State Office. Keep it handy; you'll be using it several times.

ACT TEST Conflict

There IS a conflict with ACT testing. ACT tests are February 27. This is the same date as DISTRICT INDIVIDUAL. NO SPECIAL REQUESTS will be accepted for ACT CONFLICTS. PLAN ahead!

MENTORING PROGRAM

1st year Coach?
NEED extra Support?
Please call IHSSA
OFFICE!
WE GOT YOU!

NEW COACHES

Contact STACY in
State Office for IMPORTANT
INFO! Stacy@ihssa.org
WE got YOU!

REMINDER

When making payments please put on the check what event that check is for. This will assist Pam AND it will help YOUR bookkeeper and their work.

OCTOBER JUDGE CERTIFICATION SITES

NORTHWEST

Wednesday, September 30
Fort Dodge High School, 7:00 PM

Wednesday, October 7
West Lyon High School, 7:00 PM

NORTHEAST

Wednesday, September 30
UNI, Lang Hall, Room 308, 3:00 PM

Wednesday, October 7
Turkey Valley High School, 6:00 PM

SOUTHWEST

Saturday, October 3
Waukee High School, 10:00 AM

CONVENTION

Saturday, October 10
Gateway Hotel, Ames, 12:30 PM

SOUTHEAST

Saturday, October 3
CR Washington High School, 6:00 PM

VIRTUAL

Wednesday, October 28, 7:00 PM
Intermediate and Experienced Judges Only
Email Stacy@ihssa.org for link by Oct. 24

LISA PHYFE @ DECORAH



IHSSA JUDGES + YOU!

Judge Certification sessions last for 1 1/2 hour. Please arrive 10 minutes EARLY! If you are unable to attend a session please contact stacy@ihssa.org. If you are a certified judge a letter will be sent to you with more info about certification. Please bring \$10 certification fee for the year and a writing utensil. ONLINE PAYMENT is now available at [THIS BOUND LINK](#). Or use the QR code. Here is the [BOUND HELP ME GUIDE LINK](#).

[SUBSCRIBE TO OUR YOUTUBE CHANNEL: IHSSA + YOU!](#)



NEED A MENTOR? BE A MENTOR?

[MENTEE/MENTOR SIGN UP Link!](#) The IHSSA together with the IOWA ARTS ALLIANCE wants to connect new IHSSA teachers/coaches with experienced teachers/coaches. If you are in NEED of a MENTOR, please complete. If you can be a MENTOR, please complete.

For those individuals enlisting in the program that are also full-time speech/drama/debate/language arts teachers, **opportunities exist for a small stipend \$\$--both for the MENTEE as well as the MENTOR.**



NFHS: FREE Courses!

The National Federation of State High School Associations provided FREE learning opportunities. You are strongly encouraged to educate yourself regarding COPYRIGHT COMPLIANCE and THEATRE SAFETY. These online courses are FREE and are provided as a courtesy by the [NFHS Learning Center](#).

[COPYRIGHT COMPLIANCE](#)
[COURSE Link](#)

[THEATRE SAFETY COURSE](#)
[Link](#)



FREE!

Contest Sites 27

Local School Assignments for LG: Released in **DECEMBER**

Local School Assignments for IE: Released in **JANUARY**

NORTHWEST

LARGE GROUP DISTRICT

Denison
Sibley Ocheyedan
Spencer

LARGE GROUP STATE

Fort Dodge

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS DISTRICT

Coon Rapids-Bayard
Sioux Central
West Lyon

INDIVIDUAL STATE CONTEST

Sheldon

NORTHEAST

LARGE GROUP DISTRICT

Decorah
Denver
Mason City

LARGE GROUP STATE

Dubuque Senior

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS DISTRICT

Hampton-Dumont-CAL
Janesville
MFL MarMac

INDIVIDUAL STATE CONTEST

Starmont

SOUTHWEST

LARGE GROUP DISTRICT

Ankeny
Des Moines Hoover
Harlan
Riverside

LARGE GROUP STATE

Waukee

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS DISTRICT

Clarke
Gilbert
Shenandoah
Waukee Northwest

INDIVIDUAL STATE CONTEST

Ames

SOUTHEAST

LARGE GROUP DISTRICT

Centerville
Danville
Grinnell-Newbrug
Monticello

LARGE GROUP STATE

Cedar Rapids Washington

INDIVIDUAL EVENTS DISTRICT

Mount Pleasant
North Scott
Pella Christian
South Tama County

INDIVIDUAL STATE CONTEST

Cedar Rapids Xavier

STATE DEBATE:
ANKENY DMACC CAMPUS

LG.GROUP ALL STATE FESTIVAL:
IOWA STATE

IE ALL STATE FESTIVAL:
UNI



HONK! HONK!



R1SE UP!



R1SE ENSEMBLE



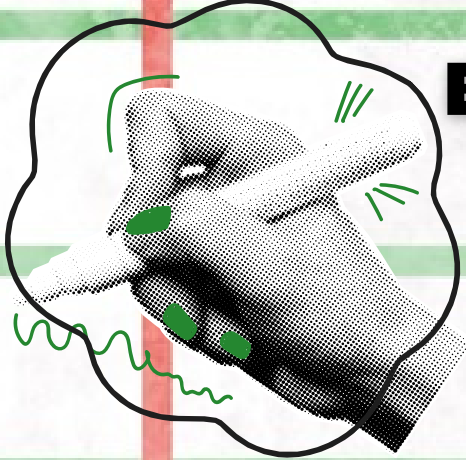
WE SEE YOU!



RISE



Support provided by the
Iowa Farm Bureau.



Behind the Comment Sheet: IHSSA JUDGE SPOTLIGHT

The IHSSA Judge Certification Committee meets throughout the year to assist in policies for certification procedures. They also aid in judge evaluations and plan workshops as well as clinics. The JC Committee would like to offer special recognition to these superior judges!

JASON FOLLETT

JASON FOLLETT has kept the IHSSA close to him for nearly four decades. Jason knows firsthand the confidence, growth, and sense of accomplishment that speech can provide. As a student at Eldora-New Providence, he participated in both LG and IE.

Jason's journey as an IHSSA judge began in 1988 when he was a UNI freshman. His high school speech coach, Dorothy Wiechmann, encouraged him to become certified, leading Jason to a judging clinic at UNI's Price Laboratory School.

Today, Jason continues to find great joy in watching Iowa students discover their voices. He especially appreciates seeing new, talented students each year and watching them grow. His advice to students is simple: relax, take a deep breath, and be confident.

Over nearly 40 years of judging, Jason has lived and judged in all four IHSSA districts and has judged every IHSSA category. In fact, when new categories are introduced, his vast experience often leads to him being one of the first judges asked to give them a try. After COVID-19, Jason took on judging Mime, a category he never imagined he would judge or even be qualified to judge. He discovered he actually enjoys it!

Outside of speech, Jason is an active volunteer and community leader. He participates in golf and bowling leagues and currently chairs the Special Olympics Iowa Board of Directors. Through his judging and service, Jason continues to give back to the activity that has been part of his life since he was a high school student.



JULIE KEELY

JULIE KEELY has a simple reason for continuing to be part of IHSSA: she loves it! After becoming hooked as a performer in the late 1970s, Julie returned to the activity years later when her own children participated. Now, as a judge, she once again finds herself surrounded by the students and performances that have meant so much to her. "Speech changed my life. It is that important."

Julie knows what it feels like to step outside your comfort zone. As a high school performer, she was an All-State performer in Choral Reading in 1980 and later earned All-State recognition in Mime. (Back then, Mime meant makeup!)

What Julie loves most is watching a student take a chance. She finds nothing better than seeing a student try something that makes them uncomfortable and then seeing the satisfaction on their face when they finish. Every student, she believes, is a unique gift and a breath of fresh air. Even when a performance doesn't go as planned, Julie hopes she can help students recognize what was special about what they created.

Her philosophy is simple: judges are there to help students grow. Her advice to performers is just as straightforward: practice, do the best you can, and remember that it will be good enough.

Outside of IHSSA, Julie is active with Brickstreet Community Theatre and enjoys genealogy research. This spring, she also stepped into a new role: grandmother. Her first grandchild, Edward Keely, has already stolen her heart!



COPYRIGHT GUIDANCE

Permission to do Material or Music in all IHSSA Events

Please remember you must have permission to do materials that you use for contest events. We have agreements with many companies to use their materials for IHSSA contest. For example, if you use recorded music for background in Mime or One Act (unless it is BMI music or you have purchased the BMI license) you must have permission to use it. If you are using music for Short Film or TV you must get rights from the copyright holder and get synchronization rights for that song or songs. If you are reading an interp selection from a book you must receive permission to read that selection or cutting at the contest. In Musical Theatre you cannot do cuttings unless you have permission to do so. You can NEVER cut or rearrange material without receiving permission or using material from the companies we have agreements with. Receiving permission to perform at contest is just that. It does not cover performing for other events. Also, NEVER allow contest selections to be placed on YouTube or the internet. YOU DO NOT HAVE PERMISSION to record. It is the responsibility of the local school to secure all performance rights for contest selections. Be sure you have permission to do material before you start a selection for contest. The IHSSA will NOT support any school that does not secure performance rights for selections at contest. Do not put your school district in financial danger by not finding the rights to perform material. Please remember all of your titles are posted on the web and those groups will see what you are doing. Get the proper rights to do material for contest. You as a coach/school must do this! Secure permission.

The IHSSA is grateful for the support of the
NFHS COPYRIGHT RESOURCES.



Please use these resources as you begin your planning for your IHSSA season.

1. BEGIN YOUR RESEARCH EARLY.

Do not wait until the week before contest to figure out whether you can use a piece. Copyright questions can take time to resolve.

2. EDUCATE YOURSELF.

Know the difference between copyright, fair use, public domain, and permission/licensing. Being used for education does not automatically make every use permissible.

3. ASK PERMISSION & KEEP A RECORD.

If you are not sure whether a student can use something, ask the copyright holder (the publisher) rather than assuming. If permission is granted, keep a copy of the permission or license with your records.



FROM FEAR TO FAIR USE
COPYRIGHT SUPPORT MATERIALS

IHSSA + YOU



IHSSA DATES FOR 2026-2027

AUGUST 15, 2026 - JUDGES / COACHES WORKSHOP, VIRTUAL

**OCTOBER 9/10, 2026 - IHSSA COACHES CONVENTION
GATEWAY HOTEL, AMES**

**JANUARY 8/9, 2027 - STATE DEBATE TOURNAMENT,
DMACC, ANKENY**

JANUARY 23, 2027 - DISTRICT LARGE GROUP CONTEST

FEBRUARY 6, 2027 - STATE LARGE GROUP CONTEST

**FEBRUARY 19, 2027 - ALL-STATE FESTIVAL LARGE GROUP
THIS IS NEW! FRIDAY! IOWA STATE CENTER, AMES**

FEBRUARY 27, 2027 - DISTRICT INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

MARCH 13, 2027 - STATE INDIVIDUAL EVENTS

**APRIL 5, 2027 - ALL-STATE FESTIVAL INDIVIDUAL EVENTS,
UNI, CEDAR FALLS**

Get these dates to your students, parents, and administration so you
can plan for these dates next year!

Approved by the Unified Board
IGHSAU, IHSAA, IHSMA, IHSSA

