



MDTA NEWS

SAVE THE DATE



Join us at the HyVee Arena in Kansas City for the MDTA State Dance Team Championships on Saturday, February 24, 2024!

In this issue:

- 2 President's Message
- 3 2023 State Champions
- 4-8 Survey Results/Coach Feedback
- 9-10 State Division Determination Points
- 11-12 Competition/Contest Updates
- 13-15 Safety Corner
- 16-17 MDTA Membership

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Jean Woodward

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State Competition Secretary

Karen Asbell

Newsletter Secretary

Melissa Albright

Regional Representatives

Shelley McCain-East

Brittani McClellan -West

Melissa Albright-Southwest

Membership Director

Nikki Boekhout

Safety Coordinator

Betsy Cuquet

Member At Large

Janna Hagerty

(Southwest Region)

President's Message

I am excited to be writing to you as the new Board President of the Missouri Dance Team Association! I joined MDTA after being hired as Ursuline Academy's Dance Team coach. After leading Ursuline to the 2018 Division 4 State Championship, I was asked to join the board as an at-large member. I served on the board as eastern region rep and worked with members of the board to navigate the challenges of the pandemic and virtual competitions. It was a joy to return to live competitions and watch the dancers across our state bring their passion for dance and competition to the floor. I invite you to join (or rejoin!) our organization as we embark on an exciting and challenging 2023-24 season.

At the end of April, our board gathered to review the results of the post 2023 state competition survey. Concerns of our membership, and the direction we believe the membership desires our association to go were addressed. At this meeting I was appointed the interim President. Elections for the president office, per our association bylaws, are to be held in even calendar years. Our goal as a board is truly to become a voice for all Missouri dance teams. We desire to provide affordable and accessible training and networking opportunities to our members and hope that all of you will participate in regional meetings, virtual meetings, and statewide conferences when scheduled. It is through your participation that the board is able to fully understand your concerns and desires as members!

Many issues were discussed and exciting decisions were approved at our board meeting in April. Please know, our decisions as a board take into consideration your comments but are also driven by MSHSAA and insurance requirements. As a board we strive to listen to the concerns of all our members! 65 coaches responded to the survey with 80% of the respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the overall run of the competition. Please note the following changes coming to our annual state competition:

- **To streamline information the board will share with coaches a Google Doc/Spreadsheet listing all items required for state and providing check off as items are submitted.**
- **State plaques will be ordered well in advance to avoid supply issues. State champion banners will continue to be awarded.**
- **The state general information letter to coaches will be compiled in chronological order to allow for a better understanding/expectation of the flow of the day.**
- **Signage to indicate "No Music Allowed" will be posted to direct coaches not to use bluetooth speakers in the warm up area.**
- **A coaches box will be marked on the floor to allow for coaches to watch their team at the center of the performance floor. A chair will be provided off center for coaches who do not wish to sit on the floor. The box will be available for coaches only with a maximum of 4 coaches in the box. Alternate dancers will need to sit off center.**
- **Safety judges will be set on 1' platforms at the center of the performance floor, routine judges will be brought down to the floor and set on 3' platforms at the center of the performance floor.**
- **Dancers can perform in a half shoe as it is safe on the gym floor.**
- **Schools, districts, coaches, and athletes are responsible for following MSHSAA rules. As such, the inspection line will be omitted. The safety panel will still observe and assess violations.**
- **Handsfree poms will be standardized.**
- **Score sheets will be revised to provide ranges according to a rubric to help standardize scoring. This will be made available to contest hosts by August 1 and posted to the MDTA website.**

Additional discussions concerning changing the division process and allowing for ropes to be brought to the competition floor were held. After extensive discussion it was decided by the board that the current procedure for setting divisions provides for the fairest distribution of teams. Through this process each division is equalized, allowing for a balanced distribution of teams in each division. Likewise, different national events use different Marley floors with varying dimensions. Preventing the use of marking ropes allows for a level playing field for all of our competing teams and allows for us to avoid time delays associated with the laying out of ropes. If you have any concerns about these decisions I invite you to reach out to me, I am here as liaison between members and our board and will do my best to foster communication that supports the success of all of our dancers!

Sincerely,
Jean Woodward





2023 State Champions



Lutheran High
Division 1



Notre Dame De Sion
Division 2



Kearney High School
Division 3



Wentzville Holt
Division 4



Wentzville Liberty
Division 5



Liberty High School
Division 6

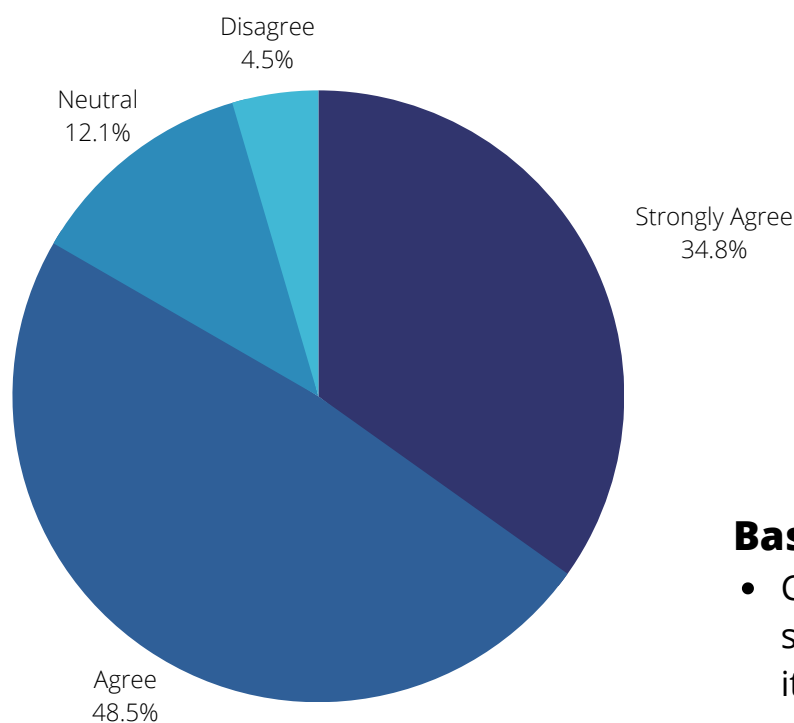


COACH FEEDBACK

Thank you Coaches for your Feedback! Your responses are appreciated!
Below are the results from the 2023 State Survey along with response from the Executive Board.

Together we will continue to make improvements for the State Dance Championships to be a smooth and enjoyable experience for everyone!

The pre-contest information and emails were helpful in preparing me for the state contest.



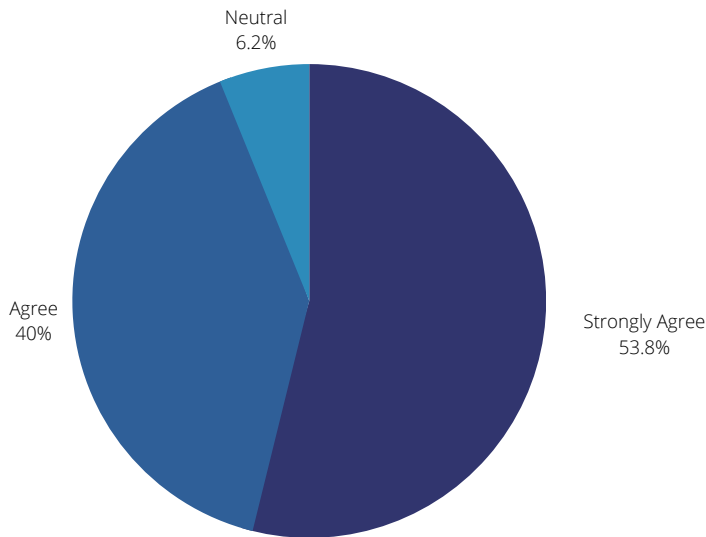
What could MDTA do differently, ahead of the contest, to assist you in preparation in terms of information?

Based off your feedback, MDTA plans to:

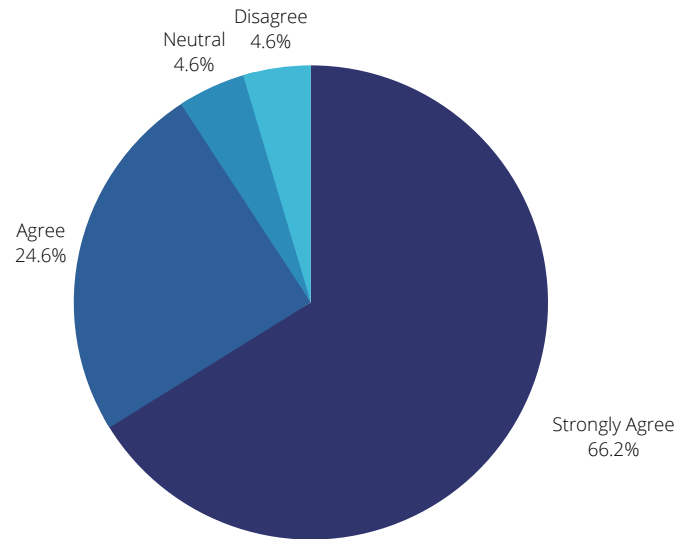
- Consolidate all state information into one spreadsheet to reduce emails which will list all items needed for the state contest. Items will be checked off when received, and coaches will be able to check it at anytime.
- State plaques are being ordered now to hopefully guarantee arrival by February 2024, and we will continue the banners due to positive response.
- The 2024 state general information letter is being reorganized in chronological order per a suggestion from the survey to make information flow better.

The MODTA website will always be the main source of information in one place. Emails, social media, and newsletters with the same information will continue to be provided as a courtesy to coaches. The best way to start receiving information and emails is by registering for MODTA early! Registration opens August 1st.

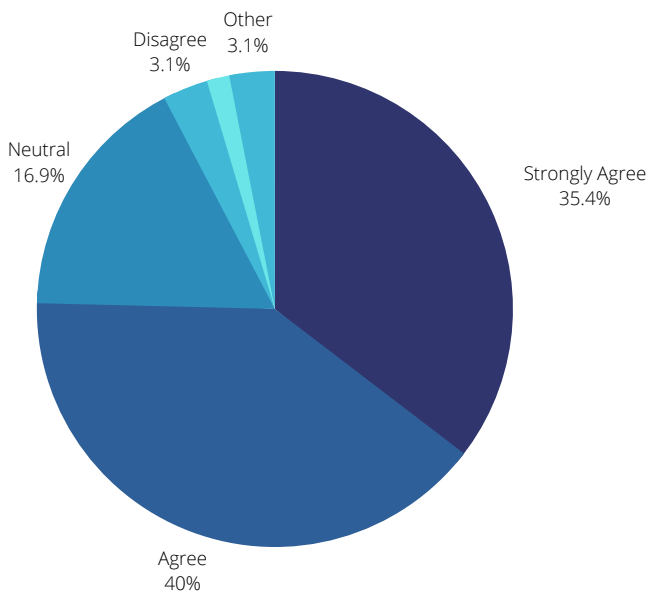
The Team Check In Gate Went Smoothly.



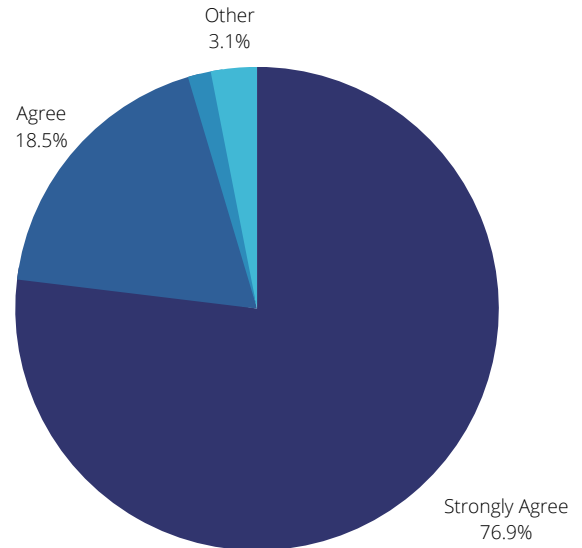
Inspections Went Smoothly.



I Liked The Way The Penalty Procedure Was Handled.



Inspectors Were Friendly, Easy to work with, and On Time

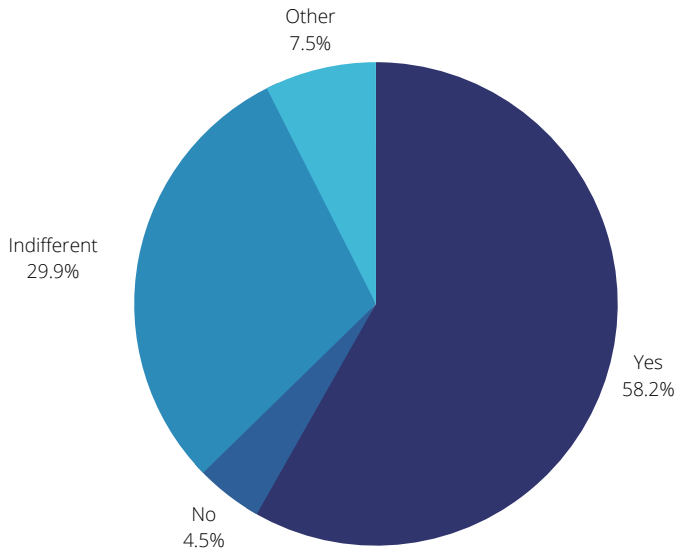


CHANGES TO SAFETY FOR THE 2024 STATE CONTEST

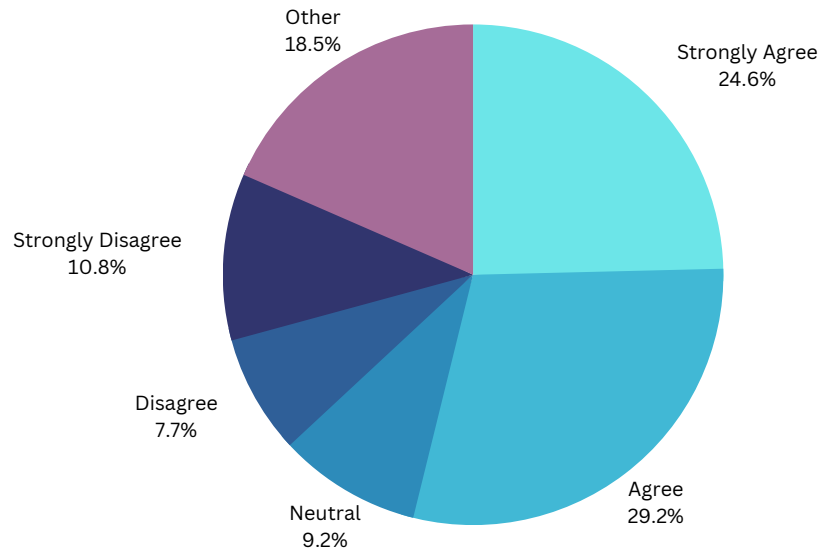
After consulting State and National advisors, the following changes will take place for the 2024 contest:

- Dancers CAN perform in a half shoe as it is safer on gym floors.
- The safety inspection line will be omitted from the 2024 contest. Please note: The school district, coaches, and athletes are responsible for following MSHSAA rules, and the safety panel will still be observing and assessing violations and guidelines.
- A comment section will be added to the safety sheet for handsfree poms and non-slick gloves. These items will be noted while teams are in holding or on deck for the safety panel.

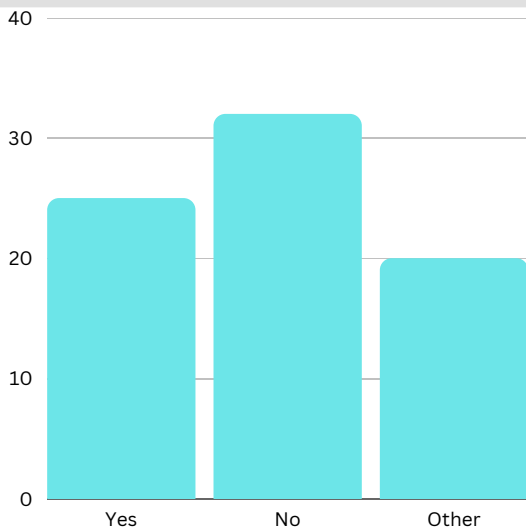
I Liked the Safety Panel being back off the floor.



I Liked the Performance Floor set up with 1 floor, facing 2 directions.

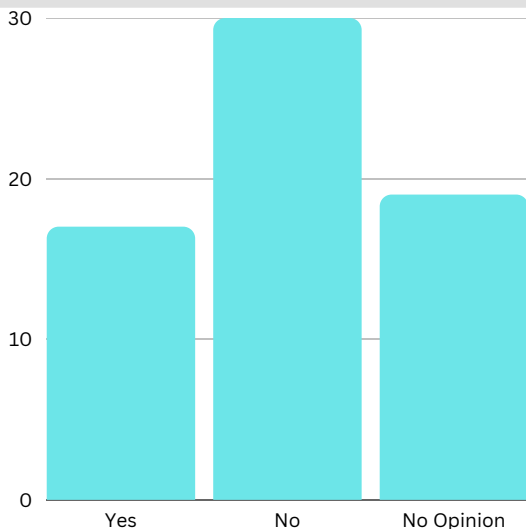


I Liked the Judges where they were.



The Judges Were Too Far Away.

I'd Prefer the Judges to be on the floor.

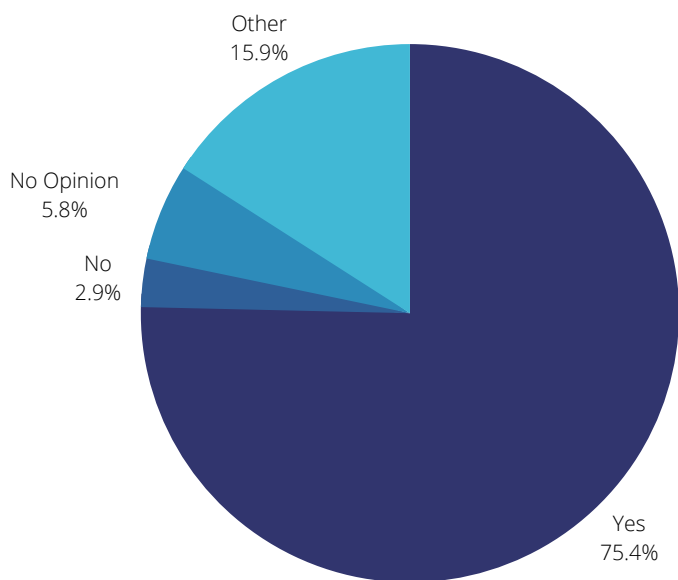


Based on your feedback, the following change will occur for the 2024 state contest:

- The safety panel will be placed on a 1' platform centered in front of the performance floor.
- The Judging panel will be placed on a 3' platform behind them on the performance floor.
- An area will be boxed off in the center of the performance floor for coaches to SIT while their team performs. It will be limited to 4, and for coaches ONLY. All others will need to sit off center.

MODTA gives our sincerest apologies for sending out scoresheets with the judging comments. It was never our intention to send out the judging comments, and take full responsibility for our accidental mistake. MODTA is making every effort to be more careful in the future to ensure it doesn't happen again.

I Liked Being Able to See My Scores as well as Each Teams Scores

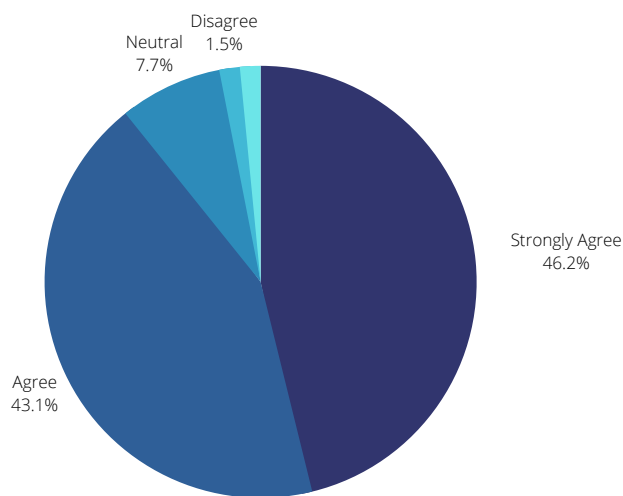


I would like to see a more consistent score sheet for all categories.

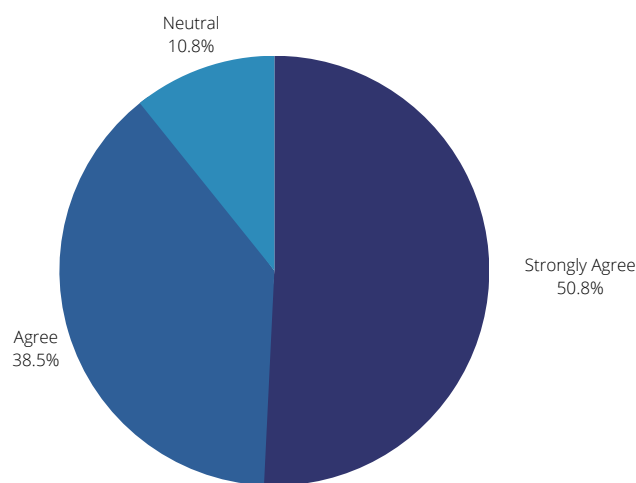
Based on your feedback, the following change will occur for the 2024 state contest:

- In an effort to provide a more standardized scoresheet, current scoresheets will be revised to provide ranges according to a rubric. These will be made available August 1 to contest hosts and for viewing on our website.

I Liked the Flow of the Performance Schedule

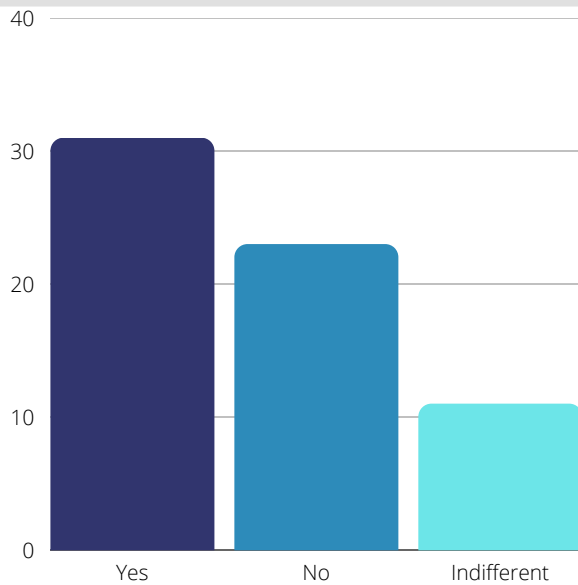


I Liked the Way the Pre-Performance Schedule was Organized.



MODTA understands the need for a safe and adequate warm up space for dancers, and continues to make every effort to provide a warm up space where teams can properly stretch and practice their routine in full. In 2024, MODTA will have additional signage at the Hy-Vee Arena to indicate "No Music Allowed" to prevent bluetooth speakers from disrupting other teams in the warmup area. One section will be utilized for music. MODTA will have a speaker available, but we encourage coaches to bring a backup speaker and/or attachment for their devices. Out of respect to other teams, NO CHANTING will be allowed in the warmup area to avoid any and all distractions.

I Liked the Award Procedure and Pace



This is MODTA's second year handling scoresheets digitally. We are continuing to make improvements and work with HyVee Arena staff to make scoring a much smoother process for next year's contest.

Based off feedback received, we will only be awarding the TOP 10 soloists in each grade level instead of the previous 20% of entries.

From Your General Comments:

- MODTA apologizes for the error regarding Academic All-State Awards. Every effort is being made to correct the issue and prevent it from happening again in the future.
- MODTA is not opposed to hosting the state contest in other parts of the state. Many factors are to be considered when choosing a venue including but not limited to: cost, size, and availability. The executive board has toured venues in Columbia and Springfield in addition to Kansas City and St. Louis, but have found The Family Arena and HyVee Arena the best options for the state contest at this time.
- MODTA has been in communication with Varsity to make sure the hospitality room stays stocked and open through the duration of the entire contest.
- The scoresheets used for the state contest have always and will continue to be available to view on our website.
- The HyVee Arena was made aware of the lack of service to restrooms and has notified MODTA there will be a new janitorial service for the 2024 state contest.
- We apologize about the water stations, and that will be a priority for 2024 to see the water stations stay stocked.
- Spacing ropes will not be allowed on the floor for the 2024 state contest to allow fairness to all teams attending the state contest. Different competitions have different requirements regarding spacing for their flooring. Rope manipulation would require extra time added to the contest.
- **ABOVE ALL, MODTA STRIVES TO HOST A STATE CONTEST WHICH PROVIDES FAIRNESS TO ALL TEAMS COMPETING REGARDLESS OF SCHOOL SIZE, TEAM SIZE, AND ABILITY LEVELS.**

Why are divisions divided equally and not another way?

In response to coach concerns on the feedback survey regarding division decisions here is some data:

The current format is listed in blue for the 2023 competition.

To divide into classes similar to MSHSAA, we would need to base it off a sport every school in Missouri would have to keep things fair. That sport is girls basketball.

If this year's entries were based on MSHSSA's girls basketball numbers (shown in red)

Divisions	Current Division break down #	Teams in each	MSHSAA Girls BB Break down #	Teams that would be in each division
1	125-364	18	0-87	0
2	371-588	18	88-158	3
3	595-868	17	159-301	8
4	878-1057	17	302-612	26
5	1070-1327	18	613-1055	31
6	1339-1878	18	1056+	37

If entries were broken down by categories and team sizes:

(Data from 2023 team entries)

Categories	Small team 1-9	10-13 Medium	Large 14+
	33 teams	39 teams	34 teams
Prec. Dance	12	6	14
Pom	9	23	21
Mix	11	11	14
Kick	2	4	4
Hip Hop	16	12	11
Prop	3	2	0
Lyrical	6	14	9

The difficulty here is that there is no way to define a state champ in each division because there would be different judges judging each category.

Additional things to consider:

- If State Champs were dissolved you could have category winners only.
 - Note that this would not align with MSHSSA for State Champs.
- Each year the range varies due to who enters for state.
- Enrollment is taken each year and schools change in numbers.
- You must also take into consideration that some schools have a large population of dance trained dancers and others do not.
- The same size schools in another area may not have the same opportunities.

The current MODTA Executive Board is currently made up of individuals across the state with various current and past coaching backgrounds and experience. When communicating the best approach to divisions, what may be beneficial to one team style may not be the best fit for another team style. Our goal is to keep everything as fair as possible for **all teams** and to ensure a smooth performance flow.

COMPETITION *Updates*

Yvonne Cole Lindbergh Invitational Saturday, December 2, 2023

Lindbergh High School

Additional Information/Questions,
email: lhsinvitational@gmail.com

Website with information found

[HERE](#)



Fort Zumwalt North Invitational

**Saturday, January 20,
2024**

Fort Zumwalt North High School

Contact: Karen Asbell @ kasbell@stcharlessd.org

Website with information found [HERE](#)



Wentzville Holt Dance Regional

**Saturday, January 6, 2024
Holt High School**



If you are hosting a competition or contest
this year, please contact

Melissa Albright at

melissa.albright@modta.org

to have it added or updated!

Lee's Summit North Dance Invitational

January 19-20, 2024

Lee's Summit North High School

Contact: Shelley McCain

shelley.mccain@lsr7.net



Farmington Dance Invitational

Saturday, January 13, 2024

Farmington High School

Contact: Janna Hagerty

jhagerty@farmington.k12.mo.us

Website with information found [HERE](#)



The Kansas City Classic

**Saturday, December
9, 2023**

Liberty High School

Website with information found [HERE](#)



MDTA State Dance Team Championships

Saturday, February 24, 2024

**HyVee Arena
Kansas City, MO**



Showcase Updates



Contact: Melanie Perkins perkinsm@carthagetigers.org
Registration Coming Soon!

SAFETY C O R N E R

From Your Safety Coordinator, Betsy Cuquet
betsy.cuquet@modta.org

Hello, and happy summer!

You've probably had a few summer practices by now, but before you get too far into learning new routines and ordering new costumes and shoes for the year, I thought I'd give you some guidelines. Let me start by saying that the National Federation of State High School Associations makes rules which MSHSAA enforces. This passes down to MDTA. We are not a state sanctioned event, but we do enforce these rules for a few reasons:

- the most important being **the safety of your dancers.**
- We also enforce these rules to level the playing field.
- Another important reason is secondary to liability insurance. This insurance is necessary to prevent our not-for-profit organization from the possibility of lawsuits should a dancer get hurt during our event. Remember, we are not associated with a school, therefore we are responsible for any and all costs that may be incurred as the result of an accident or lawsuit. We would be unable to attain insurance if we did not follow the safety rules set out by the state.

LEGAL



LEGAL



NOT
LEGAL

Costume-

MDTA adheres to the midriff modesty rule. Midriff is defined as 3 inches above the belly button. A costume can have a cut out or opening in the back but it cannot cut below the natural waist, nor can the opening extend to the front of the body. Bare skin or nude colored coverings made to give the illusion of flesh can not be part of the costume in the midriff area. When a dancer is standing at attention, no part of the buttocks, breast or belly can show.



**Allowed Skills for 2024 State
Competition in a
Turner/Half/Bear Paw Shoe:**

- Head Spring
- Hand Spring
- Front Aerial
- Side Aerial

**Anything else still
requires a full shoe.**

Footwear- HOT topic alert!!

MSHSAA tweaked the definition of head/handsprings in 2022, making it very clear that they are considered airborne skills. Further, the long standing safety rule states that if any airborne tumbling skills are to be done beside a front or side aerial, then a full shoe is to be worn. This would mean you need a full shoe to do a head or hand spring, which we enforced at this past state event. After considering MUCH feedback in addition to our own experiences and knowledge, the Safety Team has decided to allow turner/half/bear paw shoes to be worn for hand and head springs. This means that if your team is comfortable in a ½ shoe, you no longer need to consider removing those skills, nor do you need to consider wearing a full shoe in order to keep those skills in the routine. I am aware that this goes in direct conflict with what I just stated in my intro., but the board consists of dancers and coaches, and with our experience, we firmly believe that the shoe rule goes against our judgment of what is safe. Again, the MSHSAA rule has not changed, but MDTA is choosing to disregard this portion of the rule, only made possible because we are not a state sanctioned event. With that being said, we are still going to enforce the portion of the rule that has been in place for many years, and that is that any airborne skill besides a front or side aerial (and now a head spring or hand spring) requires a full shoe.

Jewelry-Another hot topic.

MSHSAA and the National Federation of State High School Associations prohibit the wearing of earrings, rings and necklaces while performing.

MDTA enforces that rule.

Soft chokers are permitted. Other chains (hip hop) must be firmly sewn to the costume to prevent flopping.



Hairpieces-

Feathers, flowers and beads can be used to fashion hairpieces. They must be worn securely with clips and pins.

Poms-

We will continue to enforce the use of hands-free poms for any skills in which the weight is put in the hands. Hands-free poms are also needed for those acting as bases when involved in lifts.



New for 2024 State:

We have seen so many variations of hands-free poms, many of which don't actually enhance the safety of the dancer at all.

Therefore, **hands free poms made with hair ties or other variations will not be allowed.**

All hands free poms shall be made with a 1-1.5 inch wide piece of elastic that goes across the palm of the hand. No elastic is to go across the fingers. The pom is worn on the outside of the hand, not held in the palm. These can be homemade, or you can purchase the kit to make them through Varsity for less than \$10 per set.

I hope this helps you in your costuming decisions!

Enjoy the rest of the summer!
Safe dancing,
Betsy Cuquet
Safety Coordinator



Are You Up To Date on the Spirit Rules?

As coaches, we set rules and guidelines we expect our dancers to follow. It is our duty as a coach to lead the way and follow the rules and guidelines set forth by our state and federal associations.

[Click to view the
2023-2024 MSHSAA
Spirit Manual](#)



Regional MEET & GREET

**August 15, 2023
6:30pm
Lee Summit North
901 NE Douglas St.
Host: Shelley McCain**

**August 15, 2023
6:15pm
Fort Zumwalt West
1251 Turtle Creek Dr, O'Fallon, MO
Host: Brittani McClellan**

This meeting will address the upcoming changes to our state championships, safety rules, and will provide a format for you to bring questions and concerns to our board. If you attend, your MDTA membership fee will be waived!



**August 14, 2023
via zoom
Join Zoom Meeting
Host: Melissa Albright**

Follow us for the latest information!



@MissouriDanceTeams

*Be sure to join our
Missouri Dance Team Association (MDTA) Coaches Group and like our
Facebook page!*



@mdtamodanceteam

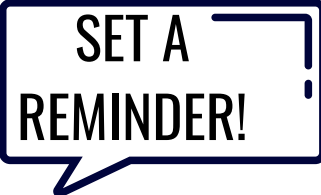
**LET'S
GET
SOCIAL!**



www.modta.org



23-24 MDTA Membership opens August 1st!



Four groups are targeted for MDTA membership. They are:

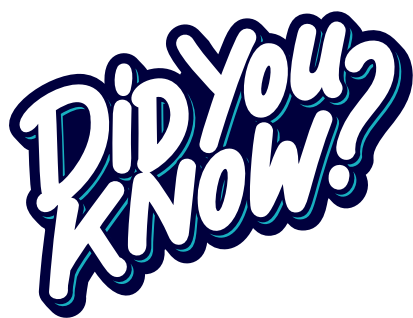
- Individuals who are actively coaching a middle/junior high or high school dance team
- Individuals who are former middle/junior high or high school dance team coaches
- College or University dance team coaches
- Business owners whose company offers services associate with dance team needs. i.e. uniforms, camps, instructions, etc.

Individual members have the following privileges:

- Voting for MDTA offices and proposals
- Having their varsity team eligible to compete in the State Championship
- Holding office on the Board of Directors
- Participating in MDTA events and workshops
- Professional Development and networking available through the MDTA coaches group on Facebook and live seminars.
- Receiving updated information regarding competitions and contests through our email list.

The membership year runs from August 1 thru July 31st.

Applications will be available at www.modta.org !



**236 coaches joined
last year representing
136 schools.**

**There were 67 new coaches
in the 22-23 season.**

**The average years of
service coaching
dance is 6 years.**

**92 coaches submitted their coaching salary in 22-23. The
average salary is \$4,770.**

Please contact Nikki Boekhout for any membership questions, if you are no longer coaching, or to pass along contact info for the new coach at your school district!
nikki.boekhout@modta.org