

Montana Creativity Quest/Montana Destination Imagination Spring Board Meeting
Manhattan High School, Friday March 28, 2004 3:30 pm

Present: Heather Geiger (State Director), Heide Arneson (State Secretary), Alean Skinner (State Treasurer), Laura Jo and Alvin McKamey (North Central), Sharon Lamar (North West), Becky Webber (South East), Linda Adams (South Central), Roy Mears (Member at Large)

The meeting was called to order at 4:03 pm. Introductions were made.

Regional Director Summaries:

South East: Becky Webber reported

Top 3 Problems at Reg. Tournament:

- new and different scoring program: it unnerved the score room staff and interfered with the process of allowing appraisers to hand out scores to teams.
- volunteers: as well as I could tell, about 1/3 of the assigned volunteers did not show up for their shift or do their assignment.
- appraisers: we had a lot of new blood which means there were few veterans to show the new ones around. Most of our head appraisers had a never been head appraisers before. No big problems resulted from this (that I know of) but multiple little problems that were worked out during the course of the morning.

Top 3 Things that went well:

- DI people were very willing to help when asked to do something specific. If a local coordinator was asked to take on a task, she found someone to do it if she couldn't.
- Souvenir sales at tournament: went smoothly. Great, competent parent volunteer.
- Concessions at tournament: heard lots of praise, no complaints. (thanks Becky for arranging this!)
- Directional signs at tournament (thanks, again, to Becky)

Number of Teams:

23 teams registered; 21 teams competed .

Number of Appraisers:

As of tournament-eve, 51 appraisers were attending. I can't say for sure how many actually showed up but it was close to that number.

Wish List:

I wish we all lived closer together (geographically) so that quick meetings would be more possible and less difficult. I wish we all worked less than 40 hours per week so that we actually had time to do our volunteer work. I wish there was a DI fairy housekeeper that would clean my house during January and February.

Next Year...

- More cakes for the cakewalk. One cake per team was not nearly enough. We ran out of cakes in 10 minutes.
- Coerce the score room guru to do a dry run of the scoring program BEFORE the tournament.
- Find a volunteer coordinator who will make assignments, check in volunteers at Regis. Table and monitor the situation throughout the day.
- recruit more veteran appraisers (?)

South West Region: Southwest Region had a successful year with seventeen teams in the region. The highlight was four new teams from Victor. I think they had a good time at the tournament even though they got a late start. I hope they will continue next year and we will encourage them. We had two teams from Stevensville and one from Florence that began but couldn't finish. We will continue to work on those areas as well as Missoula. We had a great article at the beginning of the season in the Missoulian and sent packets to people as well as e-mails to the principals in the districts. We will contact Missoula's flagship program in May to see if they want to take up DI as an after school endeavor.

Our tournament went really well. As always, a few great volunteers with experience helped make it smooth and fun for all. A HUGE thanks goes to my assistant Ria Overholt who went well beyond the call of duty and kept us "glued together". Diane Weeks, Sue Ann Williams, and Joseph Hoe are also outstanding volunteers as well as the Mears crew—Elsie, Roy, Roy, and Rodger Brown!! It is always a pleasure to work with them. The only negative feedback I received was about the difficulty of the problems. Particularly Destinations in Time—way to multi-stepped for younger teams. Is there a thought as to establishing a rate at which coaches are allowed to "interfere"? New teams need much more direction than experienced teams and if there was a way to define that for new coaches, it would keep new teams coming back. They get very frustrated the first year because they don't have the skills to know how to work together and solve the problems. If they had more coaching availability, they may not get so frustrated.

North West: The regional tournament went off pretty well with three people who work together, three coaches all sharing a piece of the pie, and being the fifth year as co-directors. One person does Appraisers and Set up, a second does Memberships and Money, and the third handles Team Managers and Appraiser Training and the Score Room. They chose to use the Excel program for scoring instead of JAVA.

North Central: Fewer teams meant no real competition. We need more teams. Some teams did not provide two appraisers. Do we need a penalty if they don't provide them, or if they recruit them and they don't show? They also need to be trained, which is part of showing up. It was decided that Regional Directors can excuse teams from the penalty. Burnout is a concern. We need to confirm with the appraisers that they will really be there, explain to them why they are really needed. Once recruited, we need to contact them right away, maybe a letter to appraisers explaining the real need for them, a brochure on DI? Unlike a speech meet, we use a team to appraise. Once we provide them with the dates, if they can't make the dates THEY need to find a substitute, or let their team know right

away so they can find another appraiser. Some of those recruited don't know what the program is, so brochures might help.

Templates and ideas for solving this problem were discussed. We need to discuss this further, including possible penalties for teams (possibly financial to penalize the parents, not the kids.) Do we need three names? Again, will this push the teams too far? Preregister, then registration to follow.

South Central: There were 33 teams, many of them competing in Cartoon Dimensions, less in Improv. There are checks still outstanding. Not all the forms were received. The competition went well.

Budget Reports are needed back from the Regions.

Laura Jo moved to accept both sets of meeting minutes as written. Sharon Lamar seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Treasurers Report:

Cash Flow – we need to add \$12,000 to the outflow due to the CD. We've spent approximately \$15,000, but still haven't received all the souvenir money. Also, not all the appraisers' per diem will be paid out (as some will elect not to be paid.)

Election of Officers: Sharon Lamar moved to elect the same slate as currently holds the positions. Linda Adams seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Membership Report: The number of memberships was the same as last year, but there was one more team. We are growing slowly, with four new memberships between Central and South Central and South West. Last fall we voted incentives, but no one qualified with five new teams per membership. A \$20 rebate will be due to some with new memberships (or team for a membership.) Heather will double check who qualified(HG). We would like to continue the growth, possibly by contacting the school coordinator before the end of the school year.

Fall Meeting Date: We are looking at August, possibly the 12-14th. Issues to be discussed include Appraiser Recruitment and Retention, Recruiting Memberships, and Instant Challenge Weekends. We might be able to talk to some of the 21st Century schools and other programs, provide them with a "kit" to learn about DI, a very basic curriculum and some simple Instant Challenge samples.

Appraiser Recruiting and Recognition: Appraiser training should help them understand how important they are, templates for thank you notes/cards. Send out letters to last year's appraisers as the school year starts, "Thank you for being a part of our success, would you be willing to help again?" Then appraisers would receive a letter and brochure to confirm that they have been "selected" as appraisers for this coming spring., then a Christmas card with the training and tournament schedule. There is a need to keep more appraisers, appreciation of some kind. Thank you cards and Christmas cards with schedules enclosed showing training and tournament dates were proposed as possible solutions.

Outside Trainer: Possibly have one person in the state travel to each region for trainings. (maybe Heather) We need a big session for appraiser training, then break out into groups. Ask the “veterans” to help the new people. This may also be needed for Team Manager Trainings. If we have outside person coming, it may make the training appear more important and more appraisers and team managers will come.

Unified Scoring System: The appraisers liked the new forms. There were delays in getting the scores back to the appraisers. Printer problems need to be worked out in advance of the tournament.

Appraisers need to spend time talking to the team about their solution, spend time validating them, why did they do this, how could this have been better, next year when you come back.... Validating the teams and their managers will help with retention.

Many of the new schools didn't start working on their solutions until January. We still see a need for a shortened season. DIAD recommended DI consider one challenge per year that will not be released until January, this was not approved at the DIAD meeting due to confusion over the fact that it meant a 6th challenge. It will be proposed again this year as there was confusion last year as to how it would work.

Concerns Regarding Challenges: If the challenges are too complicated, they are not kid friendly. Some of the challenges were too complicated, sounded dry, and were not well written. That makes them not kid friendly, too confusing, and takes away from creativity. If it is too complicated, appraisers can find it difficult to understand. By tweaking it too much, you are removing the simplicity and solutions are not easy to reach. We should be focusing on the creativity.

Added technology has hurt us, is not useful, and caused too many silly questions. Many of these questions should be answered by FAQs, and not be part of the discussion. Online registration did help. **Have registration and competition information first on the DI web site so you don't have to go looking for it. What is FAQ – call it Registration Help.

Training Replacement Board Members – we will work to add board members at the state level, volunteer coordinator, public relations, membership coordinator. (HG)

Timing of our Spring Meeting – would it be better to do set up first, then have the meeting later? The concurrence was that the present meeting time seems to be best, many board members need to get back to their teams.

Regional Boards: no progress made, we can discuss this again next fall. Team Managers and parents are possible recruits.

Sharon Lamar moved to adjourn the meeting, Roy Mears seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 5:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Heide Arneson
State Secretary