

Updated Statement on 2020 ODACS Competition and COVID-19



Regional and State Competitions Suspended, Beginning Monday, March 16

Since the release of our first statement on March 11, COVID-19 has effected numerous changes in Virginia and in the nation. We have had many conversations with our competition host ministries and with AACS. Among the factors that have led to this update are the following.

- The AACS national competition, originally scheduled for April 14-16, has been canceled.
- At least two of our host schools are anticipating the need to close school very soon.
- Today the Virginia Department of Health has issued guidance to K-12 schools and child day centers that encourages “administrators of childcare programs and schools to prepare for the possibility of outbreaks in their community” and suggests that schools consider “temporarily cancel[ing] extracurricular group activities and large events.”

Based on these new developments, and in consultation with the ministries that host competition events, ODACS has made the following decisions in the interest of the safety and health of our students, their families, and our teachers.

- The March 13 Mountain Region Competition in Madison Heights will proceed as scheduled.
- All remaining regional competitions are suspended, beginning with the East Region Competition scheduled for Monday, March 16.
- The ODACS State Competition, scheduled for March 27 in Richmond, is also suspended.

Since the AACS National Competition has been canceled, the completion of the ODACS State Competition is no longer time-sensitive. Therefore, though the March 11 announcement included a statement that postponement was not a viable option, postponement has now become a viable option. A final decision about postponement or cancellation has not yet been made. We plan to allow at least a week or two to pass to see whether the COVID-19 crisis subsides or accelerates before beginning the discussion with ministry leaders about whether to reschedule the suspended events.

Academic Competition; East Region Group Music Competition

The East Region Group Music Competition was completed on March 10. Also, many students in the regions for which competition has been suspended have already completed their academic tests and creative writing entries onsite. Regardless of the final decision regarding suspended competitions, ODACS plans to adjudicate these categories of competition and award the winning participants. We ask for patience, however, as we will wait first to make a decision about postponement or cancellation of the suspended events.

Thursday, March 12, 2020