Dear Texas State JCL Sponsors,

We are excited to be hosting you in Austin at Anderson High School for the TSJCL convention April 5-6, 2024. You may be aware that this convention presents us all with a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to be near the path of totality for a solar eclipse happening in the early afternoon of Monday, April 8th. Some of you will be able to head home after the convention to Dallas, Ft. Worth, San Antonio, or Waco where you will still be in the path of totality on Monday. Others of you may have support from your school to stay in central Texas for the event. We are excited to be providing ISO-certified eclipse glasses for all convention attendees made possible through the generosity of John and Cindy Cassidy.

While this is very exciting news, we also want to caution you that it is imperative that you begin your convention planning now. We are aware it is still very early to begin booking hotel rooms and buses, but this eclipse will make Austin and the IH-35 corridor very busy that weekend. We began working on blocking hotel rooms early knowing that the longer we waited, the harder it would be to find hotels with available rooms at a reasonable price.

We have found several hotels that have both availability and reasonable rates. We’ve been able to set up many courtesy blocks with these kinds of hotels. You can see the hotels we’ve been able to get courtesy blocks with so far on this document:

Hotel List for 2024 State Convention

We will continue updating that document as we keep working. Here is what we suggest you do right now:

- Make a good guess based on experience about how many of your students will attend, start polling your students, and talk to your administrators.
- Decide whether to make immediate reservations or to have hotels bid on your group at hotelplanner.com.
- Make your reservations as soon as possible (now, if you can!). Most hotels will let you drop rooms without penalty by a certain date on the contract.
- Book your bus if you need a charter as soon as possible.

Because some hotels have still not received many bookings (but this is changing fast), they are willing to negotiate. We also have talked to a few hotels that require a credit card to guarantee rooms and additionally require that 80% of those rooms be utilized. TSJCL cannot take the financial risk and sign these contracts; however, we can turn them over to your school if you would like to take them up on their offers now. We have negotiated the following:

- 25 suites at Home2Suites at the Domain at the rate of $199 per night for a room with two queens and a sofa bed with a maximum occupancy of 6
- 25 rooms at the Hilton Garden Inn at the Domain at the rate of $199 per night for a room with two queens with a maximum occupancy of 4
If you are interested in taking those blocks that require 80% utilization, please contact Jennie Luongo (jluongo@sasaustin.org) or Danny Schmidt (drschmidt68@gmail.com) immediately.

We are so excited about this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity but do realize it poses additional challenges for convention goers. Please start working on your accommodations now and let us know if you have any questions. We will continue regular communications as we have other hotel contract opportunities.

Looking forward to a memorable convention,
Martina Faini and Grace Shapiro
Co-Convention Coordinators