**Table of Contents**

**THE HANDBOOK**



Page 3 …………… Welcome Letter from Ms. Eype & Goals for 2015-2016

Page 4 …………… Classroom Rules

Page 5 …………… Practice Schedule & Novice Grading Policies

Page 6-8 …………. Varsity Grading Policies

* Event Tracks (p. 6)
* Prose & Poetry Concerns (p. 6)
* Student Congress Concerns (p. 7)
* Duo/Duet Concerns (p. 7)
* Partnership Issues (p. 7)
* Sharing Work & Using Briefs (p. 7)
* Grade Contract Explanation (p. 8)

Page 8 …………… No-Pass/No-Play Rule

Page 8-13 ……….. Tournament Nuts & Bolts

* Competition Schedules (p. 8)
* Registration & Drop Fees (p. 9)
* Transportation (p. 9)
* Missing Class (p. 9)
* What to Wear (p. 10)
* Supplies & Other Costs (p. 10)
* Ballot & Flows (p. 10)
* Food (p. 10)
* Understanding Breaks (p. 10)
* Tournament Behavior (p. 11-12)
* Overnight Trips (p. 12-13)

Page 14 ………….. Online Behavior

Page 14 ………….. Closeout Policy

Page 15 ………….. The Debate Alphabet (understanding TFA, UIL, NFL, & TOC)

Page 16-17 ………. The Main Events (descriptions of each event in which we compete)

Page 18-19 ………. Team Officers & Election Procedures

Page 19 ………….. About the Coach & Contact Information for Ms. Eype

Page 20 ………….. How Can Parents Help?

Page 22 ………….. Student/Parent Receipt of Team Handbook & Agreement Form

 *(Please return this form to Ms. Eype by Tuesday, Sep. 3)*

**Welcome to the 2015-2016 LCHS Speech & Debate Team!**



Dear students,

You have enrolled in a challenging and exciting elective that introduces students to the many events that comprise the “sport” of competitive public speaking. In this class, you will spend your time exploring controversial issues, and students are encouraged to express their opinions. You will be taught to effectively argue your ideas and hopefully to open your mind to new and opposing viewpoints. Our speech and debate team is all about you finding your voice.

This is going to be an important year for our program. We have a highly talented group of returning young students ready to take lead of our team and move us into our future. We also are happy to be welcoming many new students to our speech and debate family. I am proud to be the coach of this team as we write the next chapter in LCHS forensics history together. My focus this year is novice development and individual growth.

I began my participation in speech and debate as a high school sophomore in 1993. I had no idea what I was getting involved in when I joined the program. My best friend “tricked” me into becoming her duet partner and ever since my first tournament-I was hooked! I began gaining a confidence in myself that I never had. I began exploring various other events such as Lincoln-Douglas and original oratory. My success in the program carried on through college and into my career as a film/theater director and a speech and debate teacher/coach. Overall, speech and debate allowed me to find my “voice.”

You will find that speech and debate benefits you academically, professionally, personally, and socially. A powerful confidence builder, forensics is one of the best ways to develop your critical thinking, speaking, researching, reading, writing, and listening skills. You are challenged to consider multiple perspectives on the issues facing our world and to learn to work with a diverse group of people, pushing you to grow in tolerance, empathy, and understanding. For college and career, there isn’t a better preparation course. Successful adults that I know in a variety of jobs, from medicine to law to engineering to business, will tell you that their high school speech and debate teams played a key role in helping them gain the skills they needed to achieve their goals. Speech and debate creates leaders, produces concerned citizens who involve themselves in their communities, promotes academic and professional success, teaches informed and thoughtful decision making, builds character in the face of adversity, encourages the patience and bravery needed to overcome challenges, and builds life-long friendships. These benefits are gained win or lose. The rewards extend way beyond the trophies.

I am looking forward to a year full of accomplishment in all its forms – educational, personal, and competitive. I want us to be proud of each other, to grow and laugh together, and to fully appreciate the remarkable group of dynamic individuals we have on our team. Let each of us accept the challenge to keep this program welcoming and strong. Much communication will be done via our team website, email, and Edmodo- both with students and with parents. Please check your Edmodo and our website frequently. And, **PLEASE READ THIS ENTIRE HANDBOOK.** It contains everything you need to know about the LCHS Speech and Debate Team. I will expect everyone (including myself) to abide by its policies. Feel free to ask me any questions.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Yvonne Eype

Mrs. Yvonne Eype

# Description: http://images.google.com/images?q=tbn:hoPn1yjnoT4J:www.cmpevents.com/CC/images/gavel.gif

# Classroom Rules

1. *You always should be doing speech & debate work during speech & debate class.*
	* We are not a study hall or social hour. Please pay attention and quit any computer games, Internet browsing, and other laptop distractions. Homework for other classes may only be done with Ms. Eype’s permission when students need to make up missed assignments due to competing at speech and debate tournaments. Otherwise you should be working on projects related to speech & debate participation. How productive and successful we are depends on students staying focused on their work and tournament preparation. We want to enjoy our team unity without derailing class by socializing. Use class to reduce the amount of time you need to practice at home.
2. *Work to the bell.*
	* You should arrive to class on time and then be actively engaged in your work until class is over. Once the bell has rung, you should move quickly to get to your next class. However, it is never acceptable to pack up early and gather at the door.
3. *Remember you represent our team on campus.*
	* You have not only joined a class, but you also have joined a team. To be a part of this team, you are expected to represent us well to the faculty and student body. You need to show respect to all your teachers and the LCHS staff, avoid gossip and participation in unkind treatment toward other students, and represent yourself in a manner in which you can take pride. Part of showing respect to other teachers involves making sure that you are getting to their classes on time. Given the new tardy practices this year at Lamar, Ms. Eype will not write you a pass if you are hanging out in the debate room after the bell. You will have to go to the tardy calculator station. You are to NEVER use the debate team as an excuse to miss another class, leave early, or show up late. Missing another class is ONLY allowed with permission of Ms. Eype when we need to leave for a tournament.
4. *Take care of our classroom laptops/Ipads.*
	* Our classroom cart has been removed- but we hope to have a brand new one this year However, in the past, these laptops have been abused by our team. We will lose the access of laptops in this type of behavior continues. We need computers in order to do our casework. Please make sure you are taking care of whatever laptop you use. When finished, shut it down, return it to the cart, and plug it in to recharge so students in other periods will not be faced with dead batteries when they need the computers. Our classroom laptops are never to leave our room, A125. Students who do not respect these practices and/or who misuse the computers (by being off-task with them) will lose laptop privileges in class.
	* We are also getting ipads this year. The same rules will apply to ipads. Ipads are especially useful for travel purposes. You will need to checkout ipads if you wish to use them at tournaments. They will have to be returned by the following Monday after the tournament.
5. *Be respectful, considerate, & honest with your coach and teammates.* *You will be treated in kind.*
	* Please abide by the team contract created by you and your peers to allow our program to be a safe place for all students to feel at home. We are going to make mistakes, including Ms. Eype, but how we treat each other during difficult times is as important as how we act when we are getting along. We define our character through our actions. It is up to us to be a team people enjoy and respect.

# Description: http://images.google.com/images?q=tbn:hoPn1yjnoT4J:www.cmpevents.com/CC/images/gavel.gifPractice Schedule

**Mandatory team meetings will be held the 3rd Tuesday of every month. We will hold after-school workshops/practices from 3:40-5 p.m. every Wednesday.**  Officers and captains will meet the **2nd Tuesday of every month.** Just like athletes and musicians, students cannot be successful in speech and debate without regular practice to exercise their talents and improve upon their skills. Team officers and upperclassmen should attempt to attend all practices when possible in order to help train younger students looking for guidance. While one after-school practice a week is mandatory to be on the team. Only students who attend practice regularly will be chosen to attend overnight trips, such as the Harvard tournament in Boston or the UT Austin Invitational. Regardless of practice days, students should to make sure they are performing more during class and at home in order to accomplish their competitive goals. You will get out of speech & debate what you give.

# Grading Policies: Novice

# Novice students (beginners who are first year team members) will be given assignments with deadlines based on teacher-directed lessons intended to introduce them to public speaking, argumentation strategies, sound logic, and performance techniques. While students may choose to compete in whatever events interest them throughout the year on tournament weekends, during class we will learn each of the different events in which our team participates through structured units. The first half of the year, we will learn Lincoln-Douglas debate, public forum debate, extemporaneous speaking, and impromptu speaking. During these units, we will focus on how to write a strong argument and conduct quality research. We also will learn the elements of persuasion and public speaking skills.

# The second half of the year, we will learn student congress, oratory, and literature interpretation (these are theater-like events that include humorous, drama, prose, poetry, and duo/duet). We will build on the lessons in earlier units and focus our attention on how your newfound speech and debate abilities translate to having a voice in the real world. Each grading period, will include three to four major grades and six to seven daily/minor grades. Late work will be penalized 10% per day.

Novice year is meant to be a sampling of all the events so that students can choose the focus that best suits them once they become varsity in their second year. Students are required to learn about each event so that they can discover any hidden talents that they may not have realized before. Also, by everybody learning all the events their first year, students are better able to support their teammates once they enter varsity and begin to specialize. That way, a student doing varsity debate will still understand what his/her teammate is going through when working on a humorous piece. This brings us together as a team.

Beginners will not be required to compete until October, but are welcome to participate in tournaments earlier if they choose. To prepare for competitions in September or October, they should attend our after school practice workshops on Wednesdays. By the end of the school year, the goal will be that all beginners have participated in a minimum of three tournaments. Beginners are strongly encouraged to compete in as many tournaments as possible since the more you compete the better you become in all the events. Tournaments are always where students learn and grow the most.

# Grading Policies: Varsity

Second year varsity students will be expected to choose **either** “Track A” or “Track B” as their event focus each semester. Once a track is chosen, a varsity student’s grade will be based on a contract system indicating what work must be complete each six weeks. Be sure to read your grade contract carefully and follow all guidelines. Varsity students are expected to be more independent in their tournament preparation using their contracts as a guide. Students will work in Edmodo/Dropbox and organize all documents and resources according. Please see Mrs. Eype to set these accounts up. A blue/yellow folder will be used in the team file cabinet to keep tournament ballots. All assignments and grade contracts should be kept in the Edmodo/Dropbox folder for easy access by Ms. Eype or submitted via email as requested. Each semester, any student not exempt from the class final will us their Edmodo/Dropbox folder and ballots to write a self-assessment essay as their exam.

***THE TRACKS***

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Track A: Debate** | **Track B: Speech & Interp** |
| Students on this track must prepare and compete in **one** of the following events:* Lincoln-Douglas Debate (LD)
* Public Form Debate (PF)
* Student Congress (SC)
 | Students on this track must prepare and compete in **two** of the following events:* Domestic Extemporaneous Speaking (DX)
* Foreign Extemporaneous Speaking (FX)
* Original Oratory (OO)
* Humorous Interpretation (HI)
* Dramatic Interpretation (DI)
* Poetry Reading (PO)
* Prose Reading (PR)
* Duo Interpretation
* Duet Acting

\*Note: While students are welcome to participate in impromptu speaking (IMP) at tournaments, it does not count toward grade requirements since no preparation time is involved. |

These tracks are minimum expectations. Students are welcome and encouraged to compete in as many events as they enjoy as long as they are prepared. The division of tracks was based on the amount of time each event requires at competition. Students in LD, PF, and SC will spend 3-4 hours per event in preliminary competition at each tournament. Students in DX, FX, OO, HI, DI, PO, PR, DUO, and DUET will spend 1.5 hours per event in preliminary competition. So, two events in “Track B” equals about the same amount of preliminary competition time as one event in “Track A.”

Third and Fourth Year Varsity students are expected to compete in a minimum of two events. Class structure will consist of various topic discussions and weekly presentations/debates.

***POETRY & PROSE***

These are the only interpretation events offered by UIL, but they are not TFA or NFL qualifiers. Students who choose to make these their main events will be required to cut and perform with pieces that meet UIL regulations. This includes having two different poetry selections and two different prose selections since UIL requires students to be prepared to compete with two different pieces. Students who only prepare one piece and/or who don’t cut pieces according to the UIL regulations will not receive credit toward their grade for these events in “Track B.” UIL is **very** picky about the rules being followed, so you need to be careful that you are meeting all the expectations if you choose poetry and/or prose as your main event(s). Ms. Eype will have copies of these rules available in class. You can also find them here: <http://www.uiltexas.org/speech/oral-interp>.

***STUDENT CONGRESS***

Students who compete in Congress as their main event are required to give a minimum of two speeches during preliminary rounds (that is a total of six minutes of participation in a three hour period) to receive credit for attending a tournament. Student who give only one speech will receive a 70, and students who give no speeches but are present the entire time will receive a 50. Any student who skips out of a round while Congress is still in session will receive a zero for attending the competition even if they have met the speaking expectations. Congress students are expected to participate as much as possible throughout the entire session, including giving speeches and asking questions, to maximize their success. Congress legislation for all TFA Tournaments can be found here: <http://www.txfa.org/congress.asp>. Remember that NFL uses a different docket than TFA.

***DUO & DUET***

Students may choose to compete in both DUO and DUET as their two events in “Track B”; however, if they do so, they are required to have two different pieces. Partners who compete in both DUO and DUET using the same piece will have to each choose an additional event to prepare to meet grade requirements. The TFA State Tournament will not allow students to perform the same piece in both DUO and DUET, so students who qualify in both, need to be prepared to perform different scripts.

***PARTNERSHIP ISSUES***

Ms. Eype makes the final decision regarding which students will partner together for PF, DUO, and DUET. Students should not agree to partnerships without her approval. Additionally, students are individually responsible for meeting their competition requirements each six weeks. The lack of a partner or the inability of a partner to attend a competition is not an excuse for failing to attend tournaments. Partners need to discuss their schedules and agree upon which tournaments they can attend together the first week of each grading term. If unable to work out an agreed upon competition schedule, then partners need to participate in individual events for that grading period to meet course expectations. Partners need to be considerate of each other. This means not dropping out of competitions at the last minute and working hard to maintain eligibility under the state’s no-pass/no-play rules as this impacts both people’s opportunities to compete. Being considerate also means that both people are carrying an equal share of the workload and that disagreements are handled in a mature and respectful manner. In situations where conflicts cannot be resolved, partners should seek out Ms. Eype for mediation rather than allowing problems to escalate or gossip to start. Students who demonstrate repeated problems with living up to their end of a partnership will no longer be allowed to compete in PF, DUO, and DUET.

***SHARING WORK & USING BRIEFS***

Students need to do their own work in every event. In debate, this means writing their own cases and cutting their own cards. While the team will share ideas and research, students are expected to compete with work they have prepared themselves (or with their partner in PF) using credible and cited evidence when appropriate. A debater should never use another person’s case unless ***Ms. Eype has approved this beforehand***. Otherwise, this will be considered cheating, and grade penalties will apply, as well as potential disciplinary actions. Debaters also should put blocks in their own words. We don’t want to be a team where once you have debated one Lamar debater, you have debated all Lamar debaters. This will severely limit our success. Also, we must resist our past tendencies to overuse briefs. While students will be supplied with them, briefs should be used more to generate ideas and for topic analysis while independent research is conducted. Otherwise, students miss out on the educational benefits of debate and are going to lose due to their knowledge and insight on the topic being limited. Think for yourself!

***GRADE CONTRACTS***

Varsity grade contracts will cover competition and preparation requirements. They are the **minimum expectations** for the team. Students are always encouraged to do more to achieve their goals.

Competition requirements: Varsity students are required to participate in two tournaments each six weeks as a major grade. If students cannot compete during a specific term due to acceptable conflicts (such as other academic, extracurricular or family commitments), they need to speak to Ms. Eype **within the first week of that grading period**. Ms. Eype will be flexible given that our tournament schedule doesn’t ideally align with our grading periods and some of our students are involved in other campus activities (participation that we will respect).  The important concern is that students aim to compete in three tournaments per semester for a total of six per year.  Ideally, students will spread these out to one each six weeks.  But, for real conflicts, Ms. Eype will work with students to design a schedule that best meets their needs. **The most important thing for students needing an alternative plan is that they speak with Ms. Eype as early as possible. This includes students unable to compete due to failing grades. Students who wait until the last minute to explain why they haven’t attended a tournament will receive a zero just as they would in any other class for failing to complete a major project. However, Ms. Eype will work with students who approach her early and honestly.**

Preparation requirements: Contracts will include a menu of assignments from which students choose projects to best help them with their events. The contract works like a cafeteria plan. For example, LD debaters would choose writing cases while a student in humorous interpretation might choose cutting and memorizing a piece for performance. Assignments will have deadlines specified on the contract. As part of their contract, all students majoring in HI, DI, OO, DX, FX, Duet, and DUO should expect to perform in front of the class at least once a six weeks as a major grade.

# No Pass – No Play

Any student (novice or varsity) who is failing classes may not compete under the state’s no pass/no play rules. Our team strictly follows this policy, which is the same for all extracurricular activities, including athletics. Eligibility is determined by a student’s six weeks report card. Semester grades do not count. If a student fails a class in the third six weeks but passes for the semester, that student is still unable to compete. Failing students lose eligibility until their progress reports. If passing ALL classes (not only the one previously failed) on their progress reports, then students regain eligibility until the end of the grading term, when the next check occurs. While Ms. Eype will check grades online each six weeks for eligibility purposes, students also need to inform her ASAP if they know they are going to fail so that they can be removed from upcoming tournaments. Students who compete while ineligible will risk the standing of our entire team as our program can be severely penalized for violating state rules.

# Tournament Nuts & Bolts

## *COMPETITION SCHEDULES*

Our tournament calendar was already sent to all varsity families via email and will be given to novices in hard copy during the first week of school. Anybody wanting an electronic copy can also email Ms. Eype, and she will send one to you. Information regarding tournaments can be found at: [www.joyoftournaments.com](http://www.joyoftournaments.com). This website posts invitations for nearly every forensics competition in the nation. Most tournaments last two days (Friday afternoon/evening & all day Saturday). Overnight trips often continue until Sunday. Students typically compete into late Friday evening (arriving back to school around11 p.m.) to begin again early Saturday morning. Please keep in mind that tournaments oftenrun behind schedule. The entire team stays until all students have been eliminated.

### *REGISTRATION & DROP FEES*

Sign-up sheets will be posted on the debate website with deadlines. Students must meet these deadlines to be able to attend a competition. Students should only sign up once they have parental permission to participate, especially for overnight trips. They also should not sign up partners without talking to them. Please get permission first! Once a student signs up for a tournament, entry is binding. Ms. Eype will assume both parents and partners have approved. If a student has to drop out, he/she must do so as early as possible. Tournaments charge a “drop” fee when this happens. **The student is responsible for paying all drop fees**. Drop fees usually range from $15 to $50. Drop fees grow steeper the closer a tournament gets and can reach up to $100 on the day of the event. These are not fees created by Lamar, but expenses charged against our school by the tournament. If a student can find a peer replacement, there are no charges for substitutions. Finding a replacement and notifying Ms. Eype of the change is the student’s responsibility. Drops will also result in demerits. Students need to be especially conscientious about dropping from overnight trips. Chaperones are recruited, hotels reserved, and transportation organized based on each entry. Please be considerate of the team’s budget. When travel involves airfare, students are responsible for paying for plane tickets purchased in their name if they drop out.

***TRANSPORTATION***

Students are expected to take the school bus or school-arranged transportation. The bus will leave promptly. We cannot wait for tardy students at the expense of other team members missing their rounds. This is especially important on Saturday mornings. Students who miss the bus will be responsible for paying drop fees charged by the tournament for no shows. When we are finished, students are expected to call their parents and inform them that we are returning to Lamar. Students should call again once we are 15 minutes away from school. It is VERY IMPORTANT that students be picked up on time. Ms. Eype cannot leave until all students are picked up, and she has a 30min commute to drive home. Please be considerate of her sleep. If a student isn’t picked up, Ms. Eype cannot drive the child home. She is required to call the local police department to bring the child home. Any exceptions to taking the bus or school provided transportation must be approved ahead of time and include a written parent note explaining the situation. However, even if being picked up by parents, students cannot be excused until it has been officially announced by tournament officials that they have been eliminated. There are no exceptions to this rule unless there is an emergency. Students may not concede or forfeit rounds so as to leave for another engagement. Long hours are part of this activity, and skipping rounds is ALWAYS unacceptable. We ask that students and parents plan accordingly. If students miss any assigned rounds at a tournament for any reason other than an emergency, they will receive a failing grade for the tournament and lose travel privileges with the team for overnight trips. Students should not attend a tournament unless they want to be there and give their best.

***MISSING CLASS***

Sometimes students will miss school for tournaments, commonly on Friday afternoons. However, students may only miss class with coach permission and at the times specified. **Debate is never to be used as an excuse to get out of class otherwise**. When students miss class, it is their responsibility to communicate with teachers in advance, get missing assignments, and complete them as required. Each team member contributes to our reputation on campus, impacting how every debater is perceived. When we are considerate of teachers, they will support our program. It is imperative that each debater is timely, respectful, honest, and cooperative in working with their other teachers. Students should avoid being absent the day of or after a debate trip. If students are too ill to attend school the day of tournament, then they are considered too ill to compete. There is down time at tournaments to do homework. Students should make the most of it. Students are also welcome to schedule make-up tests during their speech and debate period if needed as long as they get permission from Ms. Eype first.

## *WHAT TO WEAR*

Dress for success, which means professional and conservative business attire. A good guide is to look like a lawyer entering the courtroom. Darker colors, such as black and navy, are best, and beige or khaki is acceptable. Avoid fancy patterns, and keep it simple. Tight-fitting clothes similar to skinny jeans are never acceptable. Professionalism, not fashion, is the goal. Men should wear suits with a jacket or slacks, a button-down shirt, and blazer. They also need a tie and dress shoes with dark socks. Women should wear suits (either pant or skirt with jacket), business dresses appropriate for an office, or skirt/slacks with a nice blouse. They also need pantyhose and closed-toe dress shoes. Please make sure skirts are an appropriate length (below the knee) and that shirts are not low-cut or revealing. Makeup should be neutral and not overdone; hair pulled back out of the face; and jewelry, if worn at all, kept to a minimum. High heels can become painful and are not required. Students may want to bring a pair of tennis shoes or comfortable loafers for down time between rounds or for walking across campuses. If you are having trouble affording professional clothing (or need something like a tie), please speak to Ms. Eype, and she will do her best to help. For more information, here is some advice from a student competitor: [www.forensicscommunity.com/blog/what-not-wear-speech-and-debate-tournament](http://www.forensicscommunity.com/blog/what-not-wear-speech-and-debate-tournament).

## *SUPPLIES & OTHER COSTS*

In addition to business attire, other materials may be needed for competition based on event. Please speak to Ms. Eype privately if you ever have trouble with expenses related to speech and debate. She never wants somebody to limit their participation due to finances and will always do her best to work with students who need help. Here are common expenses for speech and debate students:

* Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum – Students need a timer that counts up and down. Please purchase an actual timer and do not use cell phones, which look unprofessional in rounds and can get you disqualified at UIL competitions. Students are encouraged to keep their timers with their school supplies so that they can use them for practice in class. Students also need pens and either a legal pad, cardstock, or plain printer paper for flowing. Many varsity students use binders, expando or accordion files for organization of their papers. We have several of these files in the debate classroom for students to freely borrow.
* Prose and Poetry – Students need a small black binder from which to read their pieces. Ms. Eype has some available for $5 each. They can also be found at Office Depot.
* Travel – When we participate in an overnight trip, students may be asked to pay a portion of the expenses to help cover hotel and transportation. For example, the UT-Austin trip in December is likely to cost $50 per student. These events are voluntary and never required to be a part of our team. However, if students have earned a spot on one of these trips due to their hard work and effort but cannot afford to attend, they should speak to Ms. Eype regarding financial assistance.

### BALLOTS & FLOWS

Ballots will be distributed after preliminary rounds and then again on the bus for elimination rounds. STUDENTS SHOULD NOT ASK FOR THEM BEFORE THAT TIME! Chaperones will follow these guidelines, so don’t hound them either. Students who question Ms. Eype about results or rankings during the tournament will not get their ballots until Monday in class. All ballots distributed at the tournament or on the bus must be returned to Ms. Eype for the NFL record. These ballots will be filed each Monday by the team secretary in students’ blue folders. Debaters should label and save all flows for class discussions and practice drills for the duration of a resolution. Labels should include the name of the opponent, sides, the tournament, round, and result. Varsity debaters should bring flows to class or keep some in their yellow work folders for drills and blocking. They should also bring flows to upcoming tournaments in case they or teammates hit the same case again.

## *FOOD*

Tournaments sell food through concessions stands, providing items like donuts, candy, nachos, and pizza. Students should bring money for food or pack their own meals, especially if they wish for healthier eating. It is a very good idea for students to bring a bottle of water for use during rounds. If parents wish to donate snacks or drinks to the team to bring to tournaments to save everyone money on concessions, we have a team ice chest available for storing any items. Popular items consist of bottled water, soda, chips, cookies, and other snack foods. Donations can be sent on Friday mornings with your student to school. Team officers will take responsibility for packing and transporting the ice chest.

**UNDERSTANDING BREAKS**

When students advance past preliminary rounds into elimination rounds, we call it “clearing” or “breaking” because they have broken from the pack to rank among the top competitors entered in the tournament. At tournaments designated “TFA” on our schedule, students can earn points toward qualifying for the Texas Forensic Association State Championship when they break. This is one of the most respected state organizations in speech and debate in the nation.

Here is how breaks work at most of the competitions we attend:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| LD & PF* Typically 4-6 preliminary rounds
* Best win-loss records advance
* Ties are broken and seeding determined by “speaker points” awarded by judges for presentation
* Triple octos: Top 64
* Double octos: Top 32
* Octofinals: Top 16
* Quarterfinals: Top 8
* Semifinals: Top 4
* Finals: Top 2
 | **DX, FX, OO, HI, DI, PR, PO, DUET, DUO, and IMP*** Typically 1-2 preliminary rounds
* Students perform their speech or piece in a room with 6-8 other students and are ranked from best to worst
* Students with the best rankings then advance to semifinals (top 16 to 32 depending on tournament size). The largest competitions sometimes break to quarterfinals (top 32 to 64).
* The best ranked students in semis advance to finals (top 6 to 8).
 | **CONGRESS*** Students participate in one or two preliminary sessions that total three hours. They are given points by a judge for each speech they present, as well as an overall ranking for their total participation.
* Students with the highest points advance to semifinals (top 16 to 32) with overall ranks being used to break ties. The same process is used to determine finalists (top 8 to 16). Smaller tournaments break directly to finals and skip semis.
 |

## *TOURNAMENT BEHAVIOR*

Each student is a representative of Lamar CHS and our team while at tournaments, both at home and away. Students should take pride in showing not only our best talent but also our best character. No matter how other people behave, Lamar CHS students will show respect at all times for what we do and for **ALL** people involved no matter their level of expertise or role in the activity from the tournament director to the custodial staff. Rule violations may result in a school write-up, parent conference, loss of travel privileges, being removed from our program, and/or other disciplinary actions depending on the infraction. Students should be mindful of the following rules while at competitions:

1. *Debate tournaments are school activities.*
* Students are bound by all Lamar CHS rules and expectations while in attendance.
1. *The team has a zero tolerance policy toward alcohol, drugs, and sexual activity.*
* Students who violate this rule will no longer travel with the team. This includes not being allowed to attend state and national championships even if qualification has been earned.
1. ***Ten Minutes, Ten Miles!***
* Avoid all negative comments about a competitor, judge, or the tournament until we are alone and away from the event. We live in a small debate world, and you will be overheard. Ms. Eype understands that students sometimes need to vent. Do it privately.
1. *Always respect your judges.*
* This means students will be on time to rounds and already pre-flowed if competing in LD or PF. Judges should not have to wait. Since Ms. Eype will have judge/tab room duties, students are responsible for checking postings and being where they need to be. When rounds are over, students should always thank their judges when leaving the room. Students should never ask judges to give a disclosure or critique, and they should NEVER argue with a judge or opponent after a round. This is a BIG pet peeve. If a judge gives a critique, students should listen, take notes, thank him/her, and then leave without any show of frustration if they have lost or celebration if they have won. How one student behaves will impact how judges respond to all Lamar competitors.
1. *Clean up after yourselves and respect other people’s property.*
* Students often trash their area in a tournament cafeteria and then leave a mess for somebody else to clean up. We will be more considerate. Hosting a tournament is exhausting, and organizers should not have to stay even later to clean up after us. Throw away your trash and be responsible for your belongings. Students are responsible for any damage they cause to school property.

*6. Once eliminated: Watch rounds & attend the award ceremony as a team.*

* Unless you are competing through finals, you need to watch elimination rounds in your events once you are finished as a way to improve. Observing rounds is one of the best ways to learn. The entire team also will attend the award ceremony and show support for trophy recipients in a respectful manner. This includes standing for all first place winners.

*7. Be patient with your coaches & teammates.*

* We all put in long hours, experience stress, and may lack sleep while at competitions. Respect relationships on the team, communicate with each other and your coach instead of gossiping, and handle problems with maturity. Please know that Ms. Eype is always open to your feedback and will discuss any concerns with you.

## *OVERNIGHT TRIPS*

In addition to the rules above, a curfew of midnight or earlier will be enforced. All students must be in their rooms at the designated time for room check and must remain in their rooms until 6 a.m. the next morning. Room assignments made by Ms. Eype may not be changed without her permission. Lamar students should not enter the room of anyone from another school, nor allow anyone from another school to enter their room. If a team member not assigned to a room is in that room, the door must be propped open. If there is any damage to a hotel room, the coach must be notified immediately. Upon checkout, students must pay for any telephone, movie, or room services charges. They also are responsible for any damage they cause to hotel property. While at the tournament, no student may travel alone. Students must be in groups or with an adult chaperone. Students must inform the chaperones of their whereabouts at all times. If students have relatives in the area, they must provide written permission from a parent before we leave town to visit with those relatives. This will not be allowed otherwise. Rule violations that occur on trips may result in the student being sent home at his/her family’s expense. Finally, remember that we travel to compete, not to socialize. STUDENTS MUST SLEEP TO THINK & PUT FORTH THEIR BEST EFFORT! Sleep, sleep, sleep…

**Who Will Be Allowed to Attend Overnight Trips?**

Traveling with the team is a privilege. Ms. Eype needs to be able to trust in the responsibility of students who participate in overnight trips. In addition, opportunity is often limited by entry restrictions placed by the tournament, as well as resources available for hotel rooms and transportation. In addition to these events, there are also some local tournaments that may restrict our entry numbers, such as Memorial, UIL Districts, and NFL Districts. When Ms. Eype cannot take everybody and has to restrict our entries for a competition, the following guidelines will be followed:

* Students who regularly attend practice sessions outside class and who compete consistently beyond the minimum expectations will be selected over others. Students who make a larger commitment to the team deserve greater consideration for limited spots as they are more prepared, often more advanced due to the effort, and are making larger sacrifices for the recognition.
* Competitive record, NFL points and TFA points will be used to help determine selection. However, Ms. Eype has final say in evaluating a student’s record and readiness.
* Seniority will be considered but is never determinant. Upperclassmen will not beat out underclassmen automatically. To maintain a successful and deep program, schools must allow younger students experience. Consistency and dedication will be rewarded over age. This means that novices can earn opportunities to travel with the varsity students based on effort and attitude.
* What younger students do this year will influence their standing next year. Younger students who are not selected now will earn future chances based on what they do competitively this season and the character they show in responding to their peers and coach. **A positive, dedicated, and respectful attitude will be rewarded.**
* Any student who forfeits a round or is a “no show” will lose consideration.
* Any student who violates team rules will lose consideration.
* Any student who disrespects Ms. Eype, another chaperone, judges, or other tournament participants will lose consideration no matter how successful they have been. Courtesy will not be overlooked for trophies.
* Gossip and negativity will lose you consideration for trips, both in terms of how you treat your peers and how you respond to coaching decisions. Ms. Eype will reward positive team builders and student who show her and others respect. When students disagree with a decision Ms. Eype has made, they should talk to her directly and honestly. She will listen and is always willing to explain her reasoning. Students may also approach her about peer problems on the team. Please handle both success and disappointment with maturity. How you treat others when upset is often a bigger sign of your character than how you treat people when happy.
* *Some requirements for specific tournaments on our schedule:*
	+ **UT-Austin in December(tentative)** – Varsity students must have attended a minimum of three tournaments between September and November to be allowed to participate and must have reached quarterfinals (top 8) or better at least once in PF and LD. In all other events, including Congress, students must have reached finals (top 8) at least once. Novice students must have attended a minimum of two tournaments. Ms. Eype will assess their readiness based on class participation and competitive performance.
	+ **UIL Districts & NFL Districts** – Students who qualified for TFA State will be given first consideration. For Prose and Poetry, students who have competed throughout the year with UIL approved pieces will be chosen first.
	+ **Extemp TOC/NIETOC** – Ms. Eype will submit an at-large application for any students who qualify to TFA State or UIL State in extemp, even if they have not earned bids. If accepted, these students will be eligible to travel with the team to Chicago/Minnesota
	+ **Harvard Tournament**- Deposit of $250 and fundraising requirements. All district guidelines for out of state travel will be followed.

**Online Behavior**

This year, Ms. Eype intends to create an active online community for our team (most likely using the program edmodo at www.edmodo.com, which is a facebook for schools). Once this electronic community is ready, all students and parents will be invited to join. This community will allow our entire program to connect, providing numerous advantages, from the ability for debaters to share research to the opportunity for Ms. Eype to make announcements important for everyone. We are also electronic with our files for extemp using the dropbox program (www.dropbox.com). This saves a lot of money on supplies and provides an efficient way for us to work together. Students will be encouraged to participate actively in our team’s private electronic communities and will sometimes be given assignments to do so as daily grades. Only team members and their parents will be allowed access. The larger debate world also has some public boards. It will be team policy to not post or participate on any public forensics board. Even when you try to be positive or post something you think is harmless, it is common for people to turn your comments into snide remarks, gossip, and negativity. We do not wish for perceptions of our team to be generated based on these public boards. We prefer that our reputation come from our performance in rounds and our interpersonal interactions. If students wish to send a message to a friend in the debate community outside of Lamar CHS, they should contact them privately, such as through email. These private messages are more sincere than public displays that feed the spectacle that these boards tend to make of students and teams. This is something about which your coach feels very strongly. She has seen how these boards can hurt people and programs. These boards do influence how teams and students are treated at tournaments, especially at the state and national levels, and we do not wish for this to impact us. Ms. Eype encourages all students to remember that their online activities related to speech and debate doesn’t only represent them, but also Lamar CHS. If you have any questions regarding this policy, please speak with her.

**Closeouts (applies to LD & PF)**

When a team is highly successful at a tournament, students from the same school may be matched against each other in elimination rounds once it is no longer possible to avoid this from happening within the bracket. For example, if three of the four semifinalists at a tournament are from the same school, then mathematically this is inevitable. When students from the same school are paired against each other because they have knocked out the other competition, this is called a “closeout.” When this happens, it is a big accomplishment and the team should celebrate! However, difficult decisions have to be made that hopefully won’t taint how we as a team view such a victory. Students on our team do not debate each other in LD and PF. Tournaments expect the coach to rank students in closeout situations for the official results. There are also some tournaments, such as Memorial and UT, that don’t “break brackets.” This means that teammates can hit regardless of a closeout based on where they fall in the seeding. For example, if Lamar had the first seed and the sixteenth seed in the octofinals at one of these events, our students would be matched against each other even if seeds two through fifteen were from other schools. The guidelines below will be followed in closeout situations.

**TFA & UIL**

If one student already is qualified for the state championship and the other is not, the student still needing to qualify will advance. Otherwise the student who is the higher seed will advance.

**NFL Districts**

NFL does not use seeding. Ms. Eype will consider overall records to determine results. Seniority may factor, but strength in the skill set needed for success at NFL Nationals will be of highest consideration. Ms. Eype also will look to NFL points in the specific event in question.

**The Debate Alphabet**



The competitions our team attends fall under the governance of four organizations. Our two state organizations are TFA and UIL. Our two national organizations are NFL and TOC.

**TEXAS FORENSIC ASSOCIATION (TFA)**

TFA tournaments are hosted from August to February. When students advance past preliminary rounds, they earn points to qualify for the TFA State Championship in March. This accumulation system rewards success over the course of an entire season, allowing a student to have a bad weekend and still qualify. It takes 10 points to qualify. TFA has no divisions between schools. This means we compete against public school programs of all sizes (1A through 5A), as well as private schools. Qualifying events include: LD, PF, SC, DX, FX, OO, HI, DI, DUET, and DUO. Information can be found at [www.txfa.org](http://www.txfa.org), including how the point system works and tournament results.

**UNIVERSITY INTERSCHOLASTIC LEAGUE (UIL)**

UIL tournaments are hosted in the spring semester. Students who place in the top three at UIL Districts in March advance to UIL Regionals in April. The top three in the region advance to UIL State in May. Schools are divided based on size, and Lamar competes against 4A programs. UIL is primarily a public school league. Qualifying events include: LD, Informative Extemp, Persuasive Extemp, Prose, and Poetry. Speech and Debate students are also chosen for the Current Events Team, which involves a test to score student knowledge on world issues. Information can be found at [www.uiltexas.org/speech](http://www.uiltexas.org/speech), including practice extemp topics and the rules for prose and poetry.

**NATIONAL FORENSIC LEAGUE (NFL)**

The NFL is one of the oldest national honor societies in America. When students earn their membership, they join former presidents, successful lawyers and judges, celebrities (such as Oprah Winfrey and Brad Pitt), journalists, business pioneers, and many other important leaders. The NFL awards points to students who compete in any speech or debate tournament and gives degrees as they acquire new levels of status in their forensics careers. Students earn points win or lose because the NFL believes in rewarding effort. (See the chart in our classroom for more information on how to earn points.) The NFL also holds district tournaments based on geographical region throughout the United States in the spring. Winners advance to the NFL National Championship in June. Lamar competes in the South Texas region. Qualifying events include: LD, PF, SC, DX, FX, OO, HI, DI, and DUO. As the governing body for all forensics, the NFL determines debate topics and sets the rules for competition. For more information, visit [www.nflonline.org](http://www.nflonline.org). Students can look up their NFL status here. To do so, click on “resources,” then “membership reports,” and then use the NFL search engine.

**TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS (TOC)**

The TOC for Extemporaneous Speaking is held in May in Chicago, Ill. This national competition brings together the best speakers in the country. DX and FX are combined, challenging students to demonstrate knowledge on both domestic and international issues. To qualify, students must earn two “bids.” Bids are earned by making it to elimination rounds at designated competitions, such as UT-Austin and Alief Taylor. The Lamar tournament is proud to be one of the qualifiers. Additionally, students can earn bids based on their results at TFA State, UIL State, and NFL Nationals. Students unable to attend bid tournaments, but who have been successful in extemp over the course of the school year, may apply for an “at-large” acceptance for a fee of $25. Ms. Eype must approve and submit these applications. She will do so for anybody who qualifies to TFA State or UIL Sate in extemp. For more information, visit [www.communication.northwestern.edu/learn/student\_activities/speech/toc/](http://www.communication.northwestern.edu/learn/student_activities/speech/toc/).

**The Main Events**

Students have the ability to participate in a variety of events on our team, allowing them to explore their individual strengths, personalities, and interests. Events fall into three categories:

* Debate: Lincoln-Douglas, Public Forum, and Student Congress
* Speech: Original Oratory, Extemporaneous Speaking, and Impromptu
* Performance (more theater in nature): Humorous Interpretation, Dramatic Interpretation, Prose Reading, Poetry Reading, Duo Interpretation, and Duet Acting.

Below is a brief description of each:

**LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE (LD)**

Students debate one-on-one. The focus is on issues concerning morality and values, such as liberty, justice, social welfare, and equality. The event is named for the 1858 debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas in their race for a U. S. Senate seat. The issues at the time were slavery and the rights of states to local control. Topics, or resolutions, change every two months. Students must prepare to argue both sides. Competitors address timeless ethical or philosophical questions, such as: How do you determine what is “good” for society? What duties do citizens have to their communities? What human rights should the government protect? (Example topics: Vigilantism is justified when the government fails to enforce the law; Terminally ill patients have the right to die how they choose; The United States ought to promote democracy in other nations.)

**PUBLIC FORUM DEBATE (PF)**

Students debate with a partner against another team of two. The focus is on current events and the more practical side of government policymaking. Topics, or resolutions, change every month. Students must prepare to argue both sides. Research tends to focus on the status quo and empirical facts to analyze today’s politics. (Example resolutions: North Korea poses a more serious threat to United States national security than Iran; The No Child Left Behind Act has improved academic achievement; Social networking web sites have a positive impact on the United States.)

**STUDENT CONGRESS (SC)**

This is a mock legislative session designed to expose students to democracy in action and teach them parliamentary procedure. Students are assigned to chambers of approximately 20 members where they argue potential laws that a government could pass, such as healthcare and education reform, environmental protection, economic recovery, etc. Speeches are limited to three minutes and alternate between pro and con. Topics are provided in advance, so students have time to prepare before arriving at the competition. Judges evaluate both content (in terms of subject knowledge, organization, etc.) and speaking style. Students are rewarded for speaking conversationally while still appearing informed instead of reading off notes, which produces a dry presentation.

**ORIGINAL ORATORY (OO)**

Oration allows students to deliver a speech on a subject of their choice. Speeches are expected to be motivational and often employ a problem-cause-solution format. Speeches are written in advance and memorized with a 10-minute time limit. Students should connect with their audience and try to persuade them of their viewpoint. Speeches may be humorous or serious. Both the content of the speech as well as its presentation are judged. Some topics developed by Lamar CHS students in the past include: the need for more creativity, the benefits of being flexible, the damage violence does to society, the importance of family dinners, and the power of superstitions.

**EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING (DX or FX)**

This is a highly educational event that encourages students to learn as much as possible about current events. At tournaments, students gather in the “draw” room (usually a school auditorium). They randomly pick three questions from an envelope and choose one to answer. They then receive 30 minutes to prepare a 7-minute speech that offers their opinion. During this prep time, students are allowed to use files of news articles compiled by them prior to competition. Speakers are expected to be persuasive and cite evidence to support their position. Extemp is divided into two categories: Domestic (DX) and Foreign (FX). DX focuses on issues facing the United States. FX focuses on issues facing other countries. Questions about American foreign policy may appear in either category. Extemp tests a student’s knowledge of the world, as well as his/her ability to communicate that information to an audience. So, judges evaluate both the depth of content and presentation style. (Example questions: Can Republicans win the next presidential election? How should Texas schools handle state budget cuts to education? What can be done to reduce unemployment?)

**IMPROMPTU (IMP)**

Students may not choose this as their main event toward their grade; however, they may choose to compete in it for fun at tournaments. This event works more like improve, and creativity/humor is often rewarded. Students are given a choice of topics when they walk into their round and have only a minute or two to prepare a speech before delivering it. Time limits vary, but the typical maximum is 5 minutes for the presentation. The goal is for students to show how well they can think on their feet. Topics are often quotations, proverbs, or objects.

**INTERPRETATION OF LITERATURE (HI, DI, PR, PO, DUO, & DUET):**

“Interp” provides a great outlet for students interested in performance and theater. Several events are included in this category: humorous interpretation, dramatic interpretation, prose reading, poetry reading, duo interpretation, and duet acting. All are individual performances, except for duet acting and duo interp, which both require a pair. Each event involves presenting a selection of published literature, such as a novel, short story, poem, or play. Scripts off the Internet that are not published in hard copy (such as in a book or magazine) are unacceptable. The performances are done without the use of costumes or props. In all events, one student may portray multiple characters by “popping” into different body positions and using different voices. Monologues also are acceptable. Students must be very careful about choosing scripts that meet tournament regulations. For example, plays are not allowed in prose and what is considered acceptable poetry may vary depending on the competition. Students should have all scripts approved by Ms. Eype before they begin cutting and memorizing their pieces to make sure they are following the rules and won’t be disqualified.

* Humor (HI) & Drama (DI): These are memorized performances that portray the tone of a piece through the use of the voice and bodily expression. Both have a 10-minute time limit.
* Prose (PR) & Poetry (PO): These are readings from a script (which students hold in a small black binder while presenting). The competitors are expected to do a theatrical reading that brings to life characters and emotions through vocal techniques, use of facial expressions, and some – but limited – body movement. Both have a 7-minute time limit.
* Duet: Two students will present a mini play. They are allowed to use two chairs throughout the scene in any way they choose, but no other props are allowed. This is a memorized performance with a time limit of 12 minutes.
* Duo: Two students will again present a piece of literature in a memorized performance. But, unlike Duet, the performance is not as interactive and no chairs (or props of any kind) are used. In this performance, the two actors do not look at each other but maintain an “off-stage” focus while presenting their script. The time limit is 10 minutes.

**Team Officers**

Each year, our team will elect four to five team captains, one secretary, and two public relations directors. These officers are responsible for building and maintaining team bonds across classes, grades, experience levels, and events. They should take the lead on maintaining team professionalism and character on campus and at tournaments. Officers should be models of team expectations both in school and at competitions. They should treat people with respect, maintain competitive eligibility, and be in good standing at LCHS in terms of discipline (no write-ups or tardy problems). Team officers also should be committed to recruitment of new members, which includes attending the spring Sneak Peak for eighth grade and the summer freshman orientation, as well as any other events meant to promote LCHS and its clubs. Some specific duties are listed below by position, but all officers are expected to serve in other leadership capacities as needed in addition to the listed responsibilities. Students should only run for office if they have both the desire and the time to fulfill their obligations. Please read the duties carefully. Ms. Eype reserves the right to replace any student officer who is unable or unwilling to do the job asked of them or for disciplinary reasons relate to school or tournament behavior.

**OFFICER Responsibilities are highlight on the Officer Bulletin located in the Debate room.**

**President:** Tiffany Lam

**Vice President**: Emily Metalf

**Secretary:** Princess Ihekwoaba

**Treasurer:** Erin Anderson

**Parliamentarians:** Kevin Conde/ Madi Sosa

**Historian:** Katelyn Bui

**Public Relations:** Leigh Nealy

**CAPTAINS: David Davieson (LD) , Brinda Hollins INTREP), Mariah Gallegos (SC), Matthew Blust/Stephen Buffamante ( PF), Abrianna Materre(Speech and EXTEMP)**

**Duties:**

* Maintain exempt tubs (Abrianna Materre)
* Assist teammates in finding interp scripts (Brinda Hollins)
* Peer coach younger students both in and outside class. This requires regularly attending Tuesday and Thursday workshops.
* Gather the team for award ceremonies at tournaments.
* Help with loading the team on and off the bus for tournaments.
* Organize the recruitment of volunteer judges for the LCHS TFA Tournament in October.

**Election Procedures**

**Guidelines:**

* All officers will be elected in late April or early May.
* Students must be enrolled in speech and debate classes to hold an office. No exceptions.
* To run for captain, students must be entering sophomore, junior, or senior year, have an “A” average in class, and hold at least 25 NFL.
* To run for Officer, students must be entering junior or senior year, have an “A” average in class, and hold the Degree of Honor or better in the NFL (75+ points).
* To run for public relations officer, students must be entering sophomore or junior year, have an “A” average in class, and hold the Degree of Honor or better in the NFL (75+ points). This is a position meant to give non-seniors a chance at team leadership.
* If no one who meets these point qualifications wishes to hold a particular office, then candidacy will be open to any team member with NFL membership.
* Students currently in the novice class may run for office if they meet the candidacy qualifications and plan to enroll in the varsity class.

**Voting Process:**

We will follow a revised version of the National Forensic League’s recommended election procedures. Students with more degrees will have more influence in the decision.

* In the process of earning membership (1-24 points) = 1 vote
* All NFL Degree holders = 2 votes

***Who may vote?***

* Freshman, sophomores, and juniors who will be re-enrolling in speech and debate classes for the upcoming school year will be allowed to vote.
* Graduating seniors currently enrolled in speech and debate classes will be allowed to vote.
* Ms. Eype will vote. Her vote will count 4 times.

**This year:**

To run, students must do the following:

* Be enrolled in a speech and debate class for the 2015-2016 school year.
* Meet the point requirements (explained above) for the position for which they are running.
* Submit a one-page campaign letter to Ms. Eype by 4 p.m. on Thursday, April 23, to be shared with the team. This letter must be typed and should be emailed to MEype@lcisd.org. Ms. Eype will post these emails on Edmodo after she reviews them for the team to read. The letter should include why you want the position for which you are running. A campaign rally will be scheduled as well for presidential candidates. All other officer/captain nominees may elect to present speeches.

**How Do I Get My Letter Jacket?**

To earn a letter in debate, you need to accomplish one of the following things:

* Earn 250 NFL points
* Be elected as a team officer
* Qualify to TFA State
* Qualify to UIL State in a speech and debate event
* Qualify to NFL Nationals

Once a student has accomplished one of the achievements listed above, that student should discuss getting their letter jacket with Ms. Eype.

**How Can Parents Help?**

Parent support is vital to the success of our program. We appreciate every parent who gets involved in big or small ways. Without this help, we couldn’t do what we do as a team. If you are willing to support us in any of the following ways, please email Ms. Eype and let her know what you can do. Her email is MEype@lcisd.org. Ms. Eype will also be sending home a letter about our parent volunteer club. Parents can sign up to help by returning that letter back to school with their student.

Here are some ways parents can help the team:

* **Assist with the Lamar CHS Tournament:** This event involves about 600 people. It is a whole team and community effort to make it successful. We need parents to judge, organize food for our hospitality suite and concession stand, pick up donations from local businesses, etc. This event occurs Oct. 23rd-24th and is our primary fundraiser for the year.
* **Assist with other events hosted on our campus:** We also will be hosting a middle school festival on April 23rd-24th. We will need parents to help with hospitality and concessions at both of these events.
* **Chaperone a tournament:** When we travel out of town, it is always nice to have parent chaperones to help supervise the students. Please see our schedule for competitions outside the Houston area. A chaperone’s primary responsibility is to help with transportation and supervision. However, any chaperone who is also willing to serve as a judge is especially helpful because it saves the team money. Judging, though, is not necessary to be a chaperone. Chaperones are responsible for their own meals, but the team will pay for their expenses for hotel, rental car, and gas. Some chaperones in the past have donated to the team by covering their hotel and/or gas costs themselves. That is welcome if you wish to do it, but not required.
* **Help with our banquet:** We hold a banquet in late April or early May to celebrate our year. We need one or two parents who are willing to help us organize it. Organization involves securing a location (the LCHS cafeteria is acceptable), finding a restaurant or caterer that will provide us a deal, and providing information to Ms. Eype to distribute to families. Our student public relations officers will also work with you.
* **Feed our hungry team:** If parents wish to donate snacks or drinks to the team to bring to tournaments to save everyone money on concessions, we have a team ice chest available for storing any items. Popular items consist of bottled water, soda, chips, cookies, and other snack foods. Donations can be sent on Friday mornings with your student to school. Team officers will take responsibility for packing and transporting the ice chest. We will have a signup sheet for parents, but please feel free to donate any time.
* **Promote our program:** Our goal this year is to recruit, recruit, recruit in terms of finding new team members to build our program. If you think this program is doing positive things for your child, please tell other Lamar CHS parents and students about it. Word-of-mouth is a powerful recruitment tool. Help us keep Lamar CHS Speech & Debate strong.

We thank you in advance for supporting our team and hope everyone will find some way to become involved. We welcome all parent help including parents new to our program this year. Thank you!

**Student/Parent Receipt of Academic Decathlon Contract**



I have read the Speech and Debate Contract for 2014-2015 and understand all the rules classroom requirements. Furthermore, I understand the importance of representing Lamar CHS favorably and will do my utmost to enhance the school’s and the team’s reputation.

Student signature:

Date:

Email you want Ms. Eype to use:

I have read the entire Speech and Debate Contract for 2012-2013 and understand all the rules and regulations that will govern my child’s participation in the class, and at competitions.

Parent or guardian signature:

Date:

Email:

Parent or guardian signature:

Date:

Email:

Post/ updates will be made on Edmodo and posted on our website on how the team is doing, travel itineraries, requests for help when needed, etc. Instructions on how to join will be sent out this week. If you wish not to receive updates and notifications of assignments, please indicate below. You can also let me know if you prefer a different means of communication. Thank you.