



2019-2020
Speech & Debate Team
Handbook

Mission Statement

To emphasize excellence in learning and provide opportunities for every child to realize his/her potential in a safe environment.

To encourage students to become responsible productive citizens and lifelong learners

Forensics Code of Conduct

1. Comply with all eligibility rules outlined by your school, including but not exclusive to:
 - a. Attending school, the full day to participate in practices and tournaments.
 - b. Attend school the day before and after tournaments to avoid suspension of future tournaments.
 - c. Do not publicly display behavior that will negatively reflect on our team.
 - d. **Do NOT allow grades to fall to a point where teachers are concerned. This will result in suspension from tournaments until grades are improved.**
 - e. Do not engage in criminal activity or violate any civil law.
 - f. Do not use/sell/distribute tobacco, alcohol, or any illegal drug.
2. Violation of any of the above rules will result in discipline as outlined by sponsor(s) and/or administration.

TFA (Texas Forensics League) www.txfa.org

1. TFA is a non-profit organization of high schools in Texas which field a competitive forensic program. It governs speech and debate in-state.
1. Texas is divided into 5 regions
 - I – Amarillo/Lubbock
 - ii. Dallas
 - III – Austin/San Antonio
 - IV - Houston
 - V – El Paso/Abilene
2. TFA runs a district tournament that qualifies competitors to their state tournament.

NSDA (National Speech & Debate Association) <http://www.speechanddebate.org/nationals>

1. NSDA is a non-profit organization of high schools all over the nation. It governs speech and debate nationally.
2. Nation is divided into 82 districts
 - a. Texas has 12 districts
 - i. Central Texas
 - ii. East Texas
 - iii. Gulf Coast
 - iv. Heart of Texas
 - v. LBJ
 - vi. Lone Star
 - vii. North Texas Longhorns
 - viii. South Texas **
 - ix. Space City
 - x. Tall Cotton
 - xi. UIL
 - xii. West Texas
3. The NSDA hosts a district tournament in Texas that qualifies competitors to the National tournament in June.
4. Student Membership into the NFL National Honor Society
5. Points are assigned for every round of competition.
6. Most events have a Novice division for first year competitors in that event.

Debate Events

Lincoln-Douglas Debate (LD)-

Lincoln-Douglas Debate centers on a proposition of value, which concerns itself with what ought to be instead of what is. A value is an ideal held by individuals, societies, governments, etc. One debater upholds each side of the resolution from a value perspective. Through this contest, students are encouraged to develop a direct and communicative delivery and emphasize logic, theory and philosophy, in the development of argumentation.

Cross Examination Debate/Policy Debate (CX)-

A two-on-two debate that focuses on a policy question for the duration of the academic year, this format tests a student's research, analytical, and delivery skills. Policy Debate involves the proposal of a plan by the affirmative team to enact a policy, while the negative team offers reasons to reject that proposal. Throughout the debate, students can cross-examine one another. A judge or panel of judges determines the winner based on the arguments presented.

Public Forum (PF)-

Public Forum Debate is a team event that advocates or rejects a position. The clash of ideas should be communicated in a manner persuasive to the non-specialist or citizen judge. Through this contest, students are encouraged to communicate ideas with clarity, organization and eloquence and display solid logic, lucid reasoning and depth of analysis, in the development of argumentation.

Speech Events

Dramatic Interpretation (DI):

This contest enables the student not only to develop skills common in all speech contests, but also to select and condense worthy dramatic literature suitable to the contestant's personality and maturity, and to convey orally the meaning of that dramatic literature through characterization and narration. Selections used in Dramatic shall be cuttings from a single source from published printed novels, short stories, plays, poems, or screenplays. The selection shall be memorized and presented without the use of physical objects (script, props, hand props, or scenery) or costume. Students should avoid movement in the presentation that would distract from the literature itself.

Duet Interpretation (DUET):

This is a two-person event. The competitors may look and interact with each other. No props except two chairs will be allowed. The two chairs may be used to create atmosphere and environment. This contest will enable the students to develop skills in techniques, ensemble, and oral interpretation common to all communications. Selections used in Duet Acting shall be cuttings from a single source from a published printed novel, short story, play, poem or screenplay. Materials may be humorous, dramatic, or a mixture of both. The selection shall be memorized and presented without the use of physical objects (notes, props, hand props, or scenery) or costume. Time for presentation shall not exceed twelve minutes with a thirty-second grace period. There is no minimum time required.

Duo Interpretation (DUO):

This is a two-person event. The competitors may not touch or look at each other. In Duo Interpretation focus may be direct during the introduction and the performers may look at each other but must be indirect (off-stage) during the performance itself. Limited movement is allowed, this means no running around, jumping around the room, kneeling, etc. Imagine you are (each) in a hula-hoop. This contest will enable the students to develop skills in techniques, ensemble, and oral interpretation common to all communications. Selections used in Duo shall be cuttings from a single source from a published printed novel, short story, play, poem or screenplay. Materials may be humorous, dramatic, or a mixture of both. The selection shall be memorized and presented without the use of physical objects (script, props, hand props, or scenery) or costume. Time for presentation shall not exceed ten minutes with a thirty-second grace period. There is no minimum time required.

Dramatic Interpretation (DI):

This contest enables the student not only to develop skills common in all speech contests, but also to select and condense worthy dramatic literature suitable to the contestant's personality and maturity, and to convey orally the meaning of that dramatic literature through characterization and narration. Selections used in Dramatic shall be cuttings from a single source from published printed novels, short stories, plays, poems, or screenplays. The selection shall be memorized and presented without the use of physical objects (script, props, hand props, or scenery) or costume. Students should avoid movement in the presentation that would distract from the literature itself. Maximum time shall be ten minutes with a thirty-second grace period.

Extemporaneous (US and Foreign):

Extemporaneous speaking provides 30 minutes of preparation time, followed by a seven-minute speech. When preparation starts, speakers are offered three questions to answer. Questions are based on current affairs, and topic areas generally include international and domestic policy, economic policy, and social or scientific issues. Speakers generally speak persuasively, though some areas of the US offer informative speeches. Limited notes are allowed for novice competitors, however, if you are competing in senior or open division, notes are not allowed. Topics are based on current events from the past 3 months. The competitor will have three topic options on which to present a speech. Newspapers, magazines, and other reliable news sources may be used during preparation, but contestants may not confer with any other people.

Humorous Interpretation (HI):

This contest enables the student not only to develop skills common to all speech contests, but also to select and condense worthy humorous literature suitable to the contestant's personality and maturity, and to convey orally the humor of that literature through characterization and narration. Selections used in Humorous shall be cuttings from a single source from published printed novels, short stories, plays, poems, or screenplays. The selection shall be memorized and presented without the use of physical objects (script, props, hand props, or scenery) or costume. Students should avoid movement in the presentation that would distract from the literature itself. Maximum time shall be ten minutes with a thirty-second grace period.

Original Oratory (OO):

This is a single person competitive event in the National Speech and Debate Association, Stoa USA, National Catholic Forensic League, and other high school forensic competitions in which competitors deliver an original speech on a subject of their choosing, though the speech must be factual. Though the rules for the category change from organization to organization, generally, an Oratory must be written and memorized by the performer and should be no more than ten minutes in length. No more than 150 words can be quoted. The finished speech must be approved by the National Speech and Debate Association. This speech is frequently highly persuasive and is normally about a slightly controversial topic. An orator is given free choice of subject and judged solely on the effectiveness of development and presentation. Oratory topics are usually related to current problems in the world and are delivered in a persuasive way as to motivate the audience to make a choice. However, this may not always be the case. Some orations may alert the audience of an imminent threat or inspire them to act now to initiate change.

Poetry Reading:

The purpose of this contest is to encourage the student to understand, experience and share poetry through the art of oral interpretation. Oral interpretation, or the study of literature through its performance, can be defined as a demonstration of analysis, performance and communication skills offered publicly on behalf of literature. Oral interpretation focuses on literature in performance through expressive oral reading. The goals of this contest are to encourage the contestant's exploration of a variety of literary selections, and to enhance the performer's and audience's appreciation of literature through the performer's interpretation of the work. Contestants shall prepare selections from both approved literary categories. The literary categories are designed to encourage students to explore the wide variety of feeling and form available in poetry. The time limit for each performance including introduction and any transitional material may not exceed seven minutes (per U.I.L. rules). There is no grace period.

Prose Reading:

The purpose of this contest is to encourage the student to understand, experience and share prose works through the art of oral interpretation. Oral interpretation, or the study of literature through its performance, can be defined as a combination of analysis, performance and communication skills offered publicly on behalf of literature. Oral interpretation focuses on literature in performance through expressive oral reading. The goals of this contest are to encourage the contestant's exploration of a variety of literary selections and to enhance the performer's and audience's appreciation of literature through the performer's interpretation of the work. Contestants shall prepare selections from both approved literary categories. The literary categories are designed to encourage students to explore the wide variety of points of view and feeling available in prose. The time limit for each performance including introduction and any transitional material may not exceed seven minutes. There is no grace period.

Impromptu:

This event gives participants experience in thinking, organizing, formulating clear thoughts, and delivering those thoughts to an audience effectively. Contestants will draw three topics and have three minutes to prepare a speech, which must be presented without any notes. The maximum time limit for each speech is five minutes. There is no minimum time limit.

Active Member Status

To maintain active member status a student must:

- Be actively enrolled in a Pearland ISD school
- Maintain passing grades each grade reporting period (Report Card and Semester Grades)
- Maintain good conduct; no suspensions or ISS
- Have no more than 3 absences from practice meetings
- Contribute to team activities (cutting cards, highlighting, gathering files, research, etc.)
- Pay all dues associated with the club and/or participate in any fundraising activities.

Failure to meet any of the above requirements may result in dismissal from the team at the discretion of the Peer Review Committee and sponsor(s). Procedures for handling this are outlined later in this handbook.

Procedure for Missing a Practice

- Practices are **required** for the full school calendar to allow you to compete in tournaments.
- While it is understood that students are involved in numerous activities, it is expected that the balance will be equal. Students should always communicate with the coach(es) to inform them of these conflicts in advance.
- **Frequent missing of practices will result in tournament suspension. This is the decision of the sponsor with the input of officers & captains.**
- Sponsor and officers will be happy to help team members and parents with any issues they may have. We only ask that arrangements be made to discuss issues at a time other than practice time.

Procedure for Missing a Tournament

- All team members will be registered for our chosen tournaments (see calendar), it is the responsibility of the student to notify the coach of tournaments that they cannot attend.
- Students are expected to attend every tournament. We only attend 5-6 tournaments per year and they are spread out as much as possible. The month of January is our busiest month because we must earn enough points to qualify for state by February. If we still need points at the end of January, then we will look for additional tournaments in February for those that need points to qualify.
- The sponsor(s) needs a **minimum of three-days' notice for tournament drops**. This is because registration for tournaments is done months in advance and often there is a fee for dropped competitors.
- Should a student drop after the three-day deadline, the student may be responsible for paying any unrecoverable fees and will not be allowed to attend the next tournament until those fees are paid.

Behavior Expectations

In School

Speech & Debate is a professional experience. Team members are expected to conduct themselves with integrity always. Repeated infractions against school/classroom code of conduct, dress code, or grades may result in a dismissal from the team, at the discretion of a peer review.

Practice

Please arrive to practice on time. We have a limited amount of time to practice and we must use that timely wisely. All students are responsible for cleaning up the room at the end of practice.

Host Schools

- Rounds of a tournament are held inside the classrooms of host schools. Please do not touch anything in the classroom.
- Judges are watching and listening all the time not just during rounds. Your behavior and discussions should reflect positively on our team. Do **NOT** badmouth judges!

Tournaments

Registration

Students will be registered in advance for all scheduled tournaments. We currently plan to attend 5-6 tournaments each year (that number may fluctuate). It is the student's responsibility to notify coach of tournaments they are unable to attend.

Observations

For new members, our **first** tournament is the **only** tournament a student can register to be an "observer." This means that the student may attend the tournament with the team but is not actually going to participate in any registered events.

Procedure for Local Tournaments

Local tournaments are usually two days (Friday/Saturday). Students will arrive at DHS dressed to compete. On Saturday, students will be bused from the high school early in the morning directly to the tournament. We arrive as a team, register, and begin competition. Meals are sold at the host school (please send \$5-10 each meal). After the tournament, students will be bussed back to DHS or PHS for pick up. Students will call parents when we are 20 minutes from student pick-up location.

Dress Code

For all tournaments, students should be in professional attire. For male competitors this means suit jacket, nice dress top, dress slacks or nice khakis, and dress shoes (no tennis shoes). Boys must be clean shaven. For female competitors this means nice skirts (appropriate length and fit), dress pants and or dress, suit jacket or nice top (no halters or spaghetti straps, needs to have sleeves), appropriate shoes (no tennis shoes or flip flops) for girls.

Team Hierarchy

President

There is 1 president for the Dawson Speech and Debate Team. His/her duties are as follows:

- Attend all monthly meeting
- Attend and manage the table at Registration (2 weeks before school starts)
- Attend and manage the table at the Elective Fair (A weekday before Spring Break)
- Begin weekly meetings with agenda and notes
- Organize ballots and maintain Scorecard at competitions
- File all paperwork
- Maintain contact list of all members and parents.
- Help organize fundraiser ideas and the execution of fundraisers, this includes shirts for the club.
- Must attend all tournaments (only allowed one miss for an emergency but must notify the sponsor directly as soon as possible before the tournament they will be missing.)
- Appoint Substitute in the event you cannot make it to a meeting/tournament
- Responsible for officers' home and cell phone numbers

Vice President:

There are two vice presidents for Dawson Speech and Debate Team. One is over the speech side and the other is over the debate side. His/her duties are as follows:

- Attend all monthly meetings
- Attend and manage the table at Registration (2 weeks before school starts)
- Attend and manage the table at the Elective Fair (A weekday before Spring Break)
- Assist the President with any of the task they must perform
- Maintain open communication with team captains. It is the vice president's responsibility to make sure all members are updated on team information. The vice president reports directly to the president.
- Assist the President with organizing fundraiser ideas and the execution of fundraisers, this includes shirts for the club.
- Help make sure all postings regarding schedule of meetings, tournaments, drop dates etc. are updated as needed

President/ Vice President Eligibility

- Maintain passing grades in all classes for previous academic year (extraordinary circumstances can be addressed directly with sponsor).
- Active member for at least 2 years.
- Able to attend all debate meetings and monthly coach meetings.
- Able to attend 90% of tournaments.
- Must be responsible for all duties as outlined above, failure to maintain officer responsibilities will result in a possible removal from office.

Secretary

There is 1 secretary for Dawson Speech and Debate Team. His/her duties are as follows:

- Takes minutes and attendance at every meeting, these must be turned in no later than two days after a meeting.
- Responsible for all active team members' home and cell numbers
- Responsible for maintaining team paperwork (must make sure all forms are up-to-date)
- Responsible for maintaining contact list of community sponsors, parents and/or school staff that will help with team tournament.

Historian

There is 1 historian for the Dawson Speech and Debate Team. His/her duties are as follows:

- Take pictures at all debate events
- Keep a scrapbook for the full year (any supply money can be taken from debate fund)
- Coordinate social activities (min 1 per semester) **excluding end of year banquet
- Assist president and sponsor with organizing end of the year banquet
- Compile and distribute monthly newsletter
- Maintain and celebrate birthdays of team members every month

Historian/Secretary Eligibility

- Maintain passing grades in all classes for previous academic year (extraordinary circumstances can be addressed directly with sponsor).
- Active member for at least 1 year.
- Able to attend all debate meetings and monthly coach meetings.
- Able to attend 90% of tournaments

Captains:

There are several captain positions within the Dawson Speech and Debate Team. Duties are as follows:

- Attend 90% of the meeting
- Assist secretary with attendance at meetings
- Attend 85-90% of tournaments (100% is preferred).
- Conduct practices with club members competing in the event you captain.

Captains' Eligibility:

- Maintain passing grades in all classes for previous academic year (extraordinary circumstances can be addressed directly with coach).
- Active member for at least 1 year.
- Able to attend all debate meetings and monthly captain meetings.
- Able to attend 85-90% of tournaments

Election Procedures

- Officer candidates for the next school year, will prepare and present a speech at the end of the year, which will summarize strengths and the reasons why candidate would make a good officer are given. Speech & Debate team members (of the current year), sponsor, and 2 non-debate teachers from DHS will vote by ballot. In the event of a tie or other conflict, the sponsor and non-debate teachers will make the final decision.
- Captain candidates for the next school year, will prepare and present a speech at the end of the year (this will take place 1 week after the officer elections), which will summarize strengths and the reasons why candidate would make a good captain. The sponsor and newly elected officers will vote by group decision.
- If any candidate is running unopposed, they will still be required to give an election speech. The sponsor and voting panel will decide if the person should receive the position. The position is not automatically given to a candidate just because they are unopposed. If the sponsor(s) and voting panel decide the person is not ready for the position, the position will be re-opened or absorbed by another officer position.

Behavior Expectations

Officers are held to a higher standard of behavior than the rest of the team. Officers will be the example of proper and right behaviors in class, in the hallways, after school, in practices, on buses, at tournaments, and online. This includes language, pictures, body language, physical gestures, texts, verbal discussions, and any other form of communication that is viewable by the public. Officers are also expected to notify sponsor of behaviors of members who are not following the rules or displaying generally unacceptable behavior.

Attendance Expectations

Officers are expected to not only attend every meeting but also be EARLY for every meeting. It is difficult to run an effective meeting, if students are hanging around for 30 minutes waiting for the officers to arrive. Officers are also expected to attend at least 90% of our tournaments (may miss one tournament if needed). 100% attendance is preferred.

Peer Review Committee

The officers, with guidance from sponsor, make up the Peer Review committee for the Dawson Speech and Debate Team. Any team member suspected of violating any part of the handbook can be called into a Peer Review Meeting to decide if the student is able to remain an active member of the speech and debate team. The decision of the committee will be final.

Team Dismissal Procedures/Consequences

Members

The following are reasons for a member's active status to be revoked:

- Failing grades on at least 2 UIL Eligibility periods
- Absent from 3 consecutive meetings/practices
- Violated Debate Code of Conduct or any policy stated in this handbook
- Is written up and/or received suspension or ISS for any reason
- Disrespectful behavior towards sponsor(s) or other team members

The officers and sponsor will make up the peer review committee for the Dawson Speech and Debate Team. First offense is a warning from the sponsor. Any team member who commits a second offense will be called into a Peer Review Meeting. The Peer Review committee will decide if the student is able to remain an active member of the debate team. The decision of the committee is final.

Officers and Captains

The following are reasons for an officer's status to be revoked:

- Failing grades on 1 or more UIL Eligibility periods
- Absent from more than 1 meeting per month
- Violated Debate Code of Conduct
- Violated Officer Code of Conduct
- Received suspension or ISS for any reason
- Missed more than one tournament
- Disrespectful behavior toward sponsor or other team members
- Failure to fulfill officer/captain obligations

Should an officer or captain violate any of the rules above the sponsor will decide whether the student will continue to hold their officer/captain position. A meeting will be held to discuss the issue and allow for all participants to be heard.

The sponsor(s) reserves the right to add or remove any rules to these lists.

Parental Involvement

The Dawson Speech and Debate team relies on the support of our parents to have a successful season. It is not required for parents to participate in team activities. If parents want to be actively involved with the team there are three options listed below:

- Judging
 - Parents who can act as judges for the speech and debate rounds. There is training involved in this option and must be completed prior to judging at competitions.
- Donations
 - Parents can seek out local businesses that will support the team with financial or in-kind donations. Sponsor can provide a list of supplies and/or materials the team needs.
- Snacks/Drinks for tournaments
 - Snacks and drinks are needed to keep team members fed and hydrated at tournaments. Please contact sponsor if you would like to donate snacks or drinks for a tournament.

Fundraising

Pearland Independent School District as well as the Speech and Debate coaching staff believes that the life skills learned in Speech and Debate are immeasurable. That is why we participate for over eight months during the school year to provide as many opportunities as possible to help students learn and practice these skills. Our long season, registration fees, judging fees and traveling expenses all contribute to the money we spend each year. We could spend over \$20,000 during our season. Most costs are covered; however, students will be asked to participate in some fundraising activities during the year to help offset these costs.

We will host a TFA Speech & Debate Tournament in September. This is our large fundraiser for the year. The funds raised go toward registration fees as well as funds needed for attending regional and state competitions. This is a large event and every active member is required to participate. We would also appreciate help from parents.

Staying Informed

We use team meetings to keep team members informed. It is the student's responsibility to attend meetings and keep up to date on team events.

- Sign up for the DHS Speech & Debate Remind group
 - Text #81010 and put @gh9426a in the message
- Sponsor: Mrs. Hansen – hansena@pearlandisd.org

This manual will help provide the structure and guidelines needed to focus on what really matters - a terrific educational experience and lots of fun together as team.

Contract Agreement Student/Parent

I accept the conditions in this handbook as binding and shall honor each item contained herein, serve all disciplinary actions for violating this contract, and commit to completing the 2017-2018 debate season.

Team Member Name (Printed)

Team Member Signature

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent Volunteer Form

Parental involvement with the Dawson Speech & Debate Team helps the team to succeed. Please let us know if you would like to help in any of the following area(s):

- Judging: _____
- Donations: _____
- Snacks/Drinks: _____
- Eagle Classic Tournament: _____

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)

_____ Parent/Guardian Signature