

So you're a Debate coach!

Now what?

Welcome to the world of debate. Whether you actually debated in high school or college or you were dropped into this position by an administrator, or just because you want to do the most amazing thing you can for your students, debate has a lot to offer!

You will need to make the NSDA-- National Speech and Debate Association website (formerly called the NFL - National Forensic League) one of your favorite and most visited sites. That is where you will get up-to-date information about debate topics which drive our activity. www.speechanddebate.org

There are 4 types of debate that are part of the Illinois circuit. They include:

POLICY
LINCOLN DOUGLAS
PUBLIC FORUM
CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE

If you are just starting out, you might want to focus on just one type of debate. You can add other types later (if you decide to do that). I would suggest that you start with Public Forum debate because it is the easiest for the kids to understand, and a bonus is that they get to work with partners, which is good for them, and is good for you because you need less judges to fill your commitment at a tournament. But we'll get to that later.

The NSDA is the group that determines resolutions for each of the different types of debate. A resolution is like the thesis statement that drives a debate. The resolution is always written from the perspective of the Affirmative or the Pro side of the debate. Students must find information that supports the resolution AND that goes against the resolution because they will have to prepare cases and debate both sides of each argument.

New Lincoln Douglas and Public Forum resolutions are posted on the first of the month at 8:00 AM. For example, the LD topic that will be used for the month of November will be released on October 1 in order to give everyone an opportunity to prepare their debates.

POLICY DEBATE

There is only one Policy Debate resolution that is used during a particular school year. Students will do research that they will use for the entire year. Policy resolutions are a resolution of policy, and require a change in the status quo. The Pro side advocates for the change, while generally the negative side supports the status quo. Students work with a partner in Policy (or Cross examination) debate. Examples of some past Policy resolutions

include RESOLVED: The United States federal government should substantially reduce its restrictions on legal immigration to the United States; and RESOLVED: The United States federal government should substantially increase its funding and/or regulation of elementary and/or secondary education in the United States.

Although there are some Policy tournaments in Illinois, the majority of Policy teams do most of their competitions travelling throughout the country. Policy debaters have a rich vocabulary that is specific to their activity, including words like significance, inherency, harms, topicality, kritiks, and solvency. Policy debaters also may choose to incorporate a plan into their cases to show how they plan to solve a problem.

Policy times: The first 4 speeches are the constructive speeches; they are each 8 minutes long—followed by a 3 minute cross-examination period. The last 4 speeches are rebuttals that each last 5 minutes. Because the affirmative team has the burden of proof, the affirmative team speaks first and last.

LINCOLN DOUGLAS

Lincoln Douglas resolutions are debated for a 2 month period. LD debate is a single-debater activity, with 1 debater from a school debating 1 debater from another school. The LD topic is a resolution of value, and must have a value and criterion. According to Wiese and Lewis, a value is “the preference placed upon an action, object, idea, or person based on individual or social worth.” Values are neither right nor wrong; they are descriptions of what is preferable or ideal. Observations about the nature of values: (1) they are preferences for how the world ought to be, (2) context influences our value systems, (3) values are universal, and (4) individuals act upon their values. When choosing criterion, you should ask yourself this question: Why is the value good? The topic for the novices in the month of October is: Resolved: Civil disobedience in a democracy is morally justified. There is a different JV/Varsity topic for September/October; after October, novices will debate the same topic as the varsity and junior varsity. These topics change every 2 months.

Examples of other LD debate topics--RESOLVED: The United States ought to provide a universal basic income; and RESOLVES: Wealthy nations have an obligation to provide development assistance to other nations.

LD times:

Speech:	Affirmative Constructive	Cross-ex of aff by neg	Negative Constructive	Cross-ex of neg by aff	Affirmative Rebuttal	Negative Rebuttal	Affirmative Rejoinder
Time:	6	3	7	3	4	6	3

NOTES ABOUT NOVICE/JUNIOR VARSITY/VARSITY: These divisions are used in all types of debate and are important for competition. The first year a student debates, he/she is in the “novice” category. A coach can move a student up into JV or varsity competition at any time. Even if a student only goes to a single tournament in (for example) his/her freshman year, the next year the student must move up into the next category of debate. The second year of debate, a student will be considered a junior varsity competitor, and cannot debate in the

novice category, although at the coach's discretion, a coach can move a JV debater into the varsity division for any tournament. The third and fourth years of debate, a student MUST compete in the varsity division.

The good thing is that, with these divisions, brand new debaters should only be facing brand new debaters. Occasionally, a tournament will have an "open" division, which combines debaters. There may be a novice and an open division at a tournament (the "open" division combines JV and varsity), or there may just be an open division at a tournament, which combines novice, JV, and varsity. In Illinois debate, we try to always keep the novice debaters in a separate division.

PUBLIC FORUM

PF is the newest type of debate, and has quickly become the most accessible and popular style of debate. Topics are developed for only one month (except for the September/October topic). New PF resolutions are posted on the first of the month. The PF topic is actually voted on each month by coaches and students who are a part of the NSDA (you do not have to be a member of NSDA in order to get past and present topics from the website).

The PF topic is a resolution of fact. It is the newest form of debate and seems to still be undergoing some growing pains. This is the type of debate that you might want to consider when starting a new team, and as a bonus, it is also very "classroom friendly." The topic changes every month. Although the NSDA has stated that anyone should be able to judge a PF round, judges still need to have some training in order to understand the rules of this particular type of debate and to understand the topic which must be presented in only 4 minutes. There is a coin toss at the beginning of every round to determine who will speak first and which team will cover which side.

Examples of previous PF resolutions RESOLVED: The United States should require universal background checks for all gun sales and transfers of ownership; RESOLVED: The United States ought to replace the Electoral College with a direct national popular vote; RESOLVED: On balance, the benefits of genetically modified foods outweigh the harms.

PF times: (this is an example if the pro side won the coin toss)

1PC	1CC	XF	2PC	2CC	XF	1PR	1CR	GXF	2PR	2CR
4	4	3	4	4	3	2	2	3	1	1

CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE

Congressional debate is modeled after a session of Congress. Students submit original bills and resolutions to the tournament director who then puts together packets of bills and resolutions that will be debated at the tournament. Students are placed in a room of 15-25 students who put together a docket and debate legislation. Prior to the tournament, schools gather research to support and attack each piece of legislation. Awards are usually given for best legislation, best parliamentarian, and for best speakers.

In Illinois, there are 2 places to do Congressional Debate. The first is the ICDA--the Illinois Congressional Debate Association. This is the largest and most powerful Congress group in

the nation! In order to participate in ICDA, your school must join the league and have your judges all trained and certified to judge by the league. A list of their tournaments can be found through the IHSA website. You do not have to be a member of ICDA to participate in the IHSA State Championship in March.

The second place to participate in Congress in Illinois is through the CCFL (Chicago Catholic Forensic League--and no, you do not have to be Catholic to participate). Your school must join the CCFL/NCFL and can then participate in the qualifying tournaments. CCFL qualifies the top 5 students/teams in each type of debate through qualifying tournaments to represent the State of Illinois at the National Tournament over Memorial Day weekend. Each year the tournament is held in a different location.

GENERAL INFORMATION

To find out about tournaments in Illinois, check the IHSA website. They try to keep a link with postings of tournaments for the year. There is also a list that has information about coaches including their email information and phone numbers. Make sure to get your name on that list. Schools who are hosting tournaments use that list to send out invitations about a month before a tournament. If for some reason you do not get an invitation to a tournament that you are interested in attending, feel free to contact the coach. Tournaments are open to everyone. We work with some of the most amazing people in the business of education, and every coach is willing to work with you and with your kids.

TRAINING

You may throw your kids into a tournament, or you may want to take some students to watch a tournament first. If at all possible, try to attend a training session. Usually there is a training session at a school in Illinois in September to get students (and coaches and administrators, and judges) started in debate. Bring as many people as possible to the training. If possible, let them watch a round of Public Forum or Lincoln Douglas debate on youtube before they go to the training. The IHSA website has some links to past final round debates from Illinois. You might want to give your kids the September/October resolution and have them do some preliminary research so they understand the basic topic. The training should explain the general principles of debate; teach flowing; show an example debate; talk about the October topic; and give students an opportunity to debate and judges an opportunity to judge.

TABROOM.COM

So once you get an invitation to a tournament, and you decide to sign up some students, you will have to register for that tournament. If at any time, you have questions, make sure to contact the tournament director. He/she will be patient and kind and happy to help you.

Some tournaments ask that you contact a coach by email with names of students who will compete at the tournament. Make sure to contact the coach directly with that information. Many of the tournaments use a program called **TABROOM.COM** to manage and run the tournament. You will have to access that site and set up your school account. You will complete your registration on that account. Each student and each judge will also have to set up an account to gain access to the tournament. Students will be able to get their

schedules for rounds through Taroom, and judges will get their assignments and enter ballots through that account.

Try to get your registration done as early as possible. Some tournaments limit the number of students who can attend, so you want to make sure you get all of your students registered for the tournament. There will be a date that the registration closes. Make sure to have all of your names (including judges) listed by then. Many tournaments also put pizza orders on the Tabroom account for lunch. After you figure out the number of students you are bringing to a tournament, order pizza for your group (of course students can bring their own bag lunches, if they want). Don't forget to order a check for your registration costs and for your pizza orders and try to make sure you have those before you leave for the tournament. Contact the coach if your check will not be ready before the tournament.

Here is a list of some other things that you will need to do for a tournament: get permission slips for the students; arrange for judges; send home a letter to parents with information about the tournament; order your checks; arrange transportation.

TOURNAMENT DAY

Students dress up for tournaments. Think of this as a trial run for the best job interview ever. Suits for JV and varsity debaters are preferred. Encourage all students to wear dress slacks or skirts/dresses. There is a lot of walking at tournaments, so find appropriate shoes. Boys should wear ties and socks (dark socks that go past the ankle). Students should be encouraged to eat breakfast before a tournament and maybe even bring snacks with them for the ride. They can have water in their rounds (water is usually sold at tournaments too). Debate tournaments require lots of good nutrition, just like sporting events. Students will be debating at least 4 rounds of debate at each tournament, so we want to make sure they don't run out of steam. Don't forget to bring cases and evidence binders. Students will time their own speeches and can use their phones (on airplane mode) as timers in rounds--try the app Debate Mobile or Ridge Debate for PF (judges should also have timers for all tournaments). Students also need flow pads and pens (never flow in pencil!).

The ride home--Coaches, you will never be home at exactly the tentative time that you gave to parents on your information sheet--you need to let them know that it is only a tentative time. We never know how long tournaments will last. Make sure you have your students call their parents when you leave the tournament and tell them what time you expect to be home. You might want to tell them to be waiting at the parking lot 5-10 minutes before the bus gets there. There is always some ride that doesn't show up and keeps you waiting long after the bus leaves.

JUDGING

Usually for every 2 teams (or fraction of that) in any event that you bring to a tournament, you will need to provide one judge. For example, if you have 1 or 2 PF teams going to a tournament, you will need 1 judge. If you have 3 or 4 PF teams going to a tournament, you will need 2 judges. If you have 2 PF teams and 5 LD teams going to a tournament, you will need 1 PF judge and 3 LD judges. Please do not bring judges to tournaments who are not qualified. Make sure they have seen some rounds of debate and have practiced flowing and writing

out ballots. First of all, as a coach, you should be judging debate rounds if you don't have any other judges. Most coaches use ex-debaters as judges. We also hire school staff and sometimes use parents to judge. If you are uncertain about your judging commitments or if your judges are qualified, please contact the tournament director. Judges will need to bring a computer or iPhone and a timer with them. They may also need pens and flow paper. Please make sure that judges have access to resolutions before the tournament. If you are bringing a judge to a tournament for the first time, please contact the tournament director to see if the judge can watch a round of debate with a seasoned judge before he/she judges. New judges will be placed in Junior Varsity debate rounds.

If a tournament is using TABROOM, judges must be signed up on the site and must have access to a device that is connected to the internet, and they should have some familiarity with the site.

Be aware that judges who will be judging at the IHSA State Championship in March **MUST** be qualified to judge. That means they must have judged at least 10 varsity rounds of a particular style of debate or have participated in a particular style of debate before IHSA. Don't get caught with unqualified judges in March!

MARCH MADNESS

Really, everything we do in Illinois from September through February is just practice for the IDC and IHSA tournaments in March. These are our State Championship tournaments. As a warm-up, some districts may host Conference tournaments, and the NSDA hosts a National Qualifier, usually on the first Saturday in March (if you are a member of NSDA and are planning to attend the National Tournament in June).

The Illinois Debate Community (IDC) State Championship tournament is held the 2nd weekend in March, and is the State Championship for Novice and JV PF, LD, and Congress debaters. This two-day tournament is held at a different school each year and allows Varsity debaters to judge in the Novice division and has special awards for top judges. Think about hosting this tournament at your school.

The IHSA State Championship is held usually on the third weekend in March. It is the State Championship for Policy, Congress, Lincoln-Douglas, and Public Forum debates. In the past the tournament has been hosted by University of Illinois in Springfield, and at Wesleyan University. Currently it is held in Bloomington at Illinois State University. Check the IHSA website for information. You need to make sure your Athletic Director or Assistant Principal has listed debate as preference on the IHSA website. Congress bills will be assigned to schools that are signed up for the tournament on December 1, and must be submitted no later than January 30.

You will need to make hotel reservations for the tournament. Registration for the tournament is done on line no later than February 28, and coaches must then register in person on Thursday night before the tournament. The tournament runs all day Friday and Saturday. Be prepared to get home late on Saturday night. Even if your team does not break to the outbounds (octas, quarters, semis, or finals), this is a great opportunity for you and your students to learn from the best and watch some outstanding debate rounds.

GO OUT AND MAKE IT HAPPEN!

So what should you do first? Well, contact a coach who is active on the circuit and ask about a million questions about debate. Even if you debated in high school or college, you will need somebody (or maybe lots of somebodies) to talk to. Then talk to some students who are interested in debate. Get a core of students who want to make this team work. Watch some videos about debate and choose a style to focus on. Get to a training. And then sign up for a tournament. At the beginning of the year, all novices are in the same boat. None of them know what they are doing and they are all lacking confidence. Remind them that if they choose not to go to the first 2 tournaments, by the time they get to that 3rd tournament, some novices will have 8 rounds or better under their belt--so get out to tournaments as early as possible. It's all just practice.

Start with the resolution and make a pro/con list. What are the arguments that support the resolution (pro/affirmative); what are the arguments that attack the resolution (con/negative)? You might want to order some evidence from one of the companies that sell packages every month, but **DO NOT LET YOUR STUDENTS RELY SOLELY ON OUTSIDE EVIDENCE**. They have to do their own research! The more work they put into debate, the more successful they will be. People tend to see the connection between practice and sports, but don't make the same association between practice/work and debate. Do speaking drills to build up your facial muscles. Make sure that both pro/affirmative and con/negative cases are written at least a week before each tournament. And you have to practice your cases and arguments before each tournament. Encourage your students to rewrite cases when resolutions are being used for back-to-back tournaments.

Acronyms in debate:

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| IHSA | Illinois High School Association. They are the backbone of the state and host the Varsity State tournament in March. |
| IDC | The Illinois Debate Community. They host the State Novice/JV PF and LD Championship the weekend before IHSA |
| ICDA | This group primarily focuses on Congress. They host a training session at the beginning of every year for students and coaches. You must belong to ICDA in order to participate. |
| CCFL | Chicago Catholic Forensic League. This group participates at the NCFL Grand National tournament in May. You must qualify to participate. |
| NCFL | National Catholic Forensic League. You don't have to be Catholic in order to debate in this league |
| NSDA | The NSDA hosts a national tournament in June. You must qualify at a Chapter Tournament. Formerly known as the NFL: National Forensic League. NSDA determines resolutions for high school debate around the world. |

TOC There is a national Tournament of Champions in Kentucky in May. You must receive 2 bids in order to participate.

THE The largest national high school tournament is held the weekend before
Glenbrooks Thanksgiving at Glenbrook North and South High Schools. Contact them for information. You must register early to attend this tournament.

Attachments:

- Letter to administration
- Sample of tournament information letter for parents

Dear Administrator:

What is the single activity that you can easily add to your co-curriculars that will raise your ACT, SAT, and AP scores? Debate is the only activity/class that addresses all aspect of Common Core standards: speaking, listening, reading, writing, and language.

THE BENEFITS OF DEBATE

Critical thinking skills

Increased problem-solving and analytical abilities

Research skills

Critical listening skills

Thinking quickly under pressure

Confidence under pressure

Presenting compelling responses to difficult questions

Mental and emotional maturity

Public speaking poise

Leadership skills

According to Minh A. Luong, Professor at Yale University, “top [college] students are most often former high school debaters who actively participate in class discussions and articulate persuasive arguments both in class and on written assignments.” In addition, Luong explains that the skills students learn in debate have a long-lasting impact. “It is no surprise that many [debaters] are entering their senior year of college with multiple employment offers already in hand and quite a few of them already own their own companies.”

The Illinois Debate Coaches would like to encourage your school to start a debate program to offer these opportunities to your students through Public Forum debate: a style that embraces a new controversial/pertinent topic each month. English and Social Studies AP teachers agree that debate students are the most successful students in their classes because of their participation in debate. All you need to get a team started is an enthusiastic sponsor and a handful of interested students. Past debate topics include: the electoral college, military spending, Internet of Things, searches of students, military presence in Okinawa, the threat Russia poses to Western interests, standardized testing, first amendment protection, free tuition, economic globalization, and domestic surveillance by the NSA. Students have to research and write cases to support and disprove each topic.

Debate programs are transformational experiences for students. Debate creates leaders. Debate teaches real-world skills, like critical thinking, oral and written communication, and the ability to organize ideas and present them to support a claim. Make debate a part of your school. It’s easier than you think!



Carl Sandburg Eagle Debate

TOURNAMENT	Evanston High School CCFL Qualifier *All competition is in the OPEN Division
DATE	4 February 2017
EVENTS	Public Forum, Lincoln Douglas
HOTEL	None
TRANSPORTATION	Debaters will leave CS high school at 6:30 AM on Saturday morning. Tentative return time 3:30 PM Please pick up student on time! You have my personal gratitude!
COST/MEALS/MONEY	Bring \$5 for pizza at the tournament (plus anything else you want to buy) We will NOT be stopping on the way home.
SCHEDULE	Tentative Schedule 7:15 Registration 8:30 Round I 9:45 Round II 11:00 Round III 12:00-12:30 Lunch 12:30 Round IV 1:45 Awards
COACH NOTES	Text Yaseen and Mrs. McGraw in the morning if you have transportation problems
NOTES	Make sure to have the following: Both cases printed Evidence printed Flow paper Pens Post-its Timers Binders

