

Competitive Debate/ Debate Team

2021-2022

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Overview

Important debates occur every day in all walks of life. Scientists and politicians, for example, debate solutions to our most serious problems. There is no doubt that good debates help us to better understand issues and to arrive at well-reasoned decisions.

High school debates have set formats to create a fair and challenging contest for both sides. Debates are centered on a resolution (a controversial statement). Resolutions are about a variety of topics.

In every debate the affirmative side speaks in favor of the resolution and the negative side speaks against it. A debate takes about an hour and consists of a series of speeches for and against the resolution. There is also cross-examination.

Each debate has a judge who listens carefully to the arguments presented and chooses a winner. Most debate competitions take place at tournaments held from October-March. Many schools attend each tournament. The debaters who compile the best won-lost record are usually recognized and awarded trophies.

If you'd like to get more specific information please visit the National Speech and Debate Association's website at: <https://www.speechanddebate.org/> or email Ms. Kirk at **misty.kirk@washk12.org**

Expectations

- **Competition is required**
- We compete in the following UHSAA debate events: Lincoln Douglas, Student Congress, Public Forum, and Policy
- We compete in the following UHSA individual events: impromptu, foreign and national extemporaneous speaking, oratory, duo interpretation, and humorous & dramatic interpretation
- Competing in the national tournaments is optional, but recommended (national qualifiers are held throughout the state during the debate season)
- The competition season lasts from October to March
- Most tournaments are two days in duration: Friday afternoon/evening & Saturday morning/afternoon. One day is reserved for the debates and one day for the individual events
- In general, we compete in about one local tournament a month during the competition season
- Debaters are required to compete in at least 4 of the 6 local tournaments & are required to compete in & help with the Snow Canyon Tournament (usually held at the end of January)
 - Local schools include (as of the 2020-21 school year): Hurricane, Dixie, Beaver, Crimson Cliffs, Desert Hills, Cedar, and Snow Canyon
- Debaters are also required to compete at the region tournament (usually held at the end of February) & the state tournament, ***if they qualify*** (held in mid March)
- Out of town tournaments (up north) are optional and will not count against the class grade
- Class time is used for preparation and practice, thus after school practices are rare
- Class grade is based on competition attendance, daily participation, & case work/ speech work

Why Take Debate?

Debate offers a wide range of benefits and appeals to many students. The best way to know if you'll like it is to try it. Here are some benefits that current and former debaters often mention:

- **Build Friendships**—Debate is a great chance to meet people with common interests.
- **Develop Self-Confidence**—As debaters learn to defend their arguments and to persuade the audience, their confidence soars.
- **Public Speaking**—Public speaking is both highly feared by many people and highly valued by employers. Debate helps students to become comfortable and effective public speakers.
- **Research Skills**—Do you ever get frustrated and confused with a research assignment? You'll learn to master the research process in debate.
- **Note-taking & Listening Skills**—Former debaters have a big advantage in college because they can quickly identify and record key information from lectures.
- **Teamwork**—Being part of a team is not only a life skill, but is also rewarding by itself.
- **Fun**—The bottom line for most members of the debate team is that it's fun. When you win your first debate, you'll understand why!