



The Christian School Speech & Debate League

A Ministry of the Institute for Principle Studies

Tournaments are the most important part of any forensics league. The interscholastic competition helps students to develop and sharpen their skills, much faster than they would in a classroom. Plus, tournaments are just plain fun.

There are many benefits to hosting your own tournament. But there are a few steps involved, too. We hope this list will help you more than adequately prepare for your own tournament, and make it an enjoyable experience!

Initial Considerations

Choose a Location (Typically your school or church campus)

You will need...

General meeting place for announcements and awards (large room/gym/auditorium)

Multiple smaller rooms (classrooms, etc) for rounds

Plenty of available parking

Food options near campus (preferred, but not necessary)

Choose a Date

Friday or Saturday, or both for a two-day tournament

Limit conflicts (try avoiding SAT/ACT dates, or events that may happen on your campus (dances, sports, etc)).

Choose a "Tournament Director"

This will be the person officially in charge, who will make the final decisions.

Schedule

Create schedule for the day (see Suggested Tournament Schedules)

Determine number of teams/students the facilities can accommodate

Debate: # of classrooms available x two = # of teams

Speech: # of classrooms per event x six = # students

Registration

Send tournament information to LFA coordinator, schools, and possible

participants **Each school must send in competitor's names** (with their partner

for debate) **Require each team(debate)/student(speech) to bring one judge**

Judges

Judge Orientation (requires 1 person)

Training new judges to use the ballot for speech or debate.

Judges Room

You will need one room set aside for judges to fill out ballots.

Judge Hospitality

Consider having drinks/snacks for your judges.

Extra Judges

Invite more teachers, parents, or volunteers from your community to come judge on the tournament day. You can never have too many judges!

Awards Ceremony

Requires 1 person (to announce and hand out trophies)

Trophies / Awards

You can do something as simple as certificates, or you can go with something a little bigger, or you can get creative and make your own! Typically, top 3 receive awards, but if you want to do more, or less, that's up to you.

Pre-Tournament Preparation

Print Ballots. You will want plenty of speech/debate ballots ready. Enough for each room, each round.

Print Timer sheets. Each room should have timing sheets, enough for each round.

One timepiece to each room. This can be a stopwatch, or a kitchen timer.

Signs for rooms/buildings (if necessary)

Bathroom access

Maps of campus and/or food nearby (for lunch/dinner breaks)

Opening rooms, set up, and take down. You'll want to designate someone to be in charge of unlocking rooms, and setting them up in proper debate format, with a podium/music stand.

Snacks / Drinks for participants (optional)

Tabulation/ Score-keeping

Requires 2-4 people. You will want help doubling checking scores, copying ballots, and posting.

Requires 1 separate room. A room where competitors are not allowed.

Access to copier to make copies of ballots for the students to take home.

Access to printer (connected to tab computer)

Extra reams of legal paper (for ballot copies)

Extra reams of letter paper (for ballot copies)

Pens, pencils, stapler, tape, scissors

Manila envelopes (optional: to organize ballots by team/student)

Tournament Day

Registration (requires 1 person). Someone to check teams in, and make sure everyone has arrived.

Orientation. Opening remarks, prayer, and necessary information about the tournament.

Judge Orientation for adults who are new to judging and need to learn the basics.

Postings. A place to put up the schedule and postings before each round.

Ballot hand-out (how will the judges get ballots?)

Ballot check (who will the judges give ballots back to?)

Tab check and power-matching (optional).

Copying ballots

Printing cumes

Award ceremony

Copies to debaters