The Cary High School Speech and Debate Team

Policy Manual, Updated 7/11/19

**Article I. Name:** The name of this organization shall be the Cary High School Speech and Debate Team.

**Article II.** **Mission:** The mission of the Cary High School Speech and Debate

Team is to provide a richly rewarding extra-curricular experience, academically and socially, for students interested in advancing their skills in public speaking and debate.

**Article III. Purpose:** The purpose of the team is to train students to compete in interscholastic high school speech and debate tournaments that take place on a variety of weekends (mostly on Saturdays) throughout the school year at various high schools (and sometimes universities) throughout North Carolina (and sometimes surrounding states).

**Article IV. Eligibility:** All students currently enrolled at Cary High School are eligible to join. Three levels of membership exist—prospective, novice, and varsity. Practices (except for late in the season) are open to all prospective members. No tryouts or auditions are required. Criteria for becoming a full-fledged member (novice and varsity are both considered full-fledged) are detailed in Article X.

**Article V. Affiliations:** To compete at the state and national levels, the Cary High School Speech and Debate Team will join and pay dues to (via the Booster Club) the National Speech and Debate Association (speechanddebate.org), the Tarheel Forensics League (ncspeechanddebate.org), the Dogwood Speech and Debate League (dogwoodspeechanddebate.weebly.com) and the National Catholic Forensic League (ncfl.org). Students become full-fledged members on the team through points they earn through the National Speech and Debate Association (hereafter referred to as the NSDA).

**Article VI. The Competitive Season**

6.1 Length and Duration

6.1.1 The regular season: The regular season begins in September

and runs through March or April, depending on the calendar

established by the Dogwood Speech and Debate League and

the Tarheel Forensics League (see the websites listed in

Article V).

6.1.2 Post-season competition: Post-season competition at the

national level occurs in May and June.

6.2 Tournaments as Field Trips

6.2.1 Approval: All tournaments are considered school field trips

and must be approved by the school’s field trip committee

and county-level administration. At least one member of the

coaching staff must accompany students to a tournament in

order for it to be approved as an official school trip.

6.2.2 Determination of Dates: At the beginning of each school year,

the coaching staff will determine from the comprehensive

schedule of available tournaments listed at

ncspeechanddebate.org which tournaments the Cary High

team will attend, contingent upon approval.

6.2.3 Exceptions: Students from the team who wish to attend

additional tournaments may enter as independent entries, if

allowed by the tournament hosts, as long as the principal

approves this arrangement (which may not be granted

wholesale but on an individual, case-by-case basis, releasing

the school system from liability). In this case, students and

their parents will be responsible for all costs, arrangements,

and details concerning these trip(s), as neither the coaching

staff, the school, nor the Booster Club can be liable.

**Article VII. Competitive Events:** The Cary High Speech and Debate Team conducts training and holds practices for the following events: Lincoln-Douglas debate, public forum debate, informational speaking, original oratory, dramatic interpretation, duo interpretation, humorous interpretation, oral interpretation of prose and poetry, program of oral interpretation, and student Congress.

**Article VIII. Practices:** Practices will be held one or two times weekly, depending on the event (practices will be held two times weekly for all events during the training month of September). Students are encouraged to attend as many practices for their respective events as they can. All team members, including prospective members, must practice at least one time in front of a coach before they will be allowed to attend a tournament.

**Article IX.** **Communication**: The primary means of communication between coaching staff, team members, and parents of team members will occur via email and/or Remind101. As the season is packed with practices and tournaments, strong efforts will be made to limit school-wide communications, with several notable exceptions. School-wide announcements will be made for recruitment efforts early in the season and whenever team members place at tournaments.

**Article X. Membership**

10.1 **Full Membership:** Prospective members become full-fledged

members and officially join the team when they earn at least 25

points in the NSDA, which requires competing at one or two

tournaments, depending on their win-loss record at these

tournaments (for a full explanation of how points may be earned,

please visit

<http://kickapoospeechdebate.weebly.com/nsda-points.html>).

10.2 **Dues:** Dues for the 2019-20 season are $35 per student and will be

collected with the tournament fees for the first tournament the

student attends.

10.3 **Judge Bond:** In addition to the team dues, each student will post a

$100 bond for parent involvement during the season. The bond will

be posted with the tournament fee for the first tournament each

individual student attends and will be returned at the end of the

season if an eligible family member judges or chaperones at least

three tournaments during the season.

10.4. **NSDA Dues:** The NSDA charges a one-time fee of $20 to each

student who becomes a full-fledged member. For students who earn

this membership, their team dues will cover this charge, which will

be paid by the treasurer to the NSDA.

10.5 **Novice and Varsity Divisions:** At tournaments, students are

considered novices during their first season and varsity members

afterwards. At most tournaments, novices do not compete against

varsity members, at least in debate events. Novices who wish to

register as varsity competitors may do so, with the head coach’s

permission.

10.6 **JV Designation:** Some tournament hosts allow second-year

competitors to be considered junior varsity competitors, who have

the opportunity to compete against each other and not against other

varsity competitors (in their third or fourth year of competition) or

against novice competitors. JV is a rare designation for specific

tournaments only. Most second-year competitors are considered

varsity level at most tournaments for most of the season.

10.7 **Coach Discretion:** If prospective members choose to not attend

tournaments but simply want to attend practice, coaches may

dismiss them from the team if their participation proves distracting

to full-fledged members. Coaches may also prohibit students from

participating in practices and/or tournaments for academic and/or

behavioral concerns, in which cases parents will also be notified.

10.8 **Honor Cords:** Honor cords will be presented to seniors in April or

May of their final season who have been full-fledged members for

longer than one season, who have been active members (attending a

minimum of four tournaments during the season of their senior year;

exemptions can be granted via discretion of the head coach), and

who have maintained an exemplary record of behavior at school and

at tournaments.

**Article XI. Field Trip Forms, Tournament Registration, and Fees**

11.1 **Medical Forms:** Before students may attend any tournaments for the

season, parents must sign a medical disclosure and permission to

treat form. This form looks like a field trip permission form

encompassing all of our field trips but does not replace the necessity

of individual field trip forms for tournaments.

11.2 **Field Trip Forms**

11.2.1 Availability: Field trip forms for any particular tournament

will be available for pickup from the head coach after school

on the Monday two weeks before the tournament. Students

attending their first tournament of the season must also sign

and have their parents sign a contract for behavioral

expectations (see Article XII for more information on these

expectations).

11.2.2 Due Dates: Forms are due back no later than Friday the

week before the tournament by 2:30 p.m. Meeting this

deadline is a tremendous help for planning purposes.

Students who are absent and cannot meet this deadline may

turn in their forms by the Monday before the tournament by

3:30 p.m. Anyone who does not turn in the permission form

by this final deadline will not be able to compete in the

tournament.

11.3 **Tournament Registration**

11.3.1 Coach Responsibility: Tournament registration will be

completed on-line by the head coach or by the coach

attending the tournament.

11.3.2 Student Responsibility: Students who intend to compete

should inform the registering coach, which may be done

several ways. Picking up a permission form as explained in

11.2.1 is the standard procedure. As slots can fill up early for

really popular tournaments, students may inform the head

coach via email as soon as they know they want to go, even

before field trip forms are available. Slots will be filled by

the discretion of the head coach based upon the two

competing factors of seniority and the order of the request.

11.3.3 Registering for Overnight Stays: Team members who want

to attend a tournament involving an overnight stay must

have attended at least one one-day tournament and

demonstrated exemplary behavior. Coaches can grant

exceptions to this rule if they are well-acquainted with the

students from class or from other extra-curricular activities.

11.4 **Student Fees and Other Student Responsibilities regarding**

**Deadlines and Drops**

11.4.1 Regular Season Tournaments

11.4.1.1 Student Responsibility: Students are responsible to

pay for their participation at regular season

tournaments.  The cost typically ranges from $15 to

$20 for one-day tournaments and between $50 and

$200 dollars for two-day tournaments (depending on

whether a hotel stay is required by the distance and

how many students can share a room).  The cost for

hotel rooms also factors in the chaperones’ rooms, as

adults will stay in rooms for free (students will stay

up to four to a room, chaperones up to two to a

room).

11.4.1.2 Financial Aid: Any student may ask for financial

assistance, which may be granted per discretion of

the head coach, who will then inform the booster

club treasurer of the decision.

11.4.1.3 Deadlines: All payments will need to be made in

person by cash, check, or money order (delivered to

the treasurer or the head coach and made out to the

Cary High Speech and Debate Booster Club or

CHSDBC) by 2:30 p.m. on the Friday of the week

before the tournament. Meeting this deadline is a

tremendous help for planning purposes.

Students who are absent and cannot meet this

deadline may turn in their payment by the Monday

before the tournament by 3:30 p.m. Anyone who

does not pay by this final deadline will not be able to

compete in the tournament.

11.4.1.4 Penalties: Any student who does not pay by the

deadline (with the exception of any student who has

requested financial aid as stipulated in the letter b.

above) will be dropped from the tournament

registration and will not be allowed to attend.  In the

case that the student is part of a duo or public forum

team, both members of the team will be dropped

and a refund will be issued to the student who has

already paid.

11.4.1.5 Dropping after the Deadline: Students may receive

a refund if they drop from the tournament up to

5:00 p.m. on the Monday of the week of the

tournament, as long as they inform the registering

coach in person or by email.  If they drop after the

Monday deadline, they will not receive a refund, as

the school will be charged the drop fee from the

hosting school.

11.4.1.6 Drops due to Judge Quotas: Student attendance at

tournaments is contingent upon parental

volunteerism for chaperoning, driving, and judging

according to judge quotas established by the schools

hosting the tournaments.  If not enough parent

volunteers can attend to meet the quotas, students

registered for the events most directly affected will

be dropped and reimbursed any fees.  In the

circumstance that some students are still eligible to

attend in a certain event but a few need to be

dropped, drops will be determined per the

discretion of the head coach based upon NSDA

points, seniority, attendance and participation at

practice**,** and parent volunteerism.  All students

affected will be contacted either in person or via

email.

11.4.1.7 Special Provisions: Any deadline can be changed by

the head coach, as long as it is announced via email

in advance. Changes may be required depending

on the deadlines set by tournament hosts.

11.4.2 Post-season Tournaments: The Booster Club will pay for as

much of the students’ travel expenses and tournament fees

as funds will allow, based upon the guidelines laid out in

Section 4.14 of the Booster Club Policy Manual (other

provisions concerning parental supervision and

expenses can be found in this same passage).

**Article XII. Behavior at Tournaments**

12.1 **Wake County Provisions:** All Wake County Schools rules apply at

tournaments. Students who violate these rules may be subject to

disciplinary action when they return to the school and may be

excluded from the next tournament they want to attend and/or

dismissed from the team (per the discretion of the head coach in

consultation with the principal).

12.2 **Team Provisions:** Team provisions are listed and described on the

student contract, which all team members must sign and get their

parents to sign before they attend their first tournament. The

contracts will be kept on file for the entirety of each season that a

student belongs to the team as a member. Any student who violates

the contract could receive a range of consequences, depending on

the severity of the violation—from a warning, to a parent contact, to

early parent pickup from the tournament, to dismissal from the next

tournament the student wants to attend, to dismissal from the team.

**Article XIII. Leadership**

13.1 **Adult:** Adult leadership on the team is comprised of the coaching

staff, including the head coach and the assistant coaches, parent

chaperones, and other faculty members and parents present at

tournaments. All adults should be honored and respected. In the

case any problem arises of any kind at a tournament, the coach who is

attending should be informed. If a school rule has been violated, the

coach must report the violation to an administrator upon return to

campus during normal school hours.

13.2 **Student**

13.2.1 Mission: The focus of the organizational structure is to

maintain as much of an egalitarian atmosphere as possible,

so that all team members feel encouraged to make

contributions to the larger organization, at the same time

that leadership skills are cultivated among the most

dedicated and advanced team participants.

13.2.2 Qualifications: “Official” leadership positions are open to

varsity members who would like to plan and lead practices,

under the advisement of the head coach. Students who want

to be considered for leadership positions must express their

desire to do so to the head coach, must attend occasionally

scheduled planning meetings, must help to plan practices,

must run practices, and must attend to these commitments

in a highly consistent fashion.

13.2.3 Event Captains: Students who commit to these leadership

positions (detailed in 13.2.2) will be considered

captains/co-captains of their events.

13.2.3.1 Abdication: In the case that event captains feel as

though they can no longer fulfill their duties, they

need only inform the head coach. These individuals

will still be considered highly important members of

the team, and their abdication will in no way affect

their estimation, especially among the adults on the

team who might write letters of recommendation.

The only action that could negatively affect their

image is if they are derelict in their duties and fail to

communicate directly with their faculty superiors as

to why. Whenever an event lacks a student captain,

the supervising coach will plan and run practice.

13.2.3.2 Recruitment for Event Captains: Non-senior varsity

members will be advised towards the end of a

season as to the leadership opportunities available

to them during the next season. The head coach will

solidify the positions by gaining student

commitments at the beginning of the next season.

**Article XIV. Authority to Amend**

14.1 **Head Coach:** The head coach retains the authority to amend this

policy manual in response to the changing needs of the Cary High

School Speech and Debate Team and the larger speech and debate

community to which it belongs.

14.2 **Consultation:** The head coach may consult with the coaching staff,

coaches from other teams, team members, and/or parents before any

amendment is made.

14.3 **Communication:** Whenever this policy manual is amended, the

head coach will post a link to the revised constitution on the team’s

website. Other constituents may propose amendments, subject to

approval and action by the head coach.

14.4 **Accountability:** All amendments are subject to oversight from

the principal, to verify they are in line with Wake County School

Board Policy.

14.5 **Limitations:** This article only applies to the team policy manual, not

the Booster Club By-Laws or Policy Manual, which abide by a

different set of provisions.