



**REPUBLIC
SCHOOL DISTRICT**

Speech and Debate Handbook

for Students and Parents

2017-2018

Republic Tigers,

I am writing this letter to encourage you to consider participation in the Speech and Debate program at Republic High School in the 2017-2018 academic year. Participation on the speech and debate team is one of the most valuable activities available to students today. Involvement profoundly changed the direction of my life and countless experiences that I have seen, or have been related to me suggest that the chain of causality is strong: speech and debate produces individuals prepared to be successful in a way that little else can. It has several benefits:

- **Educational benefits**, including in college admissions: Debate teaches public speaking skills, organization, research, critical thinking, note-taking, writing, and so much more. Speech and debate builds your academic resume in a way that distinguishes you from other candidates in a college admissions process, regardless of a student's chosen major field: it demonstrates a commitment to academic pursuits, increases the attractiveness of a student for institutions that field competitive debate and/or speech teams, and may allow a student to earn scholarships that are reserved for those programs. Several studies have suggested that the effect of debate participation is not matched by other comparable activities in the benefits a student can gain in the college admission process, especially at elite institutions. Studies have shown that Harvard rejects 50% of applicants with perfect SAT scores, and 80% of valedictorians. Studies also show that 10% of admitted students were high school debaters. In other words, skills students gained from participation in speech and debate have been seen to make a difference in selective college admissions.
- **Social benefits**: The speech and debate team at Republic competes locally, regionally, and nationally. Students can create peer networks and friendships at Republic, within the Springfield area, and throughout the nation. Also, students love the competitive element of speech and debate. They are able to use their intelligence and hard work to achieve a common goal. They learn teamwork, hard work, respect for ideas, civil discourse, and so much more. Debate is fun!
- **Future career benefits**: Employers look for certain things in potential employees. Participation in speech and debate helps students learn and excel at many of these skills. Skills like problem solving capabilities, oral and written communication skills, work ethic, and critical thinking are consistently discussed by employers as among the top ten qualities they look for in new hires. Debate builds these skills in a way few activities can.

Overall, I strongly feel that speech and debate should be a part of any student's high school experience. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the program.

Sincerely,

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Values: Respect, Humility, Integrity, Service, Leadership

Students in the Republic Speech and Debate program should seek excellence in competition and education. This should be a habit. Hard work and self-discipline are essential to success on both an individual and team level. The only way to reach your potential is to continually strive to do your best at all times. Specifically, there is an expectation to do anything you can to help other team members be as successful as possible. The pursuit of excellence is a team goal, not just an individual goal.

Your school work outside of debate is included in the discussion and expectation of excellence. You should strive to maintain high grades and good relationships with teachers.

Students on the Republic Speech and Debate team are to uphold the highest standard of behavior, respect, and integrity all times whether in the classroom, in competition, or even outside of a normal school day. Good character and the ability to make appropriate choices are some of the most important things we teach. Conduct yourself in a professional, mature manner at all times. You represent not only yourself, but your school and your coaches as well.

Squad unity is essential. In order to function as a member of the team, you must accept and work productively with other team members. Respect others materials. Positive and constructive communication is essential. Varsity members should be willing to share experience and knowledge with younger members, and be proactive about doing so. Developing our own sense of family is essential in gaining respect from others in our school and the debate community in general.

The internet is a wonderful place, but it also puts students in an interesting position in regards to research and original work. There are a variety of services and companies that produce research and cut scripts for students. The quality is usually poor and many of the services make money off of students by charging for their products. It is the position of this team that utilizing those resources before doing your own research/without explicit permission from the coaching staff short circuits the educational benefits of the activity and is counter to the goals of the team. There will be zero tolerance for this, or any other, form of plagiarism. This includes representing the work of others (script cuttings and topic research) as your own.

Good sportsmanship should be demonstrated at all times. Accept criticism graciously. Win and lose with class and dignity. If a student is unable to be a good sport, their status on the team will be re-evaluated.

Republic Speech and Debate Team Rules

Conduct

- Any member with conduct unbecoming of a speech team member – at a tournament or in school - may be removed from the team depending on the offense. This includes rules of tournament conduct, and anything that is a school policy or legal violation even if the violation is not related to speech and debate. Coach to student trust is vital for overnight tournaments.
- All students representing the speech and debate team or class are to uphold all rules in this document and the Republic Student Handbook at all times.
- During attendance at school functions and tournaments, Republic High School Speech and Debate Team members are expected to act with the utmost level of professionalism with regards to all teammates, competitors, judges, tournament directors, community members, etc. that they encounter at tournaments.
- Students should clap, laugh, listen attentively, and support fellow competitors. Demonstrate good sportsmanship and common courtesy at all times.
- Students should refrain from mouthing words, shuffling papers, making negative comments, or putting their heads down during other competitors' performances.
- Students should be quiet in hallways and should enter contest rooms only before a round or during breaks between competitors.
- There shall be no distracting noises or devices, activated cell phones, etc. in hallways, contest rooms, or preparation rooms
- In accordance with school policy, students must attend all classes on the day of a debate or speech event in order to be eligible to participate. Students will be charged all fees related to competition if a violation of the attendance policy occurs.
- Students will never, under any circumstance, falsify or fake research or performances. This is not only unethical, but in violation of MSHSAA and NSDA rules for appropriate conduct. I will not tolerate those who cannot act ethically at all times.
- If asked, students will compete in any event, regardless of preparation. While this seems unlikely, it may be necessary to fill spots, and students should do so with class and try their best.
- Student should never attempt to “throw” or purposefully lose/rank poorly in a round.

Tournaments are considered a school-related activity. *Students are responsible for following all school policies while at debate and speech events.* Students are subject to all school policies concerning alcohol, drug, and tobacco use. If a student violates team and/or school rules, that individual will be subject to a team suspension or removal from the team.

Rules of Conduct – Overnight competitions

- Student agrees to conduct himself/herself in a respectful and courteous manner appropriate for a student at Republic High School at all times.
- A coach or sponsor should know your location at all times.
- Student agrees to prepare and perform to the best of his/her ability for **each** competitive event.

- Student agrees not to visit the rooms of the opposite sex at any time. No visits to any other rooms are allowed after curfew.
- Student agrees not to possess or use at any time during the trip drugs of any kind including alcohol or smoking materials (smoking materials include matches, cigarette lighters, and e-cigarettes). Rooms, luggage and personal belongings are subject to inspection.
- Student agrees to adhere to curfew.
- Students must be on time for all departures and must follow the coach described itinerary at all times.
- Students should treat all property with respect. Hotel property is not to be removed. Damage to hotel property or any additional expenses incurred will be charged to those people in the room. Students are to refer problems to a coach/sponsor first, not to the front desk personnel. Any telephone calls must be made from a public phone in the hotel lobby or a personal cell phone in order to avoid charges and delays at checkout time.
- **If a student breaks a rule at an overnight tournament, a parent or guardian will need to travel to pick up that student. This does not change based on time of day or location.**

Transportation

- Students must take the bus or van to any tournament where they will be competing.
- If a student is not on the bus at the time it is scheduled to leave, they will be left behind and charged for their entry fees. The student or a parent cannot transport them to the event.
- No student will be allowed to leave a tournament early unless a written permission request is given to the coach and the reasoning behind the excuse must be approved. No student will be allowed to leave with anyone but his / her legal guardian. The coach will consider emergencies on the day of the tournament.

Dress Code

- Speech and Debate dress code is **business professional**.
- Acceptable clothing is as follows:
 - Black, brown, navy, or gray suits with coordinating black, brown, navy, or gray slacks
 - Belts should be worn when pants have belt loops.
 - Appropriate ties
 - Dresses or skirt and jacket combination
 - Appropriate shoes (excessively high heels or athletic shoes are not acceptable)
 - Nothing extremely short, with a plunging neckline, see through, or anything that is considered “casual attire”
- The coach will decide before leaving for a tournament if the proper attire is not being worn. Violations could cause removal from a tournament and be penalized.
- **Competitors are expected to remain in their contest attire for the awards presentation.**

Trophies

- Trophies will be collected at the end of each tournament by the coach and returned at the awards banquet at the end of the school year. It is important to display these trophies throughout the year to show RHS all of our winning students.

Consequences

- Consequences vary depending on the infraction. Below are consequences for severe infractions.
- The student will be sent home, if in attendance at a tournament, at the expense of the parent/guardian.
- The Republic High School administration will be notified immediately and the student will face the consequences outlined in the school handbook.
- The student may also be suspended or permanently dismissed from the speech and debate team.

ACTIVITIES REGULATIONS - MSHSAA

The Missouri State High School Activities Association governs all interschool activities. The basic rules are posted within the school and issued to athletes in the form of brochures. You must be familiar with these regulations to protect your eligibility. Below are the citizenship, academic, and sportsmanship regulations to participate in an athletic event. A complete copy is on file and available if you have a question. Each school also has the authority to set additional requirements. Eligibility to participate in school athletics is a privilege granted if you meet these standards; it is not an inherent right.

- **CITIZENSHIP:**
You must be a creditable citizen. Creditable citizens are those students whose conduct – both in school and out of school – will not reflect discredit upon themselves or their school. All students who wish to participate in athletics or other extra-curricular activities must read and sign the Citizenship Standards for Eligibility for Republic High School Form. A single serious breach of good conduct, either in or out of school, may also be sufficient cause for declaring a student ineligible to participate in a school activity.
- **ACADEMICS:** For grades 9-12
 - a. You must be currently enrolled in and regularly attending courses that offer a minimum of 3.00 units of credit at a member school. (This is normally six courses.)
 - b. You must have earned 3.00 units of credit the preceding semester.
 - c. If you are a beginning ninth grade student, you must have been promoted at the close of the previous school year.
 - d. You must be making satisfactory progress toward graduation as determined by your local school's policies.
 - e. Do not drop courses without first consulting with your school counselor or athletic administrator to determine whether it will affect your eligibility.
- **SPORTSMANSHIP:**
 - a. If you should commit an unsportsmanlike act while participating in a high school event, you could become ineligible.
 - b. If your conduct as a spectator is found to be unsportsmanlike, you could be barred from attending any high school athletic contests.
 - c. The unsportsmanlike conduct of any spectator – regardless of age – could cause the spectator to be barred from attending school athletic contests.

Parent Meeting

All parents and guardians are highly encouraged to attend the parent meeting on Tuesday, August 22nd will briefly go over guidelines and expectations for the team but I will focus on all of the areas we need parent assistance! This team cannot thrive without the assistance of family. If you are unable to volunteer time, I will reach out for resources that can help the team prosper.

Participation Requirements

Students should expect to attend as many tournaments as they can. The more students participate the better they get and the more they win. However, speech and debate is great because it has an extended season to allow students to participate in other activities as well. Well rounded students are important and I fully support a diverse educational experience for my students. It is the responsibility of the student (and parent) to work through those conflicts to come up with a suitable travel schedule.

Students should participate in both oral interpretation and debate events. This gives your child the opportunity to grow in both forms of the activity. It also gives them a strategic and competitive advantage because doing one helps them do better at the other. Additionally, it gives them more opportunities to qualify for state, nationals, and have access to college scholarships related to these events. If a student is only interested in one variety of event, they will be asked to fill judging requirements or observe rounds.

The National Speech and Debate Association awards points for competition in tournaments. Students will be granted points by NSDA based on how they perform at tournaments. A complete point breakdown is available on the NSDA website. In order to gain privileges as a member of the team, students (class and after school), are required **to earn 75 points and go to a minimum of 4 tournaments**. Privileged members will be defined as students that can run for office and vote in elections. All students are welcome to compete at their leisure.

In order to attend a tournament:

I have certain requirements of students in order to attend a tournament. These are set at my discretion and exemptions will only be made in circumstances that I see fit. Students must have at least a cumulative **2.5 gpa, no more than one F, and no behavior issues, or referrals**. I will check grades the week tournament registrations are due for these.

Republic Novice “2017 Tournament of Tigers”

On October 20-21st, we will be hosting our “home” tournament at Republic High School. Last year we had 20 schools participate and hosted both Varsity and Novice. This year, as we split with Willard High School, who will host the Varsity division, we expect more schools. This is our main fundraiser for the year (helps us almost double our budget) and is the largest logistical undertaking we have as a team. As a result, **all students are required to be available on both Friday and Saturday**. They will help tab, room monitor, run concessions, clean etc. Emergencies can be evaluated on a case by case basis. We are also in need of your help in the following ways:

Judging: Each student is required to procure 20-25 rounds of judging (1 person can judge up to eight rounds). Anyone who is a graduate of high school is eligible to judge. This requirement is the **ONLY** way to run our tournament. In past years, even with every student bringing 20 rounds, we were dangerously close to being short. You can fill this requirement for your student or you can help them find others who are available to judge. If you have access *to any service organizations* it would be great to reach out to them to see if they can help.

Judges/Coaches Lounge: Tournaments are required to feed judges/coaches on Friday and Saturday. We need parents to run and donate to the lounge. If every parent brings in one item, we can have a pretty great lounge. I acquired multiple food donations in 2016 for our hospitality lounge and plan to do so again. If you are willing to coordinate donations please let me know!

Concessions: This year we will not need parents to monitor concessions. We usually make a Sam’s run to buy food but anything you would be willing to donate/get donations for helps us reduce cost and increase our profit from the tournament.

Tournament Attendance Notes

Grade Requirements: As stated in the “Participation Guidelines” section, there are minimum grade and behavior requirements that students must meet.

Tournament Limitations: Some tournaments limit the number of entries or entries are limited due to resources. The coaches will decide who represents our school at tournaments with limited entries. Preference will be given to students who consistently put in their best work, regularly attend team events, and/or have demonstrated a strong commitment to the team. Each student is limited to 11 tournaments excluding MSHSAA districts. This DOES include NSDA districts.

Money: Unfortunately, tournaments cost money. You may be asked to send money to cover the cost of hotel and travel costs (roughly 20 a student for a one night hotel stay). **However, I am of the firm belief that funds should, under no circumstance, limit participation of your student in this activity.** Speech and Debate is for everybody. We host fundraisers and collect money throughout the year to help cover costs associated with the activity. Please, please, please let me know if there is a way we can help your child participate in the activity. Conversely, if you would be willing to sponsor an additional student’s travel costs let me know as well.

Food: Tournaments at the high school level go all evening on Friday and all through the day on Saturday. There are no extended food breaks and students are expected to eat in between rounds. **I would strongly suggest sending your students with some snacks.** Tournaments drastically vary in the quality and availability of food. They usually have pizza, candy, soda and other items questionably called food, but it is always a good idea to have some snacks. Kids spend anywhere from just a few to twenty dollars.

Deadlines/Fees: Tournaments have deadlines by which schools must enter. They also have deadlines to drop entries without financial penalty (usually 2 weeks before). **If a student withdraws from a competition after the deadline he/she will be responsible for paying all costs associated with that drop.** If a student feels the need to drop a tournament after the deadline, they are responsible for finding a suitable replacement. If the student can find a replacement, the replacement then takes the burden of fulfilling the spot, including paying for a drop if they make a hasty agreement. Day of tournament emergencies will be evaluated on a case by case basis. I will ask for parent confirmation for emergencies. There is a tournament schedule available in this packet. Please look this over with your student so they know which tournaments they are not available for.

The following behavior will count as a DROP and students will be put on a fees list for the school that can ultimately withhold diplomas:

- Withdrawing from a tournament after the entry has been turned in
- Throwing or purposefully losing a round (you will be charged for the entry fee of the event you throw)
- Breaking rules and being sent home (you will pay for all of your entry fee)
- Covering a spot for someone but then dropping before the tournament

- Not being on the bus when it leaves (being dropped off is not an option)

Supply list for Speech and Debate

Highlighters

Legal Size Paper

Pen supply

Countdown Timer with buttons for minutes/seconds

Hanging file folder and/or manila folders

Performance binder and slicks

*Supplies will differ depending on the events a student competes in. These are examples of items students have found useful in the past. We are able to provide most of the materials students need, there may be additional things they will need throughout tournaments. Donations of supplies are always accepted.

Practices

As with any competitive activity, hard work and practice are necessary for success. Just as with any extra-curricular / co-curricular activity we will hold debate/speech practice on a regular basis after school, and additional practices may be added prior to competitions to make sure our students are prepared and successful as possible at tournaments. Attendance at practices will be considered when determining whether a student should be able to attend tournaments.

When a student attends practice, they should come prepared and ready to focus on the task at hand. Students who are disrespectful, who misbehave, or who distract from the team's ability to conduct a valuable practice session will be asked to leave.

Practices will generally be held each Thursdays from 2:30-6:00. These practices are not mandatory, as I understand the many other obligations of students. However, the time is invaluable for students to work together as a team to prepare for tournaments. Other times will be announced as relevant to accommodate individual/team schedules.

Random Student Drug Testing

Board Policy JFCI, which is the implementation of random drug testing for students in grades 7-12 participating in extracurricular activities and specific school privileges, was approved by the Board of Education in June 2017. The purpose of this policy is not to levy discipline, but rather to help prevent substance abuse among students, to encourage treatment for students with substance abuse problems, and to ensure that students have the opportunity to attend school and participate in activities in a fair, safe and healthy environment. Covered activities means any school-sponsored extracurricular activity, or co-curricular activity, and/or a performance in which a student represents the district, in the opinion of the district's administration. Extracurricular activities that will be tested are all Missouri State High School Activities Association (MSHSAA) regulated activities and events, including athletics, cheerleading, band, choir, all other co-curricular activities and events, and all district clubs and organizations. This list is subject to change on a yearly basis. The list of extracurricular activities subject to drug testing will be published annually and made available to students and parents before school starts, upon request. This also includes individuals who apply for parking permits to park in district parking lots, as a condition of receiving this parking privilege. Each student wishing to participate in covered activities and/or to receive district parking privileges will be required to complete a drug-testing consent form and return it to the high school activities office within the first ten (10) school days of the school year. Students participating in covered activities during the fall semester must submit a drug-testing consent form along with their physical documentation, insurance documentation, and concussion protocol before the first scheduled practice, if the first practice will occur prior to the start of the school year. Any newly enrolling student will be required to submit a consent form within the first ten (10) school days of enrollment. Any student not completing the consent form and returning it within the prescribed time will be ineligible to participate in covered activities for the remainder of the school year. Students will also be required to submit a drug-testing consent form before a district parking pass will be issued. Students who do not participate in covered activities and who do not receive a parking pass may still participate in the drug-testing program on a voluntary basis by submitting a consent form. Consent forms will remain in effect for the remainder of a student's enrollment within the District, unless such consent is withdrawn by the student's parent or legal guardian, in writing. Any student for whom consent is withdrawn will be ineligible to participate in covered activities, to receive a parking pass, or to park on district property for 365 calendar days from the date of withdrawal of consent. Any student for whom consent has been withdrawn may submit a new consent form during the next school year's enrollment period, but may not participate in covered activities or privileges until the expiration of their 365-calendar-day waiting period.

Republic Speech and Debate 2017-2018 – Agreement to Policies

Name _____

Grade _____

We have read the entire information packet for the Republic Speech and Debate team. We understand and accept the requirements for being on the team. We also understand that failure to fulfill these requirements may result in a suspension/dismissal from the team.

As a representative of Republic, we understand the responsibility for maintaining the best possible physical and mental condition and for displaying proper conduct, self-control, and decision-making. We understand that the following expectations are included in the rules of behavior on or off campus for all students on the team.

1. The use of alcoholic beverages in any form is prohibited
2. The use of illegal drugs is prohibited
3. The use of tobacco in any form is prohibited

I understand that any violation of the above rules will result in the stated consequences.

Debater's signature _____

I understand and have discussed the responsibilities and commitments that my son/daughter has accepted as a member of the Republic Speech and Debate team and will assist/support him/her in meeting these commitments.

Guardian signature _____

Date: _____

Student Pick-Up Authorization Form

I _____ (the parent or legal guardian) hereby give my permission and consent for my child(ren) _____ to be picked up from a Speech and Debate tournament or event by the following persons:

Name	Anytime	In Emergency	Only if I contact RHS	Dates
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

It is our policy to request photo identification for anyone unfamiliar to us. Please inform the person on your pick-up list that if they do not have proper identification, we cannot release your child to them.

Guardian Signature _____ Date _____

2017-2018 Tournament Schedule

October

13-14 Glendale(N)/Kickapoo(V) #

20-21 Tournament of Tigers (EVERYONE MUST ATTEND; can't compete)

November

10-11 Nixa Novice

17-18 MSU/Gloria Deo #

December

1-2 Spf Catholic #

January

5-6 Carthage(V)/Webb City(N)

12-13 Liberty(V)/Liberty North(N) *

(Liberty is an OVERNIGHT; must attend 4 previous tournaments and double enter)

19-20 Parkview/Central#

26-27 Lebanon

February

2-3 Bolivar (open IE, N/V debate)

16-17 Joplin (open IE, N/V debate)

23-24 Neosho (open/Varsity) #

March

2-3 MSHSAA Districts/State Qualifiers at MSU*

(must compete in 5 regular tournaments in desired event before being considered for a MSHSAA spot)

16-17 National Qualifiers at TBA (**required for Advanced class**)

April

TBA Nationals Congress Qualifiers*

#Denotes team dinner night; locations TBA

*Denotes limited spots available