National Forensic League

Coaching GUIDE:

Directing Debate & Speech Activities

Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow. - Ralph Waldo Emerson

Welcome to the National Forensic League!

Congratulations! You have made the decision to join one of the nation's largest and most prestigious honor societies. You are following in the footsteps of many prominent educators, politicians, business leaders, journalists, and entertainers before you. This journey will test your skills and broaden your horizons – and ultimately shape the way you view and interact with the world around you.

"The Journey is the Reward."

We at the National Forensic League want your speech and debate experience to be as rewarding as possible; education is our first priority. To ensure a smooth and productive introduction into the world of forensics, we have compiled this coach guide. Between its covers, you will find everything you need to jumpstart your team, from an overview of the activity itself, to the processes of managing an NFL chapter, to administering and building your program in general. We've even included a glossary of speech and debate terms. Additional resources are also available on our Web site, **www.nflonline.org**.

From all of us at the National Office, welcome to the NFL family. We are here to serve *you*.

Acknowledgements

This publication is possible in large part to the tireless work of Tyler Billman, the NFL's first Coordinator of Member Programs and Coach Education. Tyler assembled most of the materials contained within, and revised this guide several times. Our robust community of generous coaches who have shared materials with us also made this guide possible. In particular, Oregon coach Brenda Moe's "Novice Coach Guide" has been a great resource (available in the Coaching Resources section of the NFL Web site), as well as several publications produced and edited by Truman State University professor Dr. Kevin Minch of the National Federation of State High School Associations – Speech, Debate and Theatre Association. You will ultimately find that you have entered an open and giving professional community.

Adam J. Jacobi, *Editor*
Coordinator of Member Programs & Coach Education
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Table of Contents

Purpose of the National Forensic League 4
Benefits of Membership 4

Starting Up: A Coach Toolkit 5
Competitive Events Offered 12
Basic NFL Terminology 14
Frequently Asked Questions 15

Earning Competition Points 16

Participating in NFL Tournaments 17
District Tournament 17
National Tournament 17
Other NFL Points System Tools 22

NFL Points and Honors: 23
Student/Coach Awards & Service Points 23
Service Projects 24
Frequently Asked Questions 25

Partner Programs 26

Building Your Program 27
Recruitment Ideas 28
Thoughts on Recruitment 31

Drafting a Plan to Build Your Program 35

Get Parents Involved 36

Profitable Fundraising 39

Tournament Competition Glossary 40

Appendix A: Program Policy Samples 44

Appendix B: Sample Health Certificate 49

Appendix C: Samples of Travel Forms 50

Appendix D: Judge Training 52

Contacting the National Office 55

Your Starting-Point: **www.NFLonline.org**

Resources & Community: **www.ForensicsOnline.net**

Streaming Instructional & Final Round Videos: **www.NFLtv.org**

Purpose of the National Forensic League

The NFL promotes **interscholastic** debate, oratory, public speaking, and interpretation of literature by encouraging a spirit of fellowship and conferring upon deserving candidates a worthy badge of distinction. A nationwide network of competitive tournaments honors students for their achievements, culminating with the National Speech and Debate Tournament in June.

The league also serves as an **honorary society**, promoting secondary and middle level speech and debate activities and interscholastic competition as a means to develop a student's lifelong skills and values, as well as the public's awareness of the value of communication education. To this end, the NFL serves as the central agent for coordination and facilitation of heightened public awareness of the value of speech communication skills, development of educational initiatives for student and teacher training, excellence in interscholastic competition, and the promotion of honor society ideals.

As an organization, the National Forensic League embraces diversity, interconnection, and visionary leadership. We empower students to become effective communicators, ethical individuals, critical thinkers, and leaders in a democratic society.

Benefits of Membership

We offer several services and opportunities for forensics programs, including:

- Membership into the nation's most honored educational society for speech and debate. Colleges and universities consider NFL membership to be a badge of academic honor and distinction.
- A subscription to the NFL's monthly educational magazine, *Rostrum*. With more than 14,000 copies published monthly, plus online archives, *Rostrum* is the most comprehensive publication for high school speech and debate in the country.
- An extensive vehicle for honoring members of your program. Students receive certificates, seals, and other handsome insignia as recognition of their accomplishments in forensics.
- The opportunity to participate in a District (Regional) Competition, which could qualify members of your team to the NFL national tournament and over $153,000 dollars in college scholarships.

We offer several coach training/professional development initiatives, which include:

- Hundreds of coaching resources including lesson plans, fundraising ideas, drills, management and team-building exercises and an online community for coaches and students.
- Access to a *free* video library, training all areas of forensics, as well as annual complimentary DVDs of final round performances in Humorous, Dramatic, and Duo Interpretation.
- Publication information and authors of all 600 interpretation selections performed at several past national tournaments (for a nominal fee).
- Local, regional and national coach clinics and workshop scholarships, school faculty seminars, as well as coach mentoring.
- Online professional development (OPD) tutorial courses for continuing education units (CEUs) or graduate credit through Minnesota State University, Mankato.
- Professional coach/educator accreditation to honor expertise and experience.

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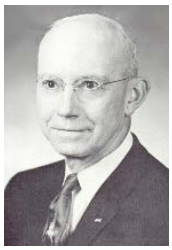
Starting Up: A Coach Toolkit



NFL founder Bruno E. Jacob *(pictured at right)* often expressed the strong conviction that individual student membership was the cornerstone of the National Forensic League. This means that regardless of competitive success, **participation** is the most valuable aspect of the forensic experience.

Directors of speech and debate programs serve as both administrators (managing logistical responsibilities) **and coaches** (educating and guiding students). In some schools and states, speech and debate has a curriculum and is offered as a class. More traditionally and more often, it is simply an extracurricular activity.

Timeline & Checklist for the Year

Summer/Before School Begins

- ❑ **Contact your NFL District Chair** (on the NFL Web site, click on "***District Contacts***" from the "***Districts***" section) to learn when local area coach meetings, clinics/workshops and tournaments are held. S/he also may direct you to state league Web sites for calendars and rulebooks. Many states offer additional speaking events not held by the NFL, but that *can* earn students NFL merit points for participation. Your district chair should be able to identify an **experienced coach** in the area who can serve as a **mentor**.

- ❑ **Set up meetings with the school administrator(s), athletic/activities director** and **bookkeeper**. Understanding school/district policies and paperwork for interscholastic **conduct**, knowing where you stand with your **budget**, obtaining appropriate **financial forms** (such as check requests), arranging **transportation**, determining if and how you will **raise funds**, and being clear on **legal policies** and **liabilities** are all critical before you even start working with students. It pays to know what your rights and responsibilities are, since you will be traveling (sometimes overnight), handling money, and working one-on-one with students.

- ❑ **Organize student leadership**. If you are inheriting a program, find out who existing officers/captains are, and meet with them. Not only do such roles teach students valuable lessons of leadership, but you can delegate certain tasks such as peer coaching. A shrewd coach is aware of personality conflicts, and rallies their student leadership around a shared vision and charges them with bringing that to the team at large. If you are starting a new program, perhaps initiate a recommendation process by which teachers provide feedback on student leader candidates.

- ❑ **Devise a practice schedule, tournament calendar and program policies.** You may seek student input for the calendar if there are options, but start with what you feel you can handle. Nothing is worse than "biting off more than you can chew" when you're new. Always have an administrator and/or your activities/athletic director (and perhaps school/district attorney) review what you put together for legality, so they are never surprised to hear from a parent about something. Samples of such materials are in the Appendix.

- ❑ **Create a bulletin board** and/or Web site or place where students can find information about upcoming meets, when forms are due, etc. Get them in the habit of checking this often!

Summer/Before School Begins *(continued)*

- ❑ **Investigate establishing a parent booster club.** Sometimes, these exist at schools as blanket organizations to support all fine arts or activities, so always work within the framework that best respects the culture of your building (make friends, not enemies). Regardless, having a parent committee to help plan trips, judge (if parent judges are common in your area), help run tournaments, raise funds, etc. is invaluable. For more information and suggestions, please see the section of this guide on "***Getting Parents Involved***."

- ❑ **Determine what supplies you need,** and use school channels to purchase, or prioritize them to purchase once adequate funds are raised. Suggestions for supplies follows this checklist.

- ❑ **List potential judges**. When you register for a tournament, you are required to bring a certain number of judges, usually based on how many entries you bring. Your contact with your NFL District Chair and/or local leagues can help you understand the prevailing rules, including whether schools usually hire teachers, business professionals, former competitors, and/or members of the community, such as parents. Depending on the expertise and experience of judges and regional norms, judges may be asked to volunteer, or may be modestly remunerated for their time. It's important to understand the procedures for handling this – some schools/districts even require judges to complete payroll and federal W-2 and I-9 forms.

- ❑ **Make sure judges are trained**. Regardless of the expertise and background of judges, the various NFL and local standards and rules for events include several technicalities and conventions that change periodically (as they are updated by coach committees). Additionally, not all judges realize the importance of writing specific and constructive criticisms when they evaluate contestants. What's more, acknowledging human bias and ethical issues is an important consideration when judging. Some states have training programs and clinics, so you'll want to be aware of these and communicate them to your judges as early as possible. An overview and basic judge training materials are included in the Appendix of this guide.

- ❑ **Create a system for communicating with judges**. Give your judges a calendar of tournaments and ask them to share their availability with you. Then, as you know how many students you're registering – and consequently, how many judges you will need – you can contact those judges who are available. The more notice you can give judges as to whether you need them *or not* is appreciated and goes a long way toward cementing a loyal, reliable judge corps.

Beginning of the School Year/Season

- ❑ **Promote your program within the school** (see the section on ***Recruitment***) and advertise an informational meeting. If there's an activity fair, set up a booth!

- ❑ **Hold an informational meeting** where you give students a brief overview of what "forensics" is, the benefits of participating and what they can anticipate as a member of your program. Keep the meeting positive, but make your expectations clear. You may wish to have student leaders assist with running this meeting, but communicate with them ahead of time, so they understand the importance of staying on message and expressing your shared vision for the program. **Have copies of the practice schedule, tournament calendar, team policies, parent letter,** and **student contact/medical/permission forms** ready to distribute to students at this meeting. Parents appreciate a coach who is organized and prepared. If the school assesses a team/participation fee (or you are allowed to assess one expressly for forensics), and/or if you require fundraising, be upfront and explain expectations/quotas.

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Running Practices

- **Be clear about your expectations,** which should be stated in writing with materials distributed at the informational meeting. Consider frequency and duration of practices offered and how many students should attend each week. Decide how you will handle conflicts (many students are involved in other activities, such as drama, music, athletics, part time jobs, etc.).

- **Determine what resources are at your disposal** (computers, printing capabilities, library, etc.) and any school policies regarding reserving space and resources).

- **Establish a structure** – how will students use their time (and yours) and share resources when they are at a practice session? Making sure they are productive, working collaboratively (they are on a *team,* after all), and prepared is essential. Pre-season, practice focuses on theories of presentation, formation of speeches, cases and literary pieces, research and subsequent filing; whereas, during the season, practice becomes more about developing technique, honing fluency, and fixing flaws.

> *"Practice does not make perfect. Only perfect practice makes perfect." - Vince Lombardi*

- **Ask colleague teachers for light assistance**. English teachers are great at proofing speeches, social studies teachers are great at reviewing debate cases or Congress legislation, science teachers are great at providing ideas for science-related debate topics. By reaching across disciplines, you also build respect for your program as enhancing student learning in those areas.

- **Watch video of successful presentations** to offer students a perspective of what it takes to be successful. The NFL offers its *Showcase* DVD set, as well as a robust library of final round video and audio archives, which you can order, and in some cases, even loan (consult the order forms that came with your membership materials).

- **Encourage peer coaching**. When students are empowered to constructively evaluate their teammates, they begin to have a more critical eye and ear for their own work, and appreciate the value of criticism. Actual practice sessions can run as detail-oriented stop-and-go presentations, which "surgically" fix individual flaws when they happen, or they can be continuous "run-throughs," where feedback is given *after* the presentation finishes, much as in actual competition.

- **Record video or audio of presentations**. With computers, this has become easier than ever. A computer with an embedded camera and/or microphone will allow students to see and hear their performance from the perspective of a spectator.

- **Always be aware** of *what* your students are presenting. Content reflects you and the school.

- **Invite judges, parents and alumni** to help observe and evaluate presentations. Some schools have a "night of forensics" prior to the season to give students a pre-tournament event to be ready to debate, speak or perform at. Add refreshments, and you've got a memorable team-building occasion that builds excitement and motivation for the season ahead!

- **Having a public showcase**, presenting at a community, youth or senior center, or holding a public debate with a civic organization is a great way to build public awareness of your program, while giving your students practical experience. They can also earn NFL "Service Speaking" merit points. There are several references throughout this guide to additional NFL partnership opportunities where students can engage the community in this manner.

- **Coaches often have a folder or binder system** where students keep judge evaluations, goal-setting sheets, competitive record and even journal reflectively about their growth.

When the Tournament Season Starts

- **Pre-season workshops/clinics are common** in many locales, so investigate what's offered, and make sure your students are aware of this opportunity.

- **Watch for invitations**. Many NFL districts, state organizations and invitationals post tournament information and registration forms online or via e-mail, while others still mail out information. Make sure you are on the appropriate mailing lists (postal or virtual).

- **Arrange transportation** in the manner most appropriate for your school and region. While many areas charter school busses, some schools require coaches to reserve and drive vans, while still others require families to find their own way to tournaments.

With transportation, there are often several liability issues, so be absolutely clear on your school's policies. Regardless, make sure these arrangements are made well in advance of the tournaments you attend.

- **If you are traveling a distance** to a tournament, you must also consider booking lodging and other modes of transportation, such as airfare. This, of course, requires additional advance planning and meticulous organization, such as communicating details to parents. Sample forms for travel-related purposes have been included in the Appendix. If your students are fortunate enough to qualify to the NFL National Tournament, then travel is assuredly a consideration, and you should talk to your administration about supporting this endeavor. The NFL National Tournament is one of the oldest supported activities by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and many schools/district will cover at least part of a team's expenses, since the National Tournament is the terminus level of competition for this academic sport.

- **Register promptly and accurately**. Many coaches require students to *sign up* for each tournament, to indicate their availability and readiness. If class credit is involved, there's often a "contract" or agreement that parents sign, acknowledging that attendance at a certain number of tournaments is attached to the student's grade. Tournaments have registration deadlines – often at least a week prior, and earlier for larger tournaments. Schools who host tournaments plan much in the same way as for a wedding: ordering food for participants and coaches/judges, determining use of rooms, ordering awards, making sure enough custodial staff is available, etc. Any time coaches are late or inaccurate with registration, they contribute to degrading the efficiency of the whole tournament. Please be a *team player* with your colleagues. Read the special procedures and rules for each *particular* tournament and follow instructions carefully.

- **Make sure your school issues a check** for the tournament promptly. Many tournaments require payment when you enter; some require it when you arrive with your students.

- **Confirm with the judges** you need for this tournament, and make sure you share logistical information (when they should arrive), as well as any rules particular to that tournament.

- **Remind students and verify their intent to attend** each tournament. Just as you do with judges, share the essential logistical information, as well as special rules. If students cancel participation, communicate these "drops" to the hosting school ***immediately***.

- **Confirm with your bus company or transportation**, and make sure you build in some extra time. It's better to arrive early and have additional time to practice, than to arrive late because of a weather issue or other mitigating circumstance. This also models responsible behavior for young people on the importance of promptness. Tournaments will usually have a schedule in the invitation; plan with needed travel time to arrive at the beginning of the registration period.

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Tournament Day *(Consult the glossary at the end of this guide for specific tournament lingo).*

- ❑ **Prepare an attendance roster** of students and their events (you can also use this to track their achievement for after the tournament). Make sure you have **medical forms** and any other essential paperwork *with you* before you leave for the tournament. If students are missing any classes, ***be sure to share the attendance list*** with the office/faculty, so teachers are aware those students will be out of the building.

- ❑ **Be sure students bring appropriate materials**, including evidence tubs, literary pieces, visual aids, timing devices, etc.
- ❑ **When you arrive** at the tournament, you will likely register your students, and receive such materials as judge assignments, schedules, maps of the school and schematics. **Remind your students** to abide by both your own school's and team's rules, as well as the host school's in terms of respecting space, and return any moved furniture to where it was when you arrive. ***Don't forget to share judge assignments*** with those whom you hired!
- ❑ **Attend the general meeting** for contestants, judges and/or coaches (if applicable).
- ❑ **Coaches have varying responsibilities** while at a tournament. They are often asked to judge, sometimes asked to help compute results (tabulate, or "tab" for short), they may follow their students around and offer advice on performance, and they may socialize. As a newer coach, do not discount the value of networking socially at tournaments. As educators, most coaches love to share their techniques and the more enthusiastic a novice coach is, the more likely an experienced coach is to share the wealth of their knowledge. Often, tournaments have a "lounge" or hospitality area for the adults – this is where you will meet people and learn about the various leagues, rules, standards/conventions, methods/techniques, etc.
- ❑ **At the awards assembly**, remind your students to represent your school with decorum and appropriate conduct. Losing with dignity is an important skill to foster. Never allow students to speak ill of students, judges or coaches from other schools – until you're back at your own school. Even a school bus with open windows or an airplane can attract unsuspected listeners.
- ❑ **Before you leave**, you will be issued a copy of the tournament's results and student evaluation sheets. Make sure your students retrieve any materials they brought – as well as personal effects (which invariably get forgotten). Make sure students clean the bus before leaving.

After the Tournament

- ❑ Students are quick to blame judges for their weak performances. Remind students that judges are unique human beings, who each bring their own backgrounds and perspectives to assessing students' performances. Ask the student to analyze how they can "win over" a particular judge, given that judge's comments. If a judge's comments are incomplete or incoherent, chalk that up to human error – after all, chances are that judge showed the same lack of courtesy to *all* the contestants that day. Depending on the culture of your local league, it may be acceptable to bring a problematic judge to the attention of the coach who hired him/her, or to the tournament host. ***Always check with experienced colleagues*** *to see what the preferred protocol is in that case.*
- ❑ Send thank you notes to the tournament host and judges, if necessary.
- ❑ **Record NFL merit points** (unless it is the NFL District or National Tournament). See the "***How to Record NFL Points***" section of this guide.
- ❑ **Publicize** successes (see more on that in the program-building section).

- **Investigate summer opportunities for training** for both you and your students. There are several scholarships available (including the NFL Coach scholarship program described on p. 10), so the sooner you investigate this, the better.
- **Appoint captains and/or have students elect new officers** for the following season. Meet with current and new officers to ensure a transfer of knowledge/experience and expectations.
- **Plan a season's end banquet** to celebrate accomplishments, to send-off seniors, and to thank parents, judges, administrators, sponsors and others for their support of your program. The NFL sells several mementos, such as silver lapel pins, chenille letter jacket patches and handsome graduation honor cords.

- **Reflect on how things went this year and re-tool for next season!** Plan to attend any local coach conventions or clinics at the end of the year. See if you can attend the NFL National Tournament in June (if none of your students qualified) to see the nation's best and brightest compete.

Checklist of Materials

- **General supplies:** writing utensils (multi-colored pens for debate), paper (copy/print as well as lined), note cards, scissors, tape, binder that fits 5½" x 8½" "half-sheets" *(pictured at left)* for oral interpretation scripts, three-hole punch, cardstock to print literary pieces on (or half-size sheet protectors), plastic tubs for evidence, file folders.
- **Periodicals for reference,** which are particularly useful for Extemporaneous Speaking, Congress and Public Forum.
- **Books**: literature for interpretive events, reference for debate. Tell everyone you know that you will take any materials they discard!

Competition Dress & Appearance

An important aspect of communication is the credibility of the source, and young people in speech and debate advocate for serious, mature issues. As part of this professional endeavor, it is customary for students to wear dress clothing, with "business casual." Coaches often hear students "bellyache" about buying or wearing such clothes, from the same students who also own name brand athletic shoes and designer jeans worth twice the value of a simple dress outfit! Coaches can educate students and their parents about the *investment* that having a professional outfit represents (such as for interviews, special occasions, etc.). Additionally, several teams have "hand-me-down" programs, and/or shop at local thrift and consignment stores.

For competitive success, suits are the most universal outfit, and usually dark colors (black, charcoal or navy) are the customary choice of attorneys and investment bankers – the adult decision-makers. In speech events, such as oratory and interpretation, bold colors (such as red) often grab attention. The idea is to look conservative, so the emphasis is on the content and delivery of the message, and not a distracting aspect of a student's appearance.

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Tournaments for Newbies*

** because that yellow book series uses a derogatory term*

This section is intended for the new coach or student alike. A speech or debate contest is like a three-ring circus, with several events happening at once, with a sea of teenagers acting out hysterics (because a character in their interpretive piece calls for it, because they are having a crisis with their significant other, because they are anxious about a big paper, or because they are nervous about competition). Ah, such is the beauty of working with young people!

No two tournaments are alike. Some are small an extremely local, often happening after school for a few hours, while some have more than a thousand contestants from several states, spanning several days. Get a sense of the norm for tournaments from an experienced coach in your area, so you aren't overwhelmed. Psyche your kids out in a positive manner. Familiarize yourself with the terminology (found in the glossary on p. 40).

There are some universal facets to every tournament: they usually have students present a couple times before different judges (and usually different opposing contestants, depending on how many enter in that particular event). Judges evaluate the performance of students (in debate, awarding a win or loss; and in speech and congress, awarding ranks or ratings/points). Some contests offer team or squad awards (often called ***sweepstakes***), which are high-stakes school awards, which principals love, while other contests emphasize individual student achievement.

Here are a few pearls of wisdom for the newbie coach or student:

- **Observe rounds whenever you have the opportunity**. For students, this means elimination rounds when they don't *break*. Watch different events, especially if they're outside your area of expertise/comfort. You may pick up a technique you can incorporate elsewhere. Watch the specific techniques of successful contestants.
- **Bring homework and other materials for the bus ride or for downtime**. Read, quietly listen to music, or complete a Sudoku or crossword puzzle.
- **Eat well and get enough rest**. Both coaches and students alike are guilty of ignoring their health and wellness in the throes of competition. Tournaments are (unfortunately) known for junk/fast food, because it's cheap and convenient. Pack high-protein, low-carbohydrate snacks and bottled water. Bottled water is also the healthiest way of keeping your voice hydrated, especially given how often students and coaches talk at tournaments!
- **Don't obsess over your record** as a contestant or coach. Success comes with experience. Just have fun and enjoy the ride! The most successful participants in this activity report that even with their last tournament, their key is that they enjoy expressing themselves, raising awareness of an issue through what they present, and engaging with their peers in this great community.

Running an NFL Chapter

Whether you just registered your school as an affiliate with the National Forensic League, or you inherited a charter chapter from another coach, you will learn about the processes of charting points your students earn, the honor systems for both students and coaches, the specific NFL events and tournaments available, and considering involvement in one or more of our special partner programs.

Competitive Events Offered

Below are described the NFL's nine main, four supplemental, and two consolation events.

Main Events

In order to compete at the NFL District Tournament and be eligible for the NFL National Tournament, students must qualify in one of the following events:

- **Policy Debate** – team debate that evaluates a proposed resolution on the basis of affirmative and negative cases.
- **Public Forum** – team debate that evaluates a position posed by the resolution. In this event, the clash of ideas must be communicated in a manner persuasive to the non-specialist or "citizen judge", i.e. a member of the American jury.
- **Lincoln-Douglas** – one-on-one debate, which examines a value resolution.

- **Congressional Debate** – contestants research and write legislation that will improve society, then debate and subsequently vote in an assembly of about 12-24 legislators, which employs parliamentary procedure and a student presiding officer.
- **Oratory** – the contestant composes an original speech that discusses intelligently and with a degree of originality, in an interesting manner and with some profit to his/her audience the topic s/he has chosen.
- **United States Extemporaneous** – requires a speaker to answer a question about domestic subjects or events by synthesizing published news material.
- **International Extemporaneous** –requires a speaker to answer a question about international events by synthesizing published news material.

- **Dramatic Interpretation** – contestant recreates characters in a dramatic story, making them seem alive to the audience.
- **Humorous Interpretation** – contestant recreates characters in a humorous story, making them seem alive to the audience.
- **Duo Interpretation** – two contestants recreate characters from a dramatic or humorous literary work.

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Debate Topics

In Policy Debate, Lincoln-Douglas and Public Forum, current and past resolution topics (and a schedule of release dates) can be found on the NFL Web site under "**Resources** > **Topics**."

Supplemental Events

At the National Tournament, students whose coaches have pre-registered them, and are eliminated from preliminary competition can re-register to continue participating in two of the following events:

- **Prose** – expresses thought through language recorded in sentences and paragraphs: fiction (short stories, novels) and non-fiction (articles, essays, journals, biographies).
- **Poetry** – expresses ideas, experience, or emotion through the creative arrangement of words according to their sound, their rhythm, and/or their meaning. Poetry may rely on verse and stanza form.
- **Extemporaneous Commentary –** contestants provide additional insight and opinions on prescribed topics.
- **Expository Speaking** – the contestant gives a speech to inform. It should describe, clarify, illustrate or define an object, idea, concept, or process.

Consolation Events

At the National Tournament, students whose coaches have pre-registered them, and are eliminated from competition by Wednesday evening can re-register to continue participating in one of the following events:

- **Storytelling** – a single published, printed story, anecdote, tale, myth or legend is *retold* without notes or props.
- **Impromptu –** contestants are asked to evaluate prompts including proverbs, abstract words, events, quotations, and famous people.

Supplemental & Consolation Event Topics

Commentary and Storytelling topic areas are released online and in the May *Rostrum* magazine.

State & Local Events

Almost any competitive speaking event can earn a student NFL merit points.

Basic NFL Terminology

- **NFL Points** – awarded when a speaker speaks at a tournament, festival, or during a public speaking engagement. Each round (whether that round is a win or a loss), counts for a specific number of NFL points), as well as "service speaking" engagements. A coach or captain records points as they are earned; coaches earn one-tenth of their students' points. Refer to pages 9-19.
- **NFL Membership** – lifetime individual membership is achieved upon earning 25 NFL points and paying a one-time $15 fee to the National Office (billed to the school NFL advisor).
- **Degree** – determined by how many points a student earns: 25=merit, 75=honor, 50=excellence, 250= Distinction, 500=special distinction, 750=superior distinction, 1000=Outstanding distinction. Each degree earned is acknowledged by a distinctive seal to be affixed to the membership certificate. Seals are automatically sent to the coach once a student has earned a new degree.
- **Service Speaking/Points** – students may earn points from audience speaking engagements (speeches, discussions, debates, memorized presentation, interpretation, radio/television announcing) of at least four minutes in length and of a quality approved by the NFL advisor. The amount of service points are assessed based on the student's level (degree) of membership.
- **Affiliate School Membership** – a school may affiliate with NFL upon payment of the annual school membership dues and the signature of the school principal on the enrollment card. Affiliate schools receive annually a certificate of school affiliation, as well as supplies.
- **Charter Chapter** – a school may qualify for charter membership by recording at least 1,000 credit points in two years and showing evidence of its commitment to a strong speech program. A charter application must be filed with the district committee, which shall vote whether a charter is warranted. Yearly annual school membership dues must be paid to the National Office.
- **District** – Each school is placed in a district depending on its geography relative to other NFL schools/districts. All member schools (chapters and affiliates) in a district compete against each other at the District Tournament (see p. 17) to determine which students will represent their area of the country at the National Tournament in June.
- **District Chair** – elected coach who leads the district in recruitment/retention of schools, mentoring of new coaches, and operation of the District Tournament.

- **NFL Key** or **Pin** – silver for students, gold for instructors – jeweled to mark the degree a competitor has attained. Purchase is optional.
- **Coach Diamond** – coaches qualify for membership and advanced degrees according to the same schedule provided for students and must apply and pay the membership fee. On attaining a total of 1,500 points, the instructor will be entitled to wear a diamond-set NFL key or pin; additional diamonds accrue at 3,000, 6,000, 10,000 and each 3,000 points thereafter. Minimum time for each diamond is five years as an NFL member coach. An instructor who obtained membership as a student should report that fact to the National Office. Membership as well as 1/10 of the points earned as a student will be transferred without application or fee.
- ***Rostrum*** – the NFL's magazine, published monthly during the school year. It includes teaching and learning articles, rule changes, tournament results, district standings, as well as NFL news.

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Frequently Asked Questions

Q: I'm a new coach. Whom can I contact about starting a team?

A: Experienced coaches are eager to talk to new NFL coaches. First, you can use the District Contacts directory to contact your district chair, who can answer questions and set you up with an area mentor. Additionally, you can use our coaching resources for useful documentation on how to start your team successfully. Finally, feel free to contact Adam Jacobi, Coordinator of Member Programs & Coach Education at **jacobi@nflonline.org** for further assistance.

Q: How can I find schools in my area that compete in speech and debate?

A: NFL coaches have access to reports that list participating schools in your district. Go to: **www.nflonline.org/points_application/reports.php** and select "**District**" from the options at the top. Then, click "**District Tournament Report (List of schools by strength)**" and select your district name from the dropdown list and click "**Search**." Finally, your state organization most likely has a Web site that will give you a schedule of upcoming tournaments and a list of schools that participate throughout your state, and your District Chair will be able to direct you there.

Q: Can I join NFL mid-year?

A: Yes! However, we suggest that you join quickly to maximize every opportunity to participate.

Q: Can my former students get credit in college for being in the NFL?

A: Yes! Some institutions offer credit or simply award credit by examination to NFL alumni. Call the National Office for official proof of membership.

Q: I used to compete in NFL years ago, how can I find my record?

A: If you competed since 1996, your record can be found online; otherwise, call 920-748-6206 or e-mail alumni@nationalforensicleague.org.

Q: My school is under financial burden. Are there grants available through NFL?

A: Lincoln Financial Group is a proud sponsor of the NFL and offers grants to speech and/or debate programs with financial needs. The grant consists of free school membership and 5 free student memberships. Call our Director of Finance to see if your school qualifies for a grant.

Q: I'm provisional. Other schools in my district are charters. Why am I different?

A: New schools are granted ***provisional chapter*** status, allowing them to record points, attend the District Qualifier, and compete in the National Tournament. In order to attain ***charter*** status, provisional chapters must earn 50 members/degrees in a three-year period. A ***member chapter*** has completed three years of provisional membership and has not met the minimum requirements for charter status, or it has returned to the League within five years of absence. Charter chapters who do not maintain the 50 members/degrees requirement over a three-year period also are move to member chapter status. Chapter status determines votes for district and national leadership in the NFL.

Q: How does my school qualify to participate in the District Tournament?

A: You will receive information from your District Chair, however it is our suggestion that you contact your District Chair and notify them of your interest. If you are having problems, please contact Adam Jacobi at the National Office. All schools are encouraged to participate in the District Tournament!

Earning Competition Points

Students earn points at local, state and nationwide open invitational events.

Debate (including Mock Trial, Teen Court): Win = 6 pts., Loss (or no decision) = 3 pts.

Original Speeches: first place rank = 6 pts.

- ✓ Student wrote the speech.
- ✓ At least 8-10 minutes long (except Extemp., which is 7 minutes)

Expository/Informative
Extemporaneous
Informative
Advocacy
Commentary
Persuasive
Public Address
Oratory
American Legion

Non-Original/Interpretive Presentations: first place rank = 5 pts.

- ✓ Non-original (created by others)
- ✓ At least 8-10 minutes in length.

Advocacy
Analysis of Address
Cold Poetry
Declamation (Non-original Oratory)
Dramatic Performance
Duet
Editorial Comment
Farrago
Great Speeches
Humorous Declamation
Bible Interp.
Duet Oral Interp.
Duo Interp.
Duo Dramatic
Humorous Interp.
Individual Oral Interp.
Interp. of Public Address
Interpretative Reading
Program Oral Interp. (or PPI)
Serious Interp.
Thematic Interp.
Literature Program (Reading)
Manuscript Reading
Memorized Public Address
Moments in History
Monologue
Odyssey of the Mind
Oratorical Analysis
Oratorical Commentary
Oratorical Declamation
Oratorical Interp.
Oratorical Interp. of Declamation
Standard Oratory
Original Prose & Poetry
Pentathlon
Performance of Literature
Program Poetry
Duo Reading
Play Reading
Program Reading
Verse Reading
Solo Acting
Speech to Entertain
Thematic Analysis of Public Address
Verse

Shorter Presentations: first place rank = 4 pts.

- ✓ Lack of content
- ✓ Shorter length (4-5 minutes)

After Dinner
Announcing
Book Review
Children's Literature
Comic Book Interp.
Creed Speaking
Creative Storytelling
Creative Expression
Demonstration
Discussion
Duo Improv.
Four Minute
Impromptu
Impromptu Duet
Interview
Optimist Oratory
Original Comedy
Original Works
Panel
Preaching
Radio Announcing
Radio Commentary
Retold Story
Salesmanship
Special Occasion Speaking
Spontaneous Argument
Soap Box Speaking
Sports casting
Storytelling
Table Topics
Tall Tales
Voice of Democracy
TV Announcing/Reporting

CIDNI: Scored by win or loss; **Win** = *rank 1* = **4** pts.; **Loss** = *rank 3* = **2** pts.

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Participating in NFL Tournaments

The NFL holds two major competitions each year; the District Tournament and the National Tournament. The District Tournament holds competition "Main Events" (see "Competitive Events Offered" section of this guide for further information). The National Tournament offers competition in Main, as well as Supplemental and Consolation Events.

While the NFL only *hosts* two tournaments, it is imperative to remember that a student receives NFL points throughout the *entire* forensic season by entering points from at local, invitational, regional, and state contests. Other speaking events, such as presentations to civic organizations and community service activities, may also qualify for points. For this reason, NFL involvement extends throughout the year as students continually engage in public speaking, service, and leadership opportunities.

District Tournament

The District Tournament determines what students qualify to compete at the National Tournament. To participate in the District Debate/Speech Tournament Series and/or the District Congress, a student must (1) be a member of the NFL at a school in good standing (coaches must verify that all of their entries were members of NFL seven days prior to the tournament), (2) have not attended a secondary school more than 9 semesters, and (3) meet the age and eligibility requirements of his/her state activities association. The size of a team's district entry depends on the number of members and degrees earned. A solo speech or Lincoln-Douglas contestant counts as one entry. A team (including public forum, policy, and duo) also counts as one entry. **Regardless of a team's size, all NFL member schools are encouraged to enter all NFL points and attend the District Tournament.**

The number of qualifiers in each event varies between districts depending on district strength and number of entries; check with the District Chair for this information. In addition to qualifiers, there are alternate positions available (in case a qualifier does not attend the National Tournament). A more in-depth explanation of the District Tournament process can be found in the District Tournament Manual, found online on the NFL Web site.

National Tournament

Hosted in a different location each year, the NFL National Tournament is the largest high school forensics tournament in the world! With more than 3,500 students, coaches, and supporters in attendance, simply qualifying to the National Tournament is considered a mark of achievement and excellence.

Regardless of whether a student qualifies to the National Tournament, we encourage all coaches to attend for educational purposes. Often, coaches remark that seeing the nation's top competitors made forensics "click" for them.

How to Record NFL Points

Start on the NFL home page by clicking on the button in the upper right-hand corner titled "Click here to enter NFL points >"

Step 1: Become an NFL member by applying or renewing, online or by mail.

If you are already a member school, then skip to step two. If not, or if you wish to renew your membership, then follow the directions below:

Applying Online

A NEW school may join the NFL ***with a credit card*** by clicking on [*Apply Online*].

- On the next screen click [*Continue*].
- Next, complete all of the information boxes. Note: Fill in the *Advisor* box with the name of the head coach of the speech and debate program for the school.
- Complete billing information requested (annual dues are $99; there is a $6 credit card processing fee, so the total will be $105).
- Click [*Apply*] after all the information fields are completed.

A new school may also join the NFL ***by check or purchase order***:

- Click [*Apply Online*].
- On the next screen, click on [*School Membership Application*].
- Print the application and complete all of the information
- Mail it to the National Office along with the $99 annual dues.

Renewing Membership

A school that was a member of the NFL last year may ***renew*** its membership online:

- Log on to nflonline.org and accessing the school profile page.
- Click the "red stop sign" on the school profile page.
- Mark the box for *Annual Dues*.
- Complete the required information at the bottom of the screen. A credit card will be required to renew a school's membership online.

A school may renew its membership through the mail by accessing the Affiliate or chapter renewal form on the NFL Web site, available under Coaching Resources, Getting Started. Print the appropriate form and mail to the National Office along with the dues and any outstanding monies owed.

Step 2: Log on to the NFL Web site

Within a week of our receiving a school's completed paperwork and dues, an NFL chapter school will be enabled on the Web site. The National office will send an assigned user name and password to new school NFL Advisors at this time. A coach who was the Advisor last year will be able to log in with the same user name and password. Please note that an advisor will not be able to log on until his/her dues and any outstanding invoices are paid.

- After logging onto the NFL site, you will be greeted by the NFL Home Page.
- In the upper right hand corner, click on [*Click Here to Enter NFL Points*]. You will immediately be taken to the Points Application Login Screen.

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Step 3: Enroll new members

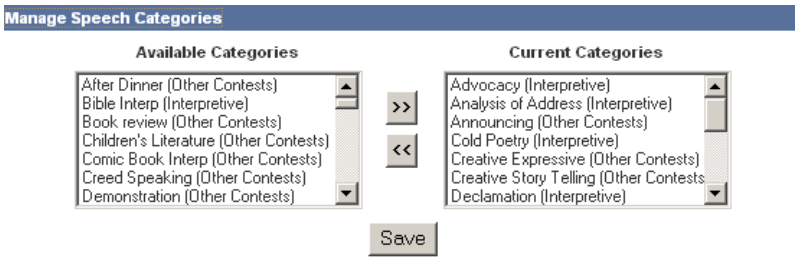
- Click on [*Add Students*] and complete the information requested in the Add New box.
- Click [*Add*]. New students' names will appear in your school profile under *View Non-Member Students*.
- The system may, as a safety check, respond with a list of student names with the same graduation year as the ones you are entering. Scroll down and check to be sure that the student you adding was not a student member at a previous school.
- If your student did not previously compete at another school, click [Save].
- If your student's name appears because he or she was an NFL member at a previous school, click on the dot in front of that record and click [*Save*]. This will transfer the record to your school.

NOTE: The National Office must be notified within 24 of a duplication of a student record.

Step 4: Manage Speech Categories

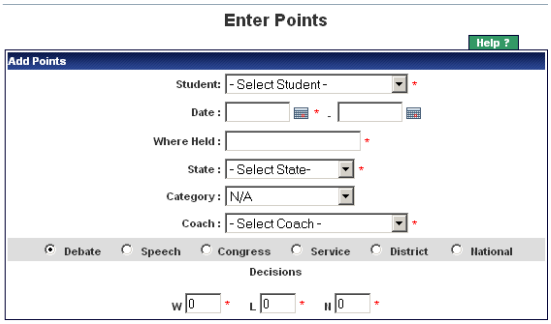
Before entering points you will need to set up your list of speech events. To do so,

- On the school profile, click [*Manage Speech Categories*].
- Click on any event that your school participates in and move it to the *Current Category* side. To do this, hold down the control key and click individual events.
- Move the highlighted events by clicking the arrows to the right.
- Once finished, click [*SAVE*].
- Each time you record points, you will only see these events in your drop down list. This feature is designed to save you from having to scroll through the entire list of events each time you record points. At any time, you may make changes to this list by adding or removing them.



Step 5: Entering Points

You may choose to enter points either by *student point sheet* or by *tournament*.



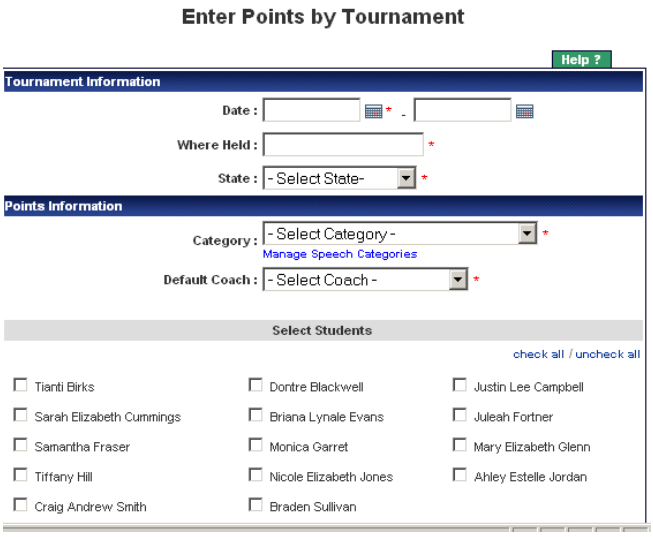
To enter points by *Student Point Sheet*:

- Click on [*By Student Point Sheet*].
- Choose the category you wish to enter by clicking the circle in front of Debate, Speech, Congress or Service.
- Select the student's name you wish to record.
- Next, fill in the date of the tournament by typing in the date or use the calendar behind the box.
- Select a coach to receive 10% of the student's points for the student.
- Complete the remaining information.
- Click on [*Add Points*]. The entry you made will now appear in the list of point entries for that student.

To enter points by *Tournament*:

To enter by tournament,

- Click on [*By Tournament*].
- Complete the tournament information.
- Choose the first category to enter.
- Next, choose the coach to receive coaching credit for the points in this category. This coach will receive 10% of the points added.
- Select all students that participated in this category by clicking on the box in front of their name.
- Click on [*NEXT*].
- Complete the result information for each student for that category.
- Click [*Add Points*].
- When the screen reply says "Points Added Successfully" you will click on *[Next]*.
- Choose the next category and repeat the above steps until all events for that tournament are entered.



Remember, unlimited rounds may be recorded in speech and debate (remember to enter rounds not ballots), but only 24 points a day may be earned in Congress and only 4 Service Projects per day.

Other NFL Points System Tools

You may complete a number of tasks on the NFL Web site, including applying for student membership, assigning user rights, contacting customer service, making corrections, obtaining membership reports, paying dues and fees, retrieving your password, and setting up new coach user rights. A step-by-step guide to each task follows.

Apply for Student Membership

When students have earned 25 points, they are eligible to become members of the NFL. To complete the application for student membership:

- At the top of the billing screen click on [Membership Application]
- Complete the date range with starting and ending date (MM/DD/YYYY) and click [*Search*].
- Verify all names and graduation dates. Only the students with the required 25 points to become a member will be listed. A student entered with less than 25 points is not a member and will show on the school profile under "View Non-Member Students."
- Print the application for student membership.
- Have your principal sign the application and **retain it in your chapter record book**. Please do not mail the application.
- When the NFL database receives your new members, the national office will send you an invoice for new members ($15 each) in the same envelope with their membership cards and hand embossed and sealed NFL student certificates.

  Note: The invoice will not have the names of the new students on it. The invoice will say "four new members for the total owed of $40". You can refer to the application

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form you printed or the membership cards in the envelope to check and see what four new students the invoice is for.

- Please pay this invoice in 30 days. After 60 days a $25 late fee will be assessed. Additionally, a school with any outstanding debt to the NFL will not be allowed to participate in the District or National Tournament.

Assign Previous Users Rights

Only the person officially listed as the NFL Advisor can activate other coaches who were online users previously. To do so

- Click on the coach's name and then on the pencil behind the coach's name.
- Choose what permissions the coach should have.
- When you click on none of the permissions they will be able to enter points for existing students only.
- When you click [*Edit Points]* they can enter points to existing students as well as make corrections to those entries.
- When you click [*Add Member*s] they can add NEW members, add points to new and existing members, and edit all points.
- Finally, you mark them *Enabled* and click [*Submit*].

Contact Customer Service

The Customer Service button is a way for you to contact the National Office with any questions or concerns. To contact Customer Service,

- Click the Help Menu located in the upper right hand portion of each page.
- Complete all information requested.
- Include your questions or concerns in the Comments box.
- Click [Submit]. You will receive a reply from Customer Service or the proper department within 48 hours.

Make Corrections

To correct an error made when entering points

- Click on the student's name.
- Then click the pencil in front of the erroneous entry.
- Change the information that is wrong.
- Click on the disk in front of the entry to save the correction.
- To delete an entry, you will need to email all information about the entry to including entry information, school name, state, student's name and person requesting the deletion to: **nflptcorrections@nflonline.org.**

Obtain Membership Reports

The NFL site offers a number of interesting reports for your information: Contenders for All American honors, Chapter Honor Societies, the District Standing of each chapter in each district, etc. To access these reports

- Click on the tool bar marked [Membership Reports].
- Choose which type of report you wish to view by marking the circle in front of Student, Coach, School, or District.
- In each of these categories a different list of reports will appear in the box. Click on the report you wish to view.
- Complete requested information and click [Search].

Please note that Membership Reports may be accessed year-round and do not require logging on. They may also be accessed on the front page of the NFL Web site under "About the NFL"

Pay Dues and Fees

To pay dues and fees:

- Assign points for new students first.
- Click on the school name at the top of the page.
- Click on the red ***exclamation point*** next to the school name. The next screen will list any new students that are not paid.

Retrieve Your Password

If you forget your password, click on [Forgot Password] on the Login Screen and follow the instructions. Your password does not have to change each year.

Please note that both user names and passwords are case sensitive. The NFL Office will never know your password; however, we will always have your user name on file.

Set up New Coach User Rights

To set up an assistant coach as an online user,

- Go to [Add [Coaches] and fill in the information requested in the Add New section.
- Click [Add].
- Next, click on the school name at the top of the screen to return to the School Profile.
- Then click on [View Non-Member Coaches] and choose the coach's name that you wish to give online rights to.
- Click on the pencil behind that coach's name.
- Type in that coach's email address.
- Click on [Assign User Name] and type in a user name (which you will need to tell them and it must be typed EXACTLY) and assign them a password and then confirm the password (again must be EXACT).
- Then click on [Manage Permissions], to choose which rights you wish for them to have.
- Finally, you must click on [Account Enabled] and click [Submit Changes].

For any questions about the NFL Web site that have not been answered here, please contact the National Office at (920) 748-6206.

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NFL Points and Honors:

Student/Coach Awards & Service Points

I logged the points! Now what?

After a coach has logged 25 NFL points for a student, he/she will receive a bill in the mail for $15, a one-time fee for each student. This fee will cover his/her LIFETIME membership in the NFL.

As the year progresses, students can earn degrees based on their speech experiences. The following explains student degrees:

Insignia Jewels – These jewels are earned when a competitor acquires each new degree. Purchasing the keys and pins that display the "jewel" is optional. Many NFL members display pins on their clothing at tournaments. It is considered prestigious, by most, to wear one.

(No jewel) – Merit degree (base membership) – 25 points
Emerald – Honor degree – 75 points
Sapphire – degree of Excellence – 150 points
Ruby – degree of Distinction – 250 points
Double Ruby – degree of Special Distinction – 500 points
Triple Ruby – degree of Superior Distinction – 750 points
Quadruple Ruby – degree of Outstanding Distinction – 1000 points
Quintuple Ruby – degree of Premier Distinction – 1500 points

The NFL Key or Pin – This award is silver for students, gold for instructors. It is jeweled to mark the degree a competitor or coach has attained. Purchase is optional.

COACHES also receive points! Coaches receive one-tenth the points earned by their students, and earn degrees per the schedule above. After a minimum of five years as an NFL member, a coach who attains 1500 points is awarded a ***diamond***; he or she receives a second diamond for 3000 points, a third for 6000 points, and so on. Five years must pass between each diamond.

Service Points

A common mistake among new coaches is that they accidentally overlook the service points category. This is a fast way for students to earn their 25 points to become members.* A speech given to 25 or more adults in person, over the radio, or on broadcast or cable television will earn service points (excluding school PA announcements).

* At least 10 of the initial points needed for membership must be obtained in interscholastic competition.

See the next section for more details on service projects.

Service Projects

Recognized Service Projects

- A speech before at least 25 adults or on radio, television, or cable, however, school public address (PA) announcements are ***not*** allowed.
- ***Contests*** held before audiences of at least 25 adults or on radio, TV, or cable may be counted as both service and competition.
- Minimum speaking time must be four (4) minutes (length of individual participation in a panel/discussion must be estimated).
- Students who hold Degree of Excellence on record in the national office may judge up to 4 rounds of novice competition per day and receive 2 points per round.
- No more than 4 service projects may be recorded each day.

Type of Speaking

- Master of Ceremonies
- After Dinner *or* Public Address Speech
- Oratorical Interpretation *or* Declamation *or* Analysis of Address
- Book Review *or* Commentating *or* Sportscasting
- Original Oration *or* Persuasive *or* Expository *or* Informative Speech
- Debate *or* Discussion Panel
- Poetry *or* Prose Reading *or* Storytelling
- Dramatic *or* Duo *or* Humorous Interpretation
- Sales Talk *or* Sermon
- Extemporaneous *or* Impromptu Speech
- Television *or* Radio Announcing
- Optimist Oratorical Contest *or* American Legion Contests
- PTA Meeting *or* Civic Group Meeting
- HS Assembly -- No points are earned for speaking to a student audience of any kind other than the official high school assembly, so this exact term, "HS Assembly," must be used. Such vague entries as "school auditorium," "church," or "school" invalidate the entry.

NFL-Sanctioned Service Projects

- The People Speak Global Debates – see www.nflonline.org/Partners/ThePeopleSpeak.
- International Public Policy Forum - 6 pts. for each round participated in

Judging

A student holding the Degree of Excellence on record may be awarded two service points per round or section of judging in a novice or middle school tournament, limit of 4 rounds per day.

Allowed Audiences

- Except for NFL-sanctioned service projects (described above), at least 25 adults must be present in a public audience assembled.

- These Audiences Qualify (be sure to identify the specific name of the group/assembly): High School Assembly, Radio/Broadcast TV/Cable Station (note call letters), Broadcast or Cable Television Station, Rotary, Kiwanis, and other service clubs, Church Congregation, Adult community or political organizations.
- If the audience is one usually composed of young people and 25 adults are also present, the audience may be designated as "Scouts and Parents" or "Hi-Y and Adults."

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Information Required for Reporting Service

- Date: Month, day, and year.
- Description: Include exact type of speaking (see that section above for descriptive phrases). Do not include title or subject; the word "Service" is too vague.
- Number of Adults: Enter the approximate number, at least 25. Only persons beyond high school age are regarded as adults.

Schedule for Awarding NFL Points

Degree Standing°	Points per Project
Non-member (less than 25 points)	1 pt.
Member (25+ pts.)	2 pts.
Honor (75+ pts.)	3 pts.
Excellence (150+ pts.)	4 pts.
Any degree of Distinction (250+ pts.)	5 pts.

° To receive the extra points allowed for Advanced Degrees, a member must actually have the advanced degrees on record in the National Office at the time of the service project.

For a speaking project before the high school assembly the minimum one point prevails unless the report indicates that 25 adults were in the audience.

If an interscholastic debate or contest is held under conditions qualifying it as a service project (over radio/TV/cable or before an adult audience or high school assembly), it is to be listed in a competitive category ***and*** also in the service category. Points are to be awarded in both categories.
A student may ***not*** receive points for more than **four** service speaking projects a day. Summer Service speaking may be recorded.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Visit **www.nflonline.org/CoachingResources/FAQs**
for a comprehensive list of frequently asked questions.

Partner Programs

In addition to competitive public speaking, the NFL proudly partners with these programs. For more details on such incentives, visit **www.nflonline.org/Partners**.

The following two contests meet a number of cross-curricular goals to extend communication skills. The People Speak asks students to engage members of the public to raise awareness of issues, to implement solutions through service, and to document/blog their experiences. The International Public Policy Forum cultivates students' abilities in developing convincing written arguments, bridging the gap between written and oral communication. Students who participate in these opportunities not only earn NFL merit service points above and beyond the non-district/national point recording limit, but could earn an opportunity to win a travel experience of a lifetime.

The People Speak

The People Speak.org
Speak Up. Change the World.

Participating students research the selected topic and prepare clear, persuasive arguments. A toolkit and online resources describe how to set up a public debate or performance showcase to engage members of the community. In addition to this opportunity, participating schools can compete to send two two-person teams to the United Nations Foundation Global Student Leadership Summit. For more information, visit **www.nflonline.org/Partners/ThePeopleSpeak**.

International Public Policy Forum

INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC POLICY FORUM

This contest – sponsored by *New York University and the Bickel & Brewer Foundation* – gives students the opportunity to participate in oral and written debates on issues of public policy. The IPPF is available to all high schools free of charge, and participating schools are eligible for substantial rewards, both in terms of experience and prizes (with a grand prize of $10,000). For guidelines, deadlines, and more information, visit: **www.bickelbrewer.com/debate**.

Coach Professional Development

NFL believes its most valuable resource is its people. Whether we are giving youth a voice, training youth for leadership, or empowering educators, our goal is simple: to reinforce coaches' identity as professionals, provide training and development in forensics, and accredit/recognize the accomplishments of its members. Here are the programs we offer:

- Online Professional Development (in partnership with Minnesota State University, Mankato)
- Coach Accreditation
- Coach Workshop Scholarships (in partnership with several leading, national institutes)
- National Tournament Clinics
- School Faculty Seminars

Visit **www.nflonline.org/CoachingResources/ProfessionalDevelopment**.

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Building Your Program

While forensics provides an enormous potential benefit for every student who participates, many students do not realize it! For this reason, recruitment is necessary to build a successful forensics program. In fact, one of the most important roles of a forensic advisor involves identifying and recruiting students that could benefit from speech and debate competition.

While every school is different, this chapter outlines some of many ways to recruit students. Before beginning the recruitment process, you should first decide exactly how many students your team can accommodate (aim high!). Make that number your goal. Then, using the strategies provided in this guide – or even a few of your own – pursue the students you need to realize that goal!

Once you have recruited a speech and debate team, continue to build your team by engaging faculty, administrators, parents, and community members. Fundraising may also enable your team to travel and compete successfully. Above all, be persistent and optimistic. Who knows – using some of these tactics, you may even surpass your original ambition!

Recruitment Ideas

Create a Team Web Site

Because the Internet is quickly becoming the fastest growing marketing tool available, Web sites are a great idea for recruiting students and parents to help move your program forward. If your school has a Web site, talk with the webmaster about creating a space for your team. The team site can include a membership roster, your mission, a tournament calendar, team/school forms, news/press releases on the success of the team, and most importantly, your contact information. This Web site will also be a great asset to keep all faculty and administrators abreast of the happenings of your team.

Public Showcase

A great way to recruit other students to join your team is by having them watch live presentations of speeches, debates or performances. Some coaches put on annual public performances to show what the forensics team has been doing all year. Showcasing your team is a great way to gain financial support from administrators and it offers a chance for the community to see your team in action! Public performances can also be during the day for the student body of your school. When students see other students having fun with forensics, they are more inclined to join themselves. Additionally, your program can earn incentives and NFL points by holding public debate – see p. 26 for details.

Write a Letter

Since effective oral and written verbal skills are necessary components in forensics competition, one idea for recruitment is to send a letter to all of your advanced English classes. This is a way to recruit students that are already making good grades and have sufficient writing skills that are imperative in speech and debate competition. Also, many established teams send out letters the year prior for the upcoming season. In general, teachers in the humanities are great allies for your program.
See Figure 1 for example letter that could be formatted to use at your school.

Publicize Accomplishments

After a tournament, publicize tournament results from your team. This is a great way to get your team's success in the public eye. Often, at the beginning, a team doesn't have many trophies to report. Don't let this deter you from writing a compelling press release. You could write "Jayna Beal received a perfect score at the McLeod HS Invitational on Saturday for her performance in Dramatic Interp." Then, when a student wins his or her first tournament, treat it like the Academy Awards.

Send your typed results everywhere you can, and send them every time you compete:

- ✓ to the public relations/communications director for your school/district
- ✓ to the faculty and staff at your school, including your Web site staff
- ✓ to your Board members and Superintendent
- ✓ to the person who makes the daily announcements at your school and to your local paper.

See Figure 2 for a sample press release.

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Figure 1: Sample Recruitment Letter

Dear (Student Name):

Congratulations on receiving this letter! You have been nominated by one or more of your teachers for the 200x-200x (Anytown High School) Forensics team. I hope that you consider this outstanding academic opportunity.

On the (Anytown High School) Forensics team, our success is a direct result of our character, integrity, and hard work. Our students have achieved rare honors and top accolades for their achievement. You too can be one of our next success stories. Consider students like Devin Smith – a 9th grader at AHS who won the Washburn Rural High School Novice Tournament. Or, think about LaTosha Seals, who went undefeated in 3 tournaments this year. You might know Matt Lang or Anish Patel . . . they earned top honors at our National Forensics League District Debate Tournament. These and so many other 9th and 10th grade students began their debate career last year and soon became some of the best competitors in the state. You can too!

The medals, the trophies, the overnight hotel trips, the squad parties . . . they are just part of the reason our students work hard and have fun. Our program is centered on producing the best and brightest students in the state. Imagine your potential as a graduate of (Anytown High School) with a background in Debate and Forensics . . . you think faster, you argue better, and you speak clearly and with a sense of purpose and style. This is what your teachers see in you, and it's what I want to see from you too.

Don't get me wrong . . . I'll expect you to work harder than you've ever worked. You'll be required to give up several Fridays and Saturdays to attend tournaments all over the state. You'll be expected to wear professional dress clothes. As a student in our program, you'll be expected to be the model of character and integrity. I expect nothing less than your best. But the rewards for your hard work will far outweigh the effort you put into it. You will be a part of a family that works hard and has fun. From the day you onto our team, you will have a circle of colleagues that you'll be proud to call your friends.

If you are interested, and I hope you are, I want you to talk with your parents. When your family has decided to be a part of our family, I want to you to visit with your AHS counselor and asked to be enrolled it the debate and/or forensics classes. I hope to see you in class this August! Once you enroll, you'll receive an invitation in May to attend our annual Speech & Debate Summer Camp during the first week of August. It's optional, but will be critical for those forensics students who want to be among the very best in the state!

Best Wishes,
(I. M. Coach) *or* (I. M. Captain & A. Co-Captain)

Figure 2: Sample Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:
Mitch Jacob, (555) 555-1234
mitch.jacob@anytown.k12.st.us

Specific But Concise Title Describing the Accomplishment

ANYTOWN -- Anytown High School placed 3rd of twenty schools at the Metropolis Invitational on Saturday, November 20. The team won seven awards at the meet. Senior Meredith Abernath led the team with first place in Poetry and sixth in Storytelling. Merryville West High took first at the tournament, followed by Ashton Falls, Anytown, Eldorado, Mayberry, and Valley Forge rounding out the top six schools.

Anytown will next compete at the Crest City Holiday Classic Invitational on December 4. Full team results are listed below.

Jane Eyre: 2nd, Prose; Agnes Corum: 6th, Dramatic Interpretation and 2nd, Improv Duo; K. C. Outfielder: 1st, Poetry and 6th, Storytelling; Ebenezer Scrooge: 3rd, Prose; Walt Whitman: 2nd, Improv Duo.

Anytown High School's Forensics program is coached by Mitch Jacob, a two-diamond National Forensic League coach and secretary of the Anystate League.

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Thoughts on Recruitment

J. Scott Wunn, NFL Executive Director

Below, I have outlined a short step-by-step process that represents my general strategies on recruitment. I hope that you can find some of these things helpful, however, keep in mind that there are no guarantees and only you know the system in which you are working. Good Luck!

Pre-Step: Answering Some Basic Questions

- What are your recruitment goals?
- How many students do you wish to have in your program?
- How will recruitment affect your budget situation (is there additional fundraising potential)?
- How many students does your administration want in the program?
- Will the level of administrative satisfaction increase with a rise in numbers?
- What type of student do I wish to recruit and work with?
- How many students to my assistants (if any) wish to work with?
- What are the chances of increasing my number of assistants when I increase the number of participants?
- How much time am I willing to put in before and after school to accommodate the increase in numbers?
- What other programs will I directly affect in make a massive push for increased participation in my program?
- Who do I definitely have to have on my side during the recruitment process?
- What resources do I have available to me to reach the kids that I would like to recruit?

Once you have the basic questions answered, you will then have a better understanding of the extent to which you want to recruit and concerns you may have. Make sure that you discuss your concerns with assistant coaches, administrators, or fellow teachers prior to beginning the recruitment process.

Step I: Attitude

Speech and Debate is a wacky activity. If you want to recruit the wacky students necessary to be successful in the activity, you have to be the wackiest person in the building. This means that although you are unbelievably busy, you need to participate in as much school stuff as possible. You have to establish that a relationship with you, in your program, will be the most incredible experience that the student has ever had.

Examples of this include: Dressing up with the kids on crazy dress-up days; getting on the announcements every once in a while and doing crazy stuff; being in the halls during the passing periods waving "hello" to various classroom students as well as current debaters and speech team members. You have to generate discussion about who you are and what you do. If you get kids talking about you or the activity, you win!! !

Step 2: Get into Classrooms

During the first week of school, I work out my schedule so I can enter every single 9th and 10th grade English classroom for a 3-minute recruitment speech about speech and debate. This speech is designed to make the students interested in either you or the concept of speech and debate. I usually do this over the course of a Tuesday and Wednesday so that I can have my informational meeting for new members on Thursday after school. It is important that this occurs during the first week. Doing this requires you to somehow get your classes covered periodically throughout the two days. My last year coaching, I hit 24 classrooms during the two-day period.

Step 3: Announcements

This is kind of a no-brainer. I make sure that my meeting for new members is publicized in the announcements and whenever possible all week. The meeting should get announced to the point that students can finish the announcement before the secretary finishes reading it.

Step 4: Recruitment Assistance from Teachers

During the first few "teacher only" days and at the end of each semester, I e-mail all of the English teachers and ask them for a list of those students that they feel ought to consider speech and debate. I usually outline for them the type of student that I am looking for. I also encourage the teachers to mention speech and debate to these students as well.

It also helps to remember that forensics is a political nightmare. If a teacher feels that they were somehow responsible for the future success of a student who came into the program because of their encouragement, they will be yours for life. Don't forget to go back to those teachers and tell them, "We owe a lot to you."

Step 5: Recruitment from Kids

Great kids breed great kids. While peer pressure can be the major downfall for some students, it can also be their savior. I always sit down with my current kids at the beginning and end of each school year and have them list at least three students that they feel would make wonderful additions to our program. Before they make their list, I remind them of the type of student that I am looking for and discuss potential problems with recruiting friends that will not be dedicated to the program. I make sure that the students give me the correct spelling of the name, the current grade, and area (speech or debate) that they feel this person would excel in.

Step 6: Constant Recruiting

Once the school year begins, it is easy to resign yourself to the fact that you now have your team and this is the team you will have to live with the rest of the season. This is just not true. In 1998, I won my first state championship. On that state team were three students (one a state champion) that did not join the team until November. I spotted them in the hall, thought-"I need people like that," and asked them to come in to discuss the possibility of joining the team. Just like that – wammo! History was written.

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Step 7: Showcase your Current Team

During the current year of competition, you also need to think about the next year. Some kids will never join the team until they have a clear understanding of the team. Likewise, many faculty members will never advocate the team until they see the tangible benefits it brings to young people. Here are a few ways to showcase your team:

- A performance night – invite everyone, advertise it! Try to get students, faculty members, administrators, board members, etc.
- Have your students debate or perform at a faculty meeting. When my faculty was trying to decide whether or not a weighted grade system would benefit our students, many teachers wanted to be more educated on the weighted grade concept prior to voting on it. I volunteered our two top debaters to debate the issue in front of them. That one hour gained more respect for our program than anything I had ever done, period.
- Public Debates-A great community publicity stunt. Remember that many members of the community will have young people at your school. Parents also enjoy attending these events, and parental influence can be quite effective. Additionally, your program can earn incentives and NFL points by holding ***Global Debates*** – see p. 26 for details.
- Press Releases every single week. You must do this yourself or facilitate it. Sports teams are really the only constant article. Reporters will not find you for fine arts articles. Find a connection at your favorite paper. This will lead to some special interest articles when major things happen.
- Have your speech team do the morning announcements. However, make sure that the people you choose will do a great job and will be appropriate.
- Locker signs for good luck at tournaments. You don't have cheerleaders, but you may have groupies or just people on your team willing to do this.
- Students in the building will not know that a major debate or speech event is coming up if you don't tell them.
- Host tournaments. The activity surrounding a tournament will always arouse some interest. When students start asking, "What's going on?" you have exposed them to some extent.
- Have your students dress up during the day prior to leaving for a major tournament or hosting a major tournament. Other students will inquire as to the reason for dressing up, which means that again you have informed and exposed them to the activity.

Step 8: Junior High Speech and Debate Programs

This is an essential element to establishing a constant flow of competitors who are interested in the long haul. It also allows you to get an idea of whether or not you want to strongly recruit that child when they reach high school. At my former program, we would run a 6 week junior high debate program and a 6 week junior high speech program. Each program met once a week. I used seniors in the program to help my assistant facilitate this program. We ended our junior high school speech program with a tournament in Des Moines.

Step 9: End of the Year Barbeque

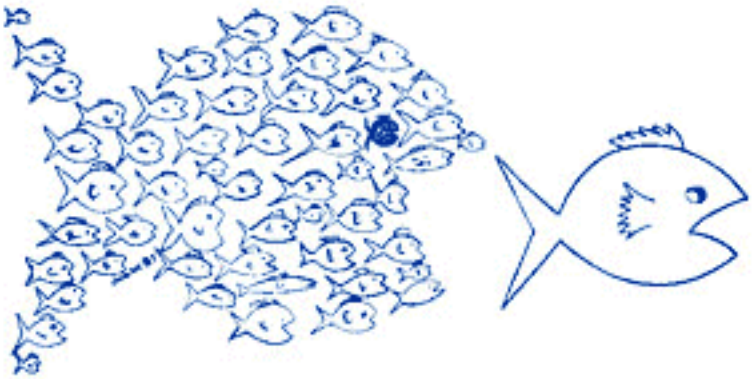
I bring my grill from home and set it up in the courtyard behind the school. All week long, I get on the announcements and advertise that I will be hosting a weenie roast for new recruits. I create a list of prospective students from teachers and current members and send them special invites to the weenie roast. At the BBQ, I tell a little bit about the program and what they need to do in the fall if they are interested. Then I showcase the nationals team. The entire goal of the BBQ is to show the new prospects that the speech team is for more than just nerds, and that it can be a "cool" thing to do. All current members are required to attend the BBQ as well.

Step 10: Over-recruit

Many people get caught up in whether or not they will end up with too many people on their team (or the wrong people). I do not worry about who is joining until they all have the program information and have actually signed the commitment sheet. Once you begin the grueling schedule of practices, you will most likely lose the bad seeds. However, YOU MUST STICK TO YOUR POLICIES or you will not lose these people. Even worse, they will probably cause chaos on your team.

If people leave, don't take it personally. I fight to keep everyone I can, but if you know the reason they are leaving is because they don't want to follow the policies, let them go. Each year, you will lose fewer and fewer people. Also, remember that every interaction with a student that you have never met could be a recruiting opportunity!

Finally, have fun recruiting! It is, by far, the best part of the activity because every student that you recruit would not have received the opportunity or benefits of speech and debate if you had not gone out and found them!!!



ORGANIZE

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Drafting a Plan to Build Your Program

J. Scott Wunn, NFL Executive Director

Ask four basic questions:

- What do I want to build?
- What resources do I need to build it?
- How do I begin construction?
- How do I sustain it through the storms?

Establish a floor plan:

- How many students do I want involved in my forensics program?
- How many students am I expected to have in my program?
- What areas of speech and debate are available?
- What kind of resource pool do I have?
- What is the history, if any, of the current program?
- What built in rewards will the program offer?

Figure out the answers:

- Start small and build with your success.
- Go to key Web sites: www.nflonline.org, www.forensicsonline.org, and your state/regional league Web site!
- Talk to your Principal, Activities Director, Department Chair, and other coaches to find out what financial and personnel resources are available.
- Find out from the other fine arts teachers what level of performance and participation is typical.
- Talk to other faculty about the history of speech and debate at the school.

Obtain Administrative/Faculty support:

- Take your floor plan to your Principal or Activities Director and establish your goals with him/her.
- Ask for permission to introduce yourself at a faculty meeting and introduce what you will be doing for the students.
- Eat lunch in the Faculty Lounge and discuss your upcoming plans to promote, keep faculty aware, and garner support for your endeavors.

Finance the Program:

- Explore all options for funding your program.
- Go to your administration with a very conservative cost estimate based on team size.
- Find out if you are allowed to charge participation fees.
- Find out if other programs are allowed to fundraise.

Get Parents Involved

As coach, you should make every attempt to utilize parents as a valuable competitive resource. Think of parents as partners. A few steps may facilitate this process:

1. Hold a meeting in the first two weeks of school with information for the parents about what is expected of them and what is expected of their child in the program. Set the meeting in the evening and have refreshments as well! Parents love food! This is also a good place to get parents to sign-up for committees. Communicate your coaching philosophy and expectations clearly and directly. Inform them of any needs you have for their assistance. Let them know how to best communicate with you.

2. Have a training session to show parents what the events are and how to judge. Make a videotape of this to share with parents who were not able to go to the workshop.

3. If you are traveling to local tournaments, ask parents to drive (if this is acceptable within school/district policies). When the parents arrive, have a list of all of the students who will be riding in the car.

4. Form parent committees. Have a tournament committee (who help with the tournament concessions and often with getting judges), fundraising committee, special events committee (recruitment ice cream social at the beginning of the school year, organize a public showcase evening), and PR committee (press releases, emails parents, etc.).

5. Have a Web site that parents can access to get itineraries, read announcements, etc. Communication is vital.

6. Form an email list so that everything you give to the students also gets to the parents. Parents want to be informed, and students often forget to give their parents paper bulletins.

7. When parents help out, send out thank you notes for all that they do. Mention them at the end of the year banquet/reception. Let them know how much you appreciate them.

8. Remember you are the coach and you are the one in charge. Parents are wonderful… consider their advice, but you ultimately run the program. Seek the assistance of the principal if needed, but always be proactive in alerting your school administration to any conflicts *ahead of time,* so your administrators aren't caught by surprise (never a good thing).

See Figure 3 for a sample of a parent bulletin, and the Appendix for additional samples of policies and other forms.

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Figure 3: General Forensics Program Information Bulletin for Parents

ANYTOWN HIGH DEBATE AND SPEECH

Director: Mitch Jacob School: (515) 123-4567 / Cell: 555-5555
E-mail: mitch.sullivan@anytown.k12.st.us
Assistants: Lacy McGuire, Randall Hanks, Geoffrey Hutchins

DEBATE PRACTICE SCHEDULES

All debate member meetings	Mondays from 3:30pm to 3:45pm
Varsity Lincoln Douglas	Tuesdays and Thursdays from 3:30 to 6pm
Novice Lincoln Douglas	Tues., Wed., and Thurs. from 3:30pm to 6pm
Varsity Policy	Monday-Thursday from 3:30 to 6pm
Congressional Debate	Thursdays from 3:30pm to 6pm

SPEECH PRACTICE SCHEDULES

All speech member meeting	1st and 3rd Monday of every month at 7:45am
Extemporaneous Speaking	Tuesdays from 3:30pm to 5:30pm
All other events	One 20 minute, individually scheduled practice per week. (More are optional)

TOURNAMENT SCHEDULES (See attached sheet for combined schedule)

Novice Lincoln-Douglas

Ankeny Duals (held at DM Roosevelt this year	Sat. Oct. 7th
Cedar Falls, IA	Fri Oct. 20th
The Glenbrooks, Chicago, IL	Fri-Sun. Nov. 17-19
IHSFL Cubed, Iowa City Community Schools	Fri/Sat. Dec. 1-2

Varsity Lincoln-Douglas

Dallas, TX	Thurs-Sun Sept. 14-17
W. Des Moines Valley	Fri-Sun Sept. 22-24
Ankeny Duals (held at DM Roosevelt this year	Sat. Oct. 7th
KANELLIS OVERNIGHTER	Host Fri/Sat. Nov. 10-11
The Glenbrooks, Chicago, IL	Fri-Sun. Nov. 17-19
GREAT MIDWESTERN NOVICE	Host Fri/Sat March 30-31

Novice Policy

Ankeny Duals (held at DM Roosevelt this year)	Fri/Sat. Oct. 6-7
KANELLIS OVERNIGHTER	Host Fri/Sat. Nov. 10-11
The Glenbrooks, Chicago, IL	Fri-Sun. Nov. 17-19
GREAT MIDWESTERN NOVICE	Host Fri/Sat March 30-31

Varsity Policy

Dallas, TX	Thurs-Sun Sept. 14-17
Dallas, TX	Thurs-Sun. Oct. 19-22
KANELLIS OVERNIGHTER	Host Fri/Sat. Nov. 10-11
The Glenbrooks, Chicago, IL	Fri-Sun. Nov. 17-19
Dowling Paradigm, W Des Moines, IA	Sat. Dec. 9
Minneapolis, MN	Fri/Sat. Dec. 15-16
GREAT MIDWESTERN NOVICE	Host Fri/Sat March 30-31

Congressional Debate

Ankeny Duals (held at DM Roosevelt this year)	Sat. Oct. 7th
Cedar Falls, IA	Sat. Oct. 21
KANELLIS OVERNIGHTER	Host Fri/Sat. Nov. 10-11
IHSSA State Debate, Ankeny, IA	Fri/Sat., Jan. 5-6
GREAT MIDWESTERN NOVICE	Host Fri/Sat March 30-31

Speech Events

Ankeny Duals (held at DM Roosevelt this year)	Fri. Oct. 6th
Cedar Falls, IA	Sat. Oct. 21
KANELLIS OVERNIGHTER	Host Fri/Sat. Nov. 10-11
The Glenbrooks, Chicago, IL	Fri-Sun. Nov. 17-19
Dowling Paradigm, W Des Moines, IA	Fri. Dec. 8
GREAT MIDWESTERN NOVICE	Host Fri/Sat March 30-31

MONETARY COMMITMENT

1. All hotel fees will be divided evenly among those students in attendance.
2. Once a family has paid $300 for hotel fees, no more fees will be assessed.
3. Students who go beyond the fundraising goal will be allowed to apply the additional profit to their hotel fees.

FUNDRAISING

1. Each student in the program will be required to participate in the "Stock in Talk" program. Complete paperwork on this program will be distributed in mid-October.
2. Each student will be required to raise $100 in the stock program. Additional money raised will be applied to that student's hotel fees.
3. We will also be generating funds from two tournaments that we host, as well as a rest stop fundraiser on Memorial Day weekend.
4. It is extremely important with the increase in numbers of participants that we prioritize financial backing.
5. If any parent has connections to possible corporate sponsorships or future fundraising ventures, please contact Mitch Jacob.

FRIENDS OF ANYTOWN HIGH DEBATE

It is our hope to begin the organization of "The Friends of Anytown High Debate." This particular group (consisting primarily of parents of current students and alumni) will establish specific committees to assistant in many facets of the program. Below is a list of the committees that will be formed within the group.

TOURNAMENT CONCESSIONS
FUNDRAISING
PARENTAL JUDGING
TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE

If anyone is interested in volunteering for chair positions on each of these committees, please see Mitch Jacob. We are also hoping to have one volunteer to serve as this year's coordinator of "The Friends of Anytown Debate." This could be a shared position if it would make individuals more comfortable with the commitment.

Thanks in advance for your dedication! We anticipate a successful and fulfilling year!

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Profitable Fundraising

Fundraising enables speech and debate programs to grow thrive. While you may be able to procure some financial support from your school administration (often in the form of NFL membership dues or other start-up costs), you will need additional monies to cover expenses such as travel costs, entry fees, and other miscellaneous expenses.

Fundraising opportunities are boundless; select the program that works best for your team. Regardless of the fundraising opportunity you pursue, however, a common approach to fundraising may maximize your windfalls.

- Begin fundraising with a planning session. Set financial goals and a fundraising time frame (we recommend 2 weeks for a fundraiser).
- Alert your community about fundraiser via parent letters, posters and community announcements. Publicity promotes profits!
- Hold a "kick-off" rally, which educates the kids on the fundraising programs, and build enthusiasm to reach fundraising goals.
- Once the fundraiser is underway, monitor your students' progress. Provide encouragement and incentives to keep students motivated.
- Once the fundraiser is complete, collect the order forms and money. Return these forms and payments to the fundraising company. At this time, you will probably also want to schedule delivery date with fundraising company.
- Keep accurate records – especially receipts – and communicate with your school bookkeeper.
- Set time and place for student and parents to meet to pick up delivered products. Have parents and teachers to volunteer to help distribute the product in an orderly fashion.
- Check for damaged products and any errors and make the necessary arrangements with the fundraising company for replacements.
- Have they student deliver their products that they sold. A personal thank you letter by the students can't hurt.
- Enjoy the fruits of your labor and start thinking of ways on improving your next fundraiser.

Remember, fundraising often improves with practice and persistence.

For a list and materials related to a variety of fundraising programs and packages, please visit: **www.nflonline.org/CoachingResources/Fundraising**

Tournament Competition Glossary

As with any specialized activity, jargon and abbreviations pervade forensics. Below, and in the pages that follow, are some of the most essential terms of art that will alleviate your uncertainty as a new coach, as well as the hesitancy any students new to forensics may feel.

Basic Tournament Terminology

- **Ballot**: the sheet of paper where judges write the results of an individual round of competition, which they submit to the Tab room.
- **Break**: advancing to the next level of competition; *break,* ***elimination*** *(****elims****)* or ***out*** rounds are much like "playoffs," with certain numbers of students eliminated at the end of each heat. The last break round of a tournament is the final round, or "finals," featuring two opposing debate teams or six speech contestants. *Also see "posting."*
- **Code**: many tournaments use a code system to keep the identity of contestants – and their schools – anonymous. Codes are often a combination of numbers and letters, which designate school, event and sequence (how many students from a particular school are in a given event).
- **Divisions**: categorizations of competition at a tournament, such as "varsity," "junior" or "JV," "novice," and "open."
- **Ethics**: rules or standards that govern conduct; when these are broken, there's usually a procedure for a coach to initiate a ***protest*** with a committee of impartial coaches, who adjudicate ethical problems.
- **Flight**: due to room or time constraints, tournaments will sometimes schedule back-to-back contests in the same room during a single round's timeframe.
- **Forensics**: overarching term for speech and debate, though it sometimes connotes speech competition, particularly in states with split debate and speech seasons.
- **Judge** (or **adjudicator**): an adult who evaluates a round of competition. Judges are drawn from educators, former competitors, and business professionals. Judges drawn from members of the local community, including parents are considered ***lay judges,*** for their lack of technical understanding of competition standards. Judges should be equipped with a timing device, writing utensils and paper.
- **Prelims**: guaranteed *preliminary* rounds of at a tournament, before competition *breaks* to *elim rounds.*
- **Posting**: process (*v.*) or location (*n.*) of prelim schematics or list of contestants breaking to elims.
- **Record**: in debate, the win-loss ratio, or in speech, the total ranks; a general *standing* of success.
- **Round**: an individual *heat* of competition, where students are matched to (an) opposing contestant(s) om a particular room with a particular judge or panel of judges. Rounds are sometimes divided into *flights*.
- **Schematics** (or "schem," "schemats"): matrix that assigns students to compete in particular rooms with particular judges for each round. In debate, these are often called "**pairings**."
- **Tab**: short for *tabulation,* this is the tournament headquarters, where results are computed. To protect integrity of competition, there are usually protocols about seeking permission to enter the Tab room.

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Debate Terminology

- ***Ad hominem* fallacy**: attacking a person rather than the argument
- ***Ad populum* fallacy**: claiming that something is true because of popular belief
- **Affirmative/Pro/Government** – the team or competitor arguing in favor of adopting the resolution.
- **Burden of Proof**: the affirmative's responsibility to that the resolution is true. If the affirmative fails to prove the resolution, he/she/they ought to lose the debate.
- **Burden of Rejoinder**: the negative's responsibility to disprove the affirmative case. If the negative fails to disprove the resolution, he/she/they ought to lose the debate.
- **Clash**: Direct responses to an opponent's arguments (see refutation).
- **Constructive**: the first speech given by each debater (both teams) in a round, used to build a case. New arguments are permitted during constructive speeches, which distinguishes them from rebuttals (wherein new arguments are not allowed).
- **Contention**: claims made for or against the resolution, often stated in one declarative sentence. A debate case may be organized into contentions
- **Cost Benefit Analysis**: one of the most common ways to decide a debate round, this philosophy requires a judge to analyze the benefits of a policy versus the cost. In other words, does the proposal do more harm or good?
- **Counterplan**: the negative admits the present system should be changed, but argues that the negative team's proposal (plan) is better than what the affirmative has offered.
- **Criterion**: standard, rule, or test on which a decision or judgment is based. In policy debate, the basis for establishing or evaluating policy (i.e., net benefits). In value debate, the criterion is the method by which the value is assessed (i.e., the value of "safety" can be measured in terms of freedom from harm i.e., a person is safe when he/she is not being harmed, and that's how you know that safety is occurring).
- **Cross Examination (Cross-Ex, CX)**: period of time when debaters ask each other questions.
- **Flowing**: note-taking during a debate, accurately recording the most important arguments and rebuttals. The paper on which this note taking occurs is known as a flow.
- **Inherency**: the reason a problem still exists. Also understood as the barrier to solvency. For example, if the federal government passed a discriminatory law, then that law would be the inherent barrier to a just society.
- **Judging Paradigm/Preferences**: a judge's educational philosophy, the model or view that guides his or her decision. In other words, what a judge does or does not want to hear in a round.
- **Leader of the Opposition**: first and last speaker for the Opposition team (in parliamentary debate)
- **Member of Government**: second speaker for the Government (in parliamentary debate)
- **Member of the Opposition**: second speaker for the Opposition (in parliamentary debate)
- **Negative/Con**: side that defends the present system and argues against the resolution
- **Opposition**: side that must negate/disprove the resolution (negative)
- **Prime Minister**: first and last speaker for the Government (Affirmative) team (in parliamentary debate)
- **Power Matching**: system of ranking in elim rounds where teams with equal records debate each other.

- **Rebuttal**: speech that rebuilds arguments after attacks, refutes arguments of the opposing team, and summarizes the debate. Generally, no new arguments are allowed in rebuttal speeches.
- **Refutation**: directly attacking the opposing teams' arguments (also known as clash).
- **Resolution**: the proposition or subject offered to debate.
- **Spirit of the Resolution**: what the resolution is "supposed" to mean. Usually decided in round.
- **Status Quo**: the current state of affairs, the present system.
- **Topicality**: an argument that states a competitor has misinterpreted a word in the resolution. Usually found in policy rounds – less common in value/public forum rounds.
- **Value**: a concept, standard, or ideal in value debate rounds. Something which, according to the debater, should be upheld, i.e. justice, freedom, equality, etc.
- **Voting Issues**: the key points in a debate that are crucial to the outcome, reasons why the judge should give the decision to a team.
- **Weighing Mechanism**: the standards by which a judge evaluates the success of the Government's and Opposition's cases, standards by which a decision is made (criterion).

Speech Terminology

- **Blocking**: movements made during a performance.
- **Category**: another word for "event," referring to a specific contest within forensics, such as Oratory, Duo Interpretation or Extemporaneous Speaking.
- **(to) Cut**: to take only selected sections from a literary piece. To cut to make time limits or to cut inappropriate material.
- **Double Entered**: entered in more than one event in a pattern. Also called ***cross entered***.
- **Draw**: limited prep events, such as Extemp., require that students prepare their response to a question or prompt distributed at the tournament for each round. The draw time is when students select their topic; followed by a prescribed preparation time before they speak (which, for Extemp., is 30 minutes). During that time, students must stay in the **Prep Room**, until they leave to speak.
- **Evaluation (**or **Critique** or **Ballot):** form where judges write specific, constructive comments.
- **Extemporaneous**: speaking without the benefit of a prepared or memorized manuscript. Brief notes are sometimes allowed.
- **Interp.**: short for *Interpretation,* refers to a performance-based event where a student brings literature alive off the printed page. *Also see "**piece**" below.*
- **Introduction**: opening of a piece; often referred to as an "intro," which is written by the competitor and (usually) memorized or (sometimes) given extemporaneously.
- **Patterns**: different groups of events. Events are divided into "Patterns" and run at different times. Usually there are three patterns in a tournament: Pattern A events, Pattern B events, and Debate.
- **Piece**: literary selection (title and author) performed in interpretation events. It's good practice – and several leagues require – that students find *quality* works of literature from *printed, published* materials, which "show insight into human motivations, relationships, problems, and understandings, and not by sentimentality, violence for its own sake, unmotivated endings, or stereotyped characterizations."
- **Pop**: when an individual performer suddenly changes characters when performing in an interp. event.

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- **Speechie**: a slang term which describes any competitor involved in **individual events**.
- **Speaking Order**: the order contestants are listed on the schematic for each round is the order in which those students should present. Conventional wisdom about speaking order is that primacy (first impression) and recency (the last word) are the choicest positions, so tournaments tend to mix the order students present in, to allow each contestant an equal opportunity to present close to first and last.
- **Teaser**: just prior to the introduction, a brief selection from the piece, which grabs the audience's attention, much as television shows have before the opening credits begin.
- **Time Signals**: hand signals showing how much time a competitor has left to speak in a limited preparation or debate event. Time signals are not given for interpretation or public address events.
- **Visual Aids**: often called V.A.'s. Visual aids, used to augment a speaker's message.

Congress Terminology

- **Agenda**: the order of legislation as suggested by a committee or legislator, and voted on by the assembly (sometimes called the "calendar").
- **Amendment**: a specific change to an item of legislation, explaining exactly which words it modifies, and not changing the intent of the legislation itself.
- **Authorship**: a constructive speech of up to three (3) minutes given by a legislator, which introduces an item of legislation for debate by the chamber. It is called a sponsorship speech if given by a student who is not affiliated with the school the legislation originated from. All authorship speeches are followed by a two-minute questioning period. All affirmative and negative speeches that follow an authorship speech should introduce new ideas (arguments) and respond to previous arguments (refute or rebut).
- **Bill**: type of legislation that describes the details of how a policy would be enacted, if voted into law by the assembly.
- **Committee**: small group of legislators who meet and bring recommendations to the full assembly.
- **Docket**: the complete packet of legislation (as titles or full text) distributed by a tournament.
- **Floor**: when a member has the full attention of the assembly to speak (also refers to the area where the assembly meets, where its legislators speak, and where it conducts its business).
- **Legislation**: specific, written proposal (in the form of a "bill" or "resolution") made by a legislator or committee for assembly to debate.
- **Precedence**: standard rule in most leagues, which requires the presiding officer to recognize speakers who have spoken least (or not at all).
- **Presiding Officer**: the leader of a legislative assembly who runs its meetings by recognizing members (legislators) to speak or move. Also called the "presiding officer," or "P.O." Modeled after the Speaker of the House, or the Vice President or President pro tempore of the Senate.
- **Questioning**: period where the members of the assembly ask individual questions of the speaker (sometimes called cross-examination). Multiple-part (or two-part) questions are not allowed (unless the rules are suspended for that instance), because they take time from other members who may wish to question the speaker.
- **Recency**: widely-used system (but not a rule), where the presiding officer not only employs precedence, but also recognizes speakers based on who has spoken least recently (or earlier).
- **Resolution**: an expression of conviction, or value belief of an assembly, which may urge, request or suggest further action by another decision-making authority.

Appendix A: Program Policy Samples

Practice & Bus Tickets from Practice

Depending on what event(s) a student is involved in, practice requirements vary. After school practices last until about 6 p.m. Since we don't practice every night, students are issued individual county bus tickets when they come. Generally, practice is on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Debaters meet all three days, Speech students meet on Mondays, and interp/performance students meet on Wednesdays and original speech/limited prep students meet on Thursdays. For purposes of safety, students must use the restroom and visit their lockers before coming to practice; once they leave (or practice ends), they are expected to leave the building immediately.

Tournament Calendar (abridged sample)

Information below is tentative. It is each student's responsibility to check the bulletin board weekly for updates on bus leave and return times. Be sure to cross-reference ACT/SAT dates, band/orchestra commitments and other conflicts, so you can plan around those. Debaters must be sensitive to their partners' schedules and communicate conflicts as early as possible. We will use a bus for all meets outside of the county, and to meets within the county on Fridays (pick-up from those meets will be at the tournament). For Saturday meets outside of the county, the bus will pick us up and return to the 19th Street (west) entrance.

Event Date	Speech/Congress – 2007-2008 Season	Bus	Report/Leave	Pick Up	Sign Up
Sat., Jan. 5	State Speech Workshop, *Whitefish Bay HS*	√	7:45 a.m.	1:30 p.m.	Dec. 13
Fri., Jan. 25	**Congress at Rufus King**° *(Banking Day)*		2:00 p.m	9:30 p.m.	Jan. 17
Sat., Jan. 26	Milwaukee Marshall, *4141 N 64th St. (just north of Capitol Dr)*		7:45 a.m.	4:00 p.m.	Jan. 17
Fri., Feb. 1	West Bend Congress	√	2:45 p.m.	9:30 p.m.	Jan. 24
Sat., Feb. 2	West Bend Tournament	√	6:45 a.m.	4:30 p.m.	Jan. 24
Fri., Feb. 8	**Congress at City Hall** *200 E. Wells (Kilbourn/Water)*		2:45 p.m.	9:45 p.m.	Jan. 31
Sat., Feb. 9	**Alverno College** *3400 S. 43rd St. (at Morgan Ave.)*		7:45 a.m.	3:30 p.m.	Jan. 31

• Boldface indicates tournament we host.

Membership

1. Students are assessed an annual *non-refundable* membership fee of **$20.00** to defray costs of awards and materials. Please see specific instructions on the membership form related to handing in payment.
2. Before a student may attend a competition or clinic, the following must be verified:
   a. Receipt of **membership fee** and signed **Membership/Agreement Form**
   b. Minimum school district athletic eligibility **grade point average** (third/fourth-year students must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA; first/second-year students may not receive more than one failing grade) and completed and notarized **Health Form.**
   c. The student must be present at school on the day of a competition, attending *all* classes prior to leaving.
   d. Students who transfer from other schools are subject to additional requirements by the Athletic Director.
3. To earn team awards, students must be *active* members of the team up to the end of the year, which includes earning at least 25 NFL points in that school year.
4. All school/district rules must be followed during practice and meets; infraction of these will result in school disciplinary action, suspension and possible expulsion from the team (forfeiting *active* membership).
5. Students are expected to participate in all fundraising activities (including tournaments we host), unless arrangements are made *in advance* and *in writing* with the director of forensics.

Preparedness, Registration & Punctuality

6. Every forensic event has standards (distributed separately) for proper preparedness; students must show self-discipline and fulfill such obligations before they will be registered to compete. Examples include, but are not limited to:
   a. Research and filing of evidence for debate events (including carding for debate; briefing for Congress)
   b. Reading, indexing and filing of current events articles for Extemporaneous Speaking
   c. Submission of scripted literature (or original speech) and a bibliographic cover page
   d. Drafting Congress legislation (in proper format) and submitting it electronically (e-mail attachment or disk)

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7. Students are required to practice regularly before or after school and are expected to communicate with coaching staff regarding their progress. ***Students requiring public transportation must make note on their membership form (individual tickets are distributed on an as-needed basis).***
8. Students sign up for meets on the bulletin board in the forensics room **by the posted registration deadline** *(see the calendar)* to be considered for competition, which indicates a commitment to attending that meet in a prepared manner. Registration for all meets is at the coach's discretion, and is based on tournament entry restrictions, practice, readiness, conduct and attitude. A list of registered students will be posted about a week before each meet.
9. Students who inexcusably cancel ("drop") from registration after the sign-up deadline, will be assessed a $30 "drop fee" per instance to cover committed registration and judging expense. For tournaments involving travel/lodging, additional fees may be levied, accordingly. Two drops in a season will result in suspension from the team.
10. Drop fees will be excused per district policies (illness, death in the family, etc.); however, the parent/guardian must contact the coach **prior to** the meeting time for that meet, and a letter must be given to the coach within 10 days of the missed competition. Any **travel** expenses must still be reimbursed to the team.
11. Students who are not at the designated meeting place (19th Street entrance or the site of the meet) on the day of a meet, by the exact time announced for that meet, and who have not contacted the coach (considered a "no-call, no-show"), will be assessed full drop fees, regardless of excuse – since no contact would have been made. Students may be suspended from the team.
12. **Financial Policies.** All fees assessed must be paid in full within two weeks of the missed meet, or the student will be suspended from the team until full payment is received. A late fee of $10 will be assessed for every month after the due date that the payment is not made. Fees not paid by May 1 will be referred to the school bookkeeper and the balance will be added to the student's unfinished business list.

Tournaments - In an academic activity where it takes courage to perform in front of others, proper *"foretiquette"* is crucial – from the moment you arrive at the city of the meet. In competition, ethical behavior reflects upon the entire squad. Gossip forsakes squad unity, and publicly complaining impedes our integrity in the greater forensic community. While the coaching staff supports free speech, remember to act responsibly with this privilege, especially in online settings. Finally, remember that MPS students are already misconstrued as "urban troublemakers." Prove the naysayers wrong! *Always cheer for and support other schools in our district.* Courtesy is the golden rule in "treating others as you would be treated." Students perceived as representing our team or school in a negative manner will be suspended and possibly expelled from the team and referred to school administration.

13. Students must follow district rules, and state and local laws regarding conduct in practice, competition, and on buses. Profane language, disrespectful attitudes (including insubordination) are not tolerated and will result in team suspension.
14. **Students should bring money to purchase a la carte food items at meets or pack a lunch.**
15. Do not enter a room until a judge is present, and if a contestant is speaking, wait outside until he/she is finished. If you move any furniture or modify the room in any way, return it to the way it was before you entered. **Give other presenters your undivided attention**. Nonverbal reactions and feedback are more powerful than what you say!
16. **Disruptive activities**, such as sports and playing stereos **are expressly forbidden** (stereos may be brought for Demonstration Speaking, but only played in competition). Contraband items will be confiscated, and disciplinary action will be taken. Activities that are encouraged are homework, reading, cards, theatre and improvisational games, and discussion/talking. Students must remain on the premises of competition sites.
17. When the team arrives at a meet, students must "warm-up" and remain together until they are dismissed by the coach to practice before rounds. The coach needs to distribute itineraries, room assignments, maps and information, which is logistically easier when everyone is in one place. Additionally, forming cliques or excluding anyone on the team from a group at any time will not be tolerated. The team must also sit together and use proper decorum at awards ceremonies, cheering equally for winning students from all schools, and giving the proper and standard attention to first place winners (usually, a standing ovation).
18. If you suspect a rules infraction or inappropriate behavior in a round, bring it to a coach's attention **immediately**. Only then can we alert the Tab room and rectify the situation. Whining about judges after meets is inappropriate. While there may be a *handful* of unqualified judges, they aren't *all* bad. Each judge brings a different background and different expectations to the round. Use constructive criticism as a means to grow as an individual and adapt to different styles. Remember that *"winners are not whiners"* and that "*Lose"* and *"Learn"* both start with an "L."
19. Go to watch a power/final round when you are assigned to by a coach or captain. At all times, conduct reminders and directives by captains/officers carry the full weight of a coach.
20. Debate evidence trading has caused a lot of trouble for some squads, due to leagues' rules and copyright laws. Please be careful and seek the coach's counsel before engaging in those transactions.

Dress Code - The first impression an audience gets of presenters is their ***appearance***. A student's appearance should be professional and dignified, showing that he or she cares about the event. *Just as in athletics or in a professional job, what one wears affects his/her performance.* **You want to be liked by your judges!**

21. **Restraint**: avoid outlandish hairstyles or apparel that draw attention away from your performance. Hair should be kept out of your face, so your audience can see facial expressions. Jewelry, if worn at all, should be kept elegantly modest – nothing should jingle or jangle. Use such tasteful judgment regarding all accessories, and when in doubt, *omit!* **Be professional, conservative** and **classy**. Look **mature**, as if you're interviewing for an office job. No jeans, and *dress/casual* shoes (not athletic or boots) must be worn.

22. **School identity**: do not tell a judge what school you are from, and do not where attire or emblems (e.g., letter jackets) that identify your school, as such information could bias their opinion.
23. In speech and debate events, professional suits/blazers or dresses (rich/knee-length or below; not too busy), with conservative blouses/shirts should be worn. In interpretive events, performers may wear more "stylish" clothing, but it should avoid being too gaudy. Tasteful shoes (women: low heels; men: conservative with laces are best, loafters are acceptable). Accessories, such as ties/scarves should be subdued and not distracting.
24. **Finalists** (power rounds) must remain in contest attire for the awards presentation, and should not take plush toys or other props on stage, per state league rules.

Transportation Policies - We commonly travel to meets locally, around the state; and periodically, nationally.

25. **Check the bulletin board the week before each meet for times, in case there is a change.** The team will gather to wait for the bus at the **19th Street/west entrance to the school (near room 104**. Parents must be waiting by the announced return time (we will call ahead for delays). Provided school is not in session, parents may park vehicles in the lot near that entrance.
26. Please fill bus seats from the **front**, reserving back seats for materials.
27. If a bus is chartered, students may not drive themselves or be driven by parents to meet locations, unless a "**Parental Permission Slip- Alternate Athletic Transportation**" form is filed with the *by that meet's registration deadline*. Honoring the request is at the coach's discretion, based on the student's level of responsibility and other policies determined by the Athletic Director.
28. Students will be sent home *at parent/guardian's expense* for **serious infraction** of these or school/district policies.

Overnight/Travel Tournaments - Besides obtaining necessary parent and teacher permission to attend these advanced tournaments, students must agree to put forth extra effort for such meets.

29. **Cost & Commitment**: Depending on the meet, students/families will pay for some, most or all of the costs of traveling, such as food and transportation, and payment must be made in full to guarantee registration. Specific details are included on each meet's parental/guardian permission form. Students are insured by the school district while traveling. When students **commit** to compete (or compete to qualify), they must be aware of the actual travel dates. Conflicts (other than severe illness or a death in the family) will **not** be tolerated: students who fail to participate must fully reimburse the team for all expenses associated with the tournament (travel/airline, lodging, registration and drop fees), whether the student was originally responsible for paying for those expenses or not.
30. **Conduct**: While all of the normal conduct and etiquette rules apply, it is especially important to stress when traveling out of town. When in airports and strange places, it is paramount that the coaches know where students are at all times. A coach may need to serve in a judging or administrative capacity at a tournament. In those cases, students must stay on hotel or tournament competition premises, or use official tournament shuttles/transportation to travel between venues. No student may venture away from a competition or lodging premises without supervision. Contrary to normal school district rules, it is often a good idea to carry a cellular phone at such tournaments, so students can maintain contact with the coach. Any students who pose problems for the coaching staff *may be sent home at the* ***parent's/guardian's*** *expense.*
31. **Lodging**: Overnight stays are an investment in fostering well-rested, competition-ready squad members. Students must abide by curfews (in the assigned room and *quiet* at the designated times) and respect the hotel property and staff. If students of the opposite sex are in a room, the door must be blocked open; no visitors from other schools unless a coach is present; likewise, you must seek a coach's permission to visit other schools' rooms. Room assignments are made by the coaching staff, and for liability purposes, *are non-negotiable* once established.
32. **Privilege**: Students must first qualify to compete at official national tournaments, such as NFL. The team obviously devotes a great deal of resources and money for large tournaments. The coaching staff will be the final arbiter of what students are allowed to attend such meets, and will make decisions based on a student's level of dedication to the team, typical conduct and behavior, academic standing, and readiness and preparedness for competition.

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Forensics Membership Form

Not valid if information is missing *(indicate n/a for not applicable. Please* ***print legibly****, especially e-mail addresses.*

Legal Name _____ Short first name _____ Graduation Year ____
First Middle Initial Last (No nicknames please; just "Bill" for William," etc.)

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Home Phone _____ Birth Date _____ ID No. S

E-mail _____ Cell Phone _____
(Cell phones are allowed at tournaments.)

Parent/Guardian Emergency Contact Information

Parent/Guardian Name(s)	**Place of Work**	**E-mail** (please write the address you check *most often*)
Relation:	Phone: ( )	Cell Phone: ( )
Relation:	Phone: ( )	

If you ride the bus to school, and need **bus tickets,** check all that apply: ❑ Practices ❑ Friday Meets ❑ Saturday Meets

PARENT/GUARDIAN PERMISSION

I allow my above-named student to participate in Forensic activities on the dates as described on the calendar included in the "Anytown High School Forensics Policies," realizing that for each meet, I am responsible for transporting my student to and from the local meet location ***or*** to and from school to ride the chartered bus by the **weekly** updated and announced leave and return time. I have discussed the team's policies with my student, and realize that infraction of these policies may result in my student's suspension from meet competition and forfeiture of awards earned. I also understand that to support the continuation of this program, my student is expected to participate in fundraising initiatives. I understand the after school "safety" requirements of leaving the building after practice.

Parent/Guardian Signature:_____ Date:_____

STUDENT AGREEMENT

I, the undersigned, hereby agree to adhere to the guidelines set forth in the "Anytown High School Forensics Policies," and realize that if I violate any of the policies, I will be subject to disciplinary action accordingly, and may forfeit any awards I have earned. I will check meet leave and return times **weekly**, realizing that the schedule information in this packet is ***tentative.*** I further agree to spend my time in practice efficiently, and that I will leave the building after practice.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

MEMBERSHIP FEE: For the non-refundable fee, checks are the *preferred* payment method, made payable for **$20** to **Anytown High School.** Please include the **student's full name** *and* **school ID number** on the check.
Cash should be **hand-delivered** to a coach in a **sealed envelope** with the **student's full name** and **school ID number** on it.

The *Interest Inventory & Goal-Setting Worksheet* on the reverse side allows the coaching staff to help students find events that match their unique interests and personality.

Forensics Interest Inventory & Goal-Setting Worksheet

1. What are your primary reasons for participating in forensics? _____

_____

_____

2. Name a prominent person (celebrity, public figure, etc.) and qualities you admire in that person:

Person_____ Qualities_____

_____

3. Rank, **in order of importance**, the following U.S. current affairs issues, 1 being ***most important;*** 10 being ***least***

___ Public Health Care/Affordable Prescriptions
___ Homeland Security/Terrorism/Intelligence
___ Foreign Trade (deficits, tariffs)
___ Environment (nuclear waste, clean air, fossil fuels)
___ Civil Liberties / Privacy
___ Social Security Reform
___ Education (vouchers "choice", standards, testing)
___ Election Reform (finance, Electoral, term limits)
___ Economy and Corporate Reform
___ Violence (in schools, central city areas)

4. Explain why you think the item above you ranked first is so important_____

_____

_____

5. On a scale of 1-10, 1 being ***most important***, how necessary is it for Americans to vote? _____

6. Please complete each statement:

a. I work best… ❑ in groups ❑ alone
b. I work well under pressure/deadlines: ❑ Yes ❑ No
c. I "multitask" well ❑ Yes ❑ No ❑ Huh?
d. I am good at memorizing things: ❑ Yes ❑ No
e. I enjoy proving my point: ❑ Yes ❑ No
f. I can offer constructive criticism: ❑ Yes ❑ No
g. I accept criticism constructively: ❑ Yes ❑ No
h. Last book I read for leisure _____
i. Favorite magazine _____
j. Favorite television programs _____
k. Favorite Web sites_____
l. Hobbies/interests _____
m. Talents (dancing, martial arts, baton twirling, etc.) _____
n. Favorite subject in school _____
o. If you competed in middle school forensics, please list events:_____

_____

7. Do you have a preference of debate and/or speech categories/events? _____

_____

8. List some specific, realistic (achievable) and *measurable* goals and steps you plan to take to achieve them.
If you are new, **we'll help you** complete this in an interview with a coach and/or captain:

Specific Goal Statements: include measurements and target timeframe for achievement.	**Actions/Steps I Will Take to Achieve Goals:** include timeframe (season, # of weeks, etc.) for each
	1
	2
	3
	1
	2
	3
	1
	2
	3

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Appendix B: Sample Health Certificate

*From the **Milwaukee Public Schools***

Student – full legal name		Birth Date		Sex	

List Allergies (including medications)	
If none, write "none."	

Medications (prescriptions or over-the-counter) you take		
If none, write "none."	Medication	Dosage

Present illnesses/chronic conditions	
If none, write "none."	

Over-the-Counter Medications Your Child May ***NOT*** Take		
If none, write "none."		

List past serious illness or surgery	
If none, write "none."	

List physical restrictions/accommodations	
If none, write "none."	

Dietary restrictions/accommodations	
Include food allergies or religious restrictions. If none, write "none."	

Insurance	***please attach a copy of insurance and prescription card(s)***			
Health Insurance Carrier:				
Health Ins. Policy Number:				
Insurance Policy Expiration Date:				
Who carries the Health Insurance?				
Health Insurance covers outside WI?		← Yes		← No

Medical	
Doctor	
Phone	
Dentist	
Phone	

Emergency Contact	Name	Phone
Parent		
Parent		
Other		
Other		

Attach additional information if necessary. → ***Please include a copy of insurance card(s).*** ←

The above named student has my permission to take part in forensics: speech and debate activities. I agree to and do hereby authorize Milwaukee Public Schools, its personnel and representatives (chaperones), to act for me in any emergency or accident or illness in the event my son/daughter is to receive medical attention if deemed necessary by a professional in the medical field. In the event the student named above is unable to participate in the program due to illness or injury, the Milwaukee Public Schools acting through its personal or representative is authorized to make whatever arrangements are appropriate in returning the student to my care. I understand that the Milwaukee Public Schools, its personnel or representatives shall not be responsible for any debts incurred in conjunction with any illness or accident involving my child. I agree to be responsible for such debts as well as for any costs incurred for the early return travel for the above named student. **Additionally, if there are any changes to the information herein, I will maintain responsibility for providing updated information.**

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date	Daytime Phone	Evening Phone
Additional Parent/Guardian *(if applicable)*	Date	Daytime Phone	Evening Phone

→→→→→→ ❑ **I've enclosed a copy of insurance card(s)**

Appendix C: Samples of Travel Forms

Travel Tournament Itinerary Sample

Tournament/Location:		
Assemble at:	on this date:	***no later than*** this time:
Specific transportation details (flights, connecting flights, etc.):		
We return on this date:	at this time:	at:
Specific transportation details:		
Hotel:	Phone ( )	
Address:		
Tournament Contact Name:		Cell ( )
Student Financial Responsibility: $	*must be paid by:*	

General Expectations:

- **Identification**: bring driver's license or state/government photo ID and school ID (for security; proves affiliation with trip).
- **Food/Money**: we provide student meals, except during competition and other snacks (I recommend bringing about _____ for the duration of the trip for those meals). Spending money over and beyond this amount is at your discretion.
- **Clothing**: bring dress clothes & shoes for ___ days of competition. Look your most professional! Bring a "main" competition outfit, with an extra shirt/accessories (tie, scarf, lapel pin, etc.)
- **Luggage**: pack lightly and efficiently, since we need room for evidence. Don't forget supplies/materials; bring what you'll need for performance (cases, piece/binder, pens, paper, stopwatch, legislation, "padfolio," Constitution, etc.).

Trip Itinerary (at Destination) & Daily Tournament Schedule:

Rooming List:

Room A	Room B	Room C	Room D
Coach			

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Event/Competition	*Destination*	*Departure Date*	*Return Date*

Milwaukee Public Schools

Travel Release and Indemnification Agreement
Covering Conduct, Personal Injury, Death and Property Damage

1. For purposes of definition, "MPS" refers to the Milwaukee Public Schools, the common name for the Milwaukee Board of School Directors, the school district in which my child is enrolled.
2. I understand that my student may not be under the direct supervision of the forensic/debate coach or approved chaperones during the competition above. I further understand that it is of utmost importance that my student alert the forensic/debate coach as to his/her whereabouts at all times during the trip, and must abide by any of the Director's directives restricting his/her whereabouts.
3. I as the student's parent/guardian, agree to and do authorize the Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) and its employees, agents, chaperones and volunteers, to act on my behalf in any emergency, accident, or illness, and further agree that MPS and its employee or such designated individuals shall not have any liability for taking any such action.
4. I agree that MPS has the right to terminate my son/daughter's participation in the field trip program for any behavior deemed detrimental to the program or the students, and further agree to accept all responsibility for any costs involved due to his/her return home to my care.
5. I affirm that my son/daughter has no chronic medical condition or disability that has not been stated in the Student Health Certificate (filled with the team) or which would make participation in the program inadvisable.
6. I agree to release and waive any and all liability and discharge MPS and its agents, chaperones and volunteers from any claims or demands that might arise in connection with 1) any accident, illness, injury, or other consequence or event arising from my child's actions or participation in the MPS program; 2) any cause beyond the control of MPS including, but not limited to, natural disasters, civil disturbances, acts of terrorism, and wars.
7. I understand that I am signing this document in addition to, and not in replacement or exclusion of, any and all other forms and agreements required by MPS. I agree that MPS reserves the right to change, or cancel travel or other arrangements should conditions necessitate.
8. I understand that MPS is not responsible for the loss of, or damage to, the personal belongings of any participant.
9. I understand that in arranging for student travel, MPS uses commercial airlines, trains, buses, restaurants, hotels and other services whose performance and service cannot be controlled. Consequently, MPS is not responsible for the actions of these commercial firms for matters including but not limited to strikes, lost luggage and the like.
10. I agree to be responsible for and to pay any bills for additional expenses of a personal nature (e.g., laundry, room services, phone calls, passport and visa replacement).
11. I agree to be responsible for and to pay any bills for medical, optical, dental or related services, whether or not such services are covered by insurance. I understand that the student field trip accidental injury insurance and emergency assistance services for specified amounts is available to MPS, and that the cost for this insurance and emergency assistance coverage is included in the field trip program fee. I understand the limits of this insurance and emergency assistance services and accept responsibility for any costs above those limits provided in the policy. I affirm that my son/daughter has adequate medical and hospital insurance coverage and that the policy will continue in force during the entire extended field trip. I affirm that the information stated in the Student Health Certificate/ Permission for Medical Care is accurate.
12. I further agree to pay any responsible attorney's fees and costs of litigation should any lawsuit against the Milwaukee Board of School Directors result from my child's participation on this trip.

Conduct: The purpose of this trip is competition. To ensure optimal preparedness, proper rest is paramount. Students must be in their *assigned* rooms by 11 p.m. (please purchase snacks/vending items before 10:59). Please pick up after yourselves: throw garbage/food wrappers/containers in the proper receptacles, do not leave open food laying around to spoil and leave an unpleasant odor for housekeeping staff, and (for multiple-night stays) leave a clear path for housekeeping staff to change bed linens and vacuum. ***If you damage any hotel property, please alert a coach immediately.***

I have read the above and attached information and am in full support of my child's participation in this trip, with the appropriate, expected conduct. I am prepared to accept the financial responsibility for this trip should my child fail to do so him/herself. If at the discretion of the forensic/debate coach, my child needs to be sent home due to illness or violation of student rules, I agree to be responsible for all transportation and subsequent costs.

Parent/Guardian Signature	Date	Daytime or Cell Phone	Evening Phone

Student Agreement Statement: I agree to abide by all school and forensic/debate activities policies while participating in the tournament named above, **including any spoken directives from coaching staff**. I understand that a violation of these rules may result in being sent home at my family's expense, expulsion from the team, and potential disciplinary action by the school administration. I further understand that my actions jeopardize the safety and success of my fellow teammates, so I will strive to uphold the standards of good character and ethics as a representative of Milwaukee Public Schools.

Print Legal Student Name *(w/Middle Initial)*	Student Signature	Date	Cell Phone *(during travel)*

Appendix D: Judge Training

The following is a general guide for judge training. Some of the rules and conventions may differ between various states, regions and the NFL itself. Judges should always be mindful of the particular contest they're adjudicating, and what unique policies/procedures apply. Even more dubious is how judges' standards for excellence tend to be highly personal, based on background and taste. The best judges are aware of their own biases, and consciously keep these in check to maintain objectivity.

The Judge's Role

A speech or debate judge not only provides sound, educational feedback for students' presentations, but s/he serves as supervisor of every round, ensuring that it proceeds in a smooth manner, with equal respect given to all contestants. Judges should not apologize for "lack of expertise" – the point of communication in forensic activities is for students to be able to share a message with any audience. Judges also set a positive tone as adults by dressing professionally (i.e., business casual), and putting students at ease with their body language.

- At many contests, students are aware they may not enter rooms unless a judge is present, and that if they move furniture, they must return it.
- Students should move from round to round quietly, as other rounds will still be in session. Judges should remind students of this when the round concludes.
- Judges must maintain objectivity and should not say anything to any student other than an overall greeting or observation; do not give special, individual praise or criticism, or ask what school a student attends.
- Students and judges are often given codes to mask school affiliation. Judges should, however, write their own school affiliation on the ballot and/or evaluation sheet, so if a coach has questions after the tournament, they may contact you via the coach who hired you.

Supplies

- ❑ A few good pens (please write evaluative feedback in black or blue, please; red is handy for personal notes when *flowing* a debate)
- ❑ Paper – for flowing debates, taking overall notes on a round of speech, etc.
- ❑ A *digital* stopwatch, timer or other timing device for keeping track of time

Tournament Timeline: Keeping the Pace

A coach should instruct the judges s/he hired to arrive early to a tournament (before the end of the registration period). Coaches are responsible for distributing the judging assignments given to their school, and if ballots/critique sheets can be completed with personal information ahead of time, it gives the judge time to prepare for the day ahead. Judges may or may not be assigned to each preliminary round (depending on how many total judges are present). Following are some general tips for judges:

- Take time to read and follow the specific and unique instructions of each tournament (which saves a great deal of time in the grand scheme of the tournament and helps prevent errors).
- Make sure to reacquaint yourself with the rules for a given event before each round.
- ***Please be punctual*** and start rounds on time so that each round can take place expeditiously for the good of all participants. Please silence your cell phone, and *don't eat in front of students – it's rude!*
- Make sure contestants assigned to your room on the schematic are there. *For speech,* ***follow the speaking order***, unless a tournament allows cross-entries, and/or a student is late to the round. Allow such contestants to catch their breath, wait through another presentation, and *then* present.
- Write legibly on critiques/ballots, so students can actually read and benefit from your suggestions!
- Be objective. Don't let your own preconceptions predetermine your impressions.

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- Be efficient. Don't spend too much time on each ballot, especially between students' presentations. Lulls make students nervous, and hold up meets. Start writing evaluation sheets/ballots during presentations
- After *each round*, return ballots/critiques to the nearest tabulation collection person/table.
- Remain at the tournament until you're dismissed (unless special arrangements have been made). Don't smoke on school premises, because this is against most state laws, and sets a terrible example for kids.
- A judge must NOT confer with other judges regarding their decisions/evaluations in competition. Panel judges are not to confer. All communication regarding results must be exclusively with tabulation staff.
- Make positive suggestions on how the speaker can improve. Do not simply write "good" or "weak." Instead explain how or why a student is doing well or poorly. You should justify the score you give a student by the comments you write.
- Judges almost never disqualify contestants. This is up to tournament officials. If judges suspect a rules infraction, rank/rate the student as he/she performed in the round. Then, bring all information to the tournament staff.

Pearls of Wisdom for Specific Events/Situations

- In Debate, judges award one team the win, and the other team a loss. They may also assign speaker points to each team, or individual debater. Finally, they may rank the debaters from best to last.
- In Speech, judges rank students against their peers, and sometimes *rate* students with speaker point values. For ranking, 1 is the best in round, 2 is second best, etc., as far down as the number of speakers (in a section of eight speakers, your ranks should look like this: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8). Many judges keep a running order of placement by making marks on the master ballot, or arranging the physical order of the critique sheets. Contestants should never be able to see or figure out your system for ranking (even if they're sitting right next to you in a cramped room). Judges should always give honest, positive, constructive – but ***tactful*** – criticism with *suggestions for improvement.* Remember the ABCs of judging: be Accurate, Brief, and Clear!
- Know the rules regarding "grace periods" and how to modify your ranking if a student extends beyond the allowed timeframe.
- Students may request time signals, particularly in Extemp. Speaking. Please be sure to communicate a mutually agreed upon system with speakers prior to their presentations.
- Some states/events allow a limited amount of vocal singing and visual aids. Always know the rules!
- In Congress, judges will hear several short speeches in immediate succession. Congress contests are tabulated in a myriad of ways, but judges will do one or several of these evaluative measures:
    - *Rate* each speaker and presiding officer on a point scale (a general rubric for qualities to look for can be found in the "Coach Resources" section of the NFL Web site).
    - *Rank up to a certain number of*, or *all* participants in a round/session. Either arranging individual critiques as suggested for speech ranking, or tracking each speech of the session will allow a judge to make a summative evaluation of the session in this case.
    - *Nominate* one or a few contestants to advance (which may go to a vote by the students).

  Some states assign two judges to a session for the express purpose of allowing them to alternately evaluate students. This method is problematic insofar as it creates inconsistency among evaluating the same group of students within the same timeframe of debate, therefore forsaking competitive equity.

Upholding Quality

Each school's coach is the arbiter of excellence for his/her own judging corps, and should make sure judges are adequately trained and prepared to provide this vital educational service to young people. Before a new judge actually adjudicates a tournament, have him/her "shadow" an experienced judge, who can debrief his/her process. At an early tournament, ask the Tab room if they can provide a copy of a new judge's critiques/ballots, so you can review the quality of their evaluations.

Descriptive Word Bank for Judges

"GOOD"

amazing
breathtaking
beautiful
brilliant
decent
delightful
dynamic
enjoyable
excellent
extraordinary
fabulous
fine
first-class
first-rate
grand
great
impressive
incredible
lovely
marvelous
perfect
pleasant
remarkable
satisfactory
spectacular
splendid
stunning
superb
terrific
wonderful

QUALITY OF PRESENTATION

articulate
believable
characterization
coherent
cohesive
credible
dramatic
emotional
enthusiastic
expression
honesty
genuine
innovative
understated
whimsical

TALENT

accomplished
capable
clever
convincing
creative
effortless
expert
proficient
natural
skilled
talented
well developed
mastered

"OOMPH"

animation
energy
enthusiasm
gusto
life
liveliness
passion
pizzazz
sparkle
spirit
vivaciousness
vigor

"POOR"

artificial
awkward
broad
faulty
flawed
hinder
incoherent
incorrect
mellow
monotonous
poor
repetitive
scarce
weak
wrong

"NEEDS"

absent of
could use
deficient in
incomplete
lacks
missing
requires
short on…
potential

THE PIECE

assortment
combination
compilation
execution
plethora
unified
unsuitable
wealth

DEBATE

fallacious
logically linked
illogical
credibility
warrant
clash
impact
rhetoric
refute
rebut
flow

Editor's Note: This word bank was developed by judges I hired while coaching at Rufus King High School in Milwaukee, WI. It is, by no means, an exhaustive list, but I certainly welcome any suggestions to enhance/modify any of the listings. Please send suggestions to: jacobi@nflonline.org.

Contacting the National Office

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125 Watson Street
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Ripon, WI 54971-0038

Phone: (920) 748-6206
Fax: (920) 748-9478
Web: www.nflonline.org

School/Student Member Assistance

Question about point procedures, using the online points application, and membership/financial issues:

Lisa Vossekuil
lisa.vossekuil@nationalforensicleague.org

Program/Coaching Assistance

Questions on building your team, finding resources, getting involved with your District, and participating in many of the special programs the NFL offers…

Adam Jacobi
adam.jacobi@nationalforensicleague.org

Merchandise Sales

The NFL offers myriad apparel, books and mementos related to forensics.

Andrea Neitzel
andrea.neitzel@nationalforensicleague.org

District/National Tournaments

Questions regarding registering and/or qualifying…

Jackie Oakes – nfl@nflonline.org
Jackie is also administrative assistant to the Executive Director.

Public Relations & Publications

Questions regarding the *Rostrum* magazine and about promoting the NFL…

Jennifer Billman
jenny.billman@nationalforensicleague.org

Development & Alumni

Do you have an idea or contact for a grant?
Bethany Rusch
bethany.rusch@nationalforensicleague.org

Are you in touch with former NFL members?
alumni@nationalforensicleague.org

Technology

Technology concerns will be routed from any of the channels above to **Cherian Koshy**.

Executive Director

Ruling questions pertaining to items proposed at NFL Council meetings or comments/concerns you may have about the League or its processes.

J. Scott Wunn – nfl@nflonline.org