



Catalyst

Speech and Debate Club

Policy Handbook 2015-2016

Our mission is to use NCFCA speech and debate competition to hone our communication skills so that we may impart to others the Love of Christ through our thoughts, our words, and our actions.

"Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one."

Colossians 4:6

Handbook updated 8/17/15

Information in this Handbook may be modified or changed during the year as new information or dates become available.

Welcome to Catalyst Speech and Debate Club!

Catalyst Speech and Debate Club is for homeschooled students who desire to learn to communicate more effectively. Our foundation as a club is to develop a Christian worldview and help students learn to communicate for Christ. We ask that all of our families read and agree to the Nicene Creed as our Statement of Faith, and to the Peacemakers Pledge as a model for dealing with problems.

Catalyst is led by a Board of Directors that is responsible for making decisions in regards to membership matters, scheduling, curriculum, etc.

We are a competitive club. While the emphasis is on learning to communicate, not winning, we do expect all of our parents and students to participate and do their part to help make our club successful. This includes being on time, doing assignments, participating in practice sessions, etc. It includes, but is not limited to, all of the following:

Attendance Regular attendance not only benefits you but others in the club as well. Students and parents will be expected to attend 75% of meetings in order to obtain a yearly letter of reference for their files. Extenuating circumstances will be determined/approved by the board on a “case by case” basis. Because your time is valuable, we will start club promptly.

Communication – Club communications will be handled via email so it is of vital importance that **both students and parents** have access to email and check it regularly. We also have a Catalyst Club Facebook page. Please check these regularly.

Electronics/Computers – Computers will be allowed in club for use during teaching time, debate research and Extemp club. However, we ask that students and parents refrain from using electronics for texting, calls, business, games, etc. Our time is short and valuable. We want to give coaches, speakers, and parents full attention. See Sibling Policy for younger student requirements.

Tournaments – Experience has shown that tournaments are the way to gain

practical hands-on skills that can't be learned in club. The competition at these tournaments pulls all the knowledge and practice from club into a meaningful and life-changing experience. There are several practice tournaments offered in the fall. Our region (AL, AK, MS, LA, and TN) usually has 5 NCFCA tournaments in the spring. **We encourage everyone to make plans to compete in at least one out of town tournament. All families** are asked to help with the work and running of the tournament we will be hosting. The Schedule will be published as soon as possible. Practice events are typically held on Fridays for just the day, and Tournaments are typically 3 days long and are held during the second semester.

Dress - Modest professional attire is required at tournaments. (Please see NCFCA.org "Qualifying Tournament Participation Rules" for more specific details.)

At club, we ask that students dress in "business casual" clothing. Guys: slacks, collared shirts, dress or casual shoes. Girls: slacks or skirts or dresses, blouses or collared shirts, dress or casual shoes or sandals. No shorts, baggy pants, clothes with holes, t shirts, flip flops, tennis shoes, etc.

NCFCA Membership - National Christian Forensic and Communications Association is the league in which this club competes. All club members must be NCFCA affiliates and agree to the NCFCA statement of faith as well as all NCFCA rules and regulations. You can join NCFCA on their website starting in July at www.ncfca.org. You must join by September 15, 2015 for the discounted price and to continue participation in club.

Parents –Attendance with your student(s) is expected and required in order to learn the information you will need to 'coach' your student at home. We require a parent to attend, not because we need chaperones, but because our club and our league rely on parental involvement. Parents' opinions and questions in club are as much a part of the learning process for students as student participation. Should a special circumstance arise, please contact Suanne Samelson. Students will not be allowed to attend club without a parent without prior approval.

Sibling Policy – Siblings are welcome at club, but Parents are responsible for their own children. Siblings should bring their own schoolwork, games, toys, etc. Those who are 8 and up can learn to time debate or speech rounds

or participate in some of the learning activities, depending on their interest and maturity. We will offer a sibling speech group for students 5- 12 years old during the speech portion of club. Parents of juniors will be asked to rotate helping with this group. We will have a room for siblings to stay in during debate, but only if parents are able to work out a rotation of overseeing this room. We ask that parents not bring movies or electronics for their younger students to use during club.

Debaters – Debaters are asked to sign the debate code of ethics put out by NCFCA. All debate cases must be approved by the debate coaches before used in competition. New students may not write their own cases with out prior consent/approval of the coaches. Team Policy students may not partner outside of club without prior discussion and approval with Team Policy coach(es).

Speech Students –Speech club students are expected to bring speeches to work on during club, submit assignments when due and be prepared for activities/lessons each week. Speeches do not have to be completed or memorized in order to receive critique from coaches. There is a minimum requirement of 3 speeches for club, but there is no minimum number for competition. When waiting for critique, or when finished but waiting for speech club to end, students are expected to listen to other speeches and participate in discussions. Students are expected to treat other students with respect and dignity during their speech time. All speeches must be approved by the club administrator and/or administrative committee. All students are asked to turn in copies of their scripts before competition. Parents are expected to help listen and give feedback each week at club.

Speech categories

Limited Preparation

Apologetics – students competing in Apol need to attend apologetics portion of club. Boxes, cards, etc are purchased on your own.

Extemporaneous – students participating in Extemp are expected to attend the Extemp portion of club, Join Extemp Genie, and bring their laptops in order to “file” articles in the dropbox.

Impromptu

Other categories:

Interpretive Speech - intended to bring literature to life. (Duo, Open, Scriptural and Original are the categories for this year.)

Platform Speech - what you think of when you hear “speech”. (Informative Speaking, Persuasive, Illustrated oratory and Biographical Narrative are this year's categories.)

All speech rules can be found at www.ncfca.org.

Catalyst Weekly Schedule
Wednesdays

12:00 – 1:30 p.m.	Speech Club/Classes
1:30 – 2:15 p.m.	Apol/Extemp/Parent Training
2:15 – 4:30 p.m.	Debate Club

The first 6 – 10 weeks of speech club will be used for instruction. Students will be scheduled throughout club time to give their speeches as we progress through the fall. Speeches do not have to be memorized or even completed to practice, but we expect all students to be willing to work each week on these at home and be evaluated each week during club by coaches and parents. Be prepared to submit speech outlines, class assignments, and scripts when due.

Fees: \$50 fee per student with a cap of \$85 per family. Club fees are due by September 2, 2015. There are additional costs for supplies, sourcebooks, tournaments, etc.

All families must affiliate with NCFCA by September 15, 2015. The fee is \$100 per family for the 2015-2016 Season. Go to www.ncfca.org. After September 15, the price will increase.

Tournament Dates already scheduled for 2016:

January 6 – 9, 2016, National Open, Oshkosh, WI

January 27 – 30, 2016, National Open, Ridgecrest, NC

March 16 – 19, 2016, National Open, Oklahoma Baptist University, Oklahoma

June 14 – 18, 2016, National Championship, Whitworth University, Spokane, WA