

IPOD Speech and Debate Club Policies

2025–2026

Ages:

Varsity Speech and Debate are designed for ages 14 and up (mature and responsible students ages 12 and up by October 1st considered at the club leader's discretion).

Junior Varsity (JV) Speech and Debate are designed for ages 10–13 (students outside of this age range will be considered on a case-by-case basis; please consult with the class leader).

Junior Speech is designed for ages 6–8.

Meeting Place:

Gentian Baptist Church
3853 Gentian Blvd, Columbus, GA

Meeting Time:

Thursdays 1–5:30 pm
JV Debate 1–2:30
Speech (Junior, JV, and Varsity) 2:30–4:00
Varsity Debate 4:00–5:30

Club Dress Code:

On regular club days students should dress modestly and appropriately for the occasion. Students who wish to participate in debate tournaments will need to adhere to the dress code outlined in the tournament section below.

Tournament Dress Code:

Varsity students must dress in professional business attire at the tournaments. For young men, this means a suit or slacks and sports coat with a shirt and tie, and dress shoes. For young ladies, this means skirt or pant suits; slacks, skirts, or dresses with a jacket, and professional dress shoes. Hemlines are to be at least to the knee when sitting down. Nylons are not required.

Junior and JV students do not have to wear a jacket but should be dressed in nice pants and a collared shirt (for boys) and a nice dress or slacks and blouse (for girls).

Necessary Supplies:

Most necessary supplies for practice sessions will be provided. Students will be

notified in advance on the occasion that they may need to bring in extra supplies from home. Tournament supplies will NOT be provided. Students may purchase a tournament supply pack from the club or they may purchase supplies on their own. Typical tournament supplies include a legal pad, timer, post it notes, and pens.

Advanced students will need internet access along with a laptop or tablet for research. Please read the technology tab on the left side of the website for more details.

Behavior Expectations:

We move quickly through a lot of material so that we can be prepared for our first tournament in the fall. In order to minimize distractions and delays, we ask the following:

- Students are expected to arrive early enough to gather necessary materials and be ready to begin practice on time.
- Students are expected to pay attention during practice and bring any assigned homework. Parents will be notified if a student is repeatedly unprepared for practice.
- Students are expected to participate in all class activities unless a parent excuses the student and personally notifies the club leader ahead of time. Club leaders are available by email, phone, or text.
- Students are expected to be able to engage appropriately with fellow team mates. Inappropriate words, jokes, or topics of discussion should be reported to a club leader immediately.
- Students should be capable of self-monitoring their own behavior and responding respectfully and immediately to redirection. Parents will be notified if students are called out repeatedly for distracting or inappropriate behavior. If a student is not able to regulate his/her behavior after correction, parents will be required to attend practice with the student.
- If there is a problem between students or with any other attendees at practice, the involved parties will be expected to peacefully address their issues with each other first and in a timely manner. If any issue remains unresolved, a third party (a club leader or other willing and impartial parent) should be brought in to help resolve the issue. If club leaders are not involved in the resolution process, at minimum they should be notified of the issues and updated throughout the conflict resolution process.
- For any other interpersonal conflicts or private matters, please have a discussion with a club leader as soon as possible. Resolving issues early and immediately is much easier and will lead to a more peaceful season for all of our members.

Tournament Participation:

Student participation in speech and debate tournaments is optional but highly

encouraged. We plan for 2 JV debate tournaments per year. We will also plan to hold our own junior and JV intra-club speech tournaments as well as one home tournament just for speech in the spring. For the varsity students, we plan for at least one tournament per month from October through April. There is some travel involved for tournaments. Details about each tournament will be shared ahead of time. We ask that all competitive students go to at least two tournaments per academic year.

Club Parental Involvement:

Parents are always welcome but not required to stay with their students during club practices. However, it is helpful to the student and the parent when parents are involved. The more parents understand about speech and debate, the more they are able to help their students. At the very least, parents should be willing to discuss speech and debate topics with their student at home. It is helpful for students to learn how others view the topics. Parents are able to provide valuable insight.

Tournament Parental Involvement:

Speech and debate tournaments are not drop off events. Parents are expected to stay and help during competition. They are also required to help judge rounds of debate and/or speech. There will be Judge Orientation at the tournament to give parents the necessary tools to make informed decisions. Staying during the weekly club meetings will also help parents feel more confident in their decisions when judging at the tournaments