

2018/2019 GBHS Debate Parent Information Form

(**Important:** Please read this form completely before signing.)

Dear GBHS Parent:

Your child has expressed an interest in joining the GBHS Debate team for the 2018/2019 season. Competitive debate is becoming increasingly popular in our area, and our team has enjoyed significant local and national success!

If you are not familiar with competitive debate, it's an amazing program! Students expand their research, problem solving, and public speaking skills, and learn the art of evidence based argumentation. Among extracurricular activities, selective colleges list debate participation as one the most desirable high school activities! In addition to expanding your student's college resume, your child will experience the benefits of being on a competitive team. Your student will work hard, but will be surrounded by encouraging, mentoring, and supportive teammates.

We are currently recruiting for next year's team, and will be holding try-outs in April. We have a limited number of spaces available, so trying out does not guarantee team membership. If your student makes the team, he/she will be required to take ***Debate 1*** as an elective next year. ***It is important, however, that parents are aware of the time and financial commitments involved in this program.***

There is an annual fee of \$250, payable in full at the beginning of the fall semester. This fee covers a lot! It helps to offset travel costs, league fees, judges' fees, evidence packets, tournament registration fees, and a whole host of other incidentals throughout the year.

There are seven local high schools involved in competitive debate in Escambia, Santa Rosa, Leon, and Okaloosa counties. There will usually be one tournament per month at one of these high school locations, and the cost is usually around \$25 per student per competition. Your child will be expected to compete in all of these local tournaments.

We always need parent volunteers for this program. Competing schools are required to bring from 10-15 parent judges to each event. We will have the schedule available in the fall for parents to sign up for the competition dates that work best for them. Don't worry! We will have training classes available before each event to get new parents up to speed! ***You must agree to judge at least two tournaments in order for your child to participate. Please do not sign this form if you or someone you know will not able to serve as a judge at least twice.***

If your student enjoys success at the local level, then he/she will advance to the state, and sometimes national finals! There may be some additional costs associated with these trips.

Additionally, we will compete in two national tournaments per year, one at the University of Florida in Gainesville, and one in New Orleans. The cost of each trip will be around \$150 per

student. These national tournaments are necessary to increase your child's debate skills. The level of competition is significantly higher than the local tournaments, and students usually see substantial improvement after participation in a national tournament. ***Grant money is available to a limited number of students who need extra financial help.***

Despite the time and financial commitments, this program is a wonderful investment in your child's future! If your child would like to try out, please sign this form below. Try outs are scheduled for April 2-6, before and after school in room 404 at GBHS. **Please have your student email me at Messerk@santarosa.k12.fl.us to schedule a day and time. Students must bring their completed application and this signed parental permission form in order to try out.** We would love to see your student there!

Sincerely,

Kim Messer
GBHS Debate Coach
Messerk@santarosa.k12.fl.us

My student _____ has my permission to try out for the GBHS Debate team. I understand that if my child makes the team, it will involve a time and financial commitment.

Parent Signature