

MERCER AREA MIDDLE/HIGH SCHOOL FORENSICS

545 West Butler Street

Mercer, PA 16137

Eric Mausser
PRINCIPAL

Hugh P. Ringer
DIRECTOR OF FORENSICS

December 29, 2023

Dear Forensics Coach:

Your forensics team is cordially invited to attend the 49th Annual Mercer Individual Events Awards Tournament, sponsored jointly by The Mercer Rotary Club and Talbot's Taproom & Terrace, on **Saturday, January 27, 2024**.

You will note that we will once again offer a wide range of individual events. In addition to offering our usual separation of Prose and Poetry we will offer Programmed Oral Interpretation (POI) and Declamation. By popular demand, we will continue to offer competition in both Public Forum Debate and Student Congress.

****ALL EVENTS WILL BE LIVE AND IN-PERSON.****

Note that registration is being conducted on the www.tabroom.com website. Click on Mercer Individual Events Tournament to register, beginning January 2, 2024. Mercer will conduct online balloting at this tournament. Please make certain your judges and contestants have tabroom.com accounts as well as a smart phone, a tablet, or a laptop.

Please read the following details closely...

Events: The following P.H.S.S.L./C.F.L./N.S.D.A. events will be offered...

- 1) **Original Oratory** (10 minutes maximum- PHSSL rules apply)
- 2) **Mixed Extemp** (7 minutes maximum/featuring domestic and international topic areas in alternating rounds)
- 3) **Declamation** (10 minutes maximum/open to **freshmen & sophomores only**/CFL rules apply)
- 4) **Prose Interpretation** (10 minutes maximum- PHSSL rules apply)
- 5) **Poetry Interpretation** (10 minutes maximum- PHSSL rules apply)
- 6) **Programmed Oral Interpretation (POI)** (10 minutes maximum- NSDA rules apply)
- 7) **Dramatic Interpretation** (10 minutes maximum- PHSSL rules apply)
- 8) **Humorous Interpretation** (10 minutes maximum- PHSSL rules apply)
- 9) **Duo Interpretation** (10 minutes maximum- NSDA rules apply)
Regardless of registration, ALL of the above events will be separate.
- 10) **Public Forum Debate** (P.H.S.S.L. time limits and rules apply)
- 11) **Student Congress** (Standard rules of procedure will be followed.)

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Number of Entries: Each school may register **up to six (6) entries in each of the above events.** *(Please know that we will welcome double entries in all speech events.)*

Congress: Any school participating in Congress should note that, in keeping with Pittsburgh district procedure, we will use legislation that the district is collecting and providing on a tournament-by-tournament basis. Legislation will be posted on Tabroom.com when it is available.

Entry Fee: **\$6.00 per student or \$12 per student if that student is double entered.** Please note that the fee for each Duo Interp team and a Public Forum Debate team is **\$12.00.** Fees does not include lunch and must be paid on or before the day of the tournament.

Make checks payable to: Mercer Speech Boosters.

****Note that refunds will NOT be given for drops that are made after on-line registration closes on Thursday, January 25th at 3:00 PM.****

****Please do your best to avoid late payment of entry fees!!****

Judges: **One qualified adult speech judge** must be supplied **for every five (5) speech entries or fraction** thereof. (i.e.- 5 entries= 1 judge; 8 entries = 2 judges, etc.)

In Public Forum Debate, supply one judge for every two (2) teams or fraction thereof.

In Congress, supply one judge per six (6) entries or fraction thereof.

- High school students may not be used as judges.
- Some judges listed as "speech" judges may judge a round or two of Public Forum Debate, and Public Forum judges may also judge one or more speech rounds. If a judge prefers to be listed as **not qualified** to judge Public Forum, please note that on your registration.
- All judges are expected to remain for the duration of the tournament.

Awards: Distinctive awards will be presented to the first through sixth or seventh place winners in each event—speech, PF, and Congress. The number of awards presented will depend upon the number of actual finalists in the given speech event and the number of deserving place winners in both Public Forum and Congress.

Sweepstakes awards will be presented to the first, second, and third place teams in the "speech" division. The top two performing schools in Public Forum and Congress will also receive awards in what we will call the "debates" division.

Speech Sweepstakes Participants: At registration, each school will be asked to indicate the eight (8) entrants or teams (Public Forum Debate entries and Congress entries are NOT to be listed.) who will count toward your school's SPEECH sweepstakes total. No more than 3 speakers (or 3 duo teams) may be designated in a given event.

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SPEECH Tournament Format: All speakers will compete in three preliminary rounds. The top 5-7 speakers in each event will then advance to a final round. Three judges will be used in the final round.

Public Forum Debate may hold up to four rounds, depending on the number registered. Congress will hold two or three sessions, depending on time constraints.

Lunch: We plan to provide a different and rather unique hot lunch and drinks during the lunch break. Please know that we will provide veggie and gluten free options as part of our menu. Prices will be reasonable. Mercer Speech Boosters have entered into an agreement with the area's most popular eatery, Talbot's Taproom & Terrace, to provide varied and delicious food options for all.

- Lunch tickets will be sold outside the auditorium during registration. Tickets should be purchased by students and judges prior to the beginning of Round I.
- There are no fast-food restaurants close to the high school, so we expect everyone to remain in the building for lunch.
- Breakfast items will be served to coaches and judges before Round I.
- Snacks and water will be sold to students throughout the day, except during the lunch period.

Time Schedule: In keeping with tradition, we intend for this tournament to run on time! With everyone's cooperation, we can adhere to this time schedule for all events...

7:30-8:30 AM....Registration (high school office)

8:35 AM.....Extempers report to the large group instruction room

8:45 AM.....Opening Assembly (auditorium) **Congress Schedule:**

9:20 AM.....Round I

9:00-10:45 AM First Session

10:45 AM.....Round II

11:00-12:45 PM Second Session

12:00 NOON.....Round III

12:45-1:30 PM Lunch

12:30-1:45 PM....Lunch (cafeteria)

1:30-3:15 PM Third Session (time permitting)

1:45 PM.....Finalists for speech events posted outside the auditorium

2:00 PM.....Final Round/Round IV in Public Forum Debate (if needed)

4:00 PM.....Awards Assembly (auditorium)

Delays or Registration Changes: If you have any travel problems—and any drops-- the day of the tournament please call Hugh Ringer's cell phone #...**724-699-2390** between 7:00 AM and 8:30 AM so that adjustments can be made in the schedule. We plan to begin Round I as scheduled and we intend to begin the awards assembly on time. Also, please report any changes in pre-registration after the pre-registration deadline (below) to Hugh Ringer by e-mail at (**hpr@zoominternet.net**).

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Pre-Registration Deadline: **3:00 PM, THURSDAY, JANUARY 25, 2024**

Because of limited space, especially since we are offering both Public Forum and Congress and additional opportunities for double entering in speech, registration will close when we reach our capacity so **complete your registration as early as possible on-line at www.tabroom.com.**

If you wish to make changes to your registration, you may do so on the tabroom.com site until Thursday, January 25 at 3:00 PM. **NOTE WELL: Payment of registration fees is expected for any and all drops made after 3:00 PM on Thursday, January 25th.**

*****REMINDER: Tournament registration begins at 7:30 AM on Saturday morning (1/27). Call Hugh Ringer's cell phone (724-699-2390) between 7:00 and 8:30 AM that morning to report any last-minute drops or travel delays.*****

We look forward to seeing you and your speech team at Mercer High School on Saturday, January 27th.

HUGH RINGER'S HOME PHONE: 724-662-3094 / CELL PHONE: 724-699-2390
(8:30 AM- 12:15 PM or 6:30 PM-10:30 PM)

HUGH RINGER'S E-MAIL ADDRESS: hpr@zoominternet.net

Sincerely,
Hugh P. Ringer
Director of Forensics
Mercer Middle-High School