



2025 Kennedy Middle School **Speech Tournament**

April 12, 2025

Hosted by the **Kennedy Middle School**
Speech Team, run by
Monta Vista Speech.

Welcome

Dear Coaches and Competitors,

We are excited to welcome you to the **2025 Kennedy Middle School Speech Tournament**, as we enter our thirteenth year of hosting this annual middle school tournament!

We sincerely believe that it is more important than ever to cultivate the voices of the next generation through this great activity. The **2025 Kennedy Middle School Speech Tournament** will be held on Saturday, April 12th, 2025, and will be hosted in person at **Cupertino Middle School**. Our tournament will be hosted by the **Kennedy Middle School Speech Team**; it will be organized, judged, and run by experienced members, captains, and coaches from the award-winning **Monta Vista Speech Team** (ranked 10th in CA; top 3 titles at Berkeley, Stanford, and James Logan Invitationals).

Please read below for important details pertaining to the tournament—if you have any questions or concerns regarding any information provided, please contact us at the below email.

We look forward to hosting you, and to a lively weekend of passionate speaking. Best of luck to your team; we can't wait to see you in April!

Best Regards,

Petros Kougiouris & Ali Malik

Kennedy Speech Tournament Directors, **Monta Vista High School** Speech Co-Presidents

Anisha Sinha & Adam Fortin

Monta Vista High School Head Speech Coach & **Kennedy Middle School** Teacher and Speech Team Advisor

Email Contact: [**kennedyspeechtournament@gmail.com**](mailto:kennedyspeechtournament@gmail.com)

Tournament Format

Entirely In-Person. The **2025 Kennedy Middle School Speech Tournament** will be held at Cupertino Middle School (1650 S. Bernardo Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94087). All preliminary and elimination rounds will be held synchronously in classrooms.

Three preliminary rounds. The tournament will host three preliminary rounds, breaking to finals.

Tabroom. All students must be linked to their school via [Tabroom.com](https://www.tabroom.com) prior to the tournament. Students will not be able to access their round pairings without it. Coaches can review the [Linking Students to Tabroom](#) document for assistance.

Schedule

The full tournament schedule will be announced closer to the tournament date, but the event will be a full-day commitment, estimated to be held from 7:30 am - 8:00 pm PST. Competitors are expected to be available for and to enter their rounds on time. Registered teams' coaches will be notified via email when a detailed schedule is posted.

7:30 - 8:00 AM	Student and Parent Chaperone Check In
8:30 - 8:50 AM	Opening Ceremony
9:00 - 10:15 AM	Prelim Round 1
11:15 - 12:30 PM	Prelim Round 2
12:30 - 2:00 PM	Lunch Break
2:00 - 3:15 PM	Prelim Round 3
4:15 - 5:30 PM	Finals Round
5:45 PM	Awards Ceremony
6:45 PM	Cleanup

Events and Rules

The Kennedy tournament will be offering 7 events: Dramatic Interpretation (DI), Humorous Interpretation (HI), Duo Interpretation (DUO), Oratorical Interpretation/Declamation (OI), Original Oratory (OO), Spontaneous Argumentation (SPAR), and Impromptu (IMP). Rules and guidelines for each event are provided below. Please note that we reserve the right to collapse events based on the number of entries.

No student will be penalized for being undertime, but may be ranked down in a round if the length of the speech detracts from the quality of performance.

Dramatic Interpretation (DI)

A piece of published work that is written by someone else (books, plays, movies are all accepted), with multiple different characters, and performed like a one-person play. Generally a more dramatic script that includes serious plots and tragic events.

- **Timing:** A 10 minute speech; 30 second grace period
- **Rules/Regulations:** Performers may only use their own bodies, and any use of props will result in a penalty within the round. Students may not consult the script during their speech and will be penalized at the judge's discretion if caught doing so.

Humorous Interpretation (HI)

A piece of published work that is written by someone else (books, plays, movies are all accepted), with multiple different characters, and performed like a one-person play. Generally a more humorous script that includes jokes, silly gags, and fast-paced action.

- **Timing:** A 10 minute speech; 30 second grace period
- **Rules/Regulations:** Performers may only use their own bodies, and any use of props will result in a penalty within the round. Students may not consult the script during their speech and will be penalized at the judge's discretion if caught doing so.

Duo Interpretation (DUO)

A piece of published work that is written by someone else (books, plays, movies are all accepted), with multiple different characters, and performed like a two-person play. Can be dramatic, comedic, or a combination of both.

- **Timing:** A 10 minute speech; 30 second grace period
- **Rules/Regulations:** Performers may only use their own bodies, and any use of props will result in a penalty within the round. Students may not touch their partner or make eye contact with their partner. Students may not consult the script during their speech and will be penalized at the judge's discretion if caught doing so.

Oratorical Interpretation/Declamation (OI)

A published speech written by someone else that was actually delivered in a public forum. You must analyze and understand the goals and motivation of the original speaker, and interpret the speech with a new voice for a new audience. Remember: it is not an impersonation, it is an interpretation.

- Timing: A 10 minute speech; 30 second grace period.
- Rules/Regulations:
 - No combining separate speeches.
 - Include an introduction with the name of the author, the title of the oration, if any, and the name of the source where the oration was published. You also need to include the place and date of the original delivery.
 - You may add a maximum of 150 words, including the introduction and any transitions. The editing and/or delivery must not change the author's intent.
 - Students may not consult the script during their speech and will be penalized at the judge's discretion if caught doing so.
 - Performers may only use their own bodies, and any use of props will result in a penalty within the round.

Adapted from the 2013 CHSSA OI guidelines.

Original Oratory (OO)

A self-written, persuasive speech on a topic of the speaker's choosing. Competitors craft an argument using the foundations of rhetoric, including utilization of

evidence, logic, and emotional appeals. Topics range widely, but should be informative or persuasive in nature and call for the audience to resolve the issue. The speech must be delivered from memory.

Competitors may also present an Original Advocacy (OA) speech, which is a persuasive speech about a societal issue that calls on the government/Congress to solve the issue. If a competitor chooses to do this, **they are responsible for notifying their judges in each round** that their speech is an OA.

- **Timing:** A 10 minute speech; 30 second grace period
- **Rules/Regulations:** All direct quotations and primary sources must be cited verbally within the body of the speech (up to 150 quoted words). Use of another person's words or ideas without crediting them is plagiarism and is strictly forbidden. No props, audio, or visual aids may be used. Profanity, obscene content, and vulgar language are strictly prohibited. The speech must be written entirely by the speaker, though quotes from verbally cited sources may be included. Students may request time signals from the judge, but are responsible for ensuring that their performance is within the aforementioned time guidelines.

Spontaneous Argumentation (SPAR)

A spontaneous debate on a given resolution with limited preparation, formatted as a Speech event. Competitors are assigned to either the affirmative or negative side of the given resolution, then debate after one minute of preparation through two speeches per speaker, and a cross-examination between sides.

- **Timings:**
 - 1 min: Preparation time for both sides
 - 1 min: Affirmative constructive
 - 1 min: Negative constructive
 - 4 min: Cross-examination (2 mins for Neg, 2 mins for Aff)
 - 1 min: Negative conclusion
 - 1 min: Affirmative conclusion
 - 30 second grace period for each section
- **Procedures:** Competitors will be paired up to debate by speaker order (i.e. speaker 1 vs speaker 2, speaker 3 vs speaker 4, etc.), and swaps in match-ups

to accommodate double-entries may be made per the judge's discretion. The judge will randomly assign the side each speaker will be arguing (affirmative or negative). The judge will then read out the resolution, and each speaker will have 1 minute to prepare their arguments. After the 1 minute of preparation time has elapsed, the speakers will commence in their debate per the timings outlined above.

- **Cross-Examination:** During cross-examination, only the two speakers are to speak (no interjections by the judge or other competitors). The allocation of speaking time between competitors is not defined, though judges will note competitors who try to dominate the time by preventing the other competitor from speaking. Competitors are expected to remain respectful in their debate, exchanging questions and responses that effectively further their arguments.
- **Rules/Regulations:** Judges will provide time signals, and competitors are permitted to time themselves for their reference if they so choose (though judges keep the official time). Once the time for a given speech has elapsed, the judge will cut off the speaker. Competitors are permitted to take notes to flow their opponent's arguments, but may not use them during the speech or during their cross-examination. Competitors are not allowed to consult outside resources or materials (i.e. previously taken notes, Internet, etc.), information will not be fact checked. Props are also not permitted.

Impromptu (IMP)

A spontaneous event in which competitors construct a speech given random topics, which can range from objects around the house to current events. Competitors will generally be offering analysis and commentary on social phenomena and tendencies, but have the creative liberty to present their given topic in a manner of their choosing.

- **Timing:** 2 minutes of preparation for a 5 minute speech; 30 second grace period (up to 5:30).
- **Rules/Regulations:** Notes may be taken during prep time, but cannot be used or consulted by the competitor while speaking. Competitors are not allowed to consult outside resources or materials (i.e. previously taken notes,

Internet, etc.) during preparation or while speaking. No props can be used. Competitors are welcome to ask judges for time signals, but are ultimately responsible for ensuring that their speeches are within the timing guidelines above. Competitors are also welcome to time themselves for their reference, though the judge's time is official.

- **Topic Categories:**

- Concrete: Physical, tangible objects
- Abstract: Intangible items (eg. emotions, ideas)
- Quotes: A quotation from a text or speech
- Current Events: Important events that are happening in the world, likely an article headline

Payment Information

The cost per entry across all events is \$30. Each team is subject to an institution fee of \$40. Your team's total fee should be visible on the invoice generated via the coach Tabroom account.

Please note that the Kennedy Tournament will be instituting a drop fee. Students who do not show up for a round or cancel last minute after registering will be charged a \$30 drop fee.

Please pay for Tournament entries [here](#). This Stripe form will request the total number of entries and your total price. **Please ensure the amount paid via form matches your invoice on Tabroom. If you do not pay for the correct number of entries, your institution's registration will not be considered valid.**

Fee waiver: If your school or students are unable to pay this fee, please reach out to both kennedyspeechtournament@gmail.com and mvsboosters@gmail.com with your reason and we will let you know if your school is eligible for a fee waiver.

Judging Policy

Teams are not required to provide any judges. Students will be receiving high-quality feedback from experienced captains and varsity members of the Monta Vista Speech team.

Parent chaperones will be provided by Kennedy Middle School. Parent chaperones will be present in each room to monitor behavior; therefore, you do not need to provide additional parent chaperones.

*****DISCLAIMER: SCHOOLS ARE STILL REQUIRED TO BRING A SCHOOL CHAPERONE WITH MEDICAL RELEASE FORMS TO MANAGE THEIR SCHOOL AS PER THE CALIFORNIA EDUCATION CODE.*****

Divisions

The Kennedy Middle School Speech Tournament will be a middle school only tournament, and there will be no distinction between novice/varsity competitors for each event. All middle school competitors (grades six through eight) are welcome to compete.

All competitors must be in middle school. Competitors must be in either sixth, seventh, or eighth grade. No high schoolers will be allowed to compete.

No unaffiliated entries. All entries must compete under a school or organization. Independent entries will not be accepted into the tournament.

Dates and Deadlines

- **Fri, 3/21 - Tabroom Registration Deadline & Fees Frozen**
 - After this date, any drops made will not be provided refunds.
- **Fri, 3/28 - Tournament Waiver Deadline**
- **Fri, 3/28 - Tabroom Drop Deadline**
 - Drops after this date will be charged a \$30 drop fee.
- **Fri, 4/4 - Payment Deadline**
- **Sat, 4/12 - Tournament Day**

Observer Policy

While the Kennedy Tournament is an excellent opportunity for competitors to showcase their own skills, it also provides the opportunity for parents to observe their child's progress in public speaking and for students to spectate final rounds and learn from fellow speakers.

Parents and coaches will be allowed to spectate during all preliminary and final rounds.

Competitors will be allowed to spectate during final rounds. Competitors are highly encouraged to spectate.

Double-Entry

Double-entry is allowed with all events. Competitors are allowed to double-enter in any combination of the events offered: Original Oratory, Oratorical Interpretation, Duo Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, Dramatic Interpretation, Spontaneous Argumentation and Impromptu.

No triple-entry allowed. In the interest of ensuring the tournament runs on schedule, competitors are not permitted to enter in three or more events. Competitors may enter in up to two events.

Competitors are responsible for getting to their rounds on time. If a competitor is double-entered, they should ask to go first for the event they plan to do first. Judges will be made aware of expected double-entries and will accommodate accordingly.

Waitlist/Entry Cap/TBA Names Policy

No waitlists or TBA names. All entries provided on Tabroom will be accepted into the tournament. There is no waitlist or TBA formatting.

No entry caps. Schools may send as many competitors per event as they would like.

Liability Form/Waivers

Attached in Tabroom is the liability form required for every competitor attending the tournament. **Waivers for all students are due Friday, Mar. 28 and can be uploaded via Tabroom.** If you are unable to find the waiver, email us.

Food Purchase

Given that our tournament will be run the entire day on the Cupertino Middle School campus, we will be offering meals (including pizza, chips, fruit, and water) to **all competitors** for **\$5 each**. Each competitor can purchase up to 3 meals. **Payments must be made prior to the tournament via [this online food form](#).**

Equity Statement/Etiquette Expectations

Competitors are expected to be on their best behavior, and failure to meet our expectations may result in follow-up with school administrations and subsequent disciplinary action. All competitors are expected to follow standard Speech tournament etiquette, including but not limited to showing support to teammates and competitors, being respectful to judges and competitors, and being punctual to rounds.

We have a **zero-tolerance policy for harassment, bullying, and/or discrimination of any kind**. We expect all competitors, coaches, judges, and staff to make a commitment to providing a safe environment for all students to compete.