Dear Middles Schools & Forensics Teams,

The Hudson Forensics Team invites you to participate at a forensics tournament!

This tournament will be held on Friday, February 21st, from 4:00 PM (EST) to 8:00 PM (EST). We are happy to offer Congressional Debate, Declamation, Impromptu, Original Oratory, Poetry Interpretation, Prose Interpretation events, as well as Spontaneous Argument (SPAR) events to all Middle School competitors Grades 4-8. All students will have a quality tournament experience, and we hope you can use this opportunity to grow their respective skills.

**SCHEDULE**

Tournament Date: Friday, February 21st  
Location: Hudson Arts & Science Charter Middle School, 114 Chestnut Street, Kearny, NJ 07032

* Arrival & Check-In: 3:30PM to 3:55PM (EST)
* First Round Speech & SPAR 4:00PM – 5:00PM (EST)
* Congressional Debate: 4:00PM – 7:00PM (EST)
* Second Round Speech & SPAR Debate: 5:05PM – 6:05PM (EST)
* Third Round Speech & SPAR Debate: 6:10PM – 7:10PM (EST)
* Awards Ceremony: 7:30PM – 8:00PM (EST)

**REGISTRATION**

* Registration for Student Entries & Judges is due Wednesday, February 19th, 2024 @ 6PM
* Students can triple enter for speech events (Poetry, Prose, Impromptu, Declamation, and Original Oratory)
  + Original Oratory will be a combined “Persuasive Speaking” & “Informative Speaking” event.
* Students entered in Congressional Debate OR Spontaneous Argument can NOT enter any other event.

**FEES**

* Each speech and SPAR entry will be $10
* Each Congressional Debate entry will be $20
* A missing judge fine of $200 will be added to a school/program invoice based on failing to meet the judging quotas listed below.

**SPECIFIC EVENT & TOURNAMENT RULES**

* Most events will follow official National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA) rules and formats with a few exceptions noted below:
* *Congressional Debate* – This will primarily be run with the intention to TEACH the process of Congressional Debate for many first-time competitors. We will NOT have an election of a Presiding Officer, and the Parliamentarian will help the students to learn how to progress through the event via motions.
* *Spontaneous Argument (SPAR) –* Six students will be assigned to a room each round, just like for speech. They will then be paired off for three “mini”-debates within the round based on speaking order (1 v 2, 3 v 4, 5 v 6). Odd numbered speakers will be assigned PRO, and even numbered speakers will be assigned CON. Each pair will be given three topics, and the debaters will strike the topics until one remains. The remaining topic is what will be debated between the two students. The cycle repeats for each pair within the round. Judges will then rank the six competitors based on speaking ability, use of persuasion techniques, and questioning techniques during the grand crossfires.
* *Declamation & Original Oratory* – Competitors WILL be allowed to read their speeches from a binder like in Poetry and Prose Interpretation. HOWEVER, judges will be instructed, within reason, to rank those who make the attempt to give their performance from memory higher than those who used a binder. Those who are competing in Original Oratory will NOT be penalized if their speech would traditionally fall within the “Informative Speaking” event description*.*

**AWARDS**

Each school will receive a certificate for participating.

Students in up to 6th Place will be recognized at the Awards Ceremony, but physical awards will only be given to each individual entry for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place for all events.

For Speech events & SPAR, this will be calculated using a cumulative ranking system over the course of their three rounds. The student that received the lowest ranking will be awarded 1st Place and so forth. In the event of a tie, the tiebreaker will be head-to-head rankings. If there is still a tie after this it will be deemed an unbreakable tie, and both students will earn the same ranking. In the event of a tie for 1st or 2nd Place, this will NOT remove an award. Meaning that it is possible for more than three students to receive an award for a particular event depending on if a tie takes place.

For Congressional Debate, the rankings will be determined based on the average scores of the two judges and the Parliamentarian. In the event of a tie, the Parliamentarian’s rank will be used as the deciding tiebreaker.

We will also give out Team Sweepstakes awards to schools/programs based on a points system. Each school will receive points for the placements of their Top 5 entries, regardless of event. Each 1st Place finish will receive 5 points, 2nd Place 4 points, 3rd Place 3 points, 4th Place 2 points, and 5th or lower will receive 1 point. The Top 3 schools/programs will receive a team award.

**JUDGES & REQUIREMENTS**

* Each school/program will provide one judge for every **FIVE** entries
* Failure to meet the judging quotas listed above will result in a $200 Missing Judge Fine for EACH missing judge.
* All judges will be put into a combined pool, and could judge any of the events being offered.
* **If a school/program has a judge that is a trained Parliamentarian, we will give your school five FREE entries!**
* While we will try to accommodate all judging requests, we cannot guarantee a judge will be assigned to the event of their choosing.

* **Parents of competitors are invited to judge in this tournament!**
* **All judges must be at least 14 years old; High school students can judge too!**
* Judges must have/must create a personal Tabroom account before the tournament and have personal devices that can connect to the internet. We will be doing e-ballots.
* Judges must judge throughout the tournament.​
* If a judge does not show up for a round, the school responsible for the judge will have to pay a fine.​
* Click here to complete the highly recommended [Cultural Competency judge training course](http://speechanddebate.org/judge-training)
* First time judging? Click [here](https://www.speechanddebate.org/judge-training/?fbclid=IwAR3yqYV7AppaI5TZLi3H3p1LfP5cZgLGpiMUh3ewKphwlh_tC7k2cvsWN3I) to learn how to do it! Or watch our Youtube playlist [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ULwBE9d544M&list=PLEwTuYcAhi-bgs1cccIDNbyhOMr6kt6Xh&ab_channel=CHSSACaliforniaHighSchoolSpeechAssociation).