

The Warrior Rumble

2nd Invitational Tournament

January 9-10, 2026



Sophie B. Wright High School

Institute of Academic Excellence

Sophie B. Wright High School

2026 INVITATIONAL

January 9-10, 2026

Dear Directors of Forensics, Coaches, and Students,

On behalf of the faculty, staff, and administration at Sophie B. Wright High School, it is our honor to invite you to the First Annual Sophie B. Wright Tournament, January 9-10, 2026, in New Orleans, Louisiana.

This exciting two-day event will feature all events, offering a platform for students to showcase their skills in an atmosphere of spirited competition and intellectual growth. We are committed to providing a high-quality tournament experience, with dedicated judging and support to ensure smooth rounds and rewarding feedback for competitors.

Our school aims to foster an environment of respect, critical thinking, and collaboration throughout the tournament.

In addition to top-tier competition, we will offer participants a taste of New Orleans' vibrant culture through local cuisine served at the tournament, including options such as gumbo, red beans/fried chicken plates, catfish plates, etc., available for purchase.

The tournament will be held in-person at our school, with hotel accommodations available nearby for traveling teams. Full tournament details, including registration, schedule, and logistics, will be available on Tabroom. Schools must provide 1 judge for every 3 entries.

There will be an awards ceremony to honor the top performers.

For any questions or assistance, please feel free to reach out to Ms. Thomas at jerenisha_thomas@sbwcharter.org. We look forward to welcoming your teams to New Orleans and making this an unforgettable experience.

Sincerely,

Jerenisha Thomas

Tournament Director

Sophie B. Wright High School

New Orleans, LA



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SBW Warrior Rumble Tournament

Friday January 9, 2026

10:00 am– Congress

2:00 pm – Check In

3:00 pm – Duo/Debate Round 1

4:00 pm – Extemp Prep

4:30 pm – Individual Events Round 1

6:00 pm – Duo/Debate Round 2

7:00 pm – Extemp Prep

7:30 pm- Individual Events Round 2

Saturday January 10, 2026

8:00 am – Debate Round 3

9:30 am – Debate Round 4/ Duo Round 3/ Elim 1

10:30 am- Extemp Prep

11:00 am- Individual Events Round 3 /Elim 1

12:45 pm- Debate Elim 1/ Duo Round 4/ Elim 2

2:30 pm – Extemp Prep

3:00 pm – Individual Events 4/ Elim 2

4:00 pm – Debate Elim 2

5:30 pm – Debate Elim 3

7:00 pm – Awards

Important Tournament Information

Please share with all competitors, judges, and coaches.

General Information:

1. During the tournament the **ONLY** entrance/exit is through the front of the school on Napoleon Ave. No one can enter or exit any other door. Please do not prop doors open.
2. Tabroom is in **Room 224** on the second floor (St. Charles Ave.).
3. Hospitality for judges and coaches will be in the **Media Center** on the first floor across from the cafeteria.
4. Commons area for contestants will be in the **auditorium** on the second floor in the main hallway. No one is allowed to go onto the stage in the auditorium.
5. No smoking/vaping on campus.
6. Contestants must not enter the competition room unless a judge is present.
7. The gymnasium is **OFF LIMITS** to all tournament guests.
8. All ballots will be online.

Speech Information:

1. Online ballots in all events. All feedback will be available to view after the tournament.
2. Impromptu ballots will be ready for pick up at the help desk in front of the cafeteria.
3. Extemp draw/prep will be in **Room 202** on the second floor in the main hallway.
4. All speech events have a 30 second grace period. No judge should impose any automatic penalty for finishing speech/performance within 30 seconds beyond the maximum time. If grace period is exceeded, no rank higher than first may be awarded. If time exceeded by 2 minutes, the speech/performance should be stopped.

Debate Information:

1. Judges are expected to provide detailed, constructive feedback on all ballots.

Policy		Lincoln Douglas		Public Forum	
1 st Affirmative Constructive	8 minutes	Affirmative Constructive	6 minutes	Team A Constructive	4 minutes
Cross Exam (Negative)	3 minutes	Cross Exam (Negative)	3 minutes	Team B Constructive	4 minutes
1 st Negative Constructive	8 minutes	Negative Constructive/Rebuttal	7 minutes	Cross fire	3 minutes
Cross Exam (Affirmative)	3 minutes	Cross Exam (Affirmative)	3 minutes	Team A Rebuttal	4 minutes
2 nd Affirmative Constructive	8 minutes	1 st Affirmative Rebuttal	4 minutes	Team B Rebuttal	4 minutes
Cross Exam (Negative)	3 minutes	Negative Rebuttal	6 minutes	Cross fire	3 minutes
2 nd Negative Constructive	8 minutes	2 nd Affirmative Rebuttal	3 minutes	Team A Summary	3 minutes
Cross Exam (Affirmative)	3 minutes	Prep Time (per debater)	4 minutes	Team B Summary	3 minutes
1 st Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes			Grand Cross	3 minutes
1 st Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes			Team A Final Focus	2 minutes
2 nd Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes			Team B Final Focus	2 minutes
2 nd Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes			Prep Time (per team)	3 minutes
Prep Time (per team)	8 minutes				



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Judges

Judging Speech

Before the Round:

- Review your paper ballot: ballot will list the speakers in order, with space for feedback and results and your assigned room.

Prepare to Judge:

- Rounds typically last about an hour so you should silence cellular devices to give speakers your full attention.
- Bring a notepad or device to take notes.
- Have a timing device to monitor each speech.
- Competitors may be entered in multiple events (“cross-entered”) and might request to speak out of order.
- Begin with the first present speaker, even if they’re not first on your ballot.
- Do not penalize students for arriving late due to cross-entry.

During the Speech Round:

- Call up each speaker in the listed order, accommodating any cross-entry adjustments.
- After each speech, thank the competitor and proceed to the next.
- Ensure speeches adhere to event-specific time limits.
- Provide time signals if required by the event rules. (***This can be done by other competitors in the room***).

After the Speech Round:

- Provide constructive feedback by offering specific, actionable comments to help students improve and highlighting strengths and suggest areas for development.
- Rank and rate competitors: assign ranks based on performance, with 1 being the highest.
- Complete any additional scoring or commentary sections as directed.

Different Speech Events

(All events are 10 minutes with a 30-second grace period with the exception of Impromptu and Extemp)

Declamation (DEC)

Declamation involves students delivering a speech written by someone else, such as a famous speech, historical address, or commencement speech. The goal is to showcase their ability to convey the original speaker's intent and message with clarity and emotional impact.

Dramatic Interpretation (DI)

This event features a performer interpreting a piece of dramatic literature, such as plays, novels, or short stories. The focus is on emotional depth, character portrayal, and storytelling through voice and physicality.

Duo Interpretation (DUO)

A two-person performance where the competitors interpret a piece of literature, typically a play, novel, or story. The performers cannot make physical or eye contact with each other and must create distinct characters and settings through their use of voice and movement.

Humorous Interpretation (HI)

Competitors perform a humorous piece of literature, aiming to entertain and make the audience laugh while demonstrating strong character work, comedic timing, and creativity.

Informative Speaking

In this original speech event, competitors create and deliver a speech designed to inform the audience about a specific topic. Visual aids may be used to enhance understanding, and the speech is judged on clarity, organization, and delivery.

Program Oral Interpretation (POI)

This event involves a thematic performance that combines multiple types of literature (e.g., prose, poetry, and drama). Competitors use transitions and their voice and body to convey the central message of the program.

Original Oratory (OO)

In this event, competitors deliver an original speech written by themselves on a topic of their choosing. The speech is persuasive and often aims to inspire, inform, or motivate the audience.

Extemporaneous Speaking (Extemp)

Students are given 30 minutes to prepare a speech answering a current events question. The speech should demonstrate a clear argument, organization, and an understanding of the topic. Sources should be cited to support claims. **This event is 7 minutes with a 30-second grace period.**

Impromptu

Competitors are given a prompt, such as a word, quote, or phrase, and have limited time (often 2 minutes) to prepare a speech. The focus is on creativity, organization, and the ability to think on one's feet. **This event is 5-7 minutes total (including prep time).**

Sample feedback for Speech Events

Remember to be specific, kind, and offer actionable suggestions for improvement

Original Oratory (Persuasive Speech)

Strengths:

- “Your opening anecdote was engaging and drew me into the topic immediately.”
- “You maintained excellent eye contact, which helped convey your confidence and credibility.”

Suggestions for Improvement:

- “Consider varying your vocal tone more to emphasize key points and maintain audience interest.”
- “Your conclusion could be stronger if you circle back to the opening story to leave a lasting impression.”

Humorous Interpretation (HI)

Strengths:

- “Your comedic timing was spot on and had the audience laughing throughout.”
- “The distinct character voices added depth to your performance.”

Suggestions for Improvement:

- “Be careful not to rush through punchlines; pause slightly to let the humor land.”
- “Consider refining some physical gestures to make them more polished and consistent.”

Dramatic Interpretation (DI)

Strengths:

- “Your emotional range was impressive and truly brought the story to life.”
- “Your pacing built suspense effectively during key moments.”

Suggestions for Improvement:

- “Project a little more to ensure your performance reaches the back of the room.”
- “Work on transitions between characters to make them more seamless.”



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Judging Debate

Thank you for volunteering to judge. As a judge, your role is to evaluate the performance and arguments presented in the round without allowing personal beliefs, biases, or preferences to influence your decision.

- **Focus on the Round:** Base your decision solely on what is said and done during the performance or debate. Avoid factoring in prior knowledge or assumptions about the topic or competitors.
- **Separate Personal Views:** Your personal opinions about the topic, style preferences, or individual competitors should not influence your evaluation. Fairness requires neutrality.
- **Cultural and Social Awareness:** Be mindful of cultural, social, and individual differences. What might seem unfamiliar to you could be a valid form of expression or argumentation.
- **Evaluate Equally:** Treat all competitors equally, regardless of their school, appearance, style, or other non-relevant factors. Every competitor deserves the same opportunity to succeed based on their performance.

Before the Debate Round:

- Review your paper ballot: ballot will list the debater or teams with space for feedback and results and the ballot also indicates your assigned room.
- Prepare to judge: Rounds typically last about 1 to 2 hours, depending on the event so you should silence cellular devices to give debaters your full attention and take notes.

During the Debate Round:

- Begin the round by introducing yourself and clarifying any procedural questions.
- Follow the event-specific structure, allowing each side to present their arguments, rebuttals, and cross-examinations as per the format.
- Ensure each speech and cross-examination adheres to event-specific time limits. (***This can be done by debaters***).

After the Debate Round:

- Provide constructive feedback and determine the winning side based on the arguments presented, adherence to the rules, and overall performance.

Different Debate Events

Policy Debate (CX)

Policy Debate, also known as Cross-Examination Debate or CX, is a two-versus-two debate focused on proposing and critiquing policy changes. Resolutions typically advocate for significant changes in government policy. This format is highly technical and emphasizes in-depth research, logical reasoning, and the ability to defend a proposed plan (Affirmative) or argue against it (Negative). Judges should evaluate the depth of analysis, the effectiveness of the plan or counter-plan, and the strategic use of evidence and arguments, while considering the debaters' communication clarity.

Lincoln-Douglas Debate (LD)

Lincoln-Douglas Debate, often called "LD," is a one-on-one debate that focuses on values and ethical reasoning. Resolutions typically present philosophical or moral dilemmas, and debaters argue whether the resolution is consistent with overarching principles like justice, liberty, or fairness. This format emphasizes persuasive speaking, logical reasoning, and the ability to apply abstract ideas to the resolution. Judges should evaluate debaters based on their ability to clearly articulate and defend their positions, engage with their opponent's arguments, and maintain an effective speaking style.

Public Forum Debate (PF)

Public Forum Debate, or PF, is a two-versus-two debate that centers on current events and public policy issues. The resolutions are designed to be easily understood by the average citizen, making PF debates accessible to judges without specialized knowledge. Debaters are expected to present evidence-based arguments, communicate clearly, and appeal to common sense and practical reasoning. Judges should focus on the quality of arguments, evidence, and the debaters' ability to adapt to their audience while effectively engaging with their opponents.

Speech Times for Debate Events

Policy Debate

Lincoln Douglas

Public Forum

1 st Affirmative Constructive	8 minutes	Affirmative Constructive	6 minutes	Team A Constructive	4 minutes
Cross Exam (Negative)	3 minutes	Cross Exam (Negative)	3 minutes	Team B Constructive	4 minutes
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2 nd Affirmative Constructive	8 minutes	1 st Affirmative Rebuttal	4 minutes	Team B Rebuttal	4 minutes
Cross Exam (Negative)	3 minutes	Negative Rebuttal	6 minutes	Cross fire	3 minutes
2 nd Negative Constructive	8 minutes	2 nd Affirmative Rebuttal	3 minutes	Team A Summary	3 minutes
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2 nd Negative Rebuttal	5 minutes			Team B Final Focus	2 minutes
2 nd Affirmative Rebuttal	5 minutes			Prep Time (per team)	3 minutes
Prep Time (per team)	8 minutes				

Sample feedback for Debate Events

Remember to be specific, kind, and offer actionable suggestions for improvement

Public Forum Debate

Strengths:

- “Your framework was well-constructed and effectively set the tone for the debate.”
- “You presented strong evidence that was clearly sourced and relevant to your arguments.”

Suggestions for Improvement:

- “During rebuttals, focus more on directly refuting your opponent’s points rather than reiterating your own.”
- “Try to speak with more confidence and clarity during crossfire to make your points more persuasive.”

Lincoln-Douglas Debate

Strengths:

- “You effectively tied your value and criterion into every argument, which helped frame your case.”
- “Your closing speech did a great job summarizing the key voting issues.”

Suggestions for Improvement:

- “While your arguments were strong, they could benefit from more philosophical depth to support your value framework.”
- “Consider managing your time more carefully in rebuttals to address more of your opponent’s points.”

Common Debate Terminology

Contentions- the main arguments in a case. These are organized points that support a debater's position and serve as the foundation of their advocacy. Each contention typically includes claims, warrants, and impacts.

Claim - is a statement or argument the debater asserts to be true. It serves as the central idea of an argument but requires evidence or reasoning (a warrant) to back it up.

Impact - explains *why the argument matters*. It highlights the significance or consequences of the argument, showing the judge why it should influence their decision.

Rebuttal - a response to an opponent's argument. This can include refuting the claim, challenging the warrant or evidence, or minimizing the impact. Effective rebuttals weaken the opponent's case while reinforcing the debater's own arguments.

Weighing - a critical part of debate where debaters compare their arguments against their opponent's to show why their position is more significant. Judges often use weighing to decide rounds. Key types of weighing include but are not limited to the following:

Probability: Which argument is more likely to happen?

Magnitude: Which argument has a greater impact or scale?

Timeframe: Which argument will occur sooner, or whose effects are more immediate?

Framework - sets the lens through which the round should be evaluated. It explains *how* the judge should prioritize or weigh arguments. Frameworks often include a value or a criterion in debates like LD but can also include principles in PF and CX.

Value - a principle or ideal that the debater argues should be upheld. It serves as the ultimate goal of the debate (e.g., justice, morality, democracy). It's most commonly used in LD debate.

Value Criterion - a measurable standard or mechanism that the debater argues is the best way to achieve the value. For example, if the value is justice, the criterion might be "protecting individual rights" or "maximizing fairness." The criterion guides how the value is evaluated in the round.

Important Tournament Information for ALL Teachers

Prep Classrooms:

1. Set up tables or desks for judges, speakers, and audience members.
 - Ensure clear sightlines between debaters and the judge.
2. Remove unnecessary items or clutter to create a professional environment.
3. Leave white board accessible for speakers to use and provide one expo marker.
4. Place paper, pens, and sticky notes on the judge's desk.
5. Post sign on the door to indicate that a debate is in progress and a 'Do not enter if judge is not present' sign.
6. Print out 'Do Not Touch' signs and place them where needed in your classroom.
7. Place trash and recycling bins in accessible locations.
8. Leave all doors unlocked.
9. Remove sensitive or personal materials from the classroom.

Attire:

1. Please wear your 'I Love SBW' shirt with jeans.

Prep for Judging:

1. If you are judging speech/debate adhere to the "Judging Debate" and/or "Judging Speech" resources in your packet. In that packet you will find step by step directions on how to judge, how to fill out your ballot, and a synopsis of each type of event.