



Belleville West High School

Maroon and White Invitational

Spring Debate Tournament

Saturday, February 28th

Welcome to our Spring invitational! We are so excited to have you and look forward to having a day of spirited competition.

Note: We will be using the March 2026 Public Forum and Lincoln Douglas topic.

March Public Forum Topic – Resolved: The United States federal government should ban corporate acquisition of single-family residences.

March/April Lincoln-Douglas Topic – Resolved: The United States military ought to abide by the principle of non-intervention.

Cost: 30.00 per entry; entries are capped at 3 per division with a waitlist, and I will let teams off as we have space.

Awards will be given to the top 5 speakers and places in each division.

Tentative Tournament Schedule

7:30-8:00	Registration
8:00	Tournament Announcements
8:30	Round I (preset)
9:45	Round II (preset)
11:00	Round III (power matched from I & II)
12:00	Lunch
12:45	Round IV (power matched from III)
2:00	Round V (power matched from IV)
4:00	Awards

Tournament Address:
Belleville West High School
4063 Frank Scott Parkway West
Belleville, IL 62223

Judges are obligated for the entire tournament, please do not leave campus.



There will not be concessions, but pizza will be available for coaches to purchase ahead of time. Food for judges will be provided.

Disclosure is allowed in all events. The tabroom will release decisions, records, and ballots after rounds 2, 3, and 4. Errors may be corrected. For example: If the ballot says, “I voted for the Pro,” but the judge awarded the Con team the victory. Matters of interpretation will not be considered. Judges’ decisions are final.

Please mark any new judges as NEW in the notes, and varsity debaters may judge novices, but you need to mark them in the notes as students.

Judging Expectations

It is the obligation of the program’s head coach to make sure each judge has read and understood the following expectations and has been trained in how to judge the event for which they have been registered.

This is an educational activity and the students are our main priority. Please do your best to support our mission. Judges at all times are expected to act in a dignified and professional manner.

Competition Guidelines

IT IS THE OBLIGATION OF THE PROGRAM’S HEAD COACH TO MAKE SURE EACH JUDGE HAD READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE FOLLOWING EXPECTATIONS.

THIS IS AN EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY AND THE STUDENTS ARE OUR MAIN PRIORITY. PLEASE DO YOUR BEST TO SUPPORT OUR MISSION. JUDGES AT ALL TIMES ARE EXPECTED TO ACT IN A DIGNIFIED AND PROFESSIONAL MANNER.

- 1. If you are a new judge, please let the tab room know asap.**
- 2. All judges are expected to be available for the duration of the tournament (8:00 through round V).** Tournaments aren’t perfect, so delays may happen, but we’ve tried to anticipate potential problems. Once round 5 is complete, it is the coach’s discretion to dismiss judges.
- 3. Please wait in the judge’s lounge if you are not scheduled to judge** to see if you are needed to fill-in for a round. This is really important to keep the tournament on time.]
- 4. Judges should be the first ones to enter a room and the last one to leave the room.** Judges and debaters are not to touch anything other than student desks (i.e. DO NOT SIT AT THE TEACHER’S DESK OR UNPLUG ANYTHING). Please do not bring anything but water into a classroom. Any unusual classroom conditions should be reported to the tab room immediately.
- 5. Please check all pairings to make sure you do not have a judge assignment.** Your room number should be listed on your ballots.
- 6. Rounds should start ASAP.** If a debater is not present within 10 minutes of the release of pairings, please have someone communicate that with the tab table. DO NOT JUST SIT IN THE ROOM. Students who do not report to their room within 10 minutes will receive a forfeit for the round.
- 7. Judges should verbally verify the debater information that is on the ballot.** In Public Forum, especially, please confirm School Names, Sides of the Debate, and Speaking Order (e.g. the CON may at times speak first instead of the PRO, unlike Lincoln-Douglas procedure). Debaters should legibly write their team information on the boards in the classrooms. Please be mindful of who is in the room. Make sure the correct teams are there and did not accidentally walk into the wrong room.



- 8. Be attentive during all parts of the debate.** Judges are expected to flow (take careful notes) during speeches and listen attentively during Cross-Ex/Crossfire. Judges can use timers and laptops to adjudicate the round, but texting during the debate conveys serious disregard to the debaters in the round (and the coaches/schools who hired you).
- 9. You may disclose your decisions in all divisions.**
- 10. Please provide constructive and specific feedback on ballots.** This provides great insight for coaches after each tournament. Vague and/or sparse ballots are not useful educational tools. Reasons for Decision (RFD) should in particular specify the arguments that the judge found most convincing (or not) and how/why the arguments were weighed. RFD's such as "The NEG presented their side better" or "The AFF did a better job debating" would be considered vague.
- 11. Oral critiques are acceptable, as long as they are brief and constructive.** If a judge feels a lengthier critique is needed, they should turn in the ballot first, then speak with the debaters in the student area. Serious concerns from the round should be addressed on the ballot and communicated to the school's coach immediately.
- 12. Please be mindful of awarding speaker points.** Scores can range from 20-30. Use the guide on each ballot to help determine points. Half points (28.5) will be accepted and tabbed. **Ties are also acceptable.**
- 13. Be nice to the kids.** This may be their first debate tournament ever, and it is important to be honest, but always be supportive and professional in any criticism. No one is suggesting you avoid critical feedback, but please be professional and effective representatives of your school's program.
- 14. Ballots should be submitted** no later than 10 minutes after the round ending. If more time is needed, please submit your decision and then go back and edit/add feedback. Please be kind to our tab staff.
- 15. Low Point Wins are acceptable,** but please be sure that you are justifying that decision on the ballot. Please make sure school/team codes are consistent with the side debated.
- 16. No scouting.** Observers are only allowed in rounds where members of their own school are competing or judging. *Observers are allowed to flow for educational purposes.*

Thank you for taking time to support our students and for adhering to our rules. We realize how important our judges are to the success of this tournament, and we are here to support you and our students. If you have any questions, feel free to contact the tab room immediately.

Speaker Point Scale

Judges must follow the speaker point scale, regardless of what they are used to or may prefer, so that there is a fair standard across all rounds. Plus, if we have a standard, points provide meaningful feedback! **The other thing to keep in mind with regard to speaker points, is that you can tie teams, giving them all the same points, or giving two or three speakers the same points.**

30: I wish I could frame your speeches – hard to imagine a better speaker

29.0-29.5: you left no doubt about who won and are an excellent speaker

28.0-28.5: you were effective and strategic, and made only minor mistakes

27.5: you hit all the right notes, but could improve (e.g. depth or efficiency)

27.0: you mainly did the right thing, but left something to be desired

26.5: you missed major things and were hard to follow

26.0: you advanced little in the debate or cost your team the round

25.0-25.5: you are not ready for this division/tournament

Below 25: you were offensive, ignorant, rude, or tried to cheat (MUST come to tab)

Low-point wins (where the winning team has fewer points than the losing team) are allowed.



Do not go below a 26 unless something egregious happens. As I said in-person, this was an excellent and very close debate for me. In the end, my main voting issue came down to humanitarian crises abroad, and the likelihood of new regulations having a positive impact on both preventing criminal activity and the markets at large.