

# **FRANKLIN ACADEMY GOLDEN PANTHERS DEBATE TEAM**

## **STUDENT AGREEMENT**

As a student participating as a member of the FAPPHS/MS Debate Team , I,  
\_\_\_\_\_ [name of student] acknowledge and agree as follows:

**[1] Preparation:** Students must attend practices regularly and be on time. Students must prepare for events as directed by their coach, Mrs. Lyons. Students may not compete in a tournament if they have not participated in a minimum of three practices during the four weeks preceding a tournament. Preference for entering students in invitational tournaments is based on each student’s experience and commitment to the activity and on each student’s attendance at all regular practices unless the absence is excused by the coach. The coach may refuse to allow a student to participate in a tournament if the student is not adequately prepared for competition.

**[2] Ethics and Behavior:** Students must observe principles of good sportsmanship, tolerance and respect for others, honesty, and fair play. Students must treat all students, coaches, teachers, chaperones, and parents (regardless of school affiliation) with courtesy and respect at all times. Mrs. Lyons may refuse to allow a student to participate in any Debate Team meeting, practice, activity or tournament if a student has violated these principles.

**Respect.** Students must show respect for fellow teammates and opponents regardless of school affiliation and no matter what event they participate in. Students must show respect for coaches, faculty sponsors, parents, chaperones and teachers regardless of school affiliation. Students must respect the property of others, including schools hosting tournaments. Students must represent FAPPHS/MS with graciousness and dignity at all times, including but not limited to practices and tournaments. Fighting, bullying, vandalizing property, insults or disrespectful comments (aka “smack talk” or “trash talk”) about competition results, or about students, parents, coaches or judges does not promote the team’s goal of promoting good sportsmanship, and will not be tolerated.

**Team Spirit.** We compete as individuals but we grow and learn as a team. When we all support each other, everyone wins. Unless excused by Mrs. Lyons, students will stay until the end of practice even if he/she is not personally debating or speaking. At a tournament, all students must stay until the end of award ceremonies with the rest of the team, unless excused in advance by Mrs. Lyons. Research (for example, for Debate or Extemporaneous Speaking) must be shared with fellow team members, unless restricted use is approved by the coach.

**Fair Play.** Students must abide by all tournament rules, including appropriate use of research, notes, script formatting, internet access, filing, and use of computers, phones and mobile electronic devices. Students must do honest work by original research. Plagiarism, using or quoting from another’s work

without proper citation, is unacceptable in the Forensic community and in all academic institutions. Students may be disciplined by the coach for dishonesty in competition.

**Competitive Equity.** Students should honor the choices made about the tournament schedule and the use of FAPPHS/MS Debate Team resources and money. Students acknowledge that the coach makes the final decision as to team pairings in all events. Composition of team pairings shall be based on the students' commitment to the activity, skill level, fairness, history of Forensics competition, a student's treatment of and respect for other students, parents, teachers and coaches, and a student's adherence to this conduct contract.

**Solidarity.** Mutual support increases each individual's chance of success and enhances the value of the experience. We are not competing against each other but with each other as a Golden Panthers Debate Team squad.

**Tolerance.** Students should strive to accept individual differences and to accommodate and promote diversity on our team and in the Forensics community. Public display of affection will not be tolerated.

**[3] Tournament Eligibility:** To be part of the FAPPHS/MS Debate Team, high school students must pay a \$25.00 membership fee to be members of the National Speech and Debate Association. Middle School students pay a \$10.00 fee to be members of the National Junior Forensics League. Once HS and MS students begin competing at debate tournaments, they earn points. After obtaining 25 points, a student will earn merit degree status, thus making them a member of the speech and debate honor society. Every time the student competes, the more points they earn, which in turn allows them to obtain higher degrees within the honor society. Students are required to participate in tournaments, and participation in competition is a privilege, not a right. The coach makes the final determination of whether a student is eligible to compete in a tournament and at what level (novice or varsity). Students shall not participate in any Forensics tournament without the approval of the coach. Eligibility for tournament competition requires completion of all of the necessary parent permission forms, this conduct contract, proof of medical insurance, and a signed consent by parent or guardian for medical treatment in case of emergency (paperwork is filled out by a parent or guardian in the beginning of the school year at registration and kept on file). Factors to be considered for tournament eligibility shall include but not be limited to: a student's experience, demonstrated commitment to the activity, and history of forensics competition; a student's treatment of and respect for other students, parents and coaches; and a student's adherence to this student contract. All Golden Panther Debaters must compete at a minimum of two tournaments per quarter. A novice debater is committed to compete at Novice Champs and Novice States. A Varsity debater is committed to compete at the Regional Qualifying Tournament, State Championship Tournament (if the debater qualifies), NSDA Qualifiers, and NSDA Nationals (if the debater qualifies). Every student that competes at the Regional Qualifying Tournament must be available to compete at the State Championship Tournament if he/she qualifies. There are substantial financial penalties for dropping from the State Tournament. Every student that competes at the NSDA Qualifiers must be available to compete

at NSDA Nationals if he/she qualifies. There are substantial financial penalties for dropping from NSDA Nationals.

**\*Please note: This year Novice States takes place in Broward County. However, in future years Novice States will take place outside of Broward County and will entail travel costs.**

**\*Please note: This year The State Championship Tournament will take place outside of Broward County and will entail travel costs. As per Dr. Valdes, principal, all students who qualify to the State Championship are responsible for getting themselves to the tournament that will take place in March. Parents are permitted to chaperone but must personally pay for all travel expenses. Students will be responsible to pay for their own hotel room, meals outside of the tournament, and extra-curricular activities. Monies fundraised through FAPPHS/MS Debate Team will defray the cost of the tournament entry fee and the coach's travel expense of the hotel. \*\*\*The coach is NOT permitted to drive students.\*\*\***

**\*Please note: This year NSDA Nationals takes place in Dallas, TX, June 16<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>. Students who qualify to Nationals in June will be responsible for ALL monetary expenses (air flight, hotel, tournament fees, rental car, food, coach's hotel/flight fees, etc.) Any parent chaperones that attend Nationals must personally pay for their own expenses, just like all other traveling debate field trips. Of course, team fundraising throughout the year defrays the costs of Nationals. The more we fundraise, the less expensive trips are ☺**

**[4] Tournament Sign Up and Drops:** Students are required to abide by the sign up and drop deadlines set for tournaments. Students must pay by check or money order for a tournament fee by the coach's designated due date or the student will not attend the tournament. Because tournaments impose fines for "late drops," a monetary fine of up to the cost of either the fine and/or the initial registration fee will be imposed if a student drops from a tournament past the drop deadline as stated in the tournament invitation. "Too much homework," "other school obligations," "other family obligations," or unverified illness will not suffice as excuses for missing a deadline to drop from a tournament. If a student drops from a tournament, the student will be "benched" from participating in the next tournament. Dropping a tournament cost the team money, is embarrassing for team, and makes Franklin Academy HS/MS look bad. When you are on the Golden Panthers Debate Team, you are representing Franklin Academy HS/MS.

**[5] Discipline:** Students may lose the privilege of competing at one or more tournaments, or may be prohibited from attending or participating in any FAPPHS/MS Debate Team related team meeting, activity, practice or tournament at the discretion of the coach for the safety, health, protection, and/or well-being whether physical or emotional of any single team member or coach, more than one team member or coach, or the team as a whole. The coach may also suspend, expel or prohibit a student team member from attendance or participation at any FAPPHS/MS Debate Team related team meeting, practice, activity or tournament in appropriate cases for a violation of this student contract.

**[6] Support FAPPHS/MS Debate Team:** There is a suggested donation of \$200 per semester to help pay for tournament registration fees and coaching fees. Please make checks out to “Franklin Academy” and write “Debate” in the memo. Please submit this sum to Mrs. Lyons. This is not a requirement for participation.

Students and parents are also expected to assist with fundraising efforts to support the FAPPHS/MS Debate Team. Fundraising defrays travels costs and tournament fees.

Parents are expected to assist with team transportation and tournament judging duties. A parent/guardian is required to judge once a quarter. It is not fair when the same parents judge all of the time. Also, it is the student’s responsibility to get themselves to all tournaments. If students are carpooling to tournaments on school days, every student carpooling must provide Mrs. Lyons with a parent letter giving consent two days prior to the tournament. If there is no parent approval letter, the student will not be able to carpool which will ultimately result in a “drop” from the tournament.

**[7] Complaints:** Complaints about any student affiliated with FAPPHS/MS Debate Team may be submitted to Mrs. Lyons.

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**STUDENT AGREEMENT**

I understand and agree to abide by the standards and expectations set forth in this agreement. I understand the goals of the team include: good sportsmanship, respect for others, competitive equity, development of public speaking skills, ethical research and writing skills, performance and debate, and encouraging peers to strive for progress and excellence in their events.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Acknowledgement: \_\_\_\_\_  
[signature of student]

Parent Acknowledgement: \_\_\_\_\_  
[signature of parent]