

BDL Kickoff 2026 Schedule – DRAFT

Friday, October 2

Time	Activity	Who's doing what	School Coaches	BDL Staff
1:00-4:00	Ride up		☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
4:00 to 4:45	<i>Arrival, drop bags, settle in</i>	Rachel & Omar: Greet bus, head count Joey & Brendan: Direct students to cabins School coaches: Help students unload	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
4:45-6:30	Orientation Community Outreach	Brendan leads; BDL staff and school coaches support Rules and Expectations Community Outreach Strategic Plan Survey	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
6:30 to 9:00	Dinner, downtime	School coaches: Attend dinner and team meetings	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
9:00 to 10:00	Fireside Debate	Fireside speaker: Rachel (her debate journey, 8–10 min talk + Q&A + reflection) Brendan sets kids up with bedding School coaches: Off	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
10:00 to 10:30	<i>Downtime</i>	School coaches: Chaperone kids bedding down Everyone else: Staff meeting, personal hygiene	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
10:30 to 7:00	Lights out	School coaches: Check kids and report back by 10:45 PM	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off

Saturday, October 3

Time	Activity	Who's doing what	School Coaches	BDL Staff
7:00 to 7:55	Wakeup, personal hygiene	Joey & Brendan: Lead wakeup and breakfast walk School coaches: Off	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
8:00 to 8:45	Breakfast	School Coaches lead BDL staff meeting	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
8:45 to 9:00	Transition	Walk to workshop space, bathroom break	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
9:00 to 10:00	BDL Calendar & Expectations Workshop; Individual Goal Setting	Brendan leads School coaches: Attend	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
10:00 to 10:15	Transition	Change shoes, fill water bottles, walk to Zip Line	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
10:15 to 12:30	Zip Line	Joey leads School coaches: Off	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
12:30 to 1:30	Team Lunch	School coaches: Lead team meetings over lunch	☒ On ☐ Off	☐ On ☒ Off
1:30 to 1:45	Transition	Walk to session space, bathroom break	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
1:45 to 2:45	Impromptu Performance/ Teacher Stepback	Brendan leads Everyone judges / gives feedback School coaches: Judge	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
2:45-3:45	Team Goal Setting	School Coaches lead	☒ On ☐ Off	☐ On ☒ Off
3:45 to 4:30	Free time	Rachel & Brendan chaperone School coaches: Off	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
4:30 to 6:30	Coolidge Prep & Rounds	Brendan leads, everyone judges School coaches: Judge	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
	Transition	Wash up, walk to dinner	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
6:30 to 8:00	Dinner, downtime	School coaches: BDL Staff downtime	☒ On ☐ Off	☐ On ☒ Off
8:00 to 9:00	Fireside Debate	Fireside speaker: Omar (his debate journey, 8–10 min talk + Q&A + reflection) School coaches: Chaperone fireside	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
9:00 to 10:00	Downtime	School coaches: Off	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
10:00 to 7:00	Lights out	School coaches: Check kids and report back by 10:15 PM BDL staff meeting	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off

Sunday, October 4

Time	Activity	Who's doing what	School Coaches	BDL Staff
7:30-8:25	Wakeup, general hygiene	School coaches lead wakeup	☒ On ☐ Off	☐ On ☒ Off
8:30 to 9:15	Breakfast	Joey, Brendan, Rachel, & Omar lead breakfast & walk back School coaches: Off	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
9:15 to 9:30	<i>Transition</i>	Walk back, grab supplies	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
9:30 to 10:00	Thank-you notes	Brendan leads School coaches: Off	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
10:00 to 10:15	<i>Transition</i>	Break	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
10:15 to 12:15	Congress Bill Drafting	Brendan leads Joey, Rachel, & Omar circulate to support drafting teams 10-min stretch break around 11:15 School coaches: Support their teams	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
12:15 to 12:45	<i>Downtime, pack up</i>	Bags packed and staged by the bus Brendan & Omar chaperone School coaches: Off	☐ On ☒ Off	☒ On ☐ Off
12:45 to 1:30	Team Lunch	School coaches: Lead lunch meetings	☒ On ☐ Off	☐ On ☒ Off
1:30 to 5:00 Bus leaves at 2	Shoutouts, load bus, ride home	Brendan leads shoutouts BDL staff leads bus loading	☒ On ☐ Off	☒ On ☐ Off

Orientation

Friday, 4:45–6:30 PM · Lead: Brendan · Location: _____

GOALS

- Welcome students and set the tone for the weekend.
- Establish shared expectations: general rules, including BDL rules, ground rules, and cabin rules.
- Give students a clear picture of how the weekend will run.
- Introduce the Community Outreach Plan, a schedule of events for students to discuss and volunteer for.
- Collect Strategic Plan Survey responses from students and coaches.

AGENDA (BRENDAN LEADS)

1. Welcome-cabin arrangements, locations
2. BDL norms
3. Cabin rules
4. Weekend overview
5. Q&A
6. Community Outreach Plan: students discuss the schedule of events and volunteer
7. Strategic Plan Survey (students and coaches)

Survey link: brooklyndebateleague.org/students

ROLES

BDL Staff	School Coaches
• Brendan (lead): Leads the full session, including the Community Outreach Plan. • Joey, Rachel, Omar: Support during Q&A by fielding logistics questions and follow-ups. • Model the norms being introduced: present, attentive, off phones.	• Sit with your team. • Support during Q&A, especially school-specific questions. • Help keep your team focused and engaged. • Take the Strategic Plan Survey.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students know the BDL rules, ground rules, and cabin rules for the weekend.
- Students understand the weekend's flow and what's coming next.
- Students know which adults to go to with questions.
- Students know the upcoming community outreach events and have volunteered for them.
- Students and coaches complete the Strategic Plan Survey.

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- Students are engaged and paying attention.
- Students ask questions during Q&A.
- Students discuss the outreach events and sign up to volunteer.
- All students and coaches complete the survey.

Fireside Debate: Rachel

Friday, 9:00–10:00 PM · Speaker: Rachel · Location: Campfire

GOALS

- Show that debate goes beyond competition and beyond high school.
- Inspire students to take full part in the weekend and the season ahead.

FORMAT

1. Rachel’s debate journey talk (8–10 minutes)
2. Q&A
3. Student reflection time

Suggested reflection prompts: What part of the story connected to your own experience? Where do you want debate to take you this season, and beyond? What’s one thing you’ll commit to this weekend?

ROLES

BDL Staff	School Coaches
• Rachel (speaker): Share your debate journey, including life beyond competition and beyond high school. Take questions and help students connect your story to their own. • Brendan, Joey, Omar: Supervise students to ensure attention and participation. Encourage questions and keep reflection time focused. • Brendan: Set students up with bedding afterward.	• Optional attendance. Join if you’d like to hear the talk.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students see debate as more than competition, with value beyond high school.
- Students feel motivated to take full part in the weekend and the season.
- Students reflect on their own debate journey and goals.

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- Students ask appropriate questions.
- Questions connect Rachel’s talk to students’ own journeys.
- Students are attentive during the talk and use reflection time well.

BDL Calendar & Expectations Workshop; Individual Goal Setting

Saturday, 9:00–10:00 AM · Lead: Brendan · Location: _____

GOALS

- Students understand BDL attendance expectations for the season.
- Students work out which tournaments they are eligible for and which they want to attend.
- Students understand how the permission slip system works.
- Students set yearlong individual goals.

AGENDA

1. Full-group walkthrough of the BDL Calendar and Expectations Letter (Brendan): attendance expectations, tournament eligibility, and the permission slip process
2. Individual worksheets: students mark intended tournament attendance and write yearlong individual goals

ROLES

BDL Staff	School Coaches
• Brendan (lead): Lead the full-group walkthrough of the Calendar and Expectations Letter, then launch worksheet time. • Joey, Rachel, Omar: Circulate during goal setting. Help students write goals that are specific, have a clear timeframe, and include actionable steps. • Help students check eligibility and attendance plans against the Calendar.	• Circulate during goal setting, focusing on your own students. • Help students write goals that are specific, have a clear timeframe, and include actionable steps. • Note your students' planned attendance for follow-up during the season.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Every student understands attendance expectations and how permission slips work.
- Every student leaves with a year plan: the tournaments they are eligible for and intend to attend.
- Every student has yearlong goals that are specific, have a timeframe, and are actionable.

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- All students complete a worksheet with planned attendance and goals.
- Goals are specific, time-bound, and actionable
- Students can explain which tournaments they're eligible for and the permission slip steps.

Zip Line

Saturday, 10:15 AM–12:30 PM · Lead: Joey · Location: _____

This session is purely for fun.

GOALS

- Build bonds within and across teams.
- Push students outside their comfort zones in a supportive setting.
- Have fun.

ROLES

BDL Staff	School Coaches
• Joey (lead): Coordinate with facility staff and keep the group moving. • All staff: Maintain safety standards: head counts, facility rules, and supervising students who are waiting their turn. • Make sure everyone has a good time. Check in with nervous students and encourage them without pressuring them. • Encourage students to cheer each other on across schools, not just within their own team.	• Off.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students form connections within and across teams.
- Students try something outside their comfort zone and feel supported doing it.

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- Students cheer on and talk with students from other teams, not only their own.
- Hesitant students feel supported, whether they try it or cheer from the ground.
- No safety incidents. Head counts match at the start and end.

Impromptu Performance / Teacher Stepback

Saturday, 1:45–2:45 PM · Lead: Brendan · Impromptu logistics: Omar & Rachel · Location: _____

GOALS

- **Impromptu:** Break the ice so students get comfortable speaking and performing in front of one another, and build adaptive thinking.
- **Teacher Stepback:** Answer coaches' questions about expectations and set them up to lead Team Goal Setting.

FORMAT

1. Introduction (Brendan)
2. **Impromptu:** Students choose to perform individually or in groups. Individuals give a speech on a fun topic. Groups act out an assigned scene. They get 5 minutes to prep, then up to 5 minutes to speak or perform.
3. **Student judging:** Students score each performance out of 10. Scoring is informal and just for fun, with no rubric.
4. **Teacher Stepback:** Coaches step back for Q&A about expectations and to prepare for the Team Goal Setting session.

ROLES

BDL Staff	School Coaches
• Brendan (lead): Lead the introduction, then run the Teacher Stepback with coaches. • Omar & Rachel: Run Impromptu logistics: individual/group sign-ups, handing out topics and scenes, timing prep and performances, keeping the order moving, and collecting student scores. • Joey: Supervise the audience and encourage students to support performers.	• Join the Teacher Stepback. Bring your questions about expectations. • Prepare to lead Team Goal Setting with your team leaders.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students are more comfortable speaking and performing in front of peers.
- Students practice adaptive thinking by building and delivering something coherent on short notice.
- Coaches are clear on expectations and ready to lead Team Goal Setting.

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- Students are enjoying themselves and engaged as performers, audience, and judges.
- Performances are coherent, with a clear idea or storyline carried through.
- Performances show adaptive thinking: recovering from a stumble, riffing on the prompt, adjusting to group members.
- Coaches leave the Stepback with their questions answered and a plan for Team Goal Setting.

Team Goal Setting

Saturday, 2:45–3:45 PM · Lead: School Coaches with Team Leaders · Location: _____

GOALS

- Team leaders, with their coaches, set team goals that go above and beyond BDL expectations.
- Goals can be performance-related or not, and qualitative or quantitative.

FORMAT

1. Coaches and team leaders meet with their teams.
2. Teams draft shared goals. They can build on the morning’s individual goals if students are comfortable sharing them.
3. Teams finalize a list of shared team goals.

Coaches prepare for this session during the Teacher Stepback. A Team Goal Setting template will be created separately.

ROLES

BDL Staff	School Coaches
• Downtime, plus a brief staff meeting while coaches run the session with their teams.	• Lead the session for your team, alongside your team leaders. • Guide the team toward goals that go beyond BDL expectations. • Invite, but don’t require, students to share their individual goals.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Each team has a list of shared team goals.
- Goals are ready to be communicated to the rest of the team back at school.

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- Every team leaves with a written list of shared goals.
- Goals go beyond BDL expectations.
- Team leaders are driving the conversation, with coaches supporting.
- Students share individual goals only if they are comfortable doing so.

Coolidge Prep & Rounds

Saturday, 4:30–6:30 PM · Lead: Brendan · Location: _____

Topic: Resolved: Wealth taxes do more harm than good.

GOALS

- Apply debate-specific skills to this year’s Coolidge topic.

FORMAT

1. **Prep (50 minutes):** Students are randomly divided into Aff and Neg, and each side preps together.
2. **Round (70 minutes):** One 1v1 round, Aff vs. Neg.
3. Judges give verbal feedback and a decision.

All pairings debate at the same time, so you need one judge and one space per pair.

ROLES

BDL Staff	School Coaches
• Brendan (lead): Run the random Aff/Neg split, launch prep, and manage pairings, rooms, and timing. • Joey, Rachel, Omar: Circulate during prep and support students as they build arguments. • Judge a round, and give verbal feedback and a decision as you would in any other round.	• Circulate during prep and support students as they build arguments. • Judge a round, and give verbal feedback and a decision as you would in any other round.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students apply debate skills to the wealth tax topic.
- Students get round experience and feedback on the topic before the season starts.

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- During prep, students build arguments themselves rather than waiting for adults to supply them.
- Rounds are coherent.
- Arguments are strong when judged as they would be in any other round.

Fireside Debate: Omar

Saturday, 8:00–9:00 PM · Speaker: Omar · Location: Campfire

GOALS

- Show that debate goes beyond competition and beyond high school.
- Inspire students to take full part in the weekend and the season ahead.

FORMAT

1. Omar's debate journey talk (8–10 minutes)
2. Q&A
3. Student reflection time

Suggested reflection prompts: What part of the story connected to your own experience? Where do you want debate to take you this season, and beyond? What's one thing you'll commit to this weekend?

ROLES

BDL Staff	School Coaches
• Omar (speaker): Share your debate journey, including life beyond competition and beyond high school. Take questions and help students connect your story to their own. • Brendan, Joey, Rachel: Supervise students to ensure attention and participation. Encourage questions and keep reflection time focused.	• Chaperone the fireside. • Help keep your students attentive and taking part.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students see debate as more than competition, with value beyond high school.
- Students feel motivated to take full part in the weekend and the season.
- Students reflect on their own debate journey and goals.

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- Students ask appropriate questions.
- Questions connect Omar's talk to students' own journeys.
- Students are attentive during the talk and use reflection time well.

Thank-You Notes

Sunday, 9:30–10:00 AM · Lead: Brendan · Location: _____

GOALS

- Students reflect on the weekend and show gratitude to the BDL donors who made kickoff possible.
- Students understand they are part of a supportive community that invests in them.

FORMAT

1. Brendan explains who the donors are, why they matter, and what a strong note includes.
2. Each student writes a note addressed to “Friend of BDL.”
3. Staff review the notes before they are collected.

ROLES

BDL Staff	School Coaches
• Brendan (lead): Introduce the donors and the purpose of the notes. Share what a strong note includes: a reflection on the weekend and a look ahead to the season. • Joey, Rachel, Omar: Check notes for neatness and readability, and make sure each includes both a reflection and a look ahead. • Have students revise or rewrite notes that aren’t ready to send.	• Off.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Students express specific, genuine gratitude to donors.
- Students see themselves as part of a supportive community.

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- Each note reflects on something specific from the weekend.
- Each note looks forward to the season, such as goals or tournaments the student is excited about.
- Notes are neat, readable, and ready to send.

Congress Bill Drafting

Sunday, 10:15 AM–12:15 PM · Lead: Brendan · Support: Joey, Rachel, Omar · Location: _____

GOALS

- Write Congress bills for the upcoming season on a range of foreign and domestic topics.
- Produce new legislation, not a rehash of last year’s bills.

FORMAT

1. Brendan launches the session, covering goals, the expectation that topics are new, and the bill format.
2. School teams draft their bills.
3. 10-minute stretch break around 11:15.
4. Teams submit drafts to BDL staff.

Bills per team: _____

ROLES

BDL Staff	School Coaches
• Brendan (lead): Launch the session and set expectations for topic range, originality, and format. Circulate and support teams. • Joey, Rachel, Omar: Circulate and support teams while they draft. Flag topics that repeat last year’s bills or overlap with another team’s. • After the session: Clean up bills before submission.	• Support your school team during drafting.

INTENDED OUTCOMES

- Every school team produces drafted legislation.
- Bills cover a range of new foreign and domestic topics.

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- Each team has at least one complete draft by 12:15.
- Topics are new, not repeats from last year.
- Across teams, the bills include both foreign and domestic topics.
- Drafts follow the bill format closely enough that staff cleanup is light.

Supervision & Logistics

Covers meals, downtime, transitions, lights out, and travel for the whole weekend.

CORE SAFETY RULES (APPLY AT ALL TIMES)

- **Rule of Three:** No one, student or adult, travels the grounds or is in a private space with fewer than 3 people.
- **Own bunk only:** Students may not be in any bunk other than their own.
- **Public spaces for mixed groups:** Downtime that combines groups must happen in public spaces.

TRAVEL

- **Friday ride up (1:00–4:00)**
- **Friday arrival (4:00–4:45):** Rachel & Omar greet the bus and take a head count. Joey & Brendan direct students to cabins. School coaches help students unload.
- **Sunday pack-up (12:15–12:45):** Bags packed and staged by the bus. Brendan & Omar chaperone.
- **Sunday departure (bus leaves at 2:00):** Brendan leads shoutouts. BDL staff lead bus loading. School coaches: on duty.

WAKE-UP & MEALS

Block	BDL Staff	School Coaches
Fri dinner (6:30–9:00)	On	Attend dinner and team meetings
Sat wake-up (7:00–7:55)	Joey & Brendan lead wake-up and the breakfast walk	Off
Sat breakfast (8:00–8:45)	Staff meeting	Lead breakfast
Sat lunch (12:30–1:30)	Off	Lead team meetings over lunch
Sat dinner (6:30–8:00)	Downtime	On duty
Sun wake-up (7:30–8:25)	Off	Lead wake-up
Sun breakfast (8:30–9:15)	Joey, Brendan, Rachel & Omar lead breakfast and the walk back	Off
Sun lunch (12:45–1:30)	Off	Lead lunch meetings

TRANSITIONS & DOWNTIME

- On every walk, one adult leads the group and one follows at the back. Take a head count at each destination.
- During downtime, supervising adults stay in the public spaces where students gather and periodically check that the Rule of Three is being followed.
- **Fri 10:00–10:30:** Brendan & school coaches chaperone bedding down. Other staff hold a staff meeting.
- **Sat free time (3:45–4:30):** Rachel & Brendan chaperone. School coaches off.
- **Sat downtime (9:00–10:00 PM):** BDL staff on. School coaches off.

LIGHTS OUT

Night	Lights out	School Coaches	BDL Staff
Friday	10:30 PM	Check kids and report back by 10:45	Brendan & Joey check in 10:30–10:50
Saturday	10:00 PM	Check kids and report back by 10:15	Staff meeting

LOOK-FORS / SUCCESS CHECK

- Head counts match at every transition and on the bus in both directions.
- No one is ever alone or in a pair in a private space or on the grounds.
- Students are only in their own bunks, and mixed-group downtime happens only in public spaces.
- Coach lights-out reports come in on time both nights.