

SOAR Speech & Debate Club

-general information

SOAR supports all 12 Stoa speech categories and all three types of debate. Parents and students should choose the speech categories & topics that fit the student's interest and educational goals. The coaches will teach, support, and give feedback for those speeches, but ultimately the student's effort and parent's involvement will determine the student's success. ***There is a minimum expectation that each student will choose at least one scripted speech event and one limited preparation speech event in order to learn a full range of speaking skills.***

SOAR can be transcribed as a speech or debate credit, but can also be so much more! We focus on Christian character, good sportsmanship, research skills, and sense of team. The topics researched while writing a speech or preparing for a debate resolution often contribute to educational work in other subject areas such as science, history, or economics.

SOAR club will begin August 8, 2025. We meet at Redeemer Community Church, 11512 W David O Dodd Rd. in Little Rock .

Fall club meets every Friday with the following schedule:

8:30 - 10:00 Parli/Extemp students
10:00-11:45 Junior and Senior Speech
11:45-12:15 All Club Apologetics
12:15-1:00 Lunch Fellowship
1:00-3:00 TP/LD/Jr. Debate

The focus in the fall is on teaching structure and skills, writing and refining scripts, blocking movement, compiling resources for debates and limited prep events, and then coaching on presentation style and debate skills. We try to give as much opportunity for practice and feedback as possible, but that feedback can't begin until the scripts are written and memorized. Students will need additional preparation and practice time at home to be ready for competition.

Spring club meets approximately two Fridays per month, and is scheduled around the tournament schedule. The focus in the spring is on preparation for upcoming tournaments, utilizing the feedback gained from ballots at prior tournaments, and practice. Attendance is based on the needs of the student. Juniors discontinue their regular meetings after the Arkansas Diamond tournament in late January, although they are welcome to come to club to practice and receive feedback if they have an upcoming tournament in the spring.

SOAR hosts two tournaments each year; Kickoff Challenge at Harding University at the beginning of October and the Arkansas Diamond in late January at New Life Baptist, Alexander. These tournaments are each 2-3 days long. Participation in these tournaments is mandatory for students and parents – please plan accordingly. We also HIGHLY encourage at least 1 other travel tournament, and some students participate in 4-5 or more throughout the season (may involve travel and hotel stays). We find that tournament competition motivates students to continue working to improve their skills and they get much more from the experience.

All Members of SOAR must also maintain a membership to Stoa. This enables you to compete in tournaments (including our own tournaments that we host) and gives you access to all of the training and resources that they offer. As you register for SOAR, also go to www.stoausa.org and take care of your membership there. Pay close attention to their eligibility requirements and statement of faith because our eligibility requirements and statement of faith are the same.

Estimated costs - costs for each family will vary, but this will give you an idea of the costs that might be involved:

- SOAR club dues - \$75 per family
- Stoa membership - \$100 per family
- Debaters will need a subscription to a briefing book or service. Price varies.
- Supplies (binders, pens, highlighters, debate box, timer, etc.) - varies
- Competition Attire (suits, dress shoes, etc.) - varies.
- Tournament entrance fees - usually around \$50-\$100 per tournament depending on events and location
- Tournament travel, accommodations, food - varies
- Jumpstart Workshop for new seniors students - \$75

We do try to offer scholarships to our students as we are able to help with tournament fees. Availability of scholarship funds is dependent on the funds we raise from our local tournaments.