





# EAGLE RIDGE HIGH SCHOOL
# SPEECH & DEBATE TEAM HANDBOOK

National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS)
School Year: _____

WELCOME

Welcome to the Eagle Ridge High School Speech & Debate Program. Participation in Speech and Debate is an educational activity designed to develop communication skills, leadership, critical thinking, academic excellence, ethical advocacy, and citizenship.

Membership on this team is both an honor and a responsibility. Students are expected to uphold the highest standards of character, integrity, and sportsmanship while representing Eagle Ridge High School and the Speech & Debate community.

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I. PROGRAM MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

Mission Statement

The Eagle Ridge Speech & Debate Team strives to build confidence in students while providing them with the tools and knowledge necessary to become self-assured and effective public speakers.

Vision Statement

The vision of the Eagle Ridge Speech & Debate Team is to develop students into confident communicators, ethical leaders, and engaged citizens who demonstrate excellence both in competition and in their communities.

Program Values

The Eagle Ridge Speech & Debate Team is committed to:

- Creating a positive and enjoyable learning environment, building self-confidence and resilience.
- Promoting teamwork and mutual respect.
- Encouraging academic and competitive excellence.
- Developing leadership and service to others.
- Providing every student the opportunity to earn a varsity letter through commitment and participation.

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II. PROGRAM GOALS

The goals of the Eagle Ridge Speech & Debate Team are to:

1. Develop excellence in public speaking, argumentation, and communication.
2. Foster confidence and personal growth in every participant and encourage ethical competition and sportsmanship.
3. Promote academic achievement and lifelong learning and prepare students for success in college, careers, and civic engagement.
4. Maintain a competitive program that consistently represents Eagle Ridge with distinction at league, regional, state, and national levels.

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III. MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

Participation is contingent upon compliance with all school district, state association, and NSDA regulations.

Members must:

- Be enrolled as full-time students at Eagle Ridge High School, Meet all academic eligibility requirements established by district policy, Complete all required registration and medical documentation, adhere to all school conduct expectations, Maintain good standing within the Speech & Debate program.

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IV. MEMBER EXPECTATIONS

Students are expected to:

Commitment

- Attend practice regularly and punctually, prepare thoroughly for competition, and participate in team activities and service opportunities.

Leadership

- Serve as positive role models, Encourage and mentor younger teammates, and promote a culture of inclusion and respect.

Academic Responsibility

- Maintain satisfactory academic progress, prioritize classroom responsibilities and communicate academic concerns to coaches.

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V. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Consistent attendance is essential to competitive success.

Required Attendance

Members are expected to attend:

- Scheduled practices, team meetings, tournaments and competitions, and mandatory program events

Excuse absences include:

Illness, Family emergencies, religious observances, School-sponsored activities, Approved obligations

Students must notify coaches as early as possible.

Unexcused Absences

Repeated unexcused absences may result in:

- Reduced competitive opportunities, Temporary suspension from tournaments, Removal from leadership positions, or Dismissal from the team

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VI. CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP

Speech and Debate participants are ambassadors of Eagle Ridge High School.

Students shall demonstrate:

- Integrity, Respect, Responsibility, Good citizenship, Professionalism

All members shall treat teammates, opponents, judges, tournament staff, coaches, and spectators with dignity and respect. Unsportsmanlike conduct, harassment, bullying, discrimination, plagiarism, falsification of evidence, or violations of school policy may result in disciplinary action.

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VII. COMMUNICATION EXPECTATIONS

Effective communication is essential to program success.

Official communication may occur through:

- School email, Team messaging platforms, Parent communication systems, and Team meetings

Students are responsible for:

- Checking communications daily, responding promptly to requests from coaches, and Informing coaches of scheduling conflicts in advance.

Parents are encouraged to maintain open and respectful communication with coaching staff.

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VIII. LEADERSHIP STRUCTURE

The Speech & Debate Team may include the following leadership positions:

Team Captain(s) - Responsibilities include:

- Supporting team culture and morale, assisting coaches with organization, serving as student representatives, Mentoring newer members.
- Assisting students within event areas, organizing peer practice sessions, and supporting competitive preparation.

Communications Officer - Responsibilities include:

- Assisting with announcements, Supporting team information dissemination.

Leadership positions are privileges and may be revoked if expectations are not maintained.

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IX. STUDENT LEADERSHIP SELECTION PROCESS

Leadership appointments shall be determined through a combination of:

- Written applications, Coach recommendations, Interviews

Selection criteria include:

- Commitment, Character, Reliability, Leadership potential, Academic standing, Competitive participation

Final appointments remain at the discretion of the coaching staff.

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X. COMPETITION EXPECTATIONS

Tournament Participation

Students selected to compete are expected to:

- Be fully prepared for assigned events, attend all rounds and required meetings, and Demonstrate professionalism at all times.

Participants shall wear business, or School attire unless otherwise directed by coaching staff.

Appropriate attire includes:

- Dress shirts, blouses, slacks, skirts, dresses, blazers, ties, or equivalent professional attire.
- Clothing must comply with district dress code standards.

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XI. TRAVEL EXPECTATIONS

Students traveling with the team shall:

- Follow all school and district travel policies, remain under supervision during events, respect all facilities and transportation providers, Demonstrate exemplary conduct.

Violations may result in removal from future travel opportunities.

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XII. LETTERING REQUIREMENTS

Consistent with the philosophy of the Eagle Ridge Speech & Debate Program, every student should have the opportunity to earn recognition through dedication and commitment.

Students may earn a varsity letter by meeting the following requirements:

1. Completion of the season in good standing, Attendance at required practices and meetings, Participation in designated tournaments (Four Tournaments plus State).
2. Demonstration of sportsmanship and positive citizenship, Fulfillment of team responsibilities.

Additional recognition may be awarded for:

- State qualification, NSDA degree achievement, Leadership service, Exceptional accomplishments

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XIII. NSDA MEMBERSHIP AND HONORS

The Eagle Ridge Speech & Debate Team encourages active participation within the National Speech & Debate Association (NSDA).

Students are encouraged to:

- Earning NSDA points and degrees, pursue leadership opportunities, Represent Eagle Ridge at events.

The accomplishments of Eagle Ridge competitors reflect the program's tradition of excellence and commitment to student success.

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XIV. PROGRAM TRADITIONS OF EXCELLENCE

The Eagle Ridge Speech & Debate Team takes pride in its tradition of achievement, including:

- Strong state tournament representation, Recognition of student excellence through NSDA honors.
- State finalists and semifinalists across multiple competitive events, and Building confidence, leadership, and lifelong communication skills in every participant.

XV. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

The coaching staff reserves the right to impose disciplinary consequences when team expectations are not met.

Possible consequences include:

1. Verbal warning, Written warning, Probation, Suspension from competitions, Removal from leadership positions, and Dismissal from the program

All disciplinary decisions shall consider the educational mission of the program.

XVI. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF HANDBOOK

Participation in the Eagle Ridge Speech & Debate Team signifies agreement to uphold the standards and expectations contained within this handbook.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

Coach Signature: _____