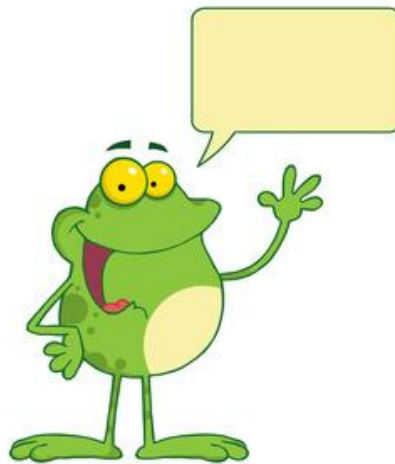


COTTER SPEECH TEAM

A Tradition of Excellence

Conference Champions 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018
Sub-Section Champions 2016, 2017, 2018
Section Runner Up 2016, 2017, 2018
29 state competitors since 2015 – and counting!

TEAM HANDBOOK



Speech Team Member:

Welcome to the 2018-19 Cotter Speech Team! We are excited to have **YOU** as a part of our team, the largest competitive team on Cotter's campus!

This handbook gives you our policies, expectations, and information that you will need for the 2019 season. Everything you should need to know is in here! Parents and participants both are asked to read this handbook and return the last page signed.

Everyone is a starter, everyone plays, and everyone is a valuable member of this team. We will teach you to find your voice! To Own the Room! To Speak!

Sincerely,

Coach Amy French
Head Speech Coach – Cotter High School

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WHAT COACHES EXPECT FROM YOU:

1. Attendance at practice.
2. Bring excitement, passion, and a willingness to learn, to be open to changes.
3. Practice on your own outside of scheduled practice times.
4. Attend required number of meets.
5. Be available for conference and sub-sections to state if invited to participate. We work hard around other activities calendars – please offer us the same courtesy during our postseason.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM US:

1. Active, engaged coaching, implementing new ideas, and challenging you to stretch beyond your comfort zone.
2. Practice time at least once a week – one on one (discussion will practice as a group) - for the length of the official season.

3. Responses to emails or phone calls within 24 hours – even if it’s just let me look into that and I will get back to you.

STUDENTS, YOU WILL NEED TO PROVIDE:

- **Meals:** Students are responsible for buying their own meals at tournaments. Concessions are generally available at most meets but the quality and quantity of food varies. You can also bring your own lunch and beverage. The Woodbury meet and the Lakeville meet will include a dinner stop.
- **Attire:** Students are asked to dress professionally at tournaments. (See Professional Dress Section for more details).
- **Notebook and folder:** You will be given a speech notebook early in the practicing process. That notebook needs to come to each practice to write down things to work on. You will need to supply a folder. It should be plain, simple and sturdy, and free of pictures and graffiti. Professional folders are appreciated but not required.
- **Good Grades:** Eligibility reports are run on Fridays. The activities office will notify students with either a warning or suspension from activities until grades meet the school policy. Because registration for speech meets is not refundable the day before a meet – **IF** a student is determined as ineligible on a Friday – they should still plan to attend the meet the following day. Their time off will be served at the next week they were planning to attend a meet (so likely 8 days later) regardless of if the grades have improved or not.

PARENTS – YOU ARE ASKED/INVITED TO HELP AND ATTEND:

- **Judging:** All parents/guardians will be asked to fill one judge spot at one meet per student, or 2 for families with multiple children. This is done in 1 of 2 ways. 1. You can do this by judging yourself (we offer two sessions (or can schedule a separate session) to train you to judge). 2. You can opt out and pay a \$65.00 fee so we can hire someone for you.
- Judge training dates for 2019 season are Saturday November 24, Saturday January 5, or by appointment if neither session works for you. Note: If you’ve been trained in years past, we are offering an optional refresher course the same 2 days, in the afternoon.
- We love to have parents come and hear their child speak...you are absolutely welcome to attend our meets! If Saturdays (or travel) are not an option, we also offer team nights – where our students present their pieces to each other. Your student would need to sign up to present at team night because this is optional for speakers, not required.
- Help at our home meet, Saturday March 23th. Details will come out Jan-Mar time frame.

COMMUNICATION:

TEAM COMMUNICATION

It is a challenge for this large team to communicate with so many students. Therefore, students must also take it upon themselves to remain updated. We provide many ways in which we update information.

- School email: Be sure you check your email daily.
- ***Team communication*** emails will be sent to students and parents from cotter.speech@cotterschools.org intermittently in the fall, then weekly (Sun/Mon time frame) during the season. Read these – what you need for the week will be in there.
- Cotter.speech@cotterschools.org will ***NOT*** be checked for replies to emails. All questions on team related information can be directed to Coach Amy. Speaker-specific questions to individual coaches.
- Coaches will communicate via email with students. Parents/guardians will be copied on all initial emails. Draft revision emails back and forth are excluded. ***Parents***; if you **don't wish to be copied, email your student's coach directly** and let him/her know.
- Announcements are also made occasionally over the school PA system – most often these are results from the previous weeks meets – but last minute changes may be made here as well. It will ***NEVER*** be the only method of communication, however.
- Calling trees will be set up for anyone wishing to participate in them the morning of meets. ***We will NOT wait for you if you are late.***...this is a help for those who want a safety net.
- After auditions, team placement sheets will come home listing all the meets each speaker will be invited to attend. One signed copy should be returned affirming your attendance. The other will be retained for your records.

TEAM FORMATION:

Auditions for Speaker Evaluation/Placement

No Auditions Needed:

- No auditions needed: previous year rank average 2.5 or < and remaining in the same category.
- > 2.5 rank average but remaining in the same category, coaches will review and recommend an audition or allow students to remain in the same category.
- S2C students will audition and be placed prior to camp due to cost of the camp.

Auditions required:

- All new speakers
- Any student desiring traveling and changing categories.
- >2.5 rank average but remaining in the same category, coaches will review and recommend
- Again – NO ONE will be cut. So don't panic!

Placement:

- We will give you our thoughts regarding categories of best fit
- General Speech Team members make final choice on category.
- Traveling Team members must participate in the category offered to them.

Double Entry (DE):

- Traveling Team members only have the option to Double Enter (DE).
- 2nd category choice is yours.
- For all non-DE tournaments, you must enter in your Traveling CategorySection placement in DE categories may be considered (exception is Duo)
- DE coach will be assigned, and one practice a week on DE is required

TEAM FORMATION:

Time Commitment, Post Season Meets, 2018 Traveling Team make up:

Congrats YOU MADE THE TEAM – and you can plan to START every tournament! BUT because we are limited to 1 bus all but 3 weekends, we have 2 groups we place our team members into: General Speech Team and Traveling Speech Team. Each has a different expectation of commitment, so please read descriptions below carefully. We ask that you commit to the level that best fits you. Coach Amy can discuss any questions or concerns.

General Team time commitment/expectations:

1. Will attend individual practices as described later in the handbook.
2. Commit to 3 of 4 meets offered to General members.
 - a. Eden Prairie, Glenbrooks, Nat Quals are optional meets/may be substituted for a regular meet
 - b. Middle School Meet may not be.
3. We work around athletic practices/games, school related events (honor band, science fair), family events; just talk to your coach about your schedule, plan ahead.
4. Conference attendance this year is mandatory because we host. You will either speak or time.
5. You need to be available to compete at Sub-Sections to State if offered a spot...our playoffs need to trump other activity's regular season things.

Traveling Team time commitment/expectations:

1. Will attend individual practices as described later in the handbook.
2. Memorized by January 8th – unless exception given by coach.
3. Will attend one captain's practice a week, simply 10 minutes extra of practices. (Arrangements can be made if times of captain's practices don't work.
4. Commit to 5 of 6 meets offered to Traveling Team members.
 - a. Eden Prairie Glenbrooks, and Nat Quals are optional meets/may be substituted for a regular meet.
 - b. Middle School Meet may not be.
5. Will be considered first for post season spots; these spots are NOT guaranteed..
6. We work around athletic practices/games, school related events (honor band, science fair), family events; just talk to your coach about your schedule, plan ahead.
7. Conference attendance this year is mandatory because we host. You will either speak or time.
8. You need to be available to compete at Sub-Sections to State if offered a spot...our playoffs need to trump other activity's regular season things.

TEAM FORMATION:

Post Season Meets, 2019 Traveling Team make up:

Conference/Sub-section Invitation/National Qualifier Meets:

1. After the March 9th meet, we will evaluate who will be awarded post season spots.
2. Conference and Sub-sections allots 4 spots to every team in each category.
 - a. Rank average will determine these spots – Traveling Team has priority.
 - b. The first General Speech Team member in our rank average sorted list per category, will set the bar for rank average cutoff for Traveling Members.
 - c. Any Traveling Team Members whose rank average falls below 0.5 of that first General Speech Team member will then lose the Traveling advantage.
 - d. Seniority, age, good standing will also factor in to invitations for post season.

Traveling Team Make-up:

1. Consists of a cap of 46 speakers (this is the bus seating limit). IF the desired number for traveling exceeds this number, the following criteria will be used to determine traveling.
2. 2017 Season Retained Spots:
 - a. Returning members from previous year's Traveling Team will retain a spot for the following year on the Traveling Team, if they meet the below criteria:
 - i. 1. Have a regular season rank average of 2.5 or less.
 - ii. 2. Have been a good team member.
 - iii. 3. Are in good standing (fulfilling requirements expected the prior year).
 - b. Speakers with these retained spots
 - i. May still be asked to audition – based on description above.
 - ii. Are subject to all required Traveling Team rules as described above.
3. Priority in close auditions for Traveling will tip toward seniors, and those who have been on the team more than one year.
4. In addition, one or two spots each year could be awarded to speakers who have been on the team 3 years or more, who have shown dedication and commitment to the process, and who have contributed in positive ways to the team other than winning.

CAPTAINS

Retention of Speakers each year allows us in part for continuity of leadership on the team and selection of Captains in the Spring for the following year.

Captains are selected each year from those who have shown leadership, are passionate about speech, and have positive attitudes toward their teammates. A demonstrated mastery of their category the year before can also factor in, but may not be required in every case.

Captains will be sophomores, juniors, or seniors. Additionally 3 Junior Captains will be selected from 8th and 9th graders with one year of experience on the team, meeting the same criteria described above.

Captains will be available to mentor students during the season; they will prepare the team on meet days by checking members in before loading of the bus; they will be leading warm-ups; they are available to answer questions at meets.

They are great resources – know who they are!

Captains will also be running Captians practices for traveling team members.

PRACTICES:

OUR PRACTICE EXPECTATIONS

- You are expected to practice on your own.
- If you want to see success during the season – you should practice each day...we will not babysit you, however. If you do this – it will show on Saturdays.
- Everyone MUST attend one **individual practice** each week during the season (January – March) with a coach, per that coach's direction. This is not negotiable – practicing with teammates, parents, does not count.
- Traveling must also attend one captain's practice a week – and speak. You may leave once you've spoken.
- Double Entries must practice their DE piece once a week with a coach to be assigned.
- Discussion will practice as a group due to the logistics of the category.
- Complete all weekly assignments given to you by your coach.
- Bring your Speech Notebook, folder, and speech to each practice along with all critiques from the season (which should be stored in your dedicated speech folder).
- Failure to practice could drop you from the meet registration unless you have a valid reason for missing practice (i.e. illness, snow day – with no makeup times available).
- The student's coach must be contacted by phone or email at least two hours prior to missing an individual practice in order for the absence to be excused. You may NOT tell a friend to tell us.
- We support your involvement in any/all Cotter activities – just communicate with us and we will work around it.
- Weather conflicts: If school is cancelled or released early due to weather, **NO SPEECH PRACTICES WILL BE HELD**. Coaches will contact you with makeup opportunities. To fit in everyone, practice times may be shortened for the remainder of the week – even if you weren't practicing the day practice was cancelled.

MEET DAY:

ATTENDANCE POLICY

All students registered for speech will automatically be registered for the tournaments listed at your level of involvement. If you will not be attending:

- Notify Coach Amy in advance of known conflicts – it helps us plan for how many judges we will need.
- Late notification (the week of a meet) will result in the student being charged \$17.00 which covers 1/6th of a judge's fee, and their entry fee which after the deadline is not refundable.
- If you are ill the morning of the meet a parent must call or text 507-450-2690 by the bus departure time. This is still subject to the Late Notification Policy (see above).

TRANSPORTATION POLICY

When transportation is provided by the school for a tournament, all participants are expected to ride with the team to the tournament per school policy.

- Students who live near Wabasha may receive permission from a head coach to drive directly to that meet location with prior written notice from a parent/guardian to a head coach.
- For tournaments where we pass by your home town (ie live in Wabasha, going to a meet in Red Wing) arrangements can be made to pick up students along the way. Let coaches know early so we can let the bus drivers know early as well.
- Under no circumstance may a student ride to or from a meet with a student driver. Parent permission does not supersede this rule per school policy.
- Parents/guardians attending the tournament may take their child(ren) home provided the student physically presents them self to one of the coaches before leaving. Parents/guardians may only leave the tournament with their own child(ren).

- A student may ride home from a tournament with a parent/guardian other than their own provided written or text notice is submitted to a head coach. Dorm students, notification is needed at least 24 hours prior to departure from Cotter.

DRESS CODE

As in life, you are judged by how you look. Appearance is a critical factor when making a favorable first impression in any public speaking situation. Therefore, we require a classy, professional approach to dress and overall appearance. We prefer all attire to be Black, White, Gray, or a Conservative Blue. IF you are a member of our traveling team – we would like to see you wear Royal Blue on you somewhere as well (your choice as to how you incorporate it).

Young Men

- White undershirt – plain (words on a t-shirt can be seen through dress shirts!).
- Collared dress shirt.
- Conservative tie (no goofy patterns, characters or pictures).
- Tie clip or tie chain.
- Dress pants with belt or suspenders.
- Dress shoes.
- Suit coat or sports coat is strongly suggested but not required.
- Hair: neat & orderly. Any length welcome; but if it can fit in a ponytail put it in one.
- Avoid distracting jewelry, watches – should be conservative as well.

Young Women

- Dress or collared blouse with a skirt or dress pants may be worn.
- If wearing a skirt, the length at minimum to knees with nylons or tights.
- Black dress shoes, flats or those with a slight heel.
- Suit jacket or blazer is strongly suggested but not required.
- Hair: any length is welcome. Long hair should be in a braid, bun, or binder of some sort.
- Conservative make-up – especially if you are pale in the winter and wearing white.
- Avoid distracting jewelry, watches – should be conservative as well.

MEET DAY:

HOW IT WORKS (GOOD READ IF YOU ARE NEW TO OUR TEAM):

- Captains will check you in ***before loading bus***. Be prepared to show a physical copy of your speech (even if you memorized), a pen, your folder and notebook, and any required books, computers, drive for you to be able to compete. The captain will also provide you a performance code for the day – pay attention to that code.
- The ***TEAM*** will warm up together upon arrival at the school. ***All students*** are expected to participate fully in every part of warm ups. **We will expect to see CHS Speakers talking to walls. 😊**
- Following warm ups (when you have given your speech to the wall) every speaker should obtain and complete a critique sheet for each round – except Discussion. Remember – the first impression a judge has of you is your writing on these sheets.
- Room and round information will be posted about 15 minutes prior to the first round. Check out the locations of your rooms and do a sound check. Ask questions of your captains if you are unsure what to do.
- Be early to your round (5 minutes).
- You must remain for the entire round ***unless*** in a draw category OR double entered (DE). If you do show up late to your round, enter only between speakers. A queue is to listen for applause. If you need to leave because you are DE, let the judge know why you are leaving.
- Be a good listener. Give each speaker your full attention; avoid making noise or doodling. ***NEVER*** make negative comments about yourself, about another speaker, or about the judge.
- Protect the anonymity the tournament design offers by not asking competitors where they are from or offering that information about yourself while in the competition room.
- When is your turn to speak, wait until the judge calls you then move confidently to the predetermined speaking area. Wait until the judge has given a verbal or nonverbal sign that he/she is ready before beginning.
- Judges will write critiques, which are given back to the competitor at the end of the tournament. If you receive a critique prior to the end of the tournament, place it in your speech folder and give it to you coach at the end of the meet. Please do not analyze the comments or change your speech because of comments received during the meet.

2017-18 Speech Handbook

- Critique sheets and round rankings will be shared with you on the return bus ride for you to see, but must return to the coach before leaving the bus.
- When meets have final rounds, all students not making finals will be expected to go and watch a final round. Students will be instructed to go to their own category, or to support fellow CHS students.
- CHS students are expected to conduct themselves in a classy and respectful manner at all awards ceremonies. Students must remain in professional dress for the entirety of the tournament through award ceremony even if you did NOT make final round. Time will be allowed for students to change into comfortable clothing for the return trip.

SPEECH AWARDS: HOW TO EARN THEM

Varsity Letter: To be considered Varsity and earn a letter you must:

- Attend at least 5 Varsity (High School) meets during the season
- Participate at a minimum of one of our 2 playoff meets (Conference or Sub-sections)
- Have no unexcused absences from practices.
- Have been a supportive team mate.

*Coaches reserve the right to present letter awards to exceptional students for showing performance and commitment that prove to be above and beyond expectations.

All Academic Conference: Criteria are pre-set by the 3 Rivers Conference:

- Have a 3.5 or better GPA for Quarter 3 (which is when our regular speech season occurs).
- Be of good standing on our team.
- Participate at the 3 Rivers Conference Meet
- Earned a Varsity Letter

Cotter Speaker of the Year (various levels): This award is meant to recognize the P.A., Interper, and Extemper who have simply scored the most points at meets for us during REGULAR season meets. *If you miss a meet, you miss points*, excused absence or not. All high school regular season meets are considered. (Middle school meet will be considered only in the Jr. High Speaker of the Year award.) Points are calculated as described below:

- Speakers each receive an overall rank at each meet (can check it out on SpeechWire).
- That rank is divided by the total number of speakers competing in the category.
- The quotient is then multiplied by 100.
- That final numbers is subtracted from 100, and what remain are the points earned by a student at that meet.
- Example:
 - You place 4th overall.
 - There were 20 speakers.
 - $4/20$ gives you a quotient of 0.2
 - $0.2*100=20$
 - $100-20=80$ points earned
- Finals are ***not*** included in this placement. Final rounds result in their own awards at the awards ceremony at each meet.

NSDA Honor Cords:

- All high school age speakers are registered with the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA). You **MUST** associate with the NSDA website when invited or you cannot receive an honor cord at graduation if you qualify.
- Points toward honor status are accrued by speaking at meets, based on rank, and advance a speaker through 8 different NSDA ranks, one of which is the rank of honor.
- If you reach the honor level, the NSDA also requires each school to set their own additional criteria as to which students earn an honor society cord. We have used the MSHSL/MSCA all state speaker award as our guideline.
- NOTE: 2017 was our first season involved with the NSDA. The criterion for awarding an honor cord has now been set. Going forward, there will still be adjustments made due to our newness to the NSDA. The criteria will remain consistent for the class of 2020 on.
- Criteria for the Class of 2020 and beyond can earn graduation honor cords by:
 - Reaching Honor Society point status.
 - Speaking at 16 meets while in high school.
 - Being an active member of the Cotter High School Speech Team for 3 years.
 - Have a GPA of 3.5 or higher
- Criteria for the Class of 2019:
 - Reaching Honor Society point status.
 - Speaking at 10 meets while in high school.
 - Being an active member of the Cotter High School Speech Team for 2 years.
- Students transferring to Cotter after sophomore year will be assessed on a case by case basis, however the minimal NSDA point accrual requirement cannot be altered.

All State Speaker:

- Numerous criterion need to be met to be considered.
- Those you can work to meet include:
 - Competing 2 times at the state meet.
 - Competing 3 times at sections.
 - Placing at 12 meets during the time on our team (or any team if transfer student).
 - 3 years on the high school speech team.
- The rest we will work with you on if you can meet the above criteria.

College Scholarships:

These are out there, and offered; if interested, talk to Coach Amy about getting auditions.

National Affiliations

We are excited to be members of the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA) <https://www.speechanddebate.org/> and the National Catholic Forensic League (NCFL) <http://www.ncfl.org/> . Each affiliation offers rewards and opportunities for students. Though Cotter supports our membership in these National Leagues, participation costs for all National Qualifiers or National Tournaments is currently the students/family's responsibility.

NSDA Graduation Honor Cords

How to earn one is described under awards. Speaker points may also be earned as well for additional speaking events. This includes but is not limited to Congressional Debate, Mock Trial, Model UN, spoken lines in plays, reading in church, really any speaking in public. Speaking as part of a class presentation however does not count. When you speak at events outside of speech meets, let Coach Amy know – she will get you credit for this if it qualifies! The higher your points, the more awards and honors you can be eligible for (like scholarships!).

National Tournaments

Both the NSDA and NCFL have national tournaments. Interested students may participate in either of these events provided specific eligibility criteria are met (see below).

How it works:

- Students must inform Coach Amy of initial interest (not final) in participation by Jan 1.
- Attend National Information meeting in January with Coach Amy to discuss logistics, timing of how this all unfolds, and costs you are responsible for paying.
- All National competitions are parent paid – Cotter does not cover National Tournaments.
- A parent will be required to travel with the student and may be required to judge.

Eligibility Criteria

- Category: Categories are offered at these national events include: Extemp Speaking, Drama/Prose, Duo, Humorous, Informative (NSDA only), Original Oratory, Debate, Oral Declamation (NCFL only) and Program Oral Interp (POI). Talk to Coach Amy if your category is not listed above – there are other options.
- Performance:
 - You should have made stage at least 4 times at varsity level (not novice) during the year.

- One for sure should be at a larger meet (Glenbrooks, Eden Prairie, Eastridge, Red Wing, Lakeville North, South St. Paul) to give you a good chance at success.

National Speech and Debate Association Tournament - June 16 to 21, 2018 in Dallas Texas.

- Bid to NSDA nationals are earned at speech contests.
- General Invitationals:
 - Some meets offer spots that will qualify contestants for National Bids.
 - Glenbrooks Tournament in Illinois is one, Eden Prairie has offered spots in the past as well.
 - Placing top 1 or 2 at these meets will earn you a bid.
- Southern Minnesota District Spots:
 - Cotter will be given a limited number of bids to send speakers to the District Tournament.
 - This is held March 8 and 9, 2019 Friday TBD, then Saturday in Eagan.
 - Placing top 3 will earn you a bid.

National Catholic Forensics League - May 24 thru 26, 2019 in Milwaukee WI

- These bids are given by strength of resume.
- We can submit anyone into the pool, then coaches in the NCFL Arch Diocese of St. Paul League will vote in based solely on resume strength (often broken down by age).
- Because this tournament occurs graduation week – our Sophomores and Juniors are treated like Juniors and Seniors, and given top priority.
- These spots are offered around mid March – and must be accepted within 1 week of when they are offered to speakers.
- The final roster is due in early April...so be prepared for a quick turn around.

Home Tournament

Cotter will be hosting a tournament this year on Saturday March 23, 2019. The expectation is all students (General Team or Traveling Team members) should plan to compete in this tournament. (Spring break is before this, and Easter after for 2019).

We are asking families to help us out with time and a donation of items we need to run our meet well and make it a success. Sign up Genius will come out during the season for shifts and material needs.

Thanks in advance for your time, talent, and treasure. The money raised will go into the speech account to help fund our program.

Speech Fund Raisers

For the 2019 season, our budget was reduced. In order to keep our program as close to the level it was at last season, we need to raise some funds. We have to start somewhere – with the hope to establish a few that will be easy to do and meet the needs of the program to keep it at the level it's been at.

1. Ashley for the Arts time

- a. Volunteer time in ~ 5 hour shifts at this festival.
- b. Money comes directly to us.
- c. This has already happened – thanks to those who volunteered.

2. Kwik Trip Cards

- a. Works like the Scripts cards – you purchase them through speech.
- b. Speech receives 5% of the cost of the cards.

3. Speech Team Cookbook

- a. Everyone will be asked to submit one recipe on the theme for the year.
- b. The cost of the cook books will be \$10.00.
- c. Each family will be asked to submit recipies.

2019 Meets:

November 24-25: National Qualifier, Glenbrooks II, those interested in Nationals – sign up in May 2018

January 18: Team Night #1 5:30-6:30

January 25: Speech Team Picture report 7:00am John Nett in speech attire

January 25-26: Eden Prairie Overnight – open to all speakers, optional, parent paid

February 2: Kasson – general and traveling

February 7: South St. Paul Middle School Meet 8th and 9th grade speakers

February 9: Woodbury – traveling only

February 14: New Prague Middle School Meet 7th grader speakers

February 16: Wabasha – general and traveling

February 18: Team Night 2 6:00-7:00

February 23: Red Wing – Traveling Team only

March 2: Lakeville North – by invitation only based on 2018 performance

March 8,9: National Speech and Debate Association National Qualifier - Eagan

March 9: Rushford – those not attending Lakeville North

March 16: Conference – we host. Mandatory for all students

March 20: Team Night #3 6:00-7:00

March 23: Home meet – general and traveling team

March 26: End of the year party 6:00

April 1: Sub-sections in Wabasha

April 6: Sections in Byron

April 12: State in Wayzata