Welcome to the Montgomery High School debate team! If you are receiving this, then you have selected Debate as one of your electives for the 2014-2015 school year. The MHS Debate Team is one of the premier teams in the state and the country; in the last few years we have won the District Championship, with students finishing as finalists in the State tournament, and a few even earning a bid to Nationals. 100% of the graduates of our program are accepted into a 4-year university. Many of our students earn scholarships and continue to debate in college.

You are invited to continue that legacy at MHS. There are a few expectations I would like you to be aware of before you join the team next year. Once you have read this letter please email me your contact information at cstowe@misd.org. This way I will be able to send you updates throughout the summer. Please also include your parent/guardians’ contact information including cell phone and email address.

The first thing that you need to know is that this is a competition class. Your major grades will be based on participation in extracurricular tournaments throughout the year. You will also be expected to attend practice twice per week for 2-hours each day. You will be assigned a lab/cohort and a captain that you will work with throughout the year.

The debate season runs from September to March with post-season tournaments running through June. Debate tournaments begin Friday afternoon and end late Saturday evening. Prepare for late nights and early mornings. You will receive a tentative tournament schedule at summer practice, along with the number of tournaments you will be expected to attend each grading period. You do not have to attend every tournament, but you are going to want to.

 **Debate I students are required to attend summer practice from 9am to 3pm, Monday, August 11th through Thursday, August 14th. A mandatory parent meeting will be held one evening that week. Make sure I have both yours and your parent’s contact information.**

 MHS will be hosting a high school debate tournament September 5th and 6th. This is our major fundraiser; all students and their guardians are required to work the tournament- **no exceptions**. You will also be expected to recruit family members/friends as judges. You’ll receive more information at the summer practice.

 There are a few major assets you’ll need to be successful on the team:

1. **A laptop computer with Microsoft Word** (preferably running Windows operating system, but Macbooks are okay)**, WiFi card** (internal or external)**, camera and a wireless mouse.** The MHS Debate team, along with a majority of the debate world, is entirely paperless; this allows us to keep thousands of pages of files without having to print them out and carry them around.
2. **High-speed internet access.** You’ll be expected to complete and turn-in assignments online, record speeches, and research from home. Reliable internet is a must.
3. **Tournament attire**. Debaters do not compete in street clothes. You will compete in western business attire- in other words, a suit. Both sexes should wear dark colored suits, generally black, charcoal, navy or gray. All students must wear a sport coat, blazer or suit jacket in competition- a sweater does not suffice; gentlemen must also wear a tie. Girls may choose to wear a pantsuit, but will typically receive better marks if they are wearing a skirt-suit. The skirt should touch the knee. Girls have more leeway with the color of the suit, but remain conservative (stick to solid, powerful colors). Nothing you wear should distract the judges from what you are saying. I recommend starting with one suit, and at least two shirts/blouses. More information about the team’s dress and grooming standards are located in the handbook.

You will also need to bring the following supplies, along with your computer, to summer practice:

* 1 ream, white copy paper
* 1 ream of PASTEL-colored LEGAL paper (blue and canary work best, try OfficeMax)
* 1 digital timer (don’t get a cheapo; it needs to last. Check the team website for examples)
* 4 colored pens. I recommend Pilot V5 extra-fine or Pilot G2 extra-fine
* 1 Moleskin-like notebook to keep all of your notes and debate records; I recommend Piccadilly Essential Notebooks ($8 at Barnes & Noble; $8 at Half-Price Books)
* 1, 1-inch binder along with 8 tab-dividers

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at cstowe@misd.org. Even if you do not have any questions please email me so I will have your contact information to give you updates during the summer.

Another method I use to send updates is Remind101. This will allow me to send mass text-message updates to the team very quickly. To sign-up, send a text with the message @stowedb8 to the number (928) 379-6260. Reply with your name, and you’re all set.

 I look forward to meeting you all this summer at practice. Check out a few of the websites below to get a preview of what you can expect. Don’t forget to send me your contact information!

See you soon,

Mr. Stowe

Important Debate Websites

MHS Debate Team site: [www.montgomeryhsdebate.weebly.com](http://www.montgomeryhsdebate.weebly.com)

Team Twitter: [@MoGoDebate](http://www.twitter.com/mogodebate)

National Speech & Debate Association: <http://www.speechanddebate.org>

Texas Forensic Association: [www.txfa.org](file:///C%3A%5CUsers%5CChristopher%5CDropbox%5CJUNKUNFILED%5Cwww.txfa.org)

University Interscholastic League: [www.uiltexas.org/speech](http://www.uiltexas.org/speech)

Debate Central: [www.debate-central.ncpa.org](http://www.debate-central.ncpa.org)

Planet Debate: [www.planetdebate.com](http://www.planetdebate.com)

The Joy of Tournaments: [www.joyoftournaments.com](http://www.joyoftournaments.com)

Edmodo: <https://edmo.do/j/g6gftb> - Debate Group Code: sp3vvj

Cross-X: [www.cross-x.com](http://www.cross-x.com)

Remind 101 Information

Text: @stowedb8

To: (928) 379-6260