

# Recruiting

*You can't get the best speakers and debaters on your team  
if the best speakers and debaters in your school  
don't even know that there is a team.*

*Sharon Volpe  
North Allegheny Senior High*

**Recruiting suggestions** – Every kid in your building should at least know that there is a forensics team, and they should all know what kids in forensics are doing.

1. Keep the good and / or dedicated. Get rid of the dead wood and those with negative attitudes.
  - a. Have a contract that outlines rules – including attitude rules.
  - b. Require an assignment at the beginning of the year for varsity members to remain on the team
2. Keep up with school news articles and announcements – Kids love to hear their names on the announcements and they love knowing that others know that they are part of a great group.
3. Keep teachers up-to-date with what your kids are doing.
  - a. Ask English teachers to proof-read speeches for students AFTER you have looked at them.
  - b. Ask Social Studies teachers for their advice on arguments AFTER you have considered the arguments.
  - c. Give Social Studies teachers the topics as they come out. You'll be surprised that some of them want to help – and there will be topics that will be especially appealing to them.
  - d. Let teachers know when the students they have helped have done well at a tournament.
  - e. Ask teachers to give you names of good students.
  - f. Thank those who help you with cookies and treats. It never hurts when others are spreading the good word about you and your group.
  - g. If your students go on an out-of-town tournament, email teachers to thank them for allowing the students to miss their classes. "Please let me know if any of them don't make up their work!"
4. Send emails to parents keeping them in the loop of how the team is doing. Every email that you send to a student should have the parent cc-ed. Not just for legal reasons, but because you want them to be informed, and you want them singing your praises as well.
5. Advertise advertise advertise.
  - a. Put trophies on display in conspicuous spot in the school.
  - b. Hang signs all over the school
  - c. Ask if any teachers will show a DVD when he is absent of the NFL final round of humor or PF.
  - d. School boards usually have meetings for the sole purpose of congratulating special wins. Let the people in administration know how your team is doing, but always remember that you are low on their priority list.

**Good luck!**

## The North Allegheny Speech and Debate Team is one of the best in the country.

We are now actively recruiting for next year's team. We need incoming freshmen who are eager to competitively act, speak, or debate. Our reputation is very important to us. Not only has the National Forensic League rated us in the top 100, some of the top universities in the country have also rated our team to be in the best 25. We are losing an amazing senior class with students who, as individuals, have been ranked as some of the best in the nation. We need to replace this incredible group.

Our regular tournaments are on Saturdays. Larger tournaments at out-of-town locations are usually three to four days at locations like Harvard, Yale, and Glenbrooks. Our season is longer than that of any other activity in the school – we start getting ready in September and the last tournament is in the middle of June for those who qualify to nationals. We know that kids have other activities, so we allow our students to choose how involved they would like to be. Students are automatically signed up to attend all tournaments, but each can have his or her name removed from the list by simply emailing our coach at least a week before the tournament. (There are a few tournaments that require a legitimate excuse to miss.) Once that week deadline has passed, we insist that the student honor his commitment to compete.

Individual practices are scheduled at different times during the week – the student can let the coach know about days that don't work and alternate days will be found.

For a brief description of our events, go to Ms. Volpe's web page, [teachers.northallegheny.org/svolpe](http://teachers.northallegheny.org/svolpe). There you will find the schedule for this past year, our constitution (where you can read about our dress code, grade requirements, and behavior expectations), and what to expect on the day of the tournament.

As a parent, you need to be prepared for fund raising. We also ask that each family sends an adult representative to two tournaments during the year to judge (Relax – it's easy to do).

We will have a meeting on at **6 p.m. on June 5 in the senior high school library** for both parents and students who are interested in getting a taste of what our team does. Please RSVP to Coach Volpe at [svolpe@northallegheny.org](mailto:svolpe@northallegheny.org). You can also use this address if your child would like to be on the team but is unable to come to this meeting.

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### What do the students say?

"I used to think that I was smart. I really didn't know how much I didn't know until I joined the debate team. It is just unbelievable how much we learn in a single year."

"My biggest regret is that I didn't join the team till I was a junior. This has been the best time of my life."

"It's amazing that we fight so much with each other – constantly and loudly - and we can't stand to be away from each other."

"Alternative energy sources, hate crime enhancements, nuclear weapons, domestic violence, plea bargaining, presidential primaries, civil disobedience – we may talk about these things in classes, but never to the depth that we do in debate. We just know things that our classmates don't get the chance to know. Everyone should join just to see what they are missing."

"I love to act. No single play or musical could have challenged me to be the best actress I could be the way that performances for forensics has."

### What do teachers say?

"I can always tell the kids who are in forensics."

"You give me the best writers."

"Anyone can see why these kids win so much!"

# North Allegheny Speech and Debate

I'm writing to solicit your help.

Please closely watch the dvd that your teacher is playing for you today to see what we do on the speech and debate team. I desperately need actors who can do what you see on these videos.

You and I both know that there are many actors who can play a single character in a stage situation. The actor needs to "take on the life" of the character and the actor "lives, eats and breathes" everything that the character would have done if he were really alive.

I get it. I understand. But I do not want these types of actors.

I need people who have the flexibility to go from one character to another in a fraction of a second. I need people who can competitively act outside of a stage situation. I need people who can act if I put them in a classroom in front of six other actors and a judge, in a closet in front of a judge, or in an auditorium filled with 5000 people. I need actors who will take criticism – some good and some bad – and work with it to "fix" his problems so that if he sees the same judge in the future, he will make the judge believe that he worked to make changes just for that judge.

That's the type of actor I need. I also need a team-player. We have more rules on the team than the Constitution of the US has. We have a uniform – a black suit. We compete on Saturdays, so if you have to be at ballet every Saturday at 7 am or at 2 pm or whatever, we can't use you.

Unless you tune out the announcements, you have to have heard that we have one of the top teams in the country, but the debaters and our extempers have been carrying the team. I need to start emphasizing the artsy so that we can be even more competitive. I have actually had people from other schools across the country say to me that it's a shame that North Allegheny isn't strong in the arts, and everyone within our district knows that we ARE strong in this area! You would need to be willing to travel to compete at the same places as the debaters, and you would need to be willing to compete on the state and national levels if your teammates pick you to represent them at district competitions. Our drama kids are pretty good – but we just have too few of them.

There are different events for acting. The events are humorous interpretation of literature, dramatic interpretation of literature, duo interpretation of literature, and we also have oral interpretation of prose and poetry (In prose and poetry, you don't have to memorize your piece; you actually read it from a script).

If you are interested, please come to see me, email me, or preferably, attend the meeting that we are having this Friday after school in room 322.. You can go to our web site to see more information ([teachers.northallegheny.org/svolpe](http://teachers.northallegheny.org/svolpe)).

I hope to see you soon!!!

Volpe

# **North Allegheny Speech and Debate**

**68<sup>th</sup> in the country**

**And shooting for the top 10**

**We're looking for a few  
more people to join us.**

**Go ahead. Rip this paper down  
to read the back if you are even  
a little bit interested.**

Recently, recruiters from colleges told Mrs. Volpe that she is doing a disservice to her school if she doesn't tell the students at North Allegheny that the number one thing that they look for on transcripts is  
*Leader on the speech and debate team.\**

Volpe doesn't want to do this disservice any more.

If you want to be a part of us  
If you wonder what we do  
If you like to talk  
If you are shy but don't want to be  
If you like to argue  
If you like to act

We have a place for every personality (and personality disorder).

Fill in the form and give to Volpe in room 322 at NASH or email her at  
SVolpe@NorthAllegheny.org.  
She'll arrange to meet with you to determine where you fit in our organization.

We may have been #68 this year. It's only a matter of time till we get to the top.

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Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year of graduation \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City + zip \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student email \_\_\_\_\_

Parent / Guardian email \_\_\_\_\_

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\* They not only told Volpe this – there was actually an article in the Washington Post about this.