

Information for Debate Parents



Tournament Schedule

A tentative tournament schedule is attached. The dates are subject to change, sometimes on short notice. Please don't make travel commitments until I confirm the dates.

November and February are busy debating months. There will be other events to plan around in your daughter's or son's life. By giving you the schedule in advance, I hope to make it easier for you to pick events that work for you, and to see when you need to arrange for homework in advance.

Please encourage your daughter or son to take part early. We debate every week at the school – but with 15 or 25 students in the club, it may be a month before each student gets a turn. At a tournament, your daughter or son can debate five or six times in a weekend – it would take five months to get that experience in club. Some novice debaters are bashful and want to wait to see if they're any good – that's a mistake. This is something where we only improve by doing it. If they don't debate early, they lose interest.

The first event is the Novice workshop, which is **Saturday September 26th**. The event is free, and takes place at Sacred Heart School. Please encourage your daughter or son to come if they are able. Experienced debaters can come and help out.

Who can come to tournaments

We have the largest debate program in Nova Scotia. Last year, 34 different Sacred Heart students left Halifax for debating tournaments. Our success—the fact there are so many students in the club this year—will mean that not everyone can go to every tournament. However, most can go to most. Because of the other demands on time, we don't usually have more who want to go, than there are spaces for. We make sure everyone gets to some tournaments.

I won't let a student enter a tournament which is too advanced for her or him (being crushed is not often a valuable learning experience). But

because the calibre of debate here is high, most of the debaters are good enough to go to most events. Students from Sacred Heart School have won each of the two largest debating tournaments in Canada three times in the last seven years.

Most tournaments have a cap on the number who can come from a particular school, or require that we supply a judge for each team we enter. I expect that there will be more volunteers for the Impromptu tournament this year than there are spots. Please be patient. Some events will take as many as we can send. The American tournaments will cheerfully take 16 debaters per school, sometimes more, and the events we host normally have an unlimited number of entries. So everybody will get floor time somewhere. We schedule enter-as-many-as-you-want events at the school about once a month. The excitement of a trip isn't there, but there are lots of opportunities to debate.

At the boys' school, every boy who wants to will probably be able to go to whatever tournaments he wants to.

There are lots of events (some every weekend, somewhere) and if there is sufficient interest and sufficient parent support (to drive to events) we can go to many more events. The entries on the schedule are based on the tournaments we plan to attend now. For example, we are able to go to Hotchkiss, a major American tournament in November, if we have interest and parent drivers.

Judges

We need to supply judges for 4 events, in order to participate. I consequently need about 14 parents for each of the following events in the morning and again in the afternoon. I would be grateful if you could come for either the morning or afternoon on each occasion. Training is provided and it is not daunting:

- Provincial Impromptus, October 2nd (evening) & October 3rd, morning and afternoon, Carrefour School, Dartmouth
- Donahoe Cup (April 10, Sacred Heart)
- Senior High Provincials (March or April, location to be announced)

- Junior High Provincials (March or April, location to be announced)

Driving

We will need drivers for 5 events—sometimes for two vehicles. We will rent and supply a van, and we pay for your gas, meals and accommodation:

- Montreal (October 30th-November 2nd – we already have two drivers; we may need a third)
- Antigonish (October or November)
- Sr Provincials in March or April
- Jr Provincials in March or April
- Massachusetts (May 1st-3rd)

I will be in touch to solicit your assistance driving and judging as we get closer to particular events. We should only need to ask you to drive once during the year.

We have the option of going to other American tournaments in the fall (likely November) if there is sufficient interest.

Funding

Most of the tournaments we enter locally have a modest registration fee (typically about \$20 a person), more if a meal is provided. We ask you to provide a cheque, payable to Sacred Heart School, for the registration fees.

If we travel, we normally put four students in a hotel room, and split the hotel cost four ways. For away tournaments with a travel cost, Sacred Heart normally pays or subsidizes the registration fee (but students have to pay the cost of their individual travel).

I would be happy to have some fund raising activities take place to make

the costs more reasonable for those travelling. We make a profit on the debate camp which enables us to slightly subsidize the activities during the year.

Contacting Me

Please call or e-mail if you have any questions or concerns during the year. I send notices home with your son or daughter, but I will e-mail a copy to you directly.

My cell phone is 293-3468 – I have it on whenever we are at tournaments or traveling. In Halifax, it is easier to reach me at work (460-3468), home (423-8457) or by e-mail (bcasey@dal.ca)

Getting Ready

Sacred Heart hosts a debate camp for one week every summer, which has attracted students from BC, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick and Newfoundland – as well as Nova Scotia. Sacred Heart students have first crack at registering for the week, and our debating program for the year is subsidized (to the tune of about \$3,000) from the proceeds. I encourage you to encourage your interested daughters and sons to take part – they get to debate ten times, which is more practice than they might get in a year of club debates.

Brian Casey
Debate Coach

2009-2010 Debating Calendar

(Dates and events are my best guess - yet to be confirmed)

When	Event	Location	Judges	Details
September	Novice Workshop (26)	Sacred Heart	No	Free
October	Provincial Impromptus (2-3)	Carrefour	Yes	6 Sr, 6 jr
	NS Team Canada Tryouts (4)	Sacred Heart	Yes	3 gr 9-10
	National Seminar (14-18)	Winnipeg	No	flight
	Dalhousie BP event (23 & 24)	Dalhousie	No	4
	McGill High School (30-31)	Montreal	No	8 debaters
November	ESU (1-2)	Montreal	No	3 or 4
	Moses Coady	St F X	No	
	Asper/Oxford Cup (22-23)	Winnipeg	No	Open
January	Dalhousie University (8-9)	Halifax	No	Open
February	Queen's University ()	Kingston	No	6 debaters
	CanWest ()	Winnipeg	No	2 per NS
March	Hart House ()	U of Toronto	No	Open
	Oxford University ()	Oxford	No	1 team
	Durham (20-21)	Durham	No	1 team
	Provincials ()		Yes	9 Seniors
April	Jr High Provincials		Yes	9 Juniors
	Donahoe Cup (10-11)	Sacred Heart	Yes	Open
	Senior High Nationals (22-26)	GNS, Victoria	No	2 teams
May	Deerfield (2)	Massachusetts	Yes	16
	Jr High Nationals (13-16)	Alberta	No	1 or 2