

# HELP!

## I'M A NEW COACH.

### WELCOME!

We know that being a new coach can be overwhelming - but you are going to have an incredible impact on the lives of students! To help you with navigating the first year of coaching, we've created this document to help answer some of the bigger questions you may have.



### FIRST THINGS FIRST

You will want to make sure you have memberships and accounts with all the appropriate places:

- [Head to NSDA](#) to make an account and get advisor status for your school.
- [Head to Tabroom](#) to make an account and link to your school.
- [Head to TSCA](#) to register as a member - make sure you select that you will be a TFA member!

#### NSDA

TFA was created to align with the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA) and prepare our students for success at the national level. Students can earn points when they compete at tournaments so you want to be an NSDA member!

#### TABROOM

Tabroom is where we "host" tournaments. This is where you will register students to compete, get your tournament invoices, sign up judges, and access ballots and results.

#### TSCA

The Texas Speech and Debate Association (TSCA) is our parent organization. You need to be a member of TSCA and TFA to be a voting member, host a tournament, and attend the TFA State Tournament!

# GET THESE QUESTIONS ANSWERED AT YOUR SCHOOL

- Meet with your AP and finance department and ask:
  - What is my budget?
  - What paperwork do I need to complete to go to a local tournament? What paperwork do I need to complete to go to a travel tournament? When should this paperwork be submitted?
  - How do I submit a bus request or a suburban/school transporting request? Do I need to complete training to drive a school-authorized vehicle such as a suburban or van?
  - How do I submit an invoice to pay for tournament fees? How long does it take to process an invoice?
  - Are there expectations for a minimum or a maximum number of tournaments we are allowed to attend?
  - Do you know if there is a Booster club already formed for this organization? What are the rules on Booster Clubs for the district?
  - What are the fundraising guidelines for the district?

## LEARNING MORE ABOUT TFA

The [TFA website](#) is a great place to access information! It provides classroom and competition resources, information about events, and more!

Our first recommendation would be for you to familiarize yourself with the Constitution. This has all the rules and regulations of the organization, along with our history and intended purpose. We know - it's pretty long. Save it as a resource so you can access it easily throughout the year and familiarize yourself with it.



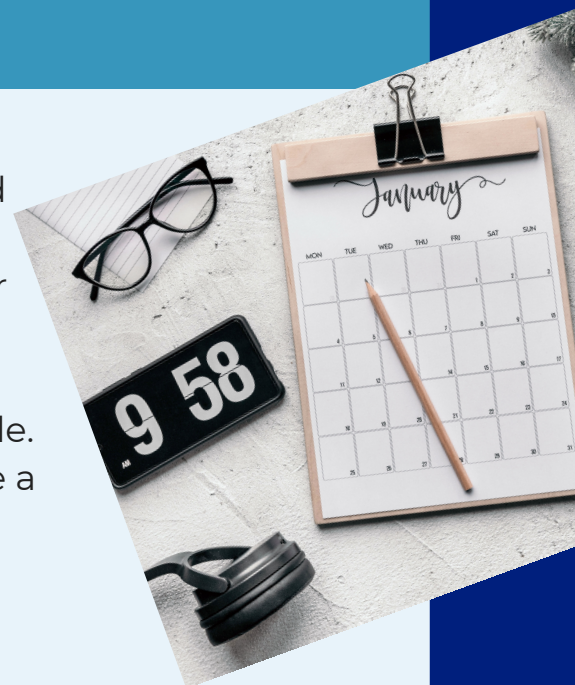
**MAKE SURE YOU KNOW WHO YOUR REGION REP IS! THEY WILL BE A GREAT CONTACT.**

**CLICK THE ICONS TO FOLLOW OUR SOCIAL MEDIA TO GET UPDATES AND CONNECT WITH THE COMMUNITY!**



# PLAN YOUR SEASON

- Check out the TFA Invitational Qualifying Tournament Schedule. Tournaments are organized by weekend and region.
- Set a tournament schedule that works for you and your school
  - Do you need to go to a wedding one weekend? Probably best to keep that weekend off the schedule.
  - Is it homecoming at your school? You may not have a whole bunch of kids competing that week...but you might!
- Create a schedule that can be published and shared with your team so they can plan accordingly.
  - Add team meetings and other important events. The more planning you can do, the better! Parents and students love clear, consistent, and early communication!



Create a copy for yourself and add deadlines to remind yourself when things need to be done!

## SPEAKING OF COMMUNICATION...



### Team Social Media

Make sure your team has active social media accounts that you monitor. This is a great way to publicize your team, build school support for your program, and communicate updates and reminders to students!

- Determine a way you can best send regular updates to students and parents. A monthly newsletter to celebrate tournament results, remind them of upcoming deadlines, and give other important updates can help keep everyone on the same page!
- Ask your school district what digital communication you are allowed to use with students (and their parents). Do they require you to use Remind? GroupMe? Slack? Use what your district approves of and set up a way to send out digital reminders to students.
- Develop a Team Handbook to share with your students at the beginning of the year. Set team expectations, dress code, and more early on. Have students \*and\* parents sign and return an acknowledgment form so that agree to the contents of the handbook!
  - Want to see an example handbook? [Click here.](#)

# TEACHING YOUR TEAM

- Learn more about each event using [our website](#) and the [NSDA Resource Package](#).
- Determine what events your students are interested in.
  - Students new to the activity won't have an answer to this question. Encourage them to learn about and explore different events and areas!
- Do you have a class? Is this an after-school-only club?
  - Either way, you will want educational resources to teach your students and prepare them for competition. Visit our classroom resources, check out the events page, and use the NSDA resource package to help you teach your students!

# PREPARING FOR COMPETITION

- Make sure students have created an NSDA account and Tabroom account and that they are linked to your school.
  - PRO TIP: You can open registration to have your student sign up for approved tournaments on Tabroom and then confirm their entry!
  - Set a deadline for students to sign up for a tournament
- Make sure you have submitted the necessary paperwork to take your students to the tournament
  - Remember! This was part of the list of questions to ask your AP/Finance person. Every school handles paperwork a little differently.
- Create an itinerary for the tournament day itself. Send this out as early as possible. Information to include:
  - What time students need to arrive and where
  - A copy of the tournament schedule
  - Reminder to bring money for food (or food to eat)
  - A list of students attending
  - ETA for return to school
  - Pro-tip; make this a little earlier than when you think you will arrive back. Parents will be late, you will be tired, and you will be sad that you have to wait for them to show up.
- Set a practice schedule and practice expectations.
  - Determine how when you will have practice. Will it be once a week after school? Two or three times a week? How often do you expect students to practice? How will you hold them accountable for coming to practice? Outline these expectations in your team handbook!
  - Set expectations for seeing and approving competitive materials prior to the tournament to make sure your students are ready.
- Confirm your student entries and judges
  - Judges: Help encourage your parents to get involved and serve as judges! Check out our judging resources here.
- Make sure you have submitted your invoice for payment!