

Bemidji Speech RULES for 2019 (and important recommendations)

1. Attendance

Students must speak at a minimum of SIX Varsity Competitions to be allowed to remain on the roster through the Section Tournament: Sub-Section, Section Tournament (those who advance) participation is an expectation of ALL members of the Speech team, as is State for those who qualify, so plan on a season lasting through April 13. We will have scheduled NINE team competitions for this season. Unless otherwise arranged, students are expected at each scheduled event. All speech team members, as noted in the introductory letter, MUST practice with coaches a minimum of once per week.

It is important to notify Coach Lucas of anticipated absences at least one week prior to a competition to be missed to avoid entering students unnecessarily. This costs not only wasted entry fees, but also potentially judge-hiring fees and the time of a judge who otherwise would have had their Saturday off. Each team is responsible for hiring judges for each competition, based on number entered, and must fulfill the commitment regardless of attendance. ONE unexcused absence will result in a warning. TWO must result in a dismissal for reasons outlined in the prior point. Lateness counts as a miss, as the bus cannot and will not wait. Non-practice penalties also are counted toward this maximum.

Absences for legitimate reasons noted by a parent in the week prior to an event will be excused, but will still result in the entry/judge consequences previously outlined, so should be avoided if possible. Absences to attend an event in which you are not directly competing will be considered unexcused (watching another activity, exhibitions, etc.) Since flexibility is built in to the requirements, minimum participation rule for Sub-Section will be enforced, and once the maximum number of absences (any combination of excused or unexcused) has been surpassed, the student will be removed from the roster. This means that missing TWO meets UNEXCUSED will result in dismissal, and missing more than THREE for ANY REASON, will result in dismissal.

2. Dress Code

Yes, there is one.

The professional nature of this highly competitive activity requires due respect. The following are important recommendations. The standard is "job-interview" clothing...conservative, professional, business attire. NO BLUE JEANS, T-SHIRTS, SWEATSHIRTS, or anything with a LOGO.

For young men:

Long-sleeved button-down shirts with tie are required. A sport coat or suit coat is a plus. Avoid tennis shoes. Any questions or concerns in this area I will be glad to address. Conservative colors (Blacks, grays, browns, blues) are a must. Black is the standard, and is preferred.

For young women:

Conservative skirts with nylons or neutral, solid-colored tights or dress pants work fine. For interpers especially, dark conservative colors (ideally black). A matching professional-looking jacket also will work. Avoid short sleeves. Closed-toed conservative shoes (no tennis shoes) are best. Again, where there is doubt, feel free to ask. Goodwill, Tkz Closet, and ValueSmart can be excellent sources if resources are a concern.

***If you have ideas that deviate from the stated suggestions, coaches are open to discuss other options. We have successfully incorporated colors in recent seasons.**

The idea in every case is to project a positive, professional image for Bemidji speakers in a subjective environment. Anything that distracts from (or draws any negative attention to) the speakers hands and face should be avoided. This includes avoiding distracting jewelry and unnaturally colored hair. Neat, clean, and down-to-business behavior and appearance benefits EVERYONE involved with Bemidji Speech. Image is critical, and professional appearances inspire professional performances.

3. PRACTICE

Each BHS Speech team member is required to practice with a coach a minimum of once a week. You must sign up to work with a coach for one 30 minute session Monday through Thursday, and Friday will be for make-up practice. All students are expected to attend a brief team meeting on Fridays as competition season approaches. This will be enforced with a **.5 UNEXCUSED ABSENCE** for any week a student does not practice. Records will be kept. Since TWO unexcused absences will result in dismissal, students should assign significance to this requirement. Students will sign up for practice electronically on google.sheets. All students should plan to check in with their coach by Monday, November 26 to establish the practice sign-up procedure.

4. IMPORTANT DOs:

- A. Stay in performance clothing until AFTER the awards ceremony.
- B. BE ON TIME! For the bus, and for each round or draw.
- C. Be a respectful audience. Sit in the middle three rows, and NEVER sit beside or behind a judge.
- D. Fill out critiques completely for the judge, including clearly printing name and code. If the judge has to ask, you've lost points.
- E. Save critiques. Bring them to practice for coach review.
- F. Support your teammates.
- G. Watch Finals, even if you aren't competing in them.
- H. Be respectful to all coaches, bus drivers, judges, and other speakers, regardless of their perceived treatment of you.
- I. ALWAYS sit together as a team at awards, and engage in MAXIMUM politeness and sportsmanship.
- J. Make friends. They may last a lifetime.

5. IMPORTANT DON'Ts:

- A. LEAVE THE PREMISES OF ANY MEET UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.
- B. Wear headsets into rounds, or otherwise give the impression that you are there for reasons other than serious competition.
- C. Engage in conversations with others after the judge enters the room, or before you leave the room.
- D. Make excessive noise in hallways. Someone is always watching you and making mental notes for the future.
- E. Enter any room when a speaker is presenting.

- F. Identify your school in a competition room. It defeats the purpose of codes, and can bias judging.
- G. Be a sore loser. Giving that impression may make it happen again soon.
- H. Access your cell phone while in a competition room. PERIOD.

5. Lettering

Bemidji speakers will qualify for a Letter by competing at a minimum SIX varsity meets plus the Section tournament; AND maintaining a regular practice schedule while obeying team rules. 1.5 unexcused misses, or its equivalent, will disqualify you from lettering.

6. NSDA membership

National Speech and Debate Association (formerly the National Forensic League) is a speech honor society with which we have affiliation. Students earn points for each round of competition, and receive awards for each level of achievement reached. It is a great incentive program, and offers prestige and other benefits as well to members.

Students become NSDA members when they reach 25 points in competition. If you wish to purchase a pin, there is a one-time \$13 charge. As students reach additional levels, pins will be exchanged for the advanced insignia. It is a great opportunity to maximize the enjoyment and potential benefit of participating in Bemidji Speech.

Any questions or concerns of students or parents may be addressed to Mr. Lucas, Ms. Hamann, or Ms. Nelson. Coach Lucas' home 755-9866, cell 218-308-1866, or e-mail at lucast01@paulbunyan.net, or tlucas@bemidji.k12.mn.us. Coach Hamann's home number is 243-2359, or e-mail at anna_hamann@bemidji.k12.mn.us. Coach Nelson's e-mail is literacyabc@gmail.com, and cell is 218-340-0347. Coach Donovan's e-mail is larissa.donovan@outlook.com, or 218-407-4266.

Please save this information for future reference, or access our Bemidji HS Speech website.

ALL STUDENTS AND PARENT/GUARDIANS are encouraged to sign up for REMIND to get updates and messages. In order to do this, TEXT @2019bhss to 81010.

Welcome to the 2019 Bemidji Lumberjack Speech family!
