



SPEAKFIRST

Dear students, parents, and guardians,

Thank you for your interest in applying to be part of SpeakFirst for the 2020-2021 school year. Before you fill out the application, I'd like to give you a brief overview of SpeakFirst, as well as lay out some participation requirements.

SpeakFirst is an academic afterschool program that offers students in Birmingham City Schools the opportunity to participate in competitive debate. Debate allows students to develop their research, critical thinking, and public speaking skills while learning how to effectively work as a team. We compete in various tournaments throughout the year, both in-state and out-of-state. In addition to debate, we also offer academic support, college counseling, and take students on college tours. This past year, our seniors were offered scholarships to University of Alabama and University of Alabama at Birmingham because of their participation in SpeakFirst.

In order to be part of the SpeakFirst team and attend the various tournaments, students must meet certain eligibility requirements, such as:

- Attending a Birmingham City Schools High School
- Maintaining an 83 average in all of their courses
- Being on time to practices
- Completing casework on time
- Attending all in-state tournaments and any mandatory out-of-state tournaments

Other application requirements include:

- If the student's application is accepted, they and their parent(s)/guardian(s) must complete an in-person interview with SpeakFirst staff members.
- If the student does not attend Parker, Carver, or Ramsay High School, the student's parent/guardian must be able to transport them to and from practice.
- All students must have transportation after practice.
- In order for us to accept any student, we must have at least two qualified applicants from the high school they will attend. In order to compete in certain tournaments, we must have a pair of students from the same school so that we can register students.
- Student must be available to attend a debate camp at Samford, either June 21 - June 27 or June 28 - July 4.

We will be holding an **informational meeting at 6:00 PM on Wednesday, March 18** at 1224 20th St S where we will give a more in depth overview of the program and answer any questions you may have. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me at rnordine@impactamerica.com at any point if you have questions about the application or the SpeakFirst program.

Sincerely,

Rebekah Nordine

SpeakFirst Program Manager



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Student Application

Deadline: Wednesday, April 1, 2020

There are three different options for submitting a completed application:

- Go to <http://bit.ly/SpF2021App> (it is case-sensitive) and electronically complete an application. You must have a valid Gmail account to submit the application this way.
- Email your completed hand-written or typed application to speakfirst@impactalabama.org
- Mail or hand-deliver your application to:

SpeakFirst
ATTN: Rebekah Nordine
601 Beacon Parkway West
STE 102
Birmingham, AL 35209

Please ensure your application is **received by** Wednesday, April 1.

A completed application includes:

- A completed general information and contact information form.
- A copy of your transcript (it can be an unofficial copy).
- Your response to the short answer questions provided, either typed or hand-written on a separate piece of paper.
- A completed recommendation form.



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General Information

Student Name: _____ Grade for 19-20 school year: _____

School(s) attended for the 2019-2020 school year: _____

High school(s) you plan to attend or have applied to for the 2020-2021 school year: _____

Do you have any previous debate experience? If yes, please describe. _____

Hobbies and extra curricular activities: _____



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Contact Information

Home Address: _____

(City)

(State)

(Zip Code)

Parent/Legal Guardian Name(s): _____

Home Phone Number: (_____) _____

Student Cell Number: (_____) _____

Student Email: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Cell Number: (_____) _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Work Number: (_____) _____

Parent/Legal Guardian Email: _____



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Directions: Answer the following questions in your own words. Please answer on a separate sheet of paper and type your responses if possible. Each answer should be 1-2 paragraphs in length.

1. What are your long-term and short-term educational goals? How will these goals help you be successful in the future?
2. Tell about a time when you did not meet your own expectations. How did you overcome this, or how did you grow from this experience?
3. What is an issue that faces your community or the world at large? Write a short speech to persuade others to adopt your perspective for how the issue should be addressed.



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Teacher Recommendation Form

Applicant should fill out their personal information, and then give the form to a current or past teacher. Once the teacher has filled in their information, include this form with the rest of your application.

Student's Name: _____ Grade: _____

School currently attending: _____

The student listed above is applying for the 2020-2021 SpeakFirst debate team. Applications are due on April 1 and teacher recommendation requests will be sent out to the email you provide below by April 3. Recommendations will be due by April 10. Please reach out to mordine@impactamerica.com if you have any questions.

Recommender's Name: _____

Title: _____

Email: _____