

SUBJECT:

Consideration and possible approval for J. Frank Dobie High School Speech and Debate qualifying team members to travel to two national championship events (1) National Individual Event Tournament of Champions (NIETOC) on May 7 – May 11, 2026, in Shakopee, MN and (2) National Catholic Forensics League (NCFL) on May 22 – May 25, 2026, in Washington, D.C. for a total cost not to exceed \$15,480.70.

BACKGROUND:

The tradition continues for J. Frank Dobie Speech and Debate team members who've previously accumulated numerous accolades, fifth place overall at NIETOC 2021, third place overall at the TOC 2021, including Ariana Okhuozagbon's TFA state win and fourth place finish at NSDA Nationals 2017.

This is the 15th year Dobie's Speech Team has qualified for state and national competitions. Dobie Speech and Debate teams have again competed rigorously in both state and national circuits, exposing students to the best competition and networking the country has to offer to win a bid at two national events. Students were chosen based on their achievement in the state forensic competition and their ranking within the National Forensics League as compared with their teammates. The team qualified for other national events; however, these tournaments were prioritized based on financial implications and student availability.

The JFD coach requests permission for the Nationally ranked Dobie Debate team to compete in the following two tournaments:

The National Individual Event Tournament of Champions (NIETOC). Two (2) students and one (1) chaperone will travel to Shakopee, MN on May 7 – May 11, 2026, to individually compete against other students from across the nation, gaining leadership through speech.

The National Catholic Forensics League (NCFL). Five (5) students and one (1) chaperone will travel to Washington, D.C. on May 22-25, 2026, to individually compete against other students from across the nation, gaining leadership through speech.

All chaperones are trained in school district policy regarding responsibilities and duties prior to the trips. All rules of conduct established by the school district will be strictly enforced and a contingency plan for travel and health advisories will be followed if needed. All student travel guidelines and expectations will be followed according to Business Office Procedures.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: District funds designated for national competitions are requested to fund each trip. An itemized record for each event will be submitted. A preliminary budget for each trip is as follows:

\$5,517.26 NIETOC
\$9,963.44 NCFL

The total cost of both trips will not exceed \$15,480.70.

RECOMMENDATION: We recommend approval for J. Frank Dobie High School Speech and Debate qualifying team members to travel to two national championship events (1) National Individual Event Tournament of Champions (NIETOC) on May 7 – May 11, 2026, in Shakopee, MN and (2) National Catholic Forensics League (NCFL) on May 22 – May 25, 2026, in Washington, D.C. for a total cost not to exceed \$15,480.70.

CABINET MEMBER(s): Stacey Barber
Tamka Alford-Stephens

CONTACT PERSON(s): JeKale Williams
Louis Cannon
Carey Sink

BOARD MEETING DATE: April 28, 2026