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For Immediate Release
September 4, 2025

Fullerton School District Speech and Debate Team Wins Sixth Consecutive National Championship



Fullerton School District's National Speech and Debate team, made up of 20 students in grades sixth through eighth representing various schools from across the district, took top 2024 NSDA honors.

(Fullerton, CA) **-** The Fullerton School District (FSD) Speech and Debate team has once again earned top national honors winning a sixth consecutive national championship at the 2025 National Speech and Debate Tournament, held in Des Moines, Iowa this June.

The prestigious event brought together more than 6,000 students from over 1,500 schools across the nation and world. At the middle school level, 829 students from 198 schools representing 40 states and five countries competed for top honors. This year also marked a historic milestone through the centennial celebration of the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA). Students kicked off the tournament with a 100th birthday celebration at the Blank Park Zoo and explored a century of debate history through a special Centennial Timeline at the Iowa Events Center.

Representing FSD were students from Beechwood and Fisler Schools, Ladera Vista, Nicolas, and Parks Junior High Schools. Nearly every FSD school advanced students into the final rounds, a remarkable achievement with competitors reaching the top eight in the nation across 36 different events. Several FSD

students placed among the top six competitors nationally in categories that included Original Spoken Word Poetry, Informative Speaking, Humorous Interpretation, and Poetry Interpretation.

One of the district's standout moments came when Parks Junior High's newly minted alumna Sabrina Samidon claimed first place in the nation for Original Oratory, a persuasive speech event focused on advocacy and social impact. A runner-up finish for first for Informative Speaking featured a Fisler competitor, and two other FSD students saw top-three finishes in Humorous Interpretation and Poetry Interpretation



Sabrina Samidon stands with her first-place hardware as FSD's national champion in Original Oratory.

FSD's championship win was reinforced by both Parks Junior High and Beechwood School receiving National Schools of Excellence awards.

Reflecting on the impact of the program during a recap meeting of the tournament with FSD's student-competitors, Cindy Hye Lee, an FSD teacher on special assignment supporting FSD's Speech and Debate program, shared that students overwhelmingly agreed this was a "surreal experience."

"It reminded me that Speech and Debate is about so much more than winning rounds—it's about finding our voice and using it to better the future," Lee paraphrased as the students' overall takeaway from the tournament.



FSD's Board of Trustees recognized and celebrated its 2025 National Speech and Debate Tournament competitors, many of whom are now freshmen in high school.

Echoing that sentiment was FSD Speech and Debate competitor Arjun Parikh, Parks Junior High Class of 2025.

"Joining Speech and Debate was not only about winning rounds; it was truly about the friendships and experiences gained through competing and supporting teammates, all while using our voices to better the future."

With its sixth straight national title, FSD continues to set the standard for middle school Speech and Debate excellence. Students, teachers, and coaches alike say the victory reflects not just skill, but also the lasting values of teamwork, leadership, and the power of student voices.

For more information about the Fullerton School District's Speech and Debate program, visit bit.ly/speechanddebatefsd, and for more about the 100-year-old National Speech and Debate Association, visit www.speechanddebate.org/.

The Fullerton School District (FSD) is located in northern Orange County, California, and serves over 11,400 students in transitional kindergarten (TK) through eighth grade. FSD is home to 15 elementary schools, two TK through eighth-grade schools, three junior high schools, and a distance learning and home school program. FSD features unique programs for students, including a Dual Language Academy for Spanish and Korean languages; a Performance Academy Sports Program that offers a traditional in-person learning experience with advanced athletic training integrated into the school day; Advanced Placement and College courses for middle school students; a trade academy focused on construction pathways; and robust before, after, and summer school programs. The mission of the Fullerton School District is to work collaboratively with the community to provide an innovative, high-quality educational experience for all students in a safe learning environment. FSD's motto, "Great Schools - Successful Kids," signifies that all FSD students will

be given the tools and instruction to achieve academic excellence, hone interpersonal skills, and develop technological expertise to contribute as productive citizens in a democratic society. To learn more about the Fullerton School District's award-winning schools and programs, call (714) 447-7400 or visit www.fullertonsd.org.

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