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## About Debating And Freedom Of Speech

I am in my seventh decade of living and still learning life's lessons, and while sports and athletics have taught me many important things, and so has my successful business career, some of my most powerful and useful lessons have come from many years of debate training long ago in school. That's why, with this series of Debate Guides, I would like to share what I've learned about the power of clear, civil, reasoned debate with readers like you who are working hard in support of quality education.

In this book I'll be sharing the fruits some of my own experience in raising money for what I believed were great ideas, and some really were. I've raised money for over $4.5 Billion in completed Real Estate projects over my career as a builder, operator, investor and innovator in commercial and residential real estate. I've also spent a lot of time learning from great ideas that others have come up with, and I've learned especially valuable lessons from ideas that looked great but didn't work out.

I've discovered that the main reason that even great ideas sometimes don't work out is that they all take smart hard work on a sustained basis by people who are committed to

each other and to making the idea become a reality. That's sort of thing doesn't just happen – it takes inspired leadership. My hope is that you are that kind of inspired leader and that this book can help you and others move toward the goal of successfully funding a school debate program that will be a game-changer for many young lives.

As we all have, I've watched our world change and evolve in so many ways – some very positive, and some quite the opposite. But whatever the challenges we face as human beings, my life experience tells me that there's solid reason to believe that we can work together successfully to make this a better and safer world for our future generations.

With the help of friends worldwide I started NoHateNoViolence.org because I truly believe that we CAN make the world a better place.

I began working for this project simply by writing posts on the value of civil discourse and debate for the No Hate No Violence blog, trying to encourage others to embrace this approach to disagreeing with each other.

Then as others joined with me, we began creating No Hate No Violence signs and taking them to the streets, carrying them ourselves and passing them out to others at demonstrations, rallies, marches and protests in Oregon and Washington. Our goal was to reduce the tensions that are always present when strong and conflicting opinions are being voiced, and to encourage peaceful demonstrations, dialog, and tolerance. I'm not going to lie, at first it was intimidating for us to do this. Would urging people not to hate or be violent have the opposite effect? We didn't know when we began, but we found our message being embraced by almost all sides in every demonstration or march

we attended. We found that it didn't make a difference what position a person held on the issues being demonstrated for or against. Most people were receptive and wanted to hold our signs and embrace the message along with whatever other messages they were there to communicate. This gave us all great hope.

In the process of learning to be a blogger, I have spent many hours researching a wide range of topics – many of them new to me and requiring significant study. I have my personal beliefs, as everyone does. But above all I believe in free and open debate and free speech. I was on a debating teams in school and have seen the benefits of that experience throughout my life. So, when I began looking into the newest research on the kinds of thinking and communications skills learned through debate can help avoid, deflect, and counter negativity, prejudice, bullying, hostility, aggression, and violence I thought "Maybe this is telling us what we need to focus on more! Maybe this is how we can help!"

## We Asked Ourselves – Could Learning Debate Affect Violence And Hate?

At the core of No Hate No Violence is a belief in the power of communication to promote mutual respect and understanding. So, we began developing different models for different ages of debaters for what has become the No Hate No Violence Debate Forum Guide series. We figured that developing and offering open-access, open-source models for setting up and running school and community debate groups and organizations would promote free speech and open debate and help to reduce the terrible, negative impact of today's almost ceaseless rhetorical conflicts. In this book we want to address the nitty-gritty of how to fund this incredibly valuable community educational resource.

## Why Funding Debate Programs Should Be A High Priority

*Given the pace of change and complexity of modern life, the ability to think critically is an important skill for children and young people to develop. The relationship between the practice of participating in debate activities and the development of critical thinking skills is a strong theme in the literature, with both qualitative and quantitative research suggesting that participation can improve critical thinking.*

"**Debating the evidence: an international review of current situation and perceptions**"

*CfBT Education Trust, 2011*

We know that the debate process promotes a new respect for the facts, and we hope that by encouraging and supporting debate programs we can help motivate more people to communicate more openly and to listen more actively to each other in an evidence-based, fact-based exchange and testing of ideas. What better way to move forward towards a more civilized society than to encourage healthy, respectful discussions among young people as a counterforce to the inflamed rhetoric they experience every day?

In today's 'total immersion' world of electronic media, news and pop culture, we are all more and more exposed to negativity, mistruths, and corrupt ideas coming from every direction.

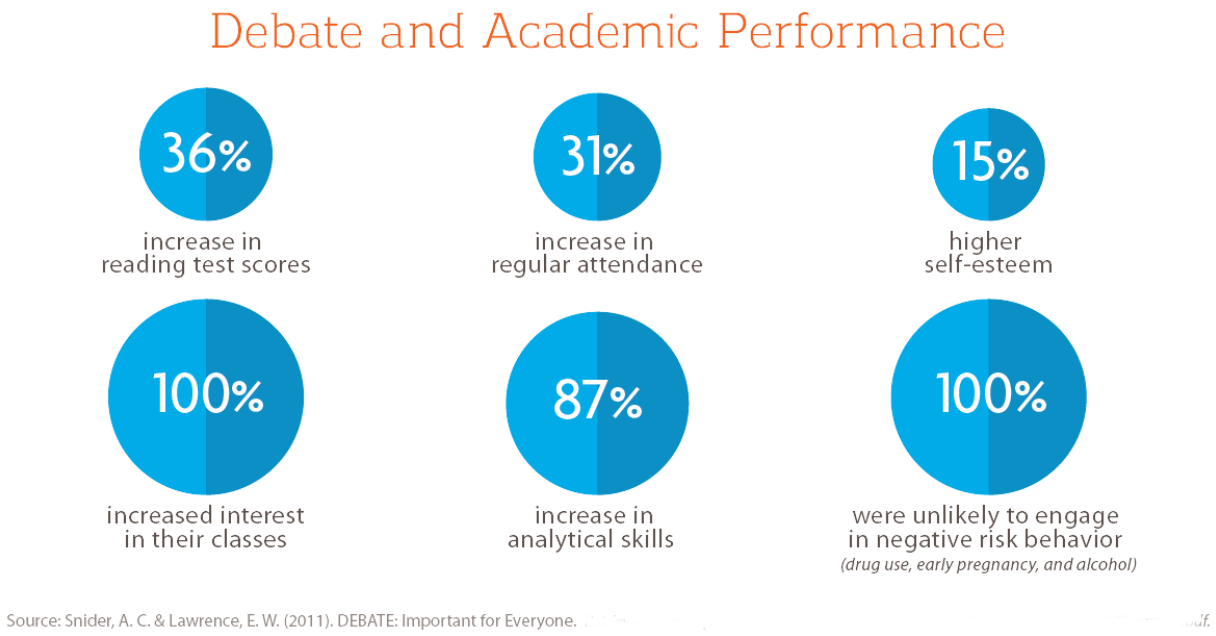
*The strongest body of evidence exists around the relationship between participation in debate activities and improvements in academic attainment. A range of studies suggest that debate has a practical and meaningful influence on the attainment of young people from diverse backgrounds, and in particular on the development of literacy skills.*

*CfBT Education Trust, 2011*

While adults may have some defenses against this barrage of manipulative messages, children who have not learned how to think critically are wide open and vulnerable. Sadly, this continual indoctrination causes far too many young people to develop a self-absorbed alienated approach to life very early, and helps keeps them closed to challenging points of view throughout childhood. Much of our society claims to be more enlightened and open minded than previous generations but if fact many of us seem to have become increasingly intolerant. The pervasiveness of bullying in the

schools and neighborhoods alone indicates that what society is teaching young people about human relationships is sometimes way off the mark.

## Why Debate Can Help Kids Grow In Important & Unique Ways




The No Hate No Violence movement intends to change that by helping to bring the civilized skills of debating to the forefront of American education, both in and out of school. Our goal is to work with teachers, families and young people to give the highest possible priority to the arts of civil discourse with formal debate foremost among these arts. We want to work together with individual teachers as well as individual schools, parental and community groups to encourage and support widespread experience of the benefits of debating with these "How-To" guides.

> *"For students from disadvantaged backgrounds, debating and winning – even against those from elite backgrounds – can equip them to see that disadvantage can be overcome and to take on those in positions of power in other situations." (Williams et al. 2001; Littlefield 2001; Inoue and Nakano 2004).*

This School Debate Guide is totally open-source so that you can take it and make it your own. All the ideas, suggestions and resources in this Sourcebook are yours to take and use as you see fit – in fact, we want to take them, improve them, and then feed them back to us so that we can share them with future Sourcebook users.

We all know there are so many benefits that debating can offer, as new research is confirming this all the time. Teaching our children the skills and arts of formal debate at the high school level develops cognitive, social and communication skills leading to greater confidence and self-esteem. This self-confidence and ability to communicate improves memory, time-management & research skills and study habits. It encourages high school students to take deep interest in subjects they might otherwise shy away from, and to consider points of view they might never otherwise encounter.

> *"Analysis by Allen et al. (1999) concludes that training in communication skills (including debate) measurably improves participants' critical thinking by as much as 44%.".*

Debating in high school gives teachers major opportunities to engage their students by leading them (openly or subtly) as they explore topics to debate, where to look for the facts, how to create their arguments, and other facets of the debate process. Debating can also be a great avenue of redirection for students lacking in social skills and for building on the strengths of students who may be challenged in some areas.

> *"Evidence exists to support the claim that debate activities can in fact increase participants' aspirations for higher education, with US high school debaters showing an increased commitment to attend college in comparison with their non-debating peers." (Collier 2004; Shuster 2008).*

We know that the child who behaves as a "bully" can redirect their aggressive behavior and the "shy" kid can find their voice. We also know that both bullying and shyness, in most cases at least, give way to openness and communication.

Debate skills carried through high school and college will open up so many opportunities and successes in the debater's life! High school debaters improve their future college and scholarship opportunities. Those who choose not to go to college will have gained invaluable skills to promote themselves in the workforce throughout their future careers and personal lives.

*"Japanese participants in competitive debating in English ranked improved speaking and communication skills, and improved English, as their top benefits." (Inoue and Nakano 2004)*

Debating promotes freedom of speech. It teaches people how to think objectively and quickly. Benefitting our youth by promoting these skills benefits our society. So from the beginning our challenge was how to get the right tools into the hands of people who could use them – teachers, parents, and community members. Ultimately of course, this set of tools is for the children who we hope will benefit from the formation of their very own Debate team and will quickly discover other teams nearby and online to engage with.

The more we thought about debating as a tool for progress, the more we realized that we needed to do something to promote these programs. From grade school to university, we saw an opportunity to help grow the practice of debate nationwide, especially in schools needing financial assistance. In this Sourcebook we're going to suggest as many ways to go outside the school for funding as possible in order to be able to fund a great debate program regardless of how financially limited the school's own budget may be.

*The most recent and largest-scale work finds that debaters were 25% more likely to graduate from high school than a group of comparable peers, and that they scored significantly better in reading and English tests, gaining on average an extra 1.02 and 1.04 points respectively (Mezuk et al. 2010).*

We at NHNV are extremely passionate about our goal but, as of now, we are a small and self-funding organization. We need your help to fully make this vision a reality. We need volunteers who will contribute time and resources as well as donations to help us continue to develop and disseminate these Debate Guides, provide outreach and training, and help schools and communities fundraise and secure sponsors. We hope you will join us on this journey by helping any way that you can.

## There is no debate. Debating can make the world a better place!

> *"The broadening of horizons, improved cultural awareness through meeting new people and spending time with those from diverse backgrounds, and the empowerment of young people are also important elements around the value of debate activities in schools." Williams et al. 2001*

## The Debate Foundation: Support And Sustainability:

### The Fun Part

Well, everybody hears about the great debates of prestige schools like Harvard, Yale, and Stanford. These prestige colleges and many well-funded high schools have huge budgets and huge numbers of people, but if your school is small, and less well-financed than one of the majors, and if maybe you don't even have a team yet, all you really need is to get together with a few other interested students and a faculty member or two and just set up shop – call yourself the XYZ Community College Debate Team or the Mavericks HS Debate Team and guess what? That's exactly what you will be.

**Know Your Financial Needs**

One of the first things that should be talked about is how much money the Debate Team will need – usually not that much compared to any other activity – and the path we recommend is to create a Foundation. Not an IRS-style 501.c.3 foundation, but an organization, even just on paper at first, that will be your vehicle for raising the funds you'll need. The foundation for a high school or small community or private college could be as many as 20 people and those are usually people that are donors, and volunteers and to help support whatever needs to be supported. In both high school and college you will need someone dedicated and energetic to become the coach. The coach is often compensated in some way because it is a lot of extra work, or even if it's part of the curriculum they are compensated when possible, sometimes not in the

beginning but when the fundraising becomes sufficient. The sacrifice for the organizers will be greatly appreciated and will uplift the self-esteem of everyone involved. Instead of teaching six classes, they teach four and handle the debating team.

We are providing an outline. You can do it differently. There is formal debating in many different categories from high speed debating to parliamentary level debating, and more. It's really important that you do it the way you feel the most comfortable with, and what you think fits the community.

**Having A Foundation Is The Key**

The Foundation doesn't have to complex, but it will provide oversight for the organization. Helping to raise money is obviously one of their biggest jobs. Where a successful High School debate team that only does limited local and regional competitions a budget of $5-10,000 a year will probably be enough. A college foundation and a college debating team might have to raise from $30,000 to $60,000 or more – although these days and for the foreseeable future there are going to be a lot more debates held online than on-site.

Some university debate teams actually have millions of dollars in reserves that have been donated from previous students who have gone on and done well in life from having been on the debating team. Be sure to start your fundraising planning by getting testimonials from anybody you can find that's ever been on a debating team in your school. It is important to get these testimonials above all else. This can be as easy as giving them a call phone and asking them to share how debating helped them in school. Did they go from being a C student to an A student; did it give them confidence; did it teach them how to speak, organize, and research their ideas; did it help them become happier and more successful in life.

**Get Helpful People Involved**

Make sure you involve people that have positive attitudes towards debating. A lot of people make the mistake of taking the debating team and only run it out of the social sciences, speech, or literature. That is not what you want to do. You want to enhance it and make this better. Have all school's departments involved - the more the merrier.

Obviously, the media/communications department has got to be one of the better choices to be involved but be sure to bring in others – English, Social Studies, Drama, Athletics. Your school has graduates who are now lawyers and doctors who were on debating teams. Tons of celebrities who are highly successful today were debaters long ago; Oprah Winfrey, Brad Pitt were debaters and they say debating helped them more than any one thing they ever did in college.

It is imperative that all the positions are set up in such a way they have a backup, so if you lose any one person nothing stops. Losing a person will always have an impact, especially if it's a top person like the debating team coach. Every debating coach should have an assistant coach, even if it's just a foundation member that's an assistant coach for a while until you find another new coach, but never let a position go unfilled and let things stop because one person leaves.

**The Importance Of Staying Independent**

If you can get funds from your school, great, but don't depend on it. Really the less you get from the administration, and the less you get from the school the better your debating team will become, because you won't have to deal with anyone's bureaucracy. Since Debate programs are quite normally organized as self-sustaining extracurricular activities, as long as you are organized to take care of your own needs and are making

the school administration look good by conducting exciting debate programs that get your fellow students involved and motivated you should have their blessing to go ahead and do your own fundraising and manage your own financial affairs.
You want to get money from outside the school, from parents, ex-students and alumni. Don't be afraid to go to the local tire dealer, clothing store, shopping center, or grocery store and have your school's debating day where they give 5% to your school and foundations. Who do I know that I can ask to do something like this?

We are also planning to put together a national program where somebody will say I'm going to sponsor 20 debates on this subject matter. I'm going to put $100,000 up, so that means $5000 for every school that participates and then maybe we'll find an opposing view company--for example, Bloomberg for anti-gun and they'll find somebody that will pay for the other side, pro-gun. They will probably not ever put their name on it, but that's where No Hate/No Violence comes in. You get the money, No Hate/No Violence arranges for the national money and you get the money. You always want to have a main sponsor and it could be presented by No Hate/No Violence. We'd love No Hate/No Violence to be a presenter wherever possible. You don't have to do it. You can do it all yourself. Take credit for all of it yourself. But promoting our ideology as a basis of your debating can only make your school look like peaceful activists. That's fine, but we really want to promote attitude and civility and tolerance.

That's what No Hate/No Violence is about, and we think debating is one of the best ways that we can do that. Don't be afraid to have the students go to their family, friends and relatives and do a little bit of betting with them. Say okay, I'm going to be in this debate. You're going to give me $50 for being in this debate. If I win the debate you've got to give me $100 or $25.00 Everyone says, $100 that's not going to mean

much—not if of the student does it 10 times with 10 different relatives or friends. If I win the debate, you've got to pay my debating team. This money never goes to the general fund. It's kept separate from the school. If the school is going to support the debating team, then some of these rules may not apply, but there are schools out there that raise $100,000 a year in about a month's time. There are schools that struggle to raise $10,000 or $15,000. Mostly on the effort and commitment of the students, educators and mainly the Foundation.

A lot of the debating has actually gone away, kind of under the auspices of funding shortages, but we believe there is more to it than that. We just want to try and fund debating outside the curriculum or the budgeting process because it's so red tape-ish and so political. We want to depoliticize debating. The best way to do that is to raise our own money. Let's learn while we're raising that money how to raise money and how you can do things. I've been doing it my whole life for charities. We're going to apply the same theory right here for debating and it's very easy to prove what comes out of debating as a benefit to society. I don't think anybody can think of it as negative in nature.

**Let's Talk About A Basic Scenario**

I would have a pitch piece and a handout. Every debate team member should have at least a couple of handouts and think on them at all times. They will be driving by someplace; oh, I'm should stop there and ask them. If they have a brochure in the car, they will stop and make the contact. If they have to think "Oh, I'll come back later" that may or may not happen. We all know how that goes. Good intentions, but … Believe it or not, that stuff can really work. You just stop spontaneously when you see a possible connection and ask for sponsors and be ready to offer creative suggestions that will

appeal to the business you're talking to. If it's a restaurant, maybe you can set up a fundraising dinner at the restaurant where they donate 10% of their revenue for that night. You make sure you fill that restaurant. You may want to pick a restaurant that's not full all the time, because that makes it difficult for them to set aside space and besides – they have all the business they need if they're too full all the time to host your fundraiser. You want a restaurant that's a little hungrier. If you have a really good loyal restaurant, especially if the manager is an ex-alumnus, that's who you go tap. This is networking.

This is networking at its ultimate level in college. If I've been on a debating team for college, which I was, I'm not only donating to a debating team that I was on, I'm actually funding the debating team I was not on and I'm may or may not be the foundation. You need to figure out what you want to do. In the first year, it's a learning experience. If you're already doing it, try and move away from the education system for funding and go to private funding. You can do more debates, bigger debates, have more prestigious debates and have a lot more fun and get to a lot of people.

**Make Debating Inclusive**

The one thing that we do want to tell you is, don't say no to anybody who wants to join the debating team for any reason. That's who we are at No Hate/No Violence. We bring in all comers. Help unite people. Do they all get to get on the stage? Maybe not, but they can learn, contribute and do whatever. I can tell you Harvard has never said no to somebody who wants to be on their debating team and half of them never make the stage, but they improved their grades and opportunities in life. There are some that

started at Harvard debating and have won national championships and gone on to be billionaires and they attribute debating to a lot of what gave them the drive.

You may have a foundation supported by many people or maybe have three major sponsors in your town that sponsors the debating team. Give all contributors lots of credit, lots of thank you, lots of memos thanking them at the end of the year as testimonials of what it did for you and how it did for you. Why would you do that? So, they'll come back next year and maybe give you more money. I've found that to be extremely effective in different areas of donations.

The debating foundation is the presenting sponsor of all your school debate. No Hate/No Violence could be another presenting sponsor. Be sure to list all the financial sponsors. " This debate is made available to you thanks to the generous contribution of!!!!! Have the art department make as large of a poster as possible, to use as a backdrop to your debate and debating video. Let the art department put their name on it as a sponsor. Always give accolades to the debating foundation.

**Stepping Outside The Proverbial Box**

Here are some hypothetical scenarios – we hope you'll come up with other even more innovative scenarios for lining up sponsors and then go make it all happen!

1. What if a government agency was in the process of making a decision that would impact a particular city and, as part of their due diligence, they sponsored a series of debates in schools throughout the city where students could take positions on the proposed regulations, research them, analyze them, and then come up with the best pro and con arguments they could muster?

2. What if a politician really wanted to know what their constituents thought the best policy options were and instead of commissioning a poll they sponsored schools in their district to debate the proposed policy and give them feedback on the results? Instead of a paid pollster popping in by phone or on the doorstep and asking a few questions of somebody who might never have given the matter a moment's thought, how about getting the best and the brightest minds in the community really digging into the issue and coming up with in-depth reasoning and facts pro AND con on the proposal? Then publicize the hell out of the results.

3.Perhaps a manufacturer wants to know whether young people think their new product is environmentally friendly, or just cool. A debate or two in target cities could tell them more than a lot of other kinds of much more expensive market research. Or what if a pizza restaurant wanted to know what people really thought of their new menu items and sponsored a series of debates in schools in their market area – like "Be It Resolved That: pineapple has no place on a pizza." Or "Be It Resolved That thin crust is better than thick crust."

4.What if a metro police department wanted to know how they could serve the community better and commissioned a series of debates in schools in impacted precincts on controversial police policies, seeking not just opinions but reasoned, researched pros and cons on the policy under discussion. Police departments and other agencies hold "Public Hearings" all the time, and most of the time these hearings get no more than a few retirees with nothing better to do than show up with coffee and donuts and kibbitz, but the agency rarely gets any real thoughtful input. Even people who show up to "testify" are there to present one side of an argument – their side. If others 'testify' with opposite opinions, then what? Nothing gets resolved because there is no process. Debate would add process and focus outcomes.

5.What if an attorney was about to try a case where they needed to know the kinds of issues that the evidence might raise in the minds of jurors. Attorneys routinely put on (very expensive) mock trials to 'road test' their defense arguments, but how about having six teams of student`s from six schools in the community where the jury pool would be drawn from research and debate the pros and cons of the defense arguments? Could it be that the attorney could learn more about what jurors from the community might think from six teams of bright young debaters than from a single "mock trial"?

We think the possibilities here are broad, and the great thing is that by engaging with student debaters in each of these cases the sponsor would be way ahead of where they could be with any other kind of "market research" or "issue research". Even better, this would be a great way for students in debate to perform real service to their community, and to raise money for their team's regular debate competitions in the process.

Finally, having issues raised and debated regularly in public by our brightest kids might give each us all better perspective on issues that we really care about but don't have the time to dig into. Let's ask the children to lead us, and then give them all the support they need to be able to overcome all the obstacles that will be put in their way by forces that we all know are locked and loaded to resist change in the status quo.

## How To Get Your Program Sponsored: The Inside Story

*(Adapted from: "How To Start A Debate Society: iDebatePress")*

### The Nitty-Gritty Of Fundraising

Just as many people are automatically suspicious when asked to give money to by someone on the streets, people can be suspicious when asked to give money to students. Just as we tend to be afraid the street person will spend it on drugs, cigarettes

or alcohol; potential sponsors tend to be afraid that students may waste their sponsorship money on partying and other frivolous expenses.

Start out behaving like a businessperson and not like a street person. Show and tell potential sponsors specifically what sponsoring your program can do for them, what their business or organization stands to gain by supporting you. Show by your attitude that you understand the value of money and help them see that you will be a good steward of the support they are being asked to give. You are a debater; you know how to present pro and con arguments – use those skills to win this debate!

Create a printed or digital sponsorship book that presents your activities and plans, and which outlines the advantages to specific businesses and organizations of sponsorship. That book should also contain categories of sponsorship with cool names. Aim at having a pyramid-shaped set of sponsors, with just one Top Sponsor but several layers of (equally valuable and respected) other sponsors.

Develop proposals that would make sense to you if you were in the decision-making position. To do this, you must understand the business's philosophy and strategy, especially toward the kinds of students you represent: smart, urban, educated, responsible young people.

A business might be interested in sponsoring you for many reasons. It might want to promote awareness of its products and services among young people or to directly stimulate their sales; it might want to hire smart young people; it might want the public to perceive it as engaged in community activities; it might want to associate itself with some aspect of your brand statement and so on.

Some multinational companies are known for sponsoring debate, but you can also try to get support from local businesses. Global firms like KPMG, PwC, Deloitte, Bain, Morgan Stanley, J. P. Morgan, T-Mobile, Accenture, Clifford Chance, McKinsey & Company or Grant Thornton have all supported debating events, and so have media companies like the newspapers Die Zeit (Germany) or The Irish Times (Ireland). Beer

brands also seem to have an interest in sponsoring debate events - could that be because student debaters frequently drink a lot of beer?

**Think Before Calling – But Call!**

Think hard about what you can offer to a sponsor before you approach them. Don't go in with just an appeal to their good nature. Many times the best idea is to start by selling a specific event, perhaps one of your flagship events, and then build up a relationship over time so the business becomes more comfortable with long-term commitment. They have to get to know you before they can justify making that commitment – for them it is as much a business decision as a public service decision. Especially in smaller owns and cities, businesses get approached hundreds of times a year to give money to all kinds of causes and organizations – they have to be given a great reason to pick you out of all those appeals.

Don't forget that a big debate competition attracts many people. This means many businesses, even small ones, can potentially obtain great business from sponsoring you. You can also use this argument to win support from your city council and even tourism promotion offices—and also from such local businesses as restaurants, bars, hotels and hostels, taxis and buses, souvenir shops, and museums.

Regardless of who you approach, focus on how their sponsorship will create real value for you and for them. It's a lot harder to establish a partnership than it is to maintain it and renew it once the sponsor knows you and has experienced the benefits of sponsorship. Don't ask for more than you really need – show them that you have thought through your needs carefully and are being conservative and careful. If possible, propose a sponsorship in which the level of support is tied to results. Potential sponsors might be a bit more willing to donate money if they know that they will be

able to see and even measure the results – again, from their point of view this will be at least partly a business decision, not simple charity.

**Do Background Research**

Get as much information on a potential sponsor as you can, but don't forget to know your own position even better. What's your budget? How many debates did you have last year and this year? Can you demonstrate growing community support for your debates? How many people attended last year compared with this year? How many people have visited your website? Your Facebook page? What percentage of your members would you consider active?

Use your personal connections to reach the right people. We all know a friend who knows a friend. Using these connections is not illegal or unethical. You just want a fair chance to present your case to the right person. Before you meet with anyone, make sure you know all you can about them. You need to talk very differently to someone from marketing than from human resources or sales, and a small business owner has different responsibilities and obligations than a corporate executive.

At a meeting, don't be afraid of using your charm, and be sure to dress appropriately for the occasion. Show yourself to be confident and at ease, but pay attention to how much formality or informality is comfortable for those you are meeting with. If there is more than one person, don't just focus on the one who you think is the decision-maker – the real decision maker may be the person who sits back and doesn't say a thing, not the one doing all the talking. Smile and be friendly, but don't force it. Be polite and be honest. If you don't know how to begin the interview, take your cue from the other person: if they are informal, be informal; if they get right down to business, get right down to business; if they like to chat, then chat away but stay alert for their signal that it's time to get down to business.

**Go In Prepared For Yes**

Be ready to make a complete proposal at this first meeting. This proposal should include the duties for each party, the time frame for the arrangement, and a figure for the value of the sponsorship. If you don't have the authority to seal an agreement, discuss what you'll be proposing with those who do before you meet a potential sponsor. Don't seal the deal unless you have power to do so. Many times, the people you are meeting with will have also to talk with their superiors.

Try different angles. If a potential sponsor is reluctant to give you an regular grant, ask him to sponsor an event or to fly a team to a tournament. If a company makes or sells something your society needs, ask them to donate stuff instead of money; if they can't give it to your program for free, ask for their most generous discount.

**Be Choosy – Value Your Proposition**

Learn to say no to unacceptable offers. Sponsorship spots are not unlimited. You cannot sell 10 "platinum sponsor" places the same way it's unlikely that you will manage to have two banks sponsoring the same event. Firms and brands use you as a way of standing out from the crowd, they value visibility, exclusiveness, and access to the participants. You can't give multiple sponsors the same visibility you can give to one in a poster or a newsletter; and even if you could have little stands for all of them at your venue, firms prefer undisputed attention and access to the participants. So if you have McDonald's, you can't have Burger King.

But learn to say yes gratefully to small offers of support. When you're just starting out, accepting low proposals from high-profile companies makes a lot of sense. First, it's an opportunity to show the sponsor that you are trustworthy, so that in the future it might want to increase its support. Second, the fact that a company is sponsoring you gives

other companies a sense of security. If you are good enough for one company, you should be good enough for another.

Be persistent, but learn when to quit. "No" sometimes means "no," but it can also mean "I'm not sure" or "I didn't understand" or "I can't fit that in my budget right now." Even when you have to take no for your answer try to learn from your experience. Ask people if they liked the way you approached them, the way you negotiated with them, what you can do to improve your proposal, and then ask them when they would like you to contact them again with another proposal.

Always keep in mind that just by talking with you they have shown interest in what you're trying to accomplish, or their door would never have been opened. They wouldn't have wasted their time if they weren't at least feeling positive about you. Your exit line should be something like: "Thank you for your interest in what we're trying to do. I can see that you want us to succeed, and I hope we can talk again sometime soon." (Adapted from: "How To Start A Debate Society: iDebatePress")

**Keep The IRS In Mind – But Don't Worry**

At some point if you are raising and handling money you will want to be sure that you have all your IRS ducks in a row. If you don't have a parent who is a lawyer or an accountant on board already, try to find someone who can help you structure your finances so that they conform with all the rules from the very beginning when you first open a bank account for your fundraising efforts. Fortunately for anyone organizing a debate program this is well-charted territory. Whether or not you want to become an IRS tax-exempt organization now or later, it's worth knowing that the IRS considers a properly organized independent debate club, team or program as tax-exempt for purposes of receiving donations.

Here's the ruling (an easy two-page read):

"The IRS Has Ruled That Debate Programs Can Be Tax-Exempt"

Rev. Rul. 66-256, 1966-2 C.B. 210

**Avoid Confusing Financial Overlap**

Increasingly stretched school budgets are a key reason that debate programs need to be independent fundraisers whenever possible. We believe that debate programs have such inherent value, not only to students but to the community, that they can be financially independent and not impose a burden on their schools – unlike many other student activities. So, assuming that your debate program is able to raise money that covers all of its expenses but also, for example, uses school property for meeting, practice and presentation, it becomes important that financial responsibilities are clearly defined. Unless the lines between the school's financial and non-financial responsibilities and the responsibilities of your debate program are clearly defined there's always the potential for confusion and even conflict.

Here is an excellent article on how booster clubs, debate clubs and other student organizations engaged in fundraising can be set up to avoid conflicting with their school's financial responsibilities. The article is secondary-school oriented but applies to any debating program that is engaged in fundraising at any level.

## Fundraising Through Your Community Of Stakeholders

Your friends, and those who will become your friends, are your allies. It is vital that you create and maintain a network of people and institutions who support your debate program because they like and understand what you are trying to do. These allies include everyone, no matter how close or distant, who for whatever their reasons want to help you and who have the ability to assist you financially, offer you their expertise,

and introduce you to others who can also help. Your primary job in establishing your debate program is to establish, build and maintain personal and professional relationships with the following groups in your community and beyond:

**Leverage Your personal network**

Tell everyone about your project. Show them how excited you are about it. Post what you're thinking, doing and planning on Social Media; Tweet about what's going on with regularity. Consider writing letters to key people – not just an email or a tweet. You might be amazed at the impact a written letter that comes in a stamped envelope has in this day of instant, often poorly written communications. Show pride – if you are proud of the accomplishments of members of your debate program, share that pride. People will sense your confidence and your pride in what you're doing and feel attracted to the project because of that.

**Don't Ignore Parents**

Many university students are still close to their parents even while striving for independence. College debaters travel a lot, spend late hours organizing events, or skip classes to go to a debating workshop, so make sure their parents support what they are doing. Persuade parents that debating is good for their children who may be away in college but who still maintain a close family connection. Remember, parents will probably be your biggest sponsors and supporters at workshops, tournaments, etc.

Many parents are eager to take part in their kids' lives, so help them be involved by finding ways they can help, support or simply come to your debates and cheer you on. If you are in school in your hometown, invite them (and their friends) to presentation debates. If you are away at school, link them them to videos of each debate that you post online, keep them up to date on what you are doing and how it is relevant to you

and your college community. Don't forget that your parents are networked with people or institutions that you may not even be aware of but that might want to sponsor your events or could be of help in other ways.

**Must See - Deans, Chancellors, and high-ranking Professors**

Try to earn the respect and admiration of those who call the shots. The success of your debate program will be vulnerable if they decide to make your life difficult, which they may do if they are left to misunderstand or misinterpret what you propose to do. Explain to each key person individually and personally what the university/faculty/department stands to gain from a debate program. Try to understand what kind of people they are and what they value. Read their published strategic plans, go to their public meetings and conferences, introduce yourself and try to make yourself memorable in a polite way, and be ready to show them(if asked) how you can help them realize their goals and how they can help you achieve yours. Earn their trust personally as well; show them you are reliable and accountable.

**Learn To Attract The Media**

As far as many people are concerned, if it's not in the news, it didn't happen. Even if you don't have access to the local and even regional/national media at first, work with your own student media first. Keep in mind this simple rule for dealing with editors – they don't care about what you care about. They will only run your story if it fits into their agenda. They have two priorities – filling their available space and keeping their advertisers happy. This means that the best approach to any editor is by showing them how the story (a) fits in with their editorial perspective and with other stories they have run in the past; (b) will appeal to their readers and – more important – to their

advertisers and (c) will make them look good to their publisher and others who they report to like their editorial board.

**Get VIPs Involved**

People love VIPs; they treat them like they were demigods and they will rush to your events if you have a VIP attending. VIPs may seem distant from everyday life but, in fact, political, economic, showbiz, academic, and other kinds of celebrities are just people; many times they are good-natured, easygoing individuals who don't even perceive themselves as celebrities. Everyone you see on TV actually exists as a person with a personal life and set of interests, passions and prejudices, and almost always has a cell phone, an email address, and one or more Social Media pages. More than that, VIPs have friends., colleagues and associates. In fact, they are usually very well connected, and they have a lot of people who want to do them favors. Your challenge is to find a personal link that will open the door and get you an introduction. Even a major celebrity won't be more than six degrees removed from you or someone in your group and in reality you will probably be no more than two or three steps away from some key VIPs. But you will never see the links unless you start asking others who they know and can introduce you to.

**Make Friends With Administrative Staff**

You'll find that many activities are only possible because staff members with some authority are willing to close their eyes when, for example, you need an extra room for a practice right now for just a little while and have no time to wait for higher-level approval. Truth be told, support staff are usually the people who make things happen inside most institutions; in most schools informal connections play a big role in how

things actually get done. In reality, the Department secretary usually has more real power than the Dean.

**Reach Out To Other Student Groups**

Sometimes they are your competition (people can't join every group), but most times they are your allies. In most colleges and universities, many students don't take part in a lot of extracurricular activities. They just go to classes and go home, unless there's a party somewhere. Indifference, lack of attachment to the school, over-focus on studies and/or parties are your biggest challenges, not competition from other student groups for resources and attention. Becoming engaged with one group usually leads to engaging with others. Collaborating with other groups maximizes your impact and helps your message reach new people. But keep your eyes open: people that enjoy making little effort and claiming all the credit may lead or influence some of the organizations you want to approach, and they may use the proposed partnership with you just to get access to your valuable know-how, connections or contacts. Be careful but not paranoid – and be practical too. Decide who you really need as a friend and focus on them, and don't make commitments until you are sure of who you'r dealing with.

**Engage With Public Officials**

When you are preparing a big event, you may find that there are local or state government agencies that might be willing to help you. In some countries, city councils can offer significant sponsorships for debating events like tournaments, or they can provide nice public spaces for your debates and events. Many public institutions have grants for youth activities and can help you with resources and equipment or help you

spread the word about your program. They are rarely a source of funds, and when they are those funds may require more paperwork than they are actually worth.

**Always Consider Potential Sponsors**

We will deal with sponsors in detail shortly; here, we just want to emphasize that you should think of sponsors as long-term allies. Create value for them, establish trust with them, and you will receive many benefits in addition to financial support.

**Alumni Can Be Huge Supporters**

In the beginning, your debate program won't have an alumni group since most of those involved will likely still be students, but your college or university always has an alumni organization. If it works well, you will have access through the alumni association to a network of thousands of highly educated people who still feel connected to their alma mater. Usually the individuals heading alumni groups are former student leaders, and so they will likely empathize with your struggle and try to help you in whatever way they can. Sometimes these groups even have access to influential people you might want to invite to speak or act as judges; sometimes alumni groups are very well-funded and will able to sponsor some of your events if you can make your case effectively.

**Call On Other Debating Groups For Help**

You are not alone. Large numbers of people around the world are involved in debate. These are articulate, great fun, inspiring, smart people who organize wonderful events for one another, who like to learn, talk, listen, and socialize with others. Many in this global community will be thrilled to learn that you are starting a debate program where none has existed before and will gladly help you. Inspire yourself by learning what's

being done elsewhere, talk to people about their experiences, ask them for advice, visit different groups just to see how they run their programs, organize workshops together and ask trainers from other schools to come and help train your debaters and judges.

**More Fundraising Ideas That Work!**

First, here's a great video with fundraising tips from 5 top debate coaches whose teams have been successful at raising money – proving that it can be done! https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=58M3RmHULK4&feature=emb_logo

Here are some more fundraising ideas and stories that will give you the confidence that your program can do as well or even better!

**1. Sign Up for Amazon Smile**

Amazon will donate 0.5 percent of all eligible items you buy to the charitable organization of your choice! You probably have parents who shop on Amazon every single day, yet they just haven't taken the time to designate an Amazon Smile recipient. Make sure your school is set up in the Amazon system to be an available option. Then promote it to parents in newsletters, email and at school events.

**2. Sell Gift Cards**

You can sign up for one of the online programs like Shop With Scrip, where people can choose from hundreds of different gift card vendors. (This is especially popular around the holidays, and you earn a percentage of sales from every gift card sold—usually 3 to 15 percent.) Typically you can choose from local and national companies, including grocery stores. Who doesn't need groceries, right? Send home a simple ordering slip or set up a table at a school event.

**3. Monetize Your Website Traffic**

School Bell Partners offers a plug-in fundraiser that turns school and district websites into cash! Just have your website manager add it (takes less than an hour), and then promote it to teachers, parents and your community. When your website visitors click on sponsorships and participate in special offers, the school earns. You choose which sponsors are displayed, and the fundraising pretty much happens all by itself—24/7 Get Details here.

**4. Collect Box Tops for Education**

If you're not already clipping box tops, this is a great new idea! This popular program encourages schools to collect "box tops" from cereal boxes, snack packages and hundreds of other items. Most are worth 10 cents each. You then send them in to earn money for your school. When you get all your families collecting, this can really add up! Consider doing a Box Tops Challenge at your school to incentivize students. The class with the most box tops can win a special prize. If you're not signed up,
Clipping box tops from cereals and snacks at 5-10 cents each, along with dozens of other packaged things that families buy can add up fast if you can get all the Debate team families and supporters involved. One program that seems to be very popular is http://www.boxtops4education.com/

**5. Auction Off Free Experiences**

Do you know how special it is for kids to have unique experiences with their teachers? They love it, and the parents will gladly pay for it! This is an easy fundraising task, and it especially works well when you set it up at a school dance or event. You could either run it as a silent auction and let parents bid, or you could sell raffle tickets for each item. Some of the items you could auction off might include:

Be principal for an afternoon.

Read the morning announcements.

Have lunch with my teacher.

Be the co-librarian for an afternoon.

Get special game time with the gym teacher.

**7. Eat and Earn**

Have you ever been invited to a dining night at a local restaurant where a portion of the proceeds is donated to a nonprofit in the area? These are extremely popular because all you have to do is spread the word about the night, and then families just show up to eat. It's important to know that not all restaurant percentages are the same. Some do as little as 10 percent while others will get up to 25 percent. Chipotle gives back 33% and you have to apply to be accepted. Ask one of your parents to call around and get the best offer, but make sure it's a restaurant that your families like. Don't forget to send lots of reminders to your community, and post it on social media on the specific day.

**8. Put the Principal on Display**

Principals will often offer to do something fun or crazy as a reward for reaching reading or fundraising goals, but what if you make the principal the central focus? For instance, you can sell strips of duct tape to help tape the principal to the wall. Or perhaps you can do a coin drive, and the winning class gets to turn the principal into a human ice cream sundae. Here are some more ideas on putting your principal front and center.

**9. Recycle and Get Rewarded**

You can find a handful of programs out there that will pay you to collect old or unwanted items from your families. For example, collections for electronics are really popular. This one, the EcoPhones Recycling Fundraiser, collects phones, ink cartridges and other electronics. You don't have to do a thing. EcoPhones sends you boxes, and then you ship your recyclable items directly to them.

Foundation Version 2

(NOTE – this is another version of the segment earlier that has the same flow of ideas but this one is also good.)

**The Foundation: Support And Sustainability. The Fun Part**

We need every debating school and team. They are going to need to have support. Volunteer support, as well as some financial support. Some more than others. It depends on the aggressiveness and how far you want to take it.

In grade school, the financial requirement is very, very low. Later in 6th, 7th and 8th grade, you may do some inner school debating so you may need to raise a little bit more money. I think you would need no more than $1000 dollars for inner school debating, unless you're going to pay for a coach, but generally you can get one of the teachers to be the coach. A teacher is going to have to start this and help put a team together. The bigger and stronger the team, the more successful the program will be and the more fun it will be. If you create a grade school foundation and you put together 6-12 people, they can be parents, alumni, teachers, maybe even a couple of local businesses that really like debating. You need to get people that are involved. Put out a flyer asking for support and participation. Now if you get way more people than you need, don't throw those away. Be prepared to recycle those people or go to them and give them something to do, because the more people in the community that support this, the better.

The inner school foundation of a debating team is going to help the teachers do inner class debating. They will support it. They will go to their class and do a debate to show them how debating works. There are so many ways that this can work for the teacher in a grade school. You can introduce debate in maybe 2nd or 3rd grade. Your support group can come in and show you what a debate looks like, how it works and all of those things. You could do it in 1st grade, but I'm going to leave that up to the school and the teachers because they will be the driving force behind this. The students will be the main beneficiaries, but the teachers will also benefit.

For grade schools there are some easy ways to raise money. Do a bake sale. Do a cookie sale. Have a luncheon. Have a luncheon during the school day with something special brought by different parents. Have the parents come to see the debating, show them what the debating team does, maybe have them do a short 5-10-minute debate on some subject matter that would be pertinent to the times or to a situation at the school.

Make sure the foundation while raising money for debates also provides opportunities for involvement to it and that it is prestigious to be on the foundation. Be proud to say I'm on the debate foundation for my grade school. I think it should be a proud position. Foundation members can participate in educating and learning as well as being judges. Judging is not difficult--ten hours total invested time. You just need to go to a couple of other debates, sit next to a debating judge and learn from them. Don't try to make it formal and complicated because it doesn't need to be. Not at this stage for sure. Make it fun though.

The most obvious people are the parents of the students who are debaters or on the debating team. It could be a lot of parents who were on debating teams themselves that

want to help and maybe there are students not athletic or involved in other activities. Don't tie the two together or make anything have to tie together. What about alumni? You go through your alumni and see people that were on debating teams who have not left town or are still available. Call one of them up and say "hey, can you help us organize this?" I believe a lot can be done.

How to raise money? You could do a deal where family members say, if you're going to be in the debate, I'll donate $5.00 for you being in the debate. If you win the debate, I'll donate $10.00. That money goes to their debating team and they get credit for that. It's not money for them. If they are really hustlers, kids may have 10 people supporting them. Ten people at $5.00 is $50.00. If they win their debate, they get $100.00. How many of those would it take to support a whole debating team? Not very many.

Don't be afraid to go to some local businesses too. Go to the tire store, the apparel store or businesses where parents frequent and ask if they could donate $50.00 for this debate? We'll put your name on a banner. It doesn't have to be a fancy banner. It can be all hand done if you want. In fact, I think that would be kind of fun. You could go to the local restaurant and ask them if they'd contribute 5% of their revenue for one night for the debating team and then promote it. Just do some flyers. I hate to say it as we're trying to get you off the phones, but get on your phones and internet everyone you know to go to this certain restaurant or pizza parlor, or hamburger place this night because 5% of the revenue goes to the school. The more funding you have the better and you're going to use that money for the most part to buy trophies. Other ways you can raise money is like the local tire sponsor would probably be glad to give you $50.00 if he was the main sponsor for a debate and maybe you do six inner school debates where you bring everybody in the auditorium. Then maybe you raise enough money to go to other

schools, depending on if there is a league for your town for grade schools to do debating in, or you start one. You could be the start of one and show other schools what to do. Trust me, the more schools that do this the better it will be for your school. Especially if you are one of the schools that starts it for the community.

Make sure that you video all of your debates with an iPhone or whatever you can get your hands on. The better the equipment the better it is. Make sure that it is fully recorded and then post it. Somehow post it so anybody in the community can look at it. You might even get the local TV station to put it on in a Sunday morning and then get the word out via phone calls and social media. Get everybody to watch this. Because once people start seeing this stuff outside the school you will be pleasantly surprised at the people who will come and want to be involved.

Your biggest challenge will be if you have the right team, but it's really important that you have a teacher that helps this get started. A coach is more than likely going to be a teacher. If the program develops where you're doing multi-school things, the teacher should be compensated extra for the time that they're going to have to take for this. A lot of their time can be done during school because they're helping the school. I think it will work differently in every school and differently in every town We do not believe in asking for any money from the school system to support debating, because then they want to start to control it and make it a bureaucracy. It will be a big enough bureaucracy with the foundation already. You just don't need more input for that. It should be controlled by those at the school--the teachers should control it. Nobody on top of the teachers. None of their organizations. The less politics involved in this the better it will be run, the more fair it will be run.

It is imperative that you have to have a coach and a coach-in-training at all times. You have to have judges and judges-in-training at all times. That's only four people. Two that are judges and two that are learning to be judges. I strongly recommend that you do this.

I do believe there should be trophies for every debate. You can have little trophies, even in the inner school or inner class debates if you want. Have an inner class debate, but it could be a debate that has a plaque on the wall for half the class that won their side of the debate. There's so many imaginations the teachers and the foundation could come up with to make it fun. But don't have it so everybody gets a trophy. Everybody can get a certificate saying they participated in the debate. I think that's fine, but trophies should be trophies. Winning should be winning. Losing should be learning. I don't believe that anybody wins and loses. I think people only win and learn.

Part of the not winning is learning and it makes people try harder. That's the philosophy of No Hate/No Violence because if there's a benefit to being nice to people, doing the right thing and not having any hate in your heart it certainly should be in a debating form. We're just trying to discuss things so people will openly discuss them. If the politicians aren't going to teach us, let's teach them and we could teach them a lot of how to handle communicating with people directly, not being interpreted by others.

The one thing we want to really emphasize; this is an outline, and this is a guide. You can vary from it. It's a good one because most of these ideas have been tried and tested, but don't be afraid to go off and add to it, do something different, as long as you do it. As long as you increase dialog in a respectful way and you get students to back up what they're saying with facts, rather than just saying you know black is blue. Okay, prove to

me how black is blue. Give me some facts. Well there are some facts that show you how blue is a black. Make sure that the foundation is a group of people and it includes everybody in the school that's working on the debating situation. You can even have some kids come to a foundation meeting and talk. You can have some kids come and say how kids write memos to the foundation that says how they love what they're doing and how it helps them and thank them for what they're doing. Always send thank you. At the end of the year, all debaters should write a letter to the foundation and to the individual members. It is important for people to get those kinds of accolades. What do they want to do? They want to give you more and they want to come back.

That's what I would do for grade school. I wouldn't make it too complicated, you know, bake sales, and tag into whatever else you're doing out there that raises money. Just be part of it for the debating team. A big deal is sustainability and in order to do that, you've got to have backup to all the positions that are needed. Make sure that if somebody…if the top person drops out, nothing slows down. It won't be the same. It'll never be as good, but it might get better with the next person over time.

## Tips For Forming A Successful Debate Foundation

The following tips have been gathered from various Reddit and Quora threads. To get a school Debate Foundation underway:

- Discuss with your development office how your debate team can create an endowed foundation that will fund future debate teams.
- Discuss creating the ability to take regular monthly autopay donations through the endowment office

- Discuss developing a plan to have debaters work with the endowment office to set up a calling campaign to call and ask for endowment gifts. Get the names, addresses, phone numbers, and class years for all living alumni who were debaters.
- Send a written letter explaining your endowment program before you call on people to make donations. This gives them time to think and has been shown to increase donations.
- Contact previous debaters – especially successful professionals. Ask them to consider donating to your endowment including regular monthly donations.
- Encourage smaller gifts to the debate endowment – stress to potential donors that even modest gifts can help build a sustaining endowment.
- Make Deans, Presidents, and Trustees aware of your fundraising plans. They need to know in case they meet with big donors who they discover are interested in debate.

## Debate Is An Intellectual Sport

We really mean that we think of Debate as a fun and uplifting sport. There's competition that at its best brings out the best in everyone, and there's sportsmanship that everyone acknowledges are the 'rules of the game'. Because Debate is a sport, that makes its well-researched, proven educational value of even greater value when it can be integrated along into both curricular and extracurricular activities. The most obvious benefit are the opportunities that debate provides to develop and practice verbal/thinking skills – a class of skills that everybody knows as "being able to think on your feet". That means, as we all also know, being able to speak from memory, under pressure, publicly, clearly, and decisively. How many of us are able to do that without a

lot of practice> We believe that debate involved winners and learners, not winners and losers. The phrase "Pro & Con" doesn't mean the same as "0 & 1". In a good debate yes, either the Pro or the Con side wins, or maybe 'prevails' would be a better term, but in a truly good debate everybody learns, which is why we all recognize that free & fair competition really does bring out the best in all of us. It's fun to play hard and win, isn't it? That's why debate is such a great intellectual sport – everybody learns a strong set of real and useful skills These skills are extremely important to academic and personal development, yet few curriculum materials are available to support the professor or instructor in fostering them. However, there are virtually no barriers to bringing debate into the classroom and using the proven structures and processes of debate to open up the classroom to the educational benefits.

What makes debate especially valuable for fostering development of verbal/thinking skills is that it is not only structured, but also interactive. Debate requires that participants listen, think and respond. It is not enough for the debater to simply memorize and perform a speech. Instead, debaters must listen to their opponents, engage in a questioning process, and incorporate this information into their own presentations.

Debate is also an excellent way to develop critical research skills. The process of researching a debate is one of examining the pros and cons of an issue, determining what the problems are and considering alternative solutions. The research and presentation of a debate is clearly a team effort, and participation in activities like debate explicitly develops the skills needed to work in teams.

Debate can also be used to explore issues in a variety of areas including social studies, economics, history, and more.  For example, one could have a debate on whether

human aggression is innate or learned. Whether or not a debate topic is related to a class curriculum, debate has a lot to offer participants.

We believe in the power of civilized debate to resolve every kind of issue from the relative desirability of cats vs. dogs as pets to whether the death penalty should be abolished, but we've come to realize that much of the underlying social and even economic value of debate has yet to be explored.

Specifically, we're beginning to realize that debate can be a great tool for seeking real-world solutions rather than being simply a competition between ideas that results in one position being declared a winner and then everybody goes home. Debate can be a way that schools and students provide their communities with desperately needed reasoned, factual information and generate funding from a brand-new source in the process.

**Appendix 1: Fundraising and Finance: Understanding the School-Volunteer Relationship** by Parent Booster USA

We're re-publishing this clear-eyed examination of the practical side of parents and volunteers becoming involved with school organizations and raising money for them. We hope you'll visit the "Parent Booster USA website" and check out their valuable resources.

Volunteer organizations raise money for their schools. That sounds like a simple and praiseworthy relationship...but maybe not. Even if a school has a good relationship with its fundraisers, the split of roles and responsibilities between the school and its fundraising organizations is usually less than ideal.

Here's the problem: School fundraising is a multibillion-dollar business operated by volunteer parents who may have no experience setting up and managing a tax-exempt

charitable organization. In addition, just when one group of parents gets the hang of all the complex federal and state charity fundraising rules, their children move on to a new activity and the parents follow. All knowledge is lost, and often the groups' tax-exempt status is also lost.

Schools provide varying degrees of support to their booster clubs. But because few school administrators have experience in dealing with tax exempt charities, they hesitate to get financially involved.

Booster clubs are separate legal entities for which schools are reluctant to assume liability for club activities. But schools inadvertently take on liability when they implement a policy, such as one requiring the school principal to review and approve the booster club budget, and then suggest that the school has no liability for the budget it just reviewed and approved. That's just one of many school district policies that don't make sense or are unenforceable.

What can be done to clean up the often-messy, always-complicated school–volunteer fundraising group relationship? It's quite simple if you follow just two rules: (1) understand who is responsible for specific activities and (2) have the responsible group pay its own bills.

**Who Is Responsible?**

Clearly, the school is in charge when it comes to overseeing academics, hiring the teachers, selecting the curriculum, and setting the school calendar. However, responsibility gets murkier with regard to extracurricular activities like sports, band, and the robotics club. Band, for example, may be an academic subject for which students earn credit and a grade, but the optional annual spring band trip may be considered an extracurricular activity.

Follow the funding to fi nd the answer to the question about responsibility. Because schools normally hire the band director and athletic coaches and have other budgeted funds to support their activities, the school is the sponsor and responsible party for the band and sports teams.

The school, however, may provide no funding for the debate team or robotics club. The school may allow the English teacher to advise the debate team and the math teacher to advise the robotics club. The teams may be allowed to meet after school in classrooms. But the teachers receive no compensation for their assistance, and the teams must raise the money to purchase supplies and enter competitions. Their boosters or fundraisers sponsor their activities and are thus the responsible party.

**Who Pays the Bills?**

The next step is easy. Once you identify the responsible party, you know who should contract for services, make purchases, and pay the bills.

Because the band and football team are school activities, the school should contract and pay for uniforms and equipment, hire and pay the directors and coaches, and pay for transportation, housing, and the like. The boosters who support the band and football team raise money and donate the cash (make a grant) to the school, which is paying the bills.

Follow the funding to find the answer to the question about responsibility.

The boosters are the sponsors of non-school activities, like the robotics club and debate team. The school provides no funding, so the boosters purchase the supplies and pay the costs of participating in competitions and other events. They pay the bills.

**On the Other Hand**

I recently learned from school administrators and booster club volunteers in an Alaska school district that in many of that state's school districts, the school "doesn't pay for cloth." In other words, although the school district sponsors sports teams, it relies on booster clubs to raise the funds for, contract for, and purchase team uniforms and helmets.

The athletic director explained that schools can't contract for new uniforms if they don't have the money in their budget. The boosters don't have the money in their bank account either, but they contract for new uniforms, then work hard to raise the money before the bill comes due.

If the school sponsors a sports team, it must ensure that the team has the uniforms and equipment to play the game. The school may ask the boosters to raise the money, and the boosters may grant those funds to the school. But the sponsoring (responsible) party should pay the bill.

That Alaska school district is not alone. A Florida high school booster club treasurer sought my advice on how to handle a bill for football helmet refurbishment.

The booster club had not contracted for the helmet refurbishment. The boosters did not know about the contract until they were billed for several thousand dollars. The boosters had not budgeted for the refurbishment and did not have the funds to pay for it. The treasurer discovered that the football coach—although not authorized by the boosters to do so—had signed the contract in the name of the booster club. The treasurer also learned that the coach routinely signed booster club checks even though he was not an authorized signer on the bank account.

Raising money to subsidize increasingly stretched school budgets is a key reason school fundraising groups are cropping up everywhere.

The refurbishment company was threatening legal action. The treasurer asked whether the boosters or the school that hired and paid the coach was responsible for the bill. The problem arose because the responsible party—the school sponsoring the team—had not contracted for a needed service.

Raising money to subsidize increasingly stretched school budgets is a key reason school fundraising groups are cropping up everywhere. The issue isn't with the fundraising—the issue is with ensuring that the responsible party pays the bills.

**How Do We Fix It?**

Before planning activities and events, the school and fundraising groups should answer three important questions:

1. Is this a school activity or a booster activity?
2. Is this an academic (graded) activity or an optional activity?
3. Does the school have standard procedures for purchasing this product or service?

The answers will help determine whether it's a school or booster activity and who is responsible for contracts and payment. The best practice is for the fundraising group to act as a grantor and give the money it raises to the school as the grantee.

## Appendix 2: The IRS Says Debate Programs Can Be Tax-Exempt

Rev. Rul. 66-256, 1966-2 C.B. 210

A nonprofit organization formed to conduct public forums at which lectures and debates on social, political, and international matters are presented qualifies for exemption from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue

Code of 1954, even though some of its programs include controversial speakers or subjects. I.T. 1224, C.B. I-I, 256 (1922), superseded.

Advice has been requested whether an organization formed to conduct public forums at which lectures and debates are presented for the benefit of the community is exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954.

The organization was formed for exclusively charitable and educational purposes. Its primary purpose is to bring about a fair and openminded consideration of social, political, and international questions by the promotion and sponsorship of a public forum at which debates and lectures are conducted. Its charter specifically states (1) the organization shall have no institutional point of view and is not responsible for the views expressed by the speakers, and (2) its only responsibility is to bring the views expressed to the attention of the community. The charter further provides that no substantial part of its activities shall be carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation, and that it shall not participate in or intervene in any political campaign of a candidate for public office. In the event of dissolution, its assets are to be paid over to the local school board for scholarship purposes.

In carrying out its primary purpose, the organization invites prominent individuals to discuss varying political and social matters of national and community interest. The speakers, in addition to delivering their prepared text, answer questions of those attending. The other part of the organization's program involves the sponsorship of debates. Individuals representing opposing viewpoints are invited to debate particular topics. The debates are conducted in accordance with carefully drawn rules. Frequently, the persons invited to lecture or debate are controversial and occasionally there is opposition to their appearance. None of the programs or activities of the organization

involves in any way participation or intervention in any political campaigns of candidates for public office. Discussions which involve participation or intervention in campaigns are not permitted.

The organization rents a hall for its programs and distributes promotional literature calling the public's attention to the events. Financial support comes from charges for admission to the forums and from contributions.

Section 501(c)(3) of the Code provides for the exemption of organizations formed and operated exclusively for charitable and educational purposes. The presentation of public lectures, forums, or debates is a recognized method of educating the public. See section 1.501(c)(3)-1(d)(3) of the Income Tax Regulations.

The fact that the presence of the invited speaker or his opinions may precipitate controversy within the community does not adversely affect the status of an organization whose primary purpose is to provide a forum for speakers independent of the organization.

Accordingly, the organization qualifies for exemption under section 501(c)(3) of the Code. I.T. 1224, C.B. I-I, 256 (1922), holding that an organization organized and operated to bring about a fair and open-minded consideration of social, political, and international questions in college students qualified for exemption under a predecessor statute of section 501(c)(3) of the Code, is superseded.

An organization which considers itself within the scope of this Revenue Ruling must, in order to establish exemption under section 501(c)(3) of the Code, file an application on Form 1023, Exemption Application, with the District Director of Internal Revenue for

the internal revenue district in which is located the principal place of business or principal office of the organization. See section 1.501(a)-1 of the regulations.

**Appendix Three – Fundraising Videos**

How To Do Fundraising At Your School!

By Francoise Naude

At first I thought I wouldn't want to watch this 'talking heads' video of a highly-accented teacher discussing his take on school fundraising, but it turns out he knows what he's talking about. You'll probably get at least one new good idea here.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbOlBvqVBmU

***"Fundraising 101"***

By Reuben Mayes

Not directed specifically at school fundraising but still a very valuable TED Talk on the principles of successful fundraising. The speaker lays out most of the very important basics in clear language. Highly recommended.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsvSWkEHNDk

***"48 Fundraising Ideas In 8 Minutes"***

By George Weiner

Actually worth watching for some good ideas in spite of the come-on title.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OE_RyIGEB6E

Whitney Young Debate Team Fundraising Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hHal4mCi8G0

A wonderful montage of bright young faces with hard-hitting observations on the benefits of debate and why community businesses and organizations should support them. We think the super-fast policy debaters interspersed among the testimonials to debate are actually distracting, but this 105 second video shows what a good fundraising video can look like.