

RICHMOND DEBATE INSTITUTE

Debate is the entertainment of ideas.

Not who's right or wrong.

Be nice. Be courteous.

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Public Forum

Intro to PF Debate

What is Public Forum debate?

- Public Forum debaters compete as a **team of two students**
- **Each team** will prepare **two cases**, one case for each side of the debate topic (**Pro and Con**), in order to compete in tournaments
- Tournaments have many rounds, where **teams argue their assigned side** in each round
- Competitors debate **to win the judge's vote** as the most persuasive side
- To create a case, **students research evidence** to support their arguments in favor or against the proposal
- The **topic changes every month**, and topics are voted on by the National Speech and Debate Association

Public Forum Speaking Order

First Speaker - Team A	4 minutes	Construction
First Speaker - Team B	4 minutes	Construction
Crossfire	3 minutes	CX
Second Speaker - Team A	4 minutes	Rebuttal
Second Speaker - Team B	4 minutes	Rebuttal
Crossfire	3 minutes	CX
Summary - First Speaker - Team A	2 minutes	Summary
Summary - First Speaker - Team B	2 minutes	Summary
Grand Crossfire	3 minutes	CX
Final Focus - Second Speaker - Team A	2 minutes	Final Focus
Final Focus - Second Speaker - Team B	2 minutes	Final Focus
Prep Time	2 minutes per team	

Keep in mind, either the affirmative or the negative can speak first, it just depends on the flip!

Both teams receive **2 minutes** of prep time.

Resolved: Charter schools on balance are beneficial to the quality of education in the United States

Example topic

Two Sides: Affirmative and Negative

Affirmative - In favor of proposal

We affirm resolved: on balance, charter schools are beneficial to the quality of education in the [united states](#).

The framework for this debate should be protecting the most disadvantaged in an educational system, because they will be the most affected by any potential reforms.

Contention One: Providing opportunities.

[Jochim 20 of the CRPE](#) finds that charter schools offer the potential to create high-performing public schools in districts typically plagued by poor student outcomes.

[Langhorne 18 of Forbes](#) explains that charter schools have the freedom to develop schools that meet specific student needs and create different environments, allowing parents to choose the school that best meets the needs of their children.

Even more so, charter schools are held accountable for their educational outcomes. [Langhorne](#) furthers that charter schools have achievement benchmarks that function like performance contracts. Every few years, authorizers review their schools. If student performance continues to lag after a probation period, authorizers will close or replace the failing school.

This creates better educational outcomes.

[Solodev 19 of the FDOE](#) finds using 2017-2018 school data, that students enrolled in charter schools demonstrated higher rates of grade level performance than their peers in traditional public schools in 82% of comparisons.

Cases
Students read aloud
their written cases at
the beginning of the
debate

Negative - Against proposal

We negate the resolution resolved: On balance, charter schools are beneficial to the quality of education in the United States.

The framework for this debate should be protecting the most disadvantaged in the educational system, because they will be the most affected by any potential reforms.

Contention 1: Pricing out the poor.

Charter schools force low income minority households to move for two reasons. First, raising property taxes. [Spika 20](#) explains that school districts pay 100% of charter school tuition. Although charter school students represent only 8% of all public school students, in 2018, 37 cents of every new property tax dollar raised was sent to a charter school. School districts then have to raise property taxes to make up for an almost 40% loss of funding for district schools. [Spika 20](#) furthers that rapidly increasing tuition payments for charter schools are a top reason why property taxes continue to rise.

Unfortunately, [Underwood 15 of the ANCS](#) finds that when property taxes rise, families of lower incomes get priced out and have to move. Second, through increasing gentrification. [Mckenna 15 of the atlantic](#) explains that charter schools are concentrated in urban and less affluent areas. Because parents do not want to drive hours to drop off their kids at school every day, charter school parents need to live close to the charter school.

Thus, when a charter school pops up, white families gentrify the urban neighborhood to send their kids to the charter school. This has happened empirically, as [Pearman and Swain 18 of Sociology and Education Journal](#) find that when charter schools are available, the likelihood that low-income communities of color experience gentrification more than doubles, jumping by 22%. Unfortunately this makes housing prices increase, as [Bluestone 18 of Georgia State University](#) explains that demand for homes in locations that provide access to charter schools will increase, subsequently raising the prices of homes in the area.

Example: Affirmative Case

We affirm resolved: on balance, charter schools are beneficial to the quality of education in the united states.

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Resolution
The topic and your position at the top of case

Contentions
Your arguments - each contention begins with a tagline

Impact
Each contention you propose should have an impact

Framework

(optional) Tell the judge how the round should be evaluated and why

Evidence & Case

Cite any evidence you use in the case! Make sure store them on your computer

Example: Negative Case

We negate the resolution resolved: On balance, charter schools are beneficial to the quality of education in the United States.

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Increasing prices pushes poor families out, as [a study from UC Berkeley](#) found that a 30% increase in median rent corresponded with a 28% decrease in low income minority households. Gentrification also decreases incomes, as [Meltzer 17 of How Housing Matters](#) finds empirically that residents in gentrifying neighborhoods experienced a 63% decrease in the number of jobs for local residents.

The overall impact is decreasing access to education.

[Manhertz 19 of Zillow](#) found that residents in areas with lower home values perceived worse access to education and jobs. Unfortunately, [Rothstein 14 of the EPI](#) finds that economic disadvantage depresses student performance as well.

Resolution

The topic and your position at the top of case

Contentions

Your arguments - each contention begins with a tagline

Impact

Each contention you propose should have an impact

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(optional) Tell the judge how the round should be evaluated and why

Evidence & Case

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Intro to Research

Building a Case

Quality Sources for Research

- **News Articles**
 - Wall Street Journal
 - Washington Post
 - Reuters
 - New York Times
 - Economist
 - Council of Foreign Relations
 - Bloomberg
 - Associated Press (AP)
- **Government Organizations**
 - Center of Disease Control
 - US Department of State
 - US Department of Labor
 - USA.gov
- **Think Tanks**
 - Brookings Institute
 - CATO Institute
 - American Enterprise Institute (AEI)
 - The Heritage Foundation
- **Academic Research**
 - Google Scholar
 - JSTOR

COUNCIL *on*
FOREIGN
RELATIONS

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL
WSJ

Bloomberg

The Washington Post

The New York Times
Company

REUTERS®

BROOKINGS

The
Economist

CATO
INSTITUTE



Google
Scholar

JSTOR

Example Research #1: News Articles



By Robert Pondiscio

Sept. 6, 2019 9:50 am ET

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201

Charter schools are a boutique phenomenon in American education, educating a mere 6% of U.S. school children. But they attract a disproportionate amount of attention—and controversy—because of their unique place in our education ecosystem. Public, tuition-free schools open to all students, but operated independently of school districts, they offer a Rorschach test revealing how one feels about U.S. public education at large. They can be perceived either as engines of innovation and an indispensable means to rescue children from failing neighborhood schools, or as an existential threat draining away resources—both money and engaged families—from traditional public schools.

Collectively, charter schools educate 3.2 million children in 7,000 schools in 43 states and the District of Columbia. None are more polarizing than New York City's network of about 50 Success Academy schools, which serve 17,000 students—94% of whom are from minority backgrounds—under their visionary and lightning-rod leader, Eva Moskowitz. Most are less than a decade old, and all of them are exceptionally high performing. In a city where less than 40% of black and Hispanic children test at proficiency for reading or math, 90% of Success Academy's students of color passed the most recent state reading test. Virtually all of them—over 98%—did so in math.

Publication Title

This is the name of the newspaper or organization.

Author Name & Date

This is the name of the author, and when the article was written.

Text

The text you use will be referenced in your case

Example Case Argument #1

Online Evidence (Website)

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

Home World U.S. Politics Economy Business Tech Markets Opinion Life & Arts Real Estate

By Robert Pondiscio

Sept. 6, 2019 9:50 am ET

SAVE PRINT TEXT

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Case Argument

Contention 1: Charter schools support underprivileged communities

Our first argument is that charter schools support underprivileged students. Students of color are face incredible obstacles in the educational system, but charter schools are helping to mitigate that. Pondiscio 19 of the Wall Street Journal contextualizes that Success Academy, a well known chain of charter schools, helped 90% of their students of color pass the state reading test. This is just one example of how charter schools support quality education in communities that struggle to access it. Increasing access to education for disadvantaged groups improves overall equality as well as spurring education as a whole.



Example Research #2: Academic Studies

Study Title

The title of the study / research performed

Charter Schools, Civil Rights and School Discipline

A Comprehensive Review



March 2016

Institution Name

This is the name of the organization or university that published the study

Charter Schools, Civil Rights and School Discipline:
A Comprehensive Review

By Daniel J. Losen, Michael A. Keith II,
Cheri L. Hodson and Tia E. Martinez

March 2016

Author Name & Date

This is the name of the author, and when the article was written.

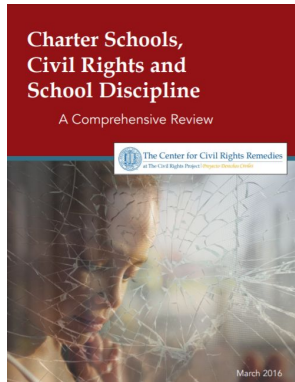
Text

The text you use will be referenced in your case

Part II of this report provides a deeper exploration of the question, how do charter school suspension rates compare with rates for non-charter schools? There are several ways to answer this question, and they should be interpreted carefully. First, in 2011-12, charter schools in the aggregate suspended 7.8% of all students enrolled, which is a slightly higher rate than for non-charter schools, at 6.7%. These numbers are based on a comparison of 4,752 charter schools (excluding alternative schools, those the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights [OCR] identified as part of the juvenile justice system, and most virtual and online schools) with more than 90,000 non-charter schools (with the same exclusions). In the aggregate, charter school suspension rates for K-12 were about 1.1 percentage points higher (thus 16% greater) for all students and about 1.8 percentage points higher for students with disabilities (SWD). Charter schools were also higher suspending for students without disabilities (SWOD).

Example Case Argument #2

Online Evidence (PDF)



Charter Schools, Civil Rights and School Discipline:
A Comprehensive Review

By Daniel J. Losen, Michael A. Keith II,
Cheri L. Hodson and Tia E. Martinez

March 2016



Case Argument

Contention one: Charter Schools enforce harmful discipline.

Rizga 16 of Mother Jones explains that charter schools have a unique, “zero-tolerance” discipline policy. These strict rules result in many students being suspended, or even expelled, when they would not be in a general school. Hence, Losen 16 of UCLA quantifies that charter schools suspend students 16% more than other schools. Suspending students for the sake of rigid discipline makes the learning environment tense, and makes those students unlikely to learn or go forwards in school. It also makes other schools more likely to increase disciplinary measures by setting a precedent for stricter education. Charter schools make students everywhere less likely to learn or be engaged in education, decreasing its quality.

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Goals for Each Speech: Part 1

Construction

- Introduce your team as the affirmative or negative.
- Read the Resolved at the top of the speech.
- Only include definitions in your case if you think definitions will be contested.
- Read your case clearly and make eye contact with the judge.
- Pause before introducing a new contention.
- Make sure all contentions are titled with the name of the argument.
- Establish why your arguments matter in the round.

Rebuttal

- Focus on refuting your opponent's contentions.
- Do not try to uphold your own arguments unless you have extra time.
- Introduce lots of new evidence against your opponent's contentions.
- Go down the flow of arguments. Respond to their first contention first, their second contention next, and so on.

Goals for Each Speech: Part 2

Summary

- Extend your arguments! Re-explain your contentions and evidence you used in your previous speeches.
- Defend your contentions! Defend against any counters they used against you, and re-explain how your evidence still stands true.
- Re-explain the warrants behind the evidence you used.
- Weigh your impacts in comparison to your opponents' impacts.

Final Focus

- Tell your judge why you won by listing your most persuasive arguments. Then explain how these arguments prove you should win.
- Focus on arguments you think can persuade the judge.
- Weigh your impacts in comparison to your opponents' impacts.

Cross-Examination (CX)

Types of Questions to Ask

- **Clarification of Evidence**
 - What pieces of evidence did you use for your second contention?
 - What credentials does your author have? Why should we trust this source?
 - When was this article written? Does it take into consideration the pandemic that hit in 2020?
- **Understanding Impacts**
 - What is the impact of your first contention?
 - Why would an economic hit matter? Won't it eventually repair itself?
 - What is the probability of war? How serious is this risk?
- **Framing**
 - What is the end goal of the decision? To save lives or save the economy?
 - What should we prioritize?

Analysis and Weighing

“Impact Calculus”

Weighing: Comparing Impacts

Timeframe	Timeframe weighing explains why your impact is going to happen first and why that matters in relation to your opponent's impact that is delayed.
Magnitude	Magnitude weighing involves how intense the impact is.
Probability	Probability explains why your impact is more likely to actually happen in comparison to your opponent's impact.
Reversibility	Reversibility weighing is why your impact cannot be reversed, whereas your opponent's can be fixed/solved.
Scope	Scope involves how broad your impact is.

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