

## Rowland Hall Debate Events Offered

*Do you want to debate with a partner or go it alone? Do you like discussing philosophical issues or matters of public policy? Do you want to develop your public speaking skills or your ability to research and process information? How much time do you have to commit to debate and what are your goals?* These are just some of the questions you'll want to answer before specializing in a specific debate event. While it's true that all debate events focus on argumentation, research and public speaking, each specific format emphasizes certain skills over others. Here are some brief descriptions of the different events you can explore while debating for Rowland Hall.

### ***Policy "CX"***

In this event, two-person teams (you have a partner) will either affirm or negate a yearlong topic by proposing different policies ("plans") to solve national and world problems. For example, this year's topic centered on changing US economic policy toward Latin America. Rowland Hall teams proposed: lifting the Cuban embargo, improving trade infrastructure along the US-Mexico border, and assisting Venezuela's oil industry, just to name a few. Each student will give an 8-minute constructive speech, a 5-minute rebuttal, and participate in two 3-minute cross-examination periods. This event requires a tremendous amount of research and evidence and the debaters often speak at accelerated rates of delivery (300 words per minute!). Because of the complexity of the topics and the fast presentation style, policy debate uniquely sharpens a student's ability to **think critically, process information quickly and research effectively.**

### ***Public Forum "PF"***

In this event, two-person teams will debate a statement that change every month. These topics are controversial but accessible and usually offer a forced-choice ("agree/pro" or "disagree/con"). For example, over the last two months Rowland Hall students debated whether "Single-gender classrooms would improve academic achievement" and if "Environmental protection is more important than economic growth." PF is an audience friendly event and most of the judges who evaluate the rounds are parents, teachers and community members. The speeches are half as long as a policy debate and typically require less evidentiary support. For these reasons, public forum debate uniquely sharpens a student's ability to **think argumentatively and communicate effectively to a diverse audience.**

### ***Lincoln-Douglas "LD"***

LD debate is a one-on-one event modeled after the famous debates between Abraham Lincoln and Stephen Douglas. The topics, which change every two months, are more philosophical and require unpacking the ethical/moral implications of the debate. For example, this year Rowland Hall students debated whether an "Oppressive government is more desirable than no government" and if "Placing conditions on humanitarian aid is just." While the delivery styles can vary, all LD debaters propose moral philosophies to prove their position "right." For these reasons, Lincoln-Douglas debate uniquely sharpens a student's ability to **think abstractly and make decisions using ethical frameworks.**

### ***Individual Speech Events "IEs"***

In addition to the events listed above, students at Rowland Hall have the opportunity to supplement their debate experience with individual speech events. IEs are non-debate public speaking events that focus on speech composition and delivery. Possible IEs include: Impromptu, Extemporaneous Speaking, Original Oratory and Student Congress. For more information on these events, please speak with a coach.