

3 March 2025

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**KENTUCKY HIGH SCHOOL SPEECH LEAGUE  
STATE DEBATE TOURNAMENT RESULTS**

The former Governor of California, and the Terminator himself – Arnold Schwarzenegger – once stated that, “When you campaign and have to participate in so many debates just to win the nomination of your party, you've had a lot of practice. You get to figure out as you go from one debate to another where you made your mistakes. By the time you get to the big debate you're pretty polished.”

With topics that ranged from the morality of artificial intelligence development to legislation written by Kentucky's students themselves, the youth of Kentucky's high schools were pretty polished indeed by the end of the Kentucky High School Speech League's annual State Debate Tournament, its 105<sup>th</sup>. Transylvania University's Speech and Debate team hosted the meet on campus Saturday (March 1), and Lexington's Paul Laurence Dunbar HS took top honors for a second consecutive year. Rounding out the top six teams were Lexington Lafayette, Lexington Henry Clay, Louisville Assumption, Louisville Trinity, and Louisville Waggener. Lafayette's Riley Murray was named Coach of the Year; Dunbar High School won the trophy for Sustained Excellence over time.

Students competed in four preliminary rounds with the top four entries advancing to semifinals in Varsity Lincoln-Douglas Debate, Novice Lincoln-

# 2025 KHSSL STATE DEBATE RESULTS

Douglas, Varsity Public Forum Debate, and Novice Public Forum Debate. Sixteen Finalists advanced to the Congressional Debate SuperSession with honors awarded to the top six. Speaker awards for the top six performers in each of the Debate events were also given. Individual awards and placings for each of the five events are listed on the next pages. Additionally, at the ceremony, Lexington Henry Clay's longtime coach Ryan Ray was inducted into the Kentucky High School Speech League's Hall of Fame.

The speech and debate season in Kentucky runs from October to January with 14 Regional Speech Tournaments held in February around the Commonwealth to qualify for State followed by State Junior Speech (grades 4-8), Senior Speech (grades 9-12), and Debate (grades 4-12) tournaments. Students compete in twenty speech, debate, and drama categories from Storytelling to Congressional Debate to Oratory in the speech and debate divisions.

KHSSL offers membership to all schools -- public, private, and homeschools -- serving students in grades 4-12 in Kentucky. With member schools from Paducah to Paintsville, Kentucky's oldest student activity trains students how to conduct themselves in public settings, how to successfully communicate ideas, how to empathize with others via character analysis, how to read critically and how to research properly with contests to encourage excellence and develop grit -- mind over chatter. For more information how to get your students and school involved, browse to [www.khssl.org](http://www.khssl.org). For further information, contact KHSSL Executive Director Steve Meadows at [khssl@khssl.org](mailto:khssl@khssl.org) or 859-927-1100. He can also easily put you in touch with the coaches of local teams for quotes, etc.

## MIND OVER CHATTER

# 2025 KHSSL STATE DEBATE RESULTS

## TEAM SWEEPSTAKES (COMBINED SCORES)

1 <sup>ST</sup>	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS	97 POINTS
2 <sup>ND</sup>	Lafayette HS	32 POINTS
3 <sup>RD</sup>	Henry Clay HS	23 POINTS
4 <sup>TH</sup>	Assumption HS	21 POINTS
5 <sup>TH</sup>	Trinity HS	17 POINTS
6 <sup>TH</sup>	Waggener HS	10 POINTS

**COACH OF THE YEAR:** Riley Murray, Lafayette HS

**SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE AWARD:** Paul Laurence Dunbar HS

**Inducted into the KHSSL Hall of Fame, class of 2025:**

Ryan Ray, Henry Clay High School

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# 2025 KHSSL STATE DEBATE RESULTS

## NOVICE LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE

1 <sup>ST</sup>	HASSINI BEERAM	LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL
2 <sup>ND</sup>	CHIAGOZEM IBEAWUCHI	ASSUMPTION HIGH SCHOOL

## SEMIFINALISTS:

LUKAS MATSON	LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL
EASHAN KOLLI	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

## TOP SPEAKERS

1 <sup>ST</sup>	HASSINI BEERAM	LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL
2 <sup>ND</sup>	PRISHA SHAH	RYLE HIGH SCHOOL
3 <sup>RD</sup>	LUKAS MATSON	LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL
4 <sup>TH</sup>	SANJANA CHOPRA	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL
5 <sup>TH</sup>	CHIAGOZEM IBEAWUCHI	ASSUMPTION HIGH SCHOOL
6 <sup>TH</sup>	ARYANA BARLOW	ASSUMPTION HIGH SCHOOL

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# 2025 KHSSL STATE DEBATE RESULTS

## VARSITY LINCOLN-DOUGLAS DEBATE

CO-CHAMPIONS

OLIVIA ZHANG

AYESHA HAMID

DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

SEMIFINALISTS:

SAIKEERTHI DOPPALAPUDI

KHOA TA

DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

OWENSBORO HIGH SCHOOL

TOP SPEAKERS

1<sup>ST</sup>

AYESHA HAMID

DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

2<sup>ND</sup>

MARIA MARIN RINCON

LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL

3<sup>RD</sup>

LIAM WAHL

TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL

4<sup>TH</sup>

KHOA TA

OWENSBORO HIGH SCHOOL

5<sup>TH</sup>

SHYMAI THOMAS

WAGGENER HIGH SCHOOL

6<sup>TH</sup>

NICHOLAS STEPHENS

WAGGENER HIGH SCHOOL

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# 2025 KHSSL STATE DEBATE RESULTS

## VARSITY PUBLIC FORUM DEBATE

1 <sup>ST</sup>	FAN & EARHARDT	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL
2 <sup>ND</sup>	DEITZ & BEIERLE	TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL

## SEMIFINALISTS:

KANG & PATEL	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL
KOLLI & NAYAKWADI	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

## TOP SPEAKERS

1 <sup>ST</sup>	IAN BEIERLE	TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL
2 <sup>ND</sup>	HAYDEN DEITZ	TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL
3 <sup>RD</sup>	MICHAEL FAN	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL
4 <sup>TH</sup>	SAIKRISH KOLLI	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL
5 <sup>TH</sup>	MADLINE FRANTZ	HIGHLANDS LATIN SCHOOL
6 <sup>TH</sup>	CHRISTOPHER CHEN	LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL

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# 2025 KHSSL STATE DEBATE RESULTS

## NOVICE PUBLIC FORUM DEBATE

CO-CHAMPTIONS

GUPTA & DHAR

VAISH & MARDINI

DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

## SEMIFINALISTS:

JOO & JANI

WELKER & WOLSING

DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL

## TOP SPEAKERS

1<sup>ST</sup> SHIVEN DHAR

DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

1<sup>ST</sup> (TIED) EKANSH GUPTA

DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

3<sup>RD</sup> ALAYA JUDKINS

GRACE JAMES ACADEMY

4<sup>TH</sup> AYAAN JANI

DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

5<sup>TH</sup> OWEN TAFEL

TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL

6<sup>TH</sup> GIOVANNI ROCCISANO TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL

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# 2025 KHSSL STATE DEBATE RESULTS

## CONGRESSIONAL DEBATE

1 <sup>ST</sup>	AHAAN THOMAS	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL
2 <sup>ND</sup>	WINSTON FUGATE	HENRY CLAY HIGH SCHOOL
3 <sup>RD</sup>	LOGAN SAPP	LAFAYETTE HIGH SCHOOL
4 <sup>TH</sup>	KYLE PALMER	HENRY CLAY HIGH SCHOOL
5 <sup>TH</sup>	AVNEESH KUDRIMOTI	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL
6 <sup>TH</sup>	CAROLINE SEGEBARTH	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL

## SUPER SESSION MEMBERS:

KISHAN AMIN	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL
ANVI VAISH	DUNBAR HIGH SCHOOL
WILLIAM COMBS	HAZARD HIGH SCHOOL
RANDY POLLARD	HAZARD HIGH SCHOOL
LOUIS STOUT	HENRY CLAY HIGH SCHOOL
ELI HOFFMAN	HENRY CLAY HIGH SCHOOL
KATHERINE HASTINGS	HENRY CLAY HIGH SCHOOL
ISABELLA HARTMAN	HENRY CLAY HIGH SCHOOL
ETHAN COOPER	HENRY CLAY HIGH SCHOOL
MAX CORBETT	TRINITY HIGH SCHOOL

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