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Welcome to Miramonte Public Speaking!

Our program has a proud tradition of public speaking excellence. Every student is guided and encouraged by teachers and peers to develop their public speaking skills to their fullest potential.

The Miramonte Public Speaking program was founded in 1979 by Sandra Starke Maguire as a one period, standard elective class. Since that time, the program has grown to include seven full classes, two classroom teachers, five coaches, and over two hundred students! Open to students of any grade or ability level, public speaking gives students the opportunity to express themselves through language and performance in a supportive environment. In addition to gaining lifelong communication skills, students learn about current events, research, writing, and delivery techniques. Our emphasis on peer support encourages an understanding of what it means to be a collaborative and encouraging team member. The goal of our program is to help every student gain the invaluable life skill of being able to speak with confidence in academic, professional, and social settings.

Miramonte public speakers showcase their talents both in the classroom and on a competitive level. Students can take public speaking for one to four years. New members of our program enroll in Oral Interpretation, which fulfills the Visual and Performing Arts requirement for college admission. Continuing speakers enroll in Public Speaking 2, 3, and 4. All of the class periods are mixed level, so beginning students have the opportunity to learn directly from more experienced speakers. Although students are not required to compete, because our curriculum prepares students for upcoming tournaments, most choose to “suit up” and test their talents at competitions. Indeed, outside the classroom, students can compete in more than fifteen tournaments each year, including the State and National Championships and invitational competitions. In recent years, Miramonte has consistently placed in the top five schools at the State Championships and has been acknowledged at the National Championships as one of the top ten speech and debate schools in the country!

Miramonte participates in the National Speech and Debate Association and the California High School Speech Association and is ranked in the top 0.5% of speech and debate programs nationwide. Our students can participate in four types of debate and twelve individual speaking events. Speakers receive personal guidance and assistance from our teachers and coaches. Our

lead teacher and head coach is Kristen Plant. As a Miramonte student, Mrs. Plant served as team president and was a standout competitor. Today, under her leadership, the program has enjoyed increased participation and competitive success. She is joined by co-teacher Linda Hora and several assistant coaches. Their combined experience means that each member of our team has the opportunity to learn valuable skills from qualified leaders and experts in specialized forms of speech and debate.

For more information about Miramonte Public Speaking, please contact teacher and head coach Kristen Plant at kplant@acalanes.k12.ca.us.