

## Speech team competes at national finals in Dallas

Written by Elizabeth Barrett  
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Local speech team adviser Dan Jensen had hoped the five-student contingent he took to Dallas, TX, last week could have competed in more than six rounds.

But it wasn't in the stars.

Jensen said no one on the team made the first cut at National Forensic League finals which whittled about 240 competitors in each event to 60.

Competing at the national contest, which was June 13-18, were Elisa Meridith in dramatic interpretation, Chris Block and Jeremy VanAcker and Lauren Schmiett and Makayla Franzen in duo interpretation.

"From my perspective, there's a convergence of different coaching and judging paradigms," Jensen said. "You've got to be really good or really lucky."

Jensen said he was proud of the team.

"They received another opportunity to show their craft," he said.

The students qualified for the national contest at NFL regional competition in Laramie, WY, the first of April.

The group was the second largest Jensen has ever taken to the national contest since students began competing in NFL.

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Jensen said the team traveled with competitors from North Platte and Scottsbluff and visited the John F. Kennedy Memorial Plaza and Sixth Floor Museum while they were there.