

## Junior High Speech proposal

In 2017 and 2018, O'Neill Junior High had a speech team for 7-8 graders. Due to lack of coaching staff and overwhelming coaching responsibilities on my plate, we had to cut the JH speech program. During that time, however, it was treated as an official OHS activity. The school provided transportation and funds for entry fees, and if the program had continued, the Junior High coaching position would have been a paid one.

The interest has come up again for a junior high speech team. The high school team members have been passionate about restarting the program to help bolster our numbers and make the high school team stronger. I would like to propose re-adding junior high speech to our activity schedule. I would also like to propose adding the JH speech coach to the extra curricular payment schedule since they will be putting in practice time outside of contract hours and will be responsible for registering and accompanying students to speech meets.

Adding the program back would not be a detriment or short-lived because we have more high school speech coaches now, so the work load is more manageable. Having a separate JH speech coach is also common practice at schools in our conference, so we would be on the same level and have similar conditions to the teams we are competing against. The high school team members are also contributing greatly to the junior high team and have taken on mentor roles to help manage practices. The trial run this year has been successful and has been beneficial to both the junior high members and the high school members.

Junior High speech would start at the beginning of March. I would like them to travel to 2-3 speech meets, most of which are held in the last half of April and at the beginning of May. The practice schedule would be set by the JH coach. As of right now, we have open practices from 7:30-7:55am and from 3:30-5pm every weekday. The track kids just come in after track practice. It has been working well.

Please strongly consider approving this proposal. It would greatly benefit the high school program and would help our students develop lifelong skills at a younger age, making them stronger communicators and more well-rounded individuals. JH speech would function just like any other JH activity we offer, but instead of practicing during 8th period, the coach would put the time in outside of teaching contract hours.