



Dear Fellow Administrators,

I am excited to have this opportunity to write a letter of support for speech and debate, and to encourage you to consider beginning or enhancing your own speech and debate program.

Several years ago, our school decided to make a commitment to speech and debate in order to provide opportunities to a population that we felt had previously been underserved. Over the years, we have focused on committing both human and financial resources in order to raise the level of our program. Five years later, our speech and debate program is such a vital part of our school culture. When we made the decision to commit fully to ensuring that our program would not only exist, but also thrive, we have seen the opportunities for our students increase beyond what we could have ever imagined.

We wanted to create more opportunities for our students. What we ended up doing was impacting our school culture in a variety of positive ways. Making this type of commitment during lean budget times may appear difficult, but we can attest to the benefits of prioritizing activities such as speech and debate. Those benefits include scholarship dollars for your students, opportunities to give students a place to belong and “plug in,” not to mention the possibility of outstanding recognition for your school and community. Also, with increased focus being placed on graduating students who are college and career ready, having a strong speech and debate program will allow your students to build communication and other skills necessary to succeed in most any area they could choose to pursue upon graduation.

I would highly recommend making this commitment to speech and debate. Any time we can create opportunities for students to connect with each other and feel connected to their school, it only enhances the culture. What started here several years ago as a commitment at Madison Central High School has turned into a strong and vital culture, and all at MCHS have benefited greatly from it.



Sincerely,

Austin Brown

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Principal, Madison Central High School, Mississippi

2017 National Speech & Debate Association Principal of the Year

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www.speechanddebate.org/resources