

No Money, No Kids, No Support...No problem!

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Fundraising for Your Program:

- a. Most school fundraisers involve selling something, but when every activity is trying to sell something, it leads to fundraising fatigue. (Personally, I dread seeing a kid walking towards me with an order form!) Here are some ideas to avoid “the sell”.
 - i. I organize the bulk of my fundraising over the summer, when no one else is doing it! We usually do carnival games at our Hometown Celebration and we partner with our local grocery store and do a food stand twice over the summer. (People like to support our food stand because they appreciate seeing the kids EARN their money!) My kids really want to do a car wash next summer, as well.
 - ii. Performances make a great Speech fundraiser! Host a talent or variety show, a night of one-acts or even a Speech Showcase in the run up to contest.
 - iii. Let your community know that your Speech students are available for short performances, for a donation in return. I receive several requests each year for students to perform for local organizations. Improv, poetry readings, monologues and short group acting scenes go over well and don't take a lot of preparation.
 - iv. My big fundraiser in the fall is requesting donations from local businesses. I write up a request letter, explaining our financial needs, list our season's achievements and detail any community service we did. I include a self-addressed, stamped envelope, as well, for easy return. I have students hand deliver the letters to each business and talk with owners/managers. Donors receive recognition on our t-shirts, programs, social media, etc.

Building Your Program:

- a. Promote, promote, promote! Get the word out any way you can.
 - i. Morning announcements, school website, social media, email or posters
 - ii. “Speech” is a very broad term. Try targeting specific categories instead of Speech as a whole: Try promoting just the tech-oriented categories (short film, tv news or radio) or just the musical categories, for example.

- b. Recruiting
 - i. Send students you would like to recruit a personal invitation letter. Tell them why you think they can be successful in Speech. It will only take a few minutes to write and can have a huge impact.
 - ii. Get in touch with fellow staff members to help you recruit, particularly for IE’s. English teachers can help you find students who will excel in After Dinner, Original Oratory, Poetry/Prose, Expository, etc. Ask the Social Studies teacher who has an interest in current events (Spontaneous Speaking, Radio News) and look to the Tech instructor for recommendations on Short Film, TV News and Radio.
 - iii. Scout your feeder schools. If you junior high or middle school has a drama program, that’s a great place to find new talent! Visit their drama class or one of their rehearsals and let them know what Speech is. Don’t have the time? Send some of your current students to spread the word and maybe play some theatre games.
 - iv. Consider starting a Junior Speech program. (High school students could take on directing duties if you don’t have time.) Reader’s Theatre or Choral Reading are great entry points into Speech for younger students.

Building Support

a. Administrators/Staff

- i. Communication is key. Start the conversation by letting your administrators know what you have planned for the season. Tell them early when and where contests will be so they can make plans to attend.
- ii. Personally invite administrators and faculty to contest and have students extend an invitation, as well. If you do some sort of "Speech Showcase" at your school, ask administrators/staff to be judges and offer your groups feedback. My principal had a new appreciation for what our students do when he had to judge it versus just watching.
- iii. Schedule time to present to your school board about Speech leading into your season. Talk about what you have planned, contest dates and so on. (Pro tip: mention that there are 25 categories across LG and IE speech you will potentially be coaching. It really helps emphasize the challenge of being a Speech coach)
- iv. Send out an email to staff Monday morning following contests with your results and be sure to get it on the morning announcements, as well.

b. Parents

- i. Host a parent meeting. It's not only a great time to over expectations for the season, but many parents are new to Speech. You'd be surprised that many don't know they can come to contests!
- ii. Sports do team suppers all the time, so consider recruiting some Speech parents to do the same. Food is always appreciated given the late hours many of us have practice.

Have questions? You can contact me at dfriederich@postville.k12.ia.us