

D211 POST: SPEECH TEAMS COMPLETE SAFE SEASON



From late October to late February, being a part of speech team is an extensive commitment for both students and staff.

“In a typical year, our tournaments are designed to mix the students as much as possible and you can easily be hosting 400 students plus coaches and judges,” said William Fremd High School speech coach Katie Giegler. “Obviously, given the CDC guidelines, we knew very early on that an in-person tournament was not going to be feasible.”

District 211 speech coaches, Naz Ahmed (Hoffman Estates High School), Vera Bass (James B. Conant High School), Brittany Tillander (Palatine High School), and Becky Carnes (Schaumburg High School), along with Giegler, worked together with the Illinois High School Association to create online tournament experiences that would work for students and safety guidelines.

Speech team events range from eight-minute individual events like Informative Speaking to fifteen-minute group events like Performance in the Round. Students work to become skilled public speakers and performers.

Hoffman Estates High School senior Abby Frank stated, “While my speaking skills are definitely far improved from where I started, I think the most important thing I’ve learned from speech is having the ability to overcome my fears and believe in myself, and this year only made that mindset stronger for me.”



Hoffman Estates speech team members Sarah Hazenfield and Abby Frank hold the IHSA Regional Title plaque.

Amidst all the changes, the teams of District 211 found great success. At Regionals, Hoffman Estates High School took first place, narrowly edging out Fremd High School for the top spot. The state series continued at Sectionals where the top three competitors in each event qualified for State.

On Friday, February 19th and Saturday, February 20th, three students represented District 211 at the IHSA Speech State Finals. From Hoffman Estates High School, Sarah

Hazenfield took 8th place in Prose Reading, while Fremd High School's Gabe Classon took 12th place in Original Oratory, and Manu Ravela took 7th place in Special Occasion Speaking.