



North Allegheny Middle School Forensics (NA MSF)
10375 Perry Highway, Wexford, PA 15090

Coach: Sharon Volpe **Contact:** svolpe@northallegheny.org

Dear Parents,

Your child has expressed interest in joining North Allegheny Middle School Forensics (NA MSF). This initiative began as a pilot program at Marshall Middle School during the 2013- 2014 school year. Due to its great success, the school district expanded the activity to all three middle schools. We strongly believe that extending speech and debate to the middle schools continues to *foster critical thinking, self-confidence, and communication skills*, crucial to all aspects of a student's life, whether that be academic or social. Additionally, earlier exposure to speech and debate gives students a solid foundation and a head start for their high school careers.

The real importance of a middle school program is consistency of practice and skill building for the future. We will have practices **twice a week at each middle school**, rotating schools each week, from October to March. Practices will be from 3:00-4:15. The first practice will start in the cafeteria.

There will be a culminating inter-school tournament at the end of the year. We call this "The NA vs. NA vs. NA Tournament."

High school students will immediately go to the appropriate middle school after classes to serve as student teachers for the middle schoolers. A teacher sponsor will be present at all practices as well. During these practices, high schoolers will first teach middle schoolers how to do their events. Once students have a grasp on the basics, practice rounds, individual work sessions, and other drills will be used to improve students' confidence and speaking abilities. **Students will always have the opportunity to change events, and during the first week of practices, we will encourage students to try multiple events.**

Sign up forms for the team can be found on Ms. Volpe's website under "Middle School

Information: <https://www.northallegheny.org/Page/20283> Remember that signing up for the team is *not a long term commitment and completely free*. There is genuinely *no downside* to signing up and trying out a few practices! One of your options with this spreadsheet will allow us to know if we can share your contact information with other parents who may be interested in ride-sharing. Note that we are having this activity at all three middle schools, and students from all middle schools are welcome to attend the practices at the other middle schools but are under no obligation to do so. Students who are attending a practice at a school different than their own should be picked up after school and delivered to that day's host school by 3:30.

Parents are responsible for providing all transportation to and from all practices. Note that students are not excused from school early if they wish to attend a practice at another school.

On Ms. Volpe's website, you will also find a **medical form that you must also fill out** for your child to join MSF. This is just something we need to have on file in case of an emergency after school or at the tournament, and all information is private. MSF will follow rules and event guidelines from our parent organization, the National Speech and Debate Association (NSDA).

Contact Ms. Volpe if you have questions, and she will forward everything to the appropriate student-leader.

All resources from MSF, including this parent letter, can be found on Ms. Volpe's web site.

Note: It is free to join MSF but does cost \$10 to join the National Junior Honor Society. More information will be sent out to all students who fill in the sign-up form at a later date.

Also note: students can "make up" a practice at another middle school. Also, some highly motivated students are able to learn even more forensics by attending these extra practices. Your child will not be at a disadvantage if he/she can't make these; we recognize that transportation between middle schools can be problematic. It is very rare that students attend practices at other another school.