

About the NMA Leadership Speech Contest



NMA... THE Leadership Development Organization proudly presents its Leadership Speech Contest as one of the nation's leading competitions among high school age students. Its primary purpose is to promote better understanding of Leadership and the unique role it plays in today's world. The top prize is \$4,000 cash!

The contest involves young men and women in grades nine through twelve. They research, write, and then deliver a speech based upon

their interpretation of a variety of Leadership topics. Topics such as Leadership in the world, its application to the free enterprise system and what Leadership means to them personally are some examples of speech themes. In short, the students are limited only by their imagination and creativity.

Students report to us that participation in this contest increases their awareness and understanding of Leadership. The contest provides an incentive for the development of communication skills – vital to those preparing to enter the workforce. In communities across the country, the NMA Contest has become recognized as an innovative program supporting our young people.

The financial rewards, at all levels of the competition, contribute to students' furthering their education. NMA members take enormous pride in their program and herald the contest as one of the NMA's greatest contributions to understanding the various aspects of Leadership. We sincerely invite you to look at our program closely and join us in participating in this important program.

Levels of Competition

In high school meeting rooms, community theatres, libraries, and even plant auditoriums, students across the country start giving their speeches in early spring. Their goal remains the same, write a first class speech and then begin to present it to various audiences, eventually working one's way to the top, with a chance at that \$4,000 top prize. Along the way, they receive the advice, counsel, and encouragement from parents, teachers, friends, and business leaders.

The four levels of competition are:

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| 1. Chapter Level | 2. Council Level |
| 3. Leadership Development Conference (LDC) Level | 4. National Level |

At the Chapter Level, students from area high schools in a given community compete against each other for prizes to be determined by chapters, if monetary, not to exceed \$300. These contests are run by local NMA chapters and have been recognized by the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

At the Council Level, students compete against one another from a wider geographical area... wherein several NMA chapters in a large city or even statewide, band together to sponsor the second level of competition. The top monetary prize at this level should not exceed \$500.

At the LDC Level (two regional meetings held in April/May of each year) the competition begins to get stiff. Here, council and chapter winners from several states, meet to compete for two top prizes at the East and West LDC Contest of \$1,000 and \$500 cash.

Finally, at the National Level, the four LDC finalists receive a paid trip to the NMA Annual Conference in September or October. These contestants compete for grand prizes of \$4,000, \$1,000, and two \$500 cash prizes.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

Participants must be enrolled in a school or be home schooled (grades 9 – 12) within the area that the sponsoring Chapter serves. An exception would be a student without a local chapter could still participate. Contact NMA Headquarters for possible sponsoring chapters.

SPEECH PREPARATION RULES

1. The speech is to relate to Leadership. Speeches at all levels shall have Leadership as its **main theme** to be considered eligible for competition.
2. Non-leadership issues such as social, medical, environmental, political etc. should not be primary subjects unless integrated into how leadership plays a role.
3. Each contestant must prepare his/her own speech. Advice and coaching is allowed and changes may be made to the speech at any time prior to the contest.
4. Contestants must submit a draft of their speech to the Contest Director prior to participating in the contest to assure the content meets the criteria.
5. Contestants may not identify themselves, their city, state or school in the context of their speech.
6. Notes are allowed, but the speech may not be read verbatim.
7. No audio/visual aids may be used with the presentation.
8. Contestants' speeches must be limited to no more than six minutes or less than four minutes.
9. Contestants may use quotations and/or copyrighted materials, but must identify the original author. The use of such material is the responsibility of the contestant.
10. Speeches prepared for this contest must not be presented to any other group without acknowledging that the speech was prepared for and was or will be delivered in this contest.
11. The listed Speech Preparation Rules are also part of the Contest Rules.

TOPICS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Leadership in the world today
2. Community Leadership or how I can be a leader in my community
3. What makes a good leader?
4. Leadership and the Free Enterprise System
5. Leadership for the next millennium
6. Attributes of a leader or the importance of inclusiveness in leadership
7. Great Leadership Examples
8. Leadership: Past, Present and for the next millennium
9. What Leadership means to me

CONTEST RULES

1. Contestants shall compete in a Chapter Level Contest in order to be eligible to participate in a Council Level Contest, which is the next level of competition. At the Chapter Level, contestants must compete against students in grades 9-12 within a school, between schools, between home schooled students or between chapters.
2. If a contestant has not competed in a Chapter Level Contest, he/she will not be eligible to compete in any higher level of contest competition. If any doubt exists concerning a contestant's eligibility, contact NMA Headquarters to resolve the issue promptly.
3. Chapters geographically isolated from other chapters may have their contestant compete in an LDC Level Contest, bypassing the Council Level Contest, but must have conducted a Chapter Level Contest. They must obtain a **written waiver** (see Sample Letters Section) in advance that needs to be approved by the NMA Staff Advisor and the current Area Chair.
4. Written copies (may be a draft) of contestant's speeches arriving after the due date established by the appropriate Contest Director, at all levels, may be ruled ineligible for competition.
5. At all contest levels, NMA shall have the right to edit, publish and/or record any speech used.
6. Contestants winning the National Level Contest are ineligible to compete in future NMA Leadership Speech Contests.
7. At the LDC Level Contests, contestants from one area shall not be permitted to attend the other area LDC speech contest.
8. At all contest levels, competing contestants should not be able to hear nor be in attendance of another contestant's speech being delivered.
9. Contestants shall be respectful of other contestants at all times and shall conduct themselves in a professional manner.
10. Individual ballot tabulations by judges are not to be revealed to anyone after completion.
11. At all contest levels, one winner will be designated and the decision of the judges in placing the contestants is final.
12. Each contest shall have a minimum of two judges with an additional tie breaking judge whose ballot will be counted only if a tie occurs.
13. Sponsoring chapters/councils need to remain involved with their contestants at all contest levels. A member of the sponsoring chapter/council shall be designated as the **contact person** and shall attend the LDC and National Level Contests or their contestant shall not be permitted to participate in the contest.
14. Chapter/Council Confirmation, Student Entry Form and Risk Forms need to be on file at NMA Headquarters prior to contest.
15. If any of the Contest Rules are broken, the contestant shall be disqualified from competing by the appropriate Contest Director.
16. A student may only compete at one Chapter Level contest per year.
17. The listed Speech Preparation Rules are also part of these Contest Rules.

CONTEST SCHEDULING

1. Chapter Level Contests should generally be conducted between January and mid-March. It is suggested the Chapter Level Contest be completed at least 14 days prior to the Council Level Contest.
2. Council Level Contests should generally be conducted between February and mid-April. It is suggested the Council Level Contest be completed at least 14 days prior to the LDC Level Contest.
3. LDC Level Contests shall be conducted at the Leadership Development Conferences which are scheduled during April and May.
4. The National Level Contest shall be conducted at the NMA Annual Conference which is held in September or October.