

**2025-2026 THE AMERICAN LEGION**  
**HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM**  
**“A CONSTITUTIONAL SPEECH CONTEST”**

The American Legion and The American Legion Auxiliary are again sponsoring the American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Contest. The contest, in which a student can win over \$25,000 in scholarships, is open to all secondary school students (Grades 9-12). At this time, we invite your cooperation and support for this worthwhile program. We hope you can include this program in the regularly scheduled class exercise.

Our 2025-2026 North Dakota State Contest will be held in Mandan at 1:00 p.m., on January 24, 2026, at the Baymont during The American Legion Winter Conference. The ten District Contests will be scheduled soon but must be held by January 1, 2026. The East and West Division Contests will be held before January 13, 2026.

The American Legion High School Oratorical Scholarship Contest Program National rules are enclosed for your reference. A copy of "The Declaration of Independence and Constitution of the United States of America" is enclosed ONLY in the mailer for the use of the schools. A SUGGESTED STUDENT REFERENCE HANDOUT is also attached.

The American Legion Post and American Legion Auxiliary Unit in your community should have an Oratorical Contest Chairman. The chairman should be contacting you shortly after you receive this information. It is the duty of the Oratorical Contest Chairman to plan for the local contest if the number of contestants warrant one and to provide you with additional information concerning the program. The local chairman has received a complete guide for conducting a contest. If the local Oratorical Contest Chairman does not contact you by October 15, please notify Jason Anderson, Department Oratorical Contest Committee Chairman, at his Scranton, ND, address listed below.

The winner of the local contest will advance to the District Contest (we have ten districts in North Dakota). In the event your high school enrollment area is represented by more than one Legion post, the school may enter one contestant for each post represented. The winner of the District Contest will advance to the Divisional Contest (we have two Divisions of five Districts each in the state). The first and second place winners from each of the two Divisional Contests will advance to the Department Oratorical Contest (State Finals) at the Winter Conference, and that winner will advance to the National Round of Competition in Hillsdale, Michigan, at the Hillsdale College Campus on May 15-17, 2026. District and Divisional boundaries are shown on the attached map. Also attached are names of the District and Divisional Chairmen.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

1. At the local level the prepared oration may be from 8-10 minutes in length. At the District and other higher contests, the prepared oration must be from eight to ten minutes in length.
2. The use of notes will be permitted at the local and District levels. Notes are not permitted at the Divisional and other higher contests.
3. The Assigned Topic Discourse is optional at the local contest; however, it is mandatory at the District and other higher contests.

If you have questions, contact the Oratorical Contest Chairman of the nearest American Legion Post or American Legion Auxiliary Unit. If you are unable to contact the local chairman, please advise the District Chairman, or Jason Anderson, Dept. Chairman, PO Box 494, Scranton ND 58653 – C -701-449-9424.



# **SUGGESTED STUDENT REFERENCE HANDOUT**

## **SPEAK YOUR WAY TO A COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIP**

HOW? Enter The American Legion Annual High School Oratorical Scholarship Program.

WHAT IS IT? An opportunity to speak your thoughts regarding the role, the resultant duties and obligations of United States citizens to our government based on some phase of the Constitution of the United States.

WHAT CAN YOU WIN? Reference our American Legion National High School Oratorical Scholarship Program "A Constitutional Speech Contest" brochure for national awards.

All four State Contest finalists will receive plaques and awards sponsored by interested groups and individuals, including:

- 1st Place - Cash scholarship awards: The state champion Legion orator advances to the National Contest and receives a \$2,000 scholarship award by competing in the First Round of the Contest and an additional \$2,000 who participates in the second round. In addition, the first-place winner will receive a \$250 cash scholarship provided by the North Dakota American Legion and a \$150 cash scholarship from the Sam Tolchinsky Endowment Fund, administered by the N.D. Community Foundation. Tolchinsky was a Past Department Commander. The C. W. Leifur Traveling Trophy will be awarded to the state winner's school, where it will be displayed for one year.
- 2nd Place - Cash scholarship awards: \$200 provided by the North Dakota American Legion and \$100 from Sam Tolchinsky Endowment Fund, administered by the N.D. Community Foundation.
- 3rd Place - Cash scholarship awards: \$150 provided by the North Dakota American Legion and \$50 from the family of the late Past Department Commander and Past National Vice-Commander John K. Kennelly.
- 4th Place - Cash scholarship award of \$100.

To each Division Champion - \$300 cash scholarship award, and the contestant placing second in each Division Contest will receive a runner-up \$200 cash scholarship award...all provided by the North Dakota American Legion.

To each District Champion - \$300 cash scholarship award and the contestant placing second in each District Contest will receive a \$200 cash scholarship award and the contestant placing third in each District Contest will receive a \$100 cash scholarship award from the Chuck Schroeder Memorial Oratorical Fund.

WHO CAN TAKE PART? Reference National Contest Rules attached.

HOW CAN I FIND A TOPIC? Prepared oration...a few suggestions listed below:

- \* AN AMERICAN CITIZEN'S RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE CONSTITUTION
- \* FULFILLING THE AIMS OF THE CONSTITUTION
- \* OUR CONSTITUTION...WORTH HAVING, WORTH DEFENDING

- \* OUR CONSTITUTION ORDAINED BY FREE MEN, SUSTAINED BY FREE MEN
- \* THE PEOPLES CONSTITUTION...OURS TO DEFEND
- \* THE BILL OF RIGHTS...RECIPROCAL RIGHTS AND DUTIES
- \* THE CONSTITUTION, GUARDIAN OF PEOPLES RIGHTS
- \* IN DEFENSE OF OUR CONSTITUTION
- \* THE CONSTITUTION...TEMPLE OF LIBERTY
- \* OUR LIVING CONSTITUTION
- \* THE CONSTITUTION AND THE FEDERAL COURTS
- \* POWERS OF THE STATES UNDER THE CONSTITUTION
- \* OUR CONSTITUTION AND FREE CAPITALISM
- \* THE CONSTITUTION, A BARRIER AGAINST TYRANNY

ASSIGNED TOPIC DISCOURSE: Reference National Contest Rules attached.

Assigned topics this year are listed in the National Contest Rules. The assigned topic will be drawn prior to the final prepared oration and will be given to each contestant five minutes prior to the time of delivery. Each contestant will have five minutes to prepare his or her oration on that subject.

WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

American History texts, U.S. Government texts, American Literature sources, Britannica series of American History, newspaper editorials, news magazines, editorials, vital speeches, Congressional Record, Congressional Digest, and many others. Visit with your school and local librarians, public office holders and teachers. Write your Congressman, state and national, ask questions and for sources available through them.

HOW DO I ORGANIZE A SPEECH? Some suggested methods are:

1. State your premise, defend or build on it; set forth your conclusions.
2. State factual information...apply that information to Americans and society today; state conclusions.
3. State your conclusions related to your selected topic - defend or build upon it and summarize.
4. Using words of a well-known individual build an argument and defend it.
5. Attack the words of a well-known person as you build an opposite case.
6. Cite opposing questions and make a case for one over the other.

**ND AMERICAN LEGION ORATORICAL  
CONTEST COMMITTEE DISTRICT CHAIRS**

**(EAST DIVISION)**

First District Chairman

Dave Rice  
2610 76<sup>th</sup> Ave. N.  
Fargo, ND 58102  
701-866-9085  
[commander@tristateveterans.com](mailto:commander@tristateveterans.com)

Second District Chairman

Quinnlyn Thompson  
7036 141<sup>st</sup> Ave. NE  
Grafton, ND 58237  
701-381-3988  
[quinnlynmichael@gmail.com](mailto:quinnlynmichael@gmail.com)

Third District Chairman

Dan Stave  
5881 61<sup>st</sup> St. NE  
Leeds, ND 58346  
701-466-2488  
[daniel.l.stave@gmail.com](mailto:daniel.l.stave@gmail.com)

Fourth District Chairman

Tenth District Chairman

Gerald Puetz  
408 Iowa Ave.  
Barney, ND 58008  
701-899-1892  
[jerry@rrt.net](mailto:jerry@rrt.net)

**(WEST DIVISION)**

Fifth District Chairman

Karen Meier  
PO Box 21  
Pollock, SD 57648  
701-595-3717  
[bgkmeier@restel.com](mailto:bgkmeier@restel.com)

Sixth District Chairman

Heather Thompson  
1649 103<sup>rd</sup> St. NE  
Bottineau, ND 58318  
701-263-1662  
[hdthom@srt.com](mailto:hdthom@srt.com)

Seventh District Chairman

Valorie Cartwright  
1203 B, 28<sup>th</sup> St.  
Bismarck, ND 58501  
701-426-2338  
[valcart@bis.midco.net](mailto:valcart@bis.midco.net)

Eighth District Chairman

Kris Fehr  
10641 Highway 10  
Dickinson, ND 58601  
Home 701-290-1027  
[krisfehr@hotmail.com](mailto:krisfehr@hotmail.com)

**and**

David Del Padre  
2891 5<sup>TH</sup> Ave. W.  
Dickinson, ND 58601  
949-206-1464  
[mrdp5b@gmail.com](mailto:mrdp5b@gmail.com)

Ninth District Chairman

Mike Weyrauch  
20 Winther St.  
Ray, ND 58849  
701-641-1105  
[AIREPAIR@NCCRAY.COM](mailto:AIREPAIR@NCCRAY.COM)

**EAST DIVISION CHAIR**

Quinnlyn Thompson  
7036 141<sup>st</sup> Ave. NE  
Grafton, ND 58237  
701-381-9388  
[quinnlynmichael@gmail.com](mailto:quinnlynmichael@gmail.com)

**WEST DIVISION CHAIR**

Jason Anderson  
PO Box 494  
Scranton, ND 58653  
701-449-9424  
[1wlb4\\_all@earthlink.net](mailto:1wlb4_all@earthlink.net)

**DEPARTMENT CHAIR**

Jason Anderson  
PO Box 494  
Scranton, ND 58653  
701-449-9424  
[1wlb4\\_all@earthlink.net](mailto:1wlb4_all@earthlink.net)



ORATORICAL CONTEST PARTICIPATION REPORT FORMS

1ST REPORT - Notification of school participation

2ND REPORT - Certification of school representative

**SECOND REPORT**      **CERTIFICATION OF SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE**  
**INTO DISTRICT ORATORICAL CONTEST**

Mail to District Chairman 1 week prior to District Contest Date!

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Sponsored by: \_\_\_\_\_ AMERICAN LEGION POST NO. \_\_ District \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Birth \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_ Sex \_\_\_\_\_  
Parent's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Name and location of High School contestant now attends \_\_\_\_\_  
Grade \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's name \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_  
Submitted by (name & title of school official) \_\_\_\_\_,  
School Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, ND \_\_\_\_\_  
(or) (name & title of post official) \_\_\_\_\_,  
Phone No.: Business \_\_\_\_\_ Residence \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

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**FIRST REPORT**      **NOTIFICATION OF SCHOOL PARTICIPATION**  
**IN AMERICAN LEGION ORATORICAL CONTEST**

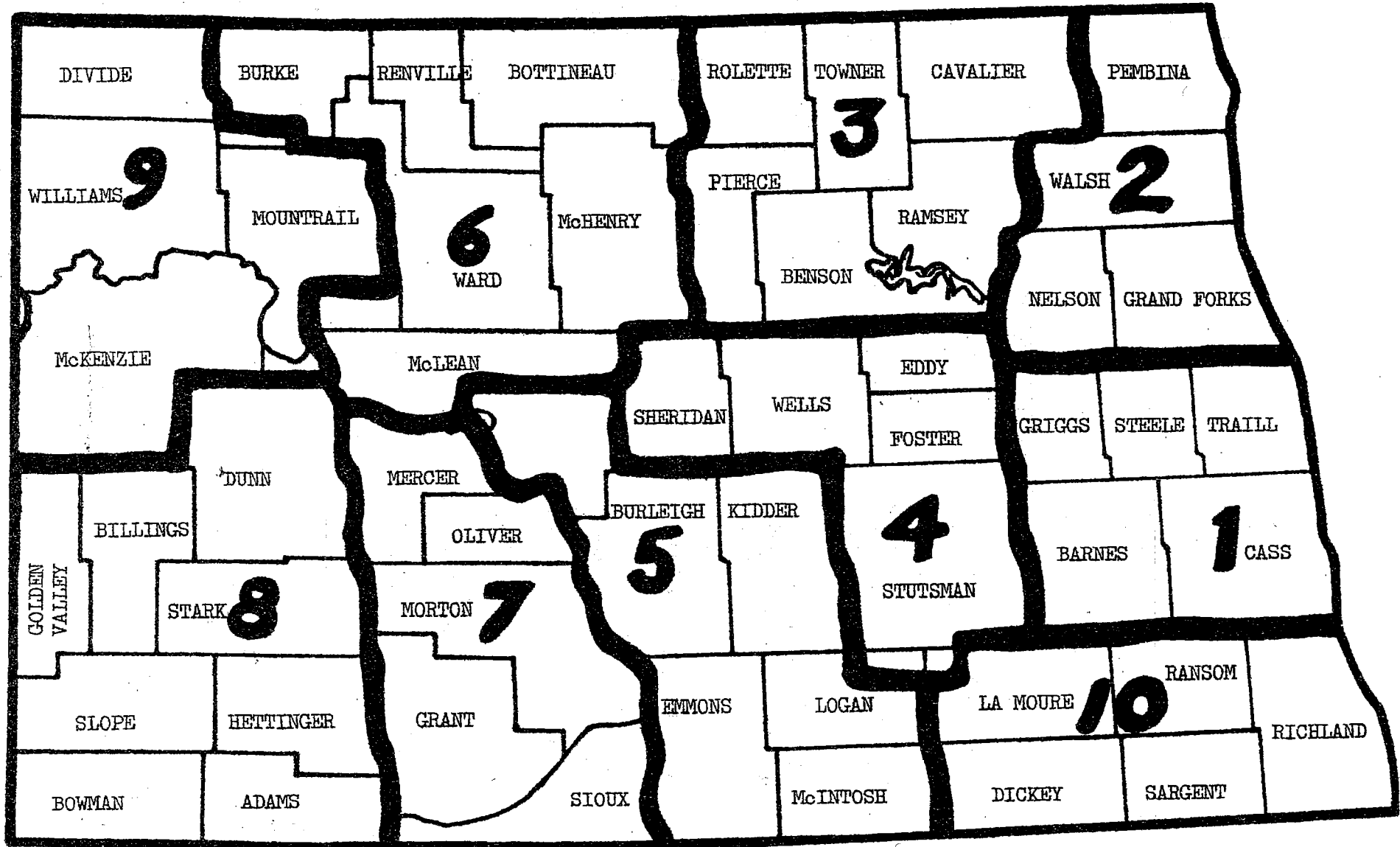
Mail to District Chairman no later than 10 days before the District Contest!

(This report will assist the District Chairman in making plans for the District Oratorical Contest. The District Chairman will subsequently advise you the date, hour, city, and facility of the District Oratorical Contest at least one week before the scheduled District Contest date.)  
The \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_, ND, is participating  
(Name of school) (city)  
in The American Legion's Oratorical Contest. Please give us notification of the date, hour, city, and facility of the District Oratorical Contest so that our contestant can make plans to appear. Following receipt of this information, we will notify you the name of the School Representative who will compete.  
Name and location of school \_\_\_\_\_  
Principal's name \_\_\_\_\_ Faculty Sponsor \_\_\_\_\_  
Submitted by (name & title of school official) \_\_\_\_\_,  
School Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_  
(or) (name of post official) \_\_\_\_\_,  
Phone No.: Business \_\_\_\_\_ Residence \_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_



AMERICAN LEGION DISTRICTS

NORTH DAKOTA



WEST DIVISION  
Districts 5, 6,  
7, 8 and 9

HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL CONTEST

EAST DIVISION  
Districts 1, 2,  
3, 4, and 10