1. Any student entering the competition must be under the age of 20 years on the date of the National Contest.

2. The student must be presently enrolled in a high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, private, or home school), commencing with grade nine and terminating with grade twelve, during the time of participation at any level of the Contest.

3. The student must either live in or attend school in Pennsylvania and can only compete in Pennsylvania.

4. The student must submit an application to any Pennsylvania Post for sponsorship by November 29, 2026. A local Post can be found at https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Find-a-Post.

5. The contest will consist of two parts: an 8-10 minute memorized oration on some phase of the United States Constitution and a 3-5-minute oration on one of four "assigned topics" selected by the National Organization. These four topics can be found at https://www.legion.org/oratorical/topics

6. The contestant may not use any notes, props, amplification, or prompts during the oration.

7. A minimum of five judges will judge all contests at the District level and above. Local and County contests may use a minimum of three judges.

8. All contests at the District level and above shall conform with National Contest procedures, rules, and regulations. The "assigned topics" shall be used at all levels of competition. National Contest rules can be found at https://www.legion.org/oratorical

9. The judges' score sheets, the tabulation forms, and the timekeepers' cards all become the property of the Department of Pennsylvania Oratorical Committee.

10. Barring unforeseen circumstances, any student who enters the Oratorical program **must** be available to compete on the date of the Department Contest and **must** be available to compete at the National Contest from May 14-16, 2027 in Hillsdale, Michigan.

11. The Oratorical Committee has established the following dates **BY WHICH the various contests must be held, if required, and the winner's name and contact information sent to the next level of competition:** (Dates subject to change. Check with the appropriate competition level to confirm.)

Application to any Pennsylvania Post no later than (NLT) November 29, 2026

School or Post Contest NLT December 27, 2026

County Contest NLT January 10, 2027

District Contest NLT January 24, 2027

Inter-District Contest NLT February 7, 2027

Sectional Contest NLT February 21, 2027

Department Contest ON March 13, 2027

National Contest from May 14-16, 2027

12. The Department Contest will be held in Harrisburg at 10:00 AM on Saturday, March 13, 2027. A banquet to honor the Department Contest competitors will be held on Friday evening, March 12, 2027.

13. The Department Contest in March will be under the direct supervision of the Oratorical Committee; final authority on all issues raised will remain with the Oratorical Committee.

14. The Department winner must be certified with National Headquarters. If for any reason the Department winner is unable to compete at the National Contest, the Department First Runner-up will be substituted, following approval by National.

15. Additional contest resources can be found at https://www.legion.org/oratorical

Application Form

2027 High School
Oratorical Program
Deadline: November 29, 2026

Student First Name_____

Student Middle Name_____

Student Last Name_____

Student Date of Birth_____

Parent/Guardian First Name_____

Parent/Guardian Middle Name_____

Parent/Guardian Last Name_____

Address_____

_____

Phone_____

Email_____

High School_____

Grade_____

_____

Contact a Sectional Vice Chair with any questions.

I have read and understand the rules and regulations to participate in the Oratorical Program sponsored by The American Legion, Department of Pennsylvania. I have also read and understand the brochure prepared by The National American Legion and agree to abide by all rules and regulations of both the Department and the National Organization.

Signed_____

Date_____

Oratorical Program Committee

Department Commander: Jon Hosfeld
P O Box 2324, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2324
Department Adjutant: James "Woody" Hogan
P O Box 2324, Harrisburg, PA 17105-2324
Department Oratorical Chair:
Michael Cortes, 2711 Legion Rd Ste 8243
Erie, PA 16506 (814) 954-0067
michael@michaelcortes.com

Sectional Oratorical Vice Chairs
Eastern: John Kubitz, 158 Link Rd,
Fleetwood PA 19522 610-987-9670
jkfuster@comcast.net
Central: Dorene Meaders, 215 Nottingham Ln,
Bloomsburg PA 17815 570-854-6050
punsy307@aol.com
Western: Gary Bojalad, 192 Bailey Ave,
Uniontown, PA 15801 814-590-6438
garybojalad@icloud.com

AWARDS

Department Winner

$7,500.00 scholarship, plaque, and all-expenses-paid trip to the Department of Pennsylvania State Convention to deliver his or her winning prepared oration, plus the opportunity to represent Pennsylvania at the National Contest and receive an additional $2,000.00 scholarship from the National Organization.

Department First Runner-up

$5,000.00 scholarship and plaque.

Second Runner-up

$4,000.00 scholarship and plaque.

2027 HIGH SCHOOL ORATORICAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM



"A Constitutional Speech Contest"

Rules and Regulations

PENNSYLVANIA AMERICAN LEGION
www.pa-legion.com
(717) 730-9100

2027 ESSAY CONTEST RULES & REGULATIONS

"Digital Privacy in the 21st Century: Do Fourth Amendment Protections extend to Modern Technologies?"

Any student enrolled in grades 9 through 12 in a public, private or parochial, cyber school or who is home schooled in Pennsylvania is eligible to participate.

Students **MAY NOT** use any AI for any assistance with the essays.

All essays **MUST** have a **COVER PAGE** containing the following:

- **The Essay Title (As stated above WITH NO CHANGES),**
- **Student's Name, address, telephone, & email address (if applicable),**
- **School Name and Address if applicable,**
- **Teacher's verification of Student's Grade Level,**
- **Sponsoring American Legion Post Number & address,**
- **Parent or guardian's name, address and phone number,**
- **Student's signature.**

ALL essays (typewritten preferred but not required) MUST **be no less than 500** words and **no more than 1,000** words.

The title MUST appear on all pages of the essay as well as the cover page.

Essays shall be judged on the following:

- **Proper English structure.**
- **Accuracy.**
- **Extent of information.**
- **Originality** - *Any material not original must be cited in a bibliography for the information of the judges, stating publication, volume, page, date, publisher and author. Anything cited from the internet must include a verifiable internet address such as: http://pa-legion.com/about/our-history/*

- No reference shall be made, for or against, any political candidate or political party affiliation.

DEADLINE DATES:

1. **BEFORE JANUARY 13, 2027 - STUDENTS** must submit their Essays to a **LOCAL AMERICAN LEGION POST**. To locate a post https://mylegion.org/PersonifyEbusiness/Find-a-Post & and enter your zip code.

2. **BEFORE JANUARY 27, 2027** – The American Legion Posts shall have selected and forwarded their winning essays to their **COUNTY Essay Chairperson.**

3. **BEFORE FEBRUARY 10, 2027- COUNTIES** shall have forwarded their winning essays to their appropriate **DISTRICT Essay Chairperson** (as listed in the current American Legion Directory).

4. **BEFORE MARCH 3, 2027 – DISTRICTS** shall have forwarded their winning essays to their **SECTIONAL Essay Vice Chairperson**.

5. **BEFORE MARCH 17, 2027** – each **SECTION** (East, Central, West) shall have selected and forwarded their winning essay to the Department Essay Chairperson.

6. The Department of Pennsylvania's Essay Program's top three winners will have been judged and selected by **MARCH 31, 2027.**

The Department of Pennsylvania will award the following prizes to those top three (3) winning Essays.

- **First Place Winner will be awarded a $3,500, a plaque and a trip to the PA American Legion Convention in July** to read the winning essay to the assembled delegates.

- **The Second Place Winner will receive $3,000 and a plaque.**

- ***The Third Place Winner will receive $2,500 and a plaque.***

As American Legionnaires, we fully believe that education is the cornerstone upon which the future of America is built. Education becomes the first requisite of good citizenship and the relationship of The American Legion to Pennsylvania citizens is of prime importance as a means of keeping us a free civilization.

Our approach to supporting solid educational principles is direct and positive. We agree with the current PA Department of Education initiative of "writing across the curriculum" and reward the efforts of involved students through our annual essay scholarship program.

Through the annual Department of Pennsylvania American Legion Essay scholarship contest, students are provided an opportunity to show case their talents and abilities in English by using originality, accuracy and research as evidence, while learning that the responsibilities and duties of good citizenship can be both rewarding and fun.

Since the inception of the Department of Pennsylvania state Essay Contest in 1935, The American Legion has awarded well over $500,000 in scholarships, while local American Legion Posts, counties, Districts and Sections have also offered suitable awards and prizes for their respective best essay winners as well.

For more information on participating in the Department of Pennsylvania's American Legion Essay Contest, visit https://pa-legion.com/programs/student-and-youth/essay-program/

The American Legion Essay Committee

Chairman: **James Fulton, Sr.**
68 Boulder Dr
Plum, PA 15239
(412) 216-4063
jfulton65@yahoo.com

Sectional Vice Chairmen:

East: **Aaron Campbell,** 60 Hawthorne Ln,
Willingboro, NJ 08048 (609)-665-3824
aaron292@yahoo.com

West: **Ken Vybiral,** 2439 Arlington St.
Pittsburgh, PA 15209 (8412)-716-5568
majkjv@aol.com

Central: **John Minito,** 705 Quaker Cir, Apt 1
Lewisberry, PA 17339 (717) 576-1726
jminito@ptd.net

POSTS

If HAVE county representation please Call your County Commander for the winner to move to the next level. (As listed in the current American Legion Directory).

If NO county representation please Call your District Essay Chairperson for the winner to move to the next level. (As listed in the current American Legion Directory).

If anyone has any questions or concerns about rules or procedures PLEASE Call the Essay Chairman or another Committee member listed above.

"Digital Privacy in the 21st Century: Do Fourth Amendment Protections extend to Modern Technologies?"

2027

PENNSYLVANIA

AMERICAN LEGION

92th ANNUAL

ESSAY CONTEST

FOR GRADES 9-12

The American Legion
Department of Pennsylvania
PO Box 2324
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2324
(717) 730-9100
www.pa-legion.com