

Answers to Students' Frequently Asked Questions

Before You Decide

Q) Why should I take part in Speaking Proudly 2019?

A) Choose your reason(s):

- I'm really proud to be an American and not afraid to say so.
- I've never competed in this kind of event and would like to give it a try.
- I love oratory competitions and enter every one I can.
- The prize money (\$1,000, \$500 or \$250) is quite tempting.
- I have something to say about my country and want people to hear it.
- It will astound my family and teachers.
- It will look great on my college-entrance application.
- I love a challenge.
- I know the United States of America is a very special nation.
- It gives me a chance to make a speech at the State Capitol – just like a legislator!
- It will require me to think deeply about an important topic.
- Other: (add your own reasons) _____

Q) Will this be a lot of work?

A) It probably will be, if you're serious about giving an excellent speech. It also can be a rewarding experience, academically, emotionally and, perhaps, financially.

Applying

Q) When should I get started?

A) The earlier the better, so you have a chance to think about this year's topic, develop your thoughts and prepare a complete application form and a speech description that will impress the selection committee and earn you an invitation to compete. Remember, application *must* be complete and received or postmarked **on or before September 14, 2019**.

Q) Why shouldn't I identify myself on the speech description?

A) We want Speaking Proudly to be as fair as possible. We're Republicans, so we believe everyone should have an equal opportunity to succeed and everyone should be judged solely on the basis of merit, meaning, in this instance, the quality of your speech.

The selection committee and competition judges will not know competitors' names, schools or other personal information. The Speaking Proudly registrar, to

whom you mail your application, will have this data. She will assign a number to identify each applicant for selection and judging.

Q) May both my sister and I apply?

A) Yes, definitely. There's no restriction on having more than one student from the same family or same school.

Q) I use a wheelchair. Will the State Capitol be too difficult for me to navigate?

A) No. Do not let mobility problems keep you from participating. The Capitol is a handicapped-accessible building, with elevators serving all floors and accessible competition rooms, restrooms and other facilities.

Q) Can I get a little more time to apply?

A) No. The application deadline and all other deadlines are absolute –no extensions allowed.

Q) Why do I have to submit a \$50 deposit?

A) To be frank, we want students to apply who are committed to actually showing up October 26. The \$50 deposit is an incentive to accomplish that. Speaking Proudly is limited to 50 students so any student who receives an invitation but fails to participate deprives another applicant of the opportunity to compete.

Deposits will be refunded promptly to students who are not invited to compete.

Competitors and alternates will receive their deposits back promptly after October 26.

Applicant Selection

Q) Who selects the students chosen to compete?

A) A committee from Metro Republican Women, the competition's sponsor, will review all of the Speech Descriptions submitted and select up to 50 competitors and up to five alternates. The committee will not see the Application Forms submitted.

Q) When will I know if I'm invited to Speaking Proudly?

A) We will send invitations to compete as soon as possible after we receive your application.

Q) If I'm chosen, what will I need to know?

A) The invitation to competitors and alternates will include full details about when you should arrive, which group you'll be in, parking, and where to go to when you arrive at the State Capitol, etc. It also will help you to make arrangements for box lunches and Capitol tours (free) for you and your guests.

Q) What about alternates?

- A)** Alternates will be ranked on the basis of their speech description and will be called to compete in that order, in the event an invited competitor cancels in advance or does not attend and compete October 26.
- Q) What's the difference between the students in Section A and those in Section B?**
- A)** Nothing. There are not enough Capitol rooms for all 50 students to compete at the same time. We will divide the students into two groups randomly and have the groups compete at different times in the preliminary and semi-final rounds.

Pre-Competition Prep

- Q) What tips can you give me about competing?**
- A)** Be sure to read the information on the Student Page. It provides a lot of helpful details about oratory competition. Also, read, and follow closely, the Rules. To know how the judges will evaluate you, check the Judge's Ballot.
- Q) Who will be the judges?**
- A)** They will include speech teachers and Minnesota public officials and public figures. We'll list the judges in the competition's printed program.
- Q) What should I wear to compete?**
- A)** The dress code for Speaking Proudly is basically common sense. Impress the judges by being clean, tidy and well groomed. Dresses, skirts and pants are all acceptable.
- Q) May my family and friends be present when I give my speech?**
- A)** Space in most of the competition rooms at the State Capitol is quite limited. The individual rooms' managers will decide how many persons, if any, can be present with the competitors and judges. All persons admitted to competition rooms must be totally quiet and respectful of every competitor.
- Q) What if I get sick or for some other reason cannot compete?**
- A)** Email us at student@speakingproudly.org as soon as possible! If you cancel before the October 12 deadline, we will refund your \$50 deposit. If you cancel after the deadline, you must forfeit your deposit.

All cancellations are final, because we will notify the highest-ranking alternate to take your place.

Saturday, October 26

- Q) I've never been to the State Capitol. How will I know where to go?**

A) Volunteers will be on hand at the Capitol's entrance to escort you to the registration area. Other volunteers will escort you to and from competition rooms and to the Rathskeller and direct you to other locations in the Capitol.

Q) May we tour the Capitol?

A) Definitely! You won't want to miss seeing Minnesota's recently restored and quite magnificent Capitol. In advance of the competition we will offer reservations for you for a special guided tour, which takes about 45 minutes and is free of charge. Your guests may arrange for a free tour at the Minnesota Historical Society office in the Capitol.

Q) What about lunch?

A) Competitors and their guests will be able to pre-order box lunches. All food and beverages must be consumed in the Rathskeller. If you have special dietary needs, be sure to tell us so we can make arrangements for you.

Q) May we bring our own lunches and snacks?

A) No. Capitol rules require that all food be provided by its approved vendor, unless you have special dietary needs we cannot accommodate through the vendor. The Rathskeller will not sell other food October 26 so you will need to pre-order lunch through Speaking Proudly.

Q) When will we know who wins?

A) Tabulating of scores will be done as quickly as possible, so you know which competitors advance to the semi-final and final rounds. All competitors, guests, judges and volunteers are invited to attend the afternoon awards ceremony.

