**UConn 4-H Public Speaking Contest**

**Guidelines & General Rules**

**Contest Objectives:**

* To acquire skills, confidence and poise in speaking to groups by the use of interesting and familiar topic areas.
* To expand topic-based knowledge.
* To learn skills necessary to properly research and compile information on a specific topic.
* To learn organizational skills and ways to effectively express ideas in a logical and concise manner to a diverse audience whether in person or through electronic means.
* To evaluate skills and recognize accomplishment in a positive competitive atmosphere.
* To encourage the sharing of ideas through the use of assorted presentation tools.

**Contest Age Brackets:**

* **Senior** – any youth 13-18 years of age as of January 1
* **Junior** – any youth 9-12 years of age as of January 1
* **Novice** – any youth 7-8 years of age as of January 1
  + Participation only available at local/county level
  + No Novice bracket at state level contests
* **Explorer** – any youth 5-6 years of age as of January 1
  + Participation only available at local/county level
  + No Explorer bracket at state level contests
  + “Show and Tell” only – not scored or compete against others

**Contest Presentation Categories:**

* **Speech** 
  + **Note Cards Only** – involves educating on a topic of interest without the use of visual aids, props or additional materials
* **Visual Presentation**
  + **Demonstration** – involves doing something *(making, creating, finishing, etc.)* while educating the audience through explanation of the steps being performed
  + **Illustrated Talk** – involves speaking to the audience with the aid of an illustration such as a diagram, chart, model, photo, etc.
  + **Electronic Media** – A demonstration or illustrated talk incorporating the use of electronic content such as PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.
* **Team Presentation**
  + Must compete through use of a **Visual Presentation** *(see above)* and not **Speech**
  + All members of the groups must be meaningfully involved in the presentation
  + If move onto level II *(virtual presentation)* all team members must all be in the same physical location to deliver presentation to virtual audience
  + Consult with county educator for group size limits
  + All group members must be in the same age bracket to qualify beyond local/county level
    - Any mixed aged team at local/county level must compete in bracket of highest aged member of team
    - No novice/junior or junior/senior teams at level II or above

**Contest Time Requirements:**

* **Senior** *(13-18 years)*– presentation should be 5-8 minutes in length
* **Junior** *(9-12 years)* – presentation should be 3-5 minutes in length
* **Novice** *(7-8 years)* – presentation should be 3-5 minutes in length

**Contest Levels**

* **Level I – Local/County Contests**
  + Held through live events at the county level.
  + Coordinated by the county educator(s). Can consist of one county or include a group of counties offering a contest in partnership as a regional event.
    - All materials necessary for completion of contest should be coordinated by the local/county contest facilitator.
  + Should take place from late January to the end of February.
  + Any speaker/presenter/team 9 yrs or older who achieves a blue ribbon at the county level is invited to participate in the level II virtual state qualifier to take place in March.
    - Individuals have the option to move forward or choose not to compete further
  + List of all qualifying county level blue ribbon recipients should be submitted to the state public speaking contest team no later than March 1.
    - Blank spreadsheet will be provided to county contest facilitators.
* **Level II – State Qualifier Contest**
  + To take place in a **Virtual** contest via digital meeting portal *(Zoom, WebEx, etc.)*
  + Level II contests will take place in early March during the week in the evening.
    - Night 1 – Visual Presentation
    - Night 2 – Speech
  + Qualified presenters will be invited to participate by direct email invitation by members of the state public speaking contest team.
  + All virtual contests will be facilitated by members of the state public speaking contest team or their designees.
  + A waiting room will be in effect for all virtual contests
    - Participants will be invited to arrive in the waiting room 5-10 minutes prior to their assigned presentation time.
    - Presenters will be admitted to the room as it is their turn to present.
    - In the room will be the presenter, judges, room host/contest facilitator and one parent/coach who will be allowed to view the presentation
* **Level III – State Finals Contest**
  + Scheduled to take place live on the last Saturday in March in the W.B. Young Building on the UConn Storrs campus.
  + The **top four** scorers from each division of the Level II contest will qualify to compete at the Level III contest.
  + Individual divisions will run simultaneously in assigned rooms throughout the building.
  + Opening and closing ceremonies will consist of all participants and invited guests.
  + State finals winners will be invited to participate in the Northeast Presentation Festival which takes place each fall. This contest incorporates states from Maine to West Virginia.

**Other Information of Importance**

* The same scoring rubric will be utilized at all levels of competition. Scoring rubrics will be provided by the state public speaking contest team to all local/county contest facilitators.
* A Google spreadsheet will be provided to all local/county contest facilitators to accurately record all those moving onto greater levels of competition.
* Judges are normally the only individuals allowed to ask follow up questions during a public speaking contest at any level.
* The judges’ decisions are final for all public speaking contests.
* All contest related questions should be directed to the local/county contest facilitator or state public speaking contest team.
* Awards for local/county contests are the responsibility of the local/county contest facilitator. All awards for state level contests will be coordinated by the state public speaking contest team.
* All revisions will be routed through the state 4-H Team for discussion and alteration/approval.

**Important Dates 2025**

* **January 29** – Public Speaking Virtual Workshop
* **February 2** – Fairfield County Public Speaking Contest, Bridgeport
* **February 2** – New Haven County Public Speaking Contest
* **January 31** – Hartford and Tolland County Public Speaking Contest
* **February 7** – New London County Public Speaking Contest
* **February 8** – Fairfield County Public Speaking Contest, Bethel
* **February 13** – Litchfield County Public Speaking Contest
* **February 17**– Names of county level blue ribbon recipients who will be moving onto Level II state qualifier due to Marc for processing.
* **February 22**– Windham County Public Speaking Contest
* **February 26** – Visual Presentation Level II Contest
* **February 27** – Speech Level II Contest
* **March 8** – Level III State Finals at UConn Storrs campus

**State Public Speaking Contest Team**

* Emily Picard
* Marc Cournoyer
* Emily Alger