

NEMAHA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S ANNUAL SPEECH CONTEST

2026 TOPIC – “Home is Where the Habitat is”

HOW TO ENTER

[Click on this link to register](#) or

Contact the Nemaha County Conservation District at 785-336-5748.
or email dana.schmelzle@usda.gov

SPEECH CONTEST RULES

1. This contest is open to all high school students, grades 9 through 12.
 - A. Entrants must be residents of the State of Kansas and residents of Nemaha County KS. Our contest is held in Seneca in October. If you win, you will participate in the Area Contest in November, and if you win, you will participate in the State contest in Wichita on November 23, 2026.
 - B. All previous first place state winners in this contest are ineligible.
 - C. Entrants may compete in the contest conducted by the conservation district where they attend school. Entrants may participate in only one district contest.
 - D. Contestants who win a district contest during their senior year are eligible to continue competition in the fall.
2. The speeches given by contestants must be at least five (5) minutes long and not longer than eight (8) minutes. Failure to meet the time requirements will result in a penalty of deducting (1) point per second over 8 minutes or under 5 minutes being assessed by the judges scoring the speeches.
3. Contestants will be permitted to use notes if the notes are on 3" X 5" cards. Deductions in scoring may be made for using cards if it detracts from the effectiveness of the presentation. The deduction will be taken from the Power of Expression points (not to exceed 50 points).
4. Speeches will be judged on content, organization of material, voice, stage presence, power of expression, and general effect. The judges may converse with the contestants after the speech, if necessary.
5. In all contests, a supporting document (news release or letter to the editor) of the speech must be presented to the judges. Contestants are required to include a brief bibliography with their supporting document (3 copies). Direct quotes from any source of information must be marked in “quotes” on the supporting document and be identified in the bibliography.

CONTEST AWARDS

Local Award- Each participant receives \$25 when they submit their speech at the local level if it meets the requirements of the rules on the previous page.

Area Awards- \$150 for 1st place, \$100 for 2nd place, and \$50for 3rd place.

State Awards-Scholarships of \$1000 for the first place, \$500 for second place, and \$250 for all honorable mention will be awarded to the winners at the state level. Payment will be made to the winner upon proof of enrollment at an accredited school or training institution of the winner's choice. Scholarships must be used within four years of graduating from high school.

To Participate:

[Click here to register](#)

**Questions: Call 785.336.5748 or Email Dana Schmelzle
dana.schmelzle@usda.gov**

2026 Nemaha County Conservation District Speech Contest Entry Form

