JUNIOR HIGH PUBLIC SPEAKING

Leadership Development Event

MICHIGAN FFA

Contest Details

Individual Event
7-8th Grade
Official Dress Required: Yes
National Qualifying Event: No

OBJECTIVES

To develop agricultural leadership by allowing seventh or eighth grade students an opportunity to participate in an official contest designed to increase their interest in career education in agriculture and the FFA organization.

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS

Education standards are the same as those for the Prepared Public Speaking Contest. To view standards, please refer to the Prepared Public Speaking Handbook located at https://www.ffa.org/participate/prepared-public-speaking/

TEAM MAKE-UP/ELIGIBILITY

Number of students

Members must either be in 7th or 8th grade.

All participants must be members in good standing with the Michigan FFA Association and on the official roster.

Official Dress

Official dress is required for this contest.

Official Dress for an FFA member includes:

1. An official FFA jacket zipped to the top
2. Black slacks and black socks/nylons or black skirt and black nylons
    a. *Skirt should be a minimum of knee length*
    b. *Slacks should be full length*
3. White collared blouse or white collared shirt
4. Official FFA tie or official FFA scarf
5. Black dress shoes with closed heel and toe

Note: Medical or cultural adjustments to required official dress may be made with prior approval of the contest/event chair. Also, appropriate personal protective equipment may be used with Official Dress. ***Junior high FFA members are allowed to wear FFA jackets, but it is optional. Participants in junior high contests should not be judged differently for wearing or not wearing a jacket.***

If warranted, deductions for non-compliance with official dress guidelines will be determined by the contest chair and enforced equally by all judges. The chair may make a deduction of 0, 2, 5, 7, or 10 points.

CONTEST PERSONNEL

Judges

Three competent and impartial persons will be selected to judge the event. At least one judge should have an agricultural/FFA background.

During the contest, the judges will seat themselves apart from one another in different sections of the room.

Contest Chair

The contest chair will monitor the contest room and assist the judges as they compile their final placing.

The contest chair will adequately prepare the judges before the event competition.

Timekeeper

The timekeeper should use a stopwatch and the guidelines provided on the Michigan FFA website. The timekeeper should also use the 8 ½" x 11" cards available at https://www.michiganffa.org/sites/default/files/2026-09/Junior%20High%20Public%20Speaking%20Timekeeper%20Signs.pdf

Holding Room Monitor

The holding room should be monitored at all times.

MANUSCRIPT REQUIREMENTS

Topic

Contestants may choose any current agriculture, food, or natural resources subject which is of general interest to the public.

Manuscripts

Written manuscripts will not be required at the district contest. If contestants bring manuscripts to the District contests, they are not allowed to be distributed to the judges.

In the regional contest, four copies of the manuscript must be submitted to the regional contest chair prior to the contest. An electronic copy of the winning speech and second place speech must be submitted to the state FFA office by the student or their advisor by the deadline published on the association calendar. https://www.michiganffa.org/2026-2027-michigan-ffa-calendar

The speech may not be changed between the regional and state contest.

Manuscripts shall be used by the judges as a source of developing appropriate questions related to the topic. Manuscripts are not to be scored as a part of the speech.

References

Manuscripts must include a complete reference list of all sources. The reference list must conform to the most current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual.

References are not required for the district contest.

If deductions for non-compliance with the reference requirements are warranted, the contest chair will have the judges confer when all presentations have finished. During this time, judges may only discuss the quality of the references provided and must come to an agreement on the completeness and quality of the provided references. The following guidance should be followed for reference point deductions. For formatting examples, judges should refer to Reference List Formatting & Examples resource.

REFERENCES	POINT DEDUCTION
Reference list is present and includes a complete list of sources and is formatted following the most current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual.	No deduction
Reference list is present and complete but formatting is somewhat inconsistent with the most current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual.	-1 point
Reference list is present but the list is incomplete and/or formatting is inconsistent with the most current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual.	-3 points
Reference list is not present.	-5 points

Statement of Authenticity

All manuscript submissions must include a signed copy of the Michigan FFA Statement of Authenticity Form verifying that the manuscript results from the student's original work. The Statement of Authenticity Form can be found on the Michigan FFA website at: https://www.michiganffa.org/sites/default/files/2026-09/Statement%20of%20Authenticity%20Form_Fillable%20%20Update%2091826_0.pdf

Statement of Authenticity is not required for the district contest.

For regional contest, the signed Statement of Authenticity Form should be attached as the first page of the printed manuscript.

For state level contest, the signed Statement of Authenticity Form should be included in the PDF as the first page or can be uploaded as a separate document.

If the signed Statement of Authenticity Form is not included, a deduction of 5 points will be determined by the contest chair and enforced equally by all judges.

Overview of Manuscript Requirements

	DISTRICT	REGIONAL	STATE
Statement of Authenticity	N/A	Required	Required
Manuscript	N/A	Required	Required
References	N/A	Required	Required
Online Submission	N/A	N/A	Submit all files electronically by deadline on association calendar
Printed Copies	N/A	Submit four printed copies of all files at contest site	Printed copies made by State FFA Office
Note: See detailed requirements in above sections.			

PROCEDURE

Contest Procedures

Contestants will draw for order of speaking. The contest chair will introduce each contestant in order of drawing and announce the subject of their speech.

A contestant may be disqualified if anyone other than the contest chair, holding room, or prep room monitor enters the holding room or the prep room at any time during the competition.

Participants may use notes in delivery. Visual aids, such as charts or other

materials, may not be used and participants may not read from a prepared manuscript.

Prior to the speech the participant should introduce themself, speech topic, and the name of their FFA chapter, and then immediately proceed with, "Timekeeper, I am ready to begin my presentation," or "Honorable Timekeeper, I am ready to begin my presentation."

The participant must conclude their presentation with, "Timekeeper, this concludes my presentation," or "Honorable Timekeeper, this concludes my presentation."

At the conclusion of the presentation, the judges may ask questions for a maximum of four minutes.

TIME

The timekeeper will record the length of the speech. These times will be reported to the judges. The exact total minutes and seconds must be recorded showing undertime or overtime for which deductions will be made.

Official time does not include the time required for the member's introduction.

The presentations will be a maximum of 6 minutes in length and a minimum of 4 minutes.

The presenters will receive a signal at 4 minutes and at 5:30 minutes.

A maximum of 4 minutes for questions and answers will be allotted. Questions and answers will terminate at the end of 4 minutes.

For deductions, see time deductions chart on the next page.

PRESENTATION LENGTH	POINT DEDUCTION
1:31 - 2:30	-8 points
2:31 - 3:30	-4 points
3:31 - 6:30	No deduction
6:31 - 7:30	-2 points
7:31 - 8:30	-4 points

SCORES

The presentation will be scored on the following criteria.

ORAL COMMUNICATION AND NON-VERBAL COMMUNICATION	
Command of Audience	15 points
Poise	15 points
Supporting Evidence	10 points
Persuasive Use of Evidence	10 points
Pace	10 points
Eye Contact	10 points
Mannerisms and Gestures	10 points
QUESTIONS	
Response to Questions	10 points
Knowledge of Topic	10 points

Determining Awards

After scoring presentations, each judge will use their total score to rank the individuals numerically without consultation among judges. All judges' rankings for each individual will then be totaled together. The winner will be the individual whose total of rankings is the lowest (low point score method of selection).

District and regional individuals will be rated **gold** or **silver.** State semi-finals individuals will be rated **silver** or **bronze.** State finals individuals will be rated **gold** or **silver.** Determinations should be based on the score break of the performance. The top individual and an alternate will be selected to move on to another contest level.

Placing and awards shall be determined utilizing the Guide to Ranking Teams and General Rules Governing Michigan FFA Leadership Contests.

ADDITIONAL MATERIALS

In addition to these rules, please review the following documents:

- General Rules Governing Michigan FFA Leadership Contests
- Junior High Public Speaking Score Card
- Guide to Ranking Teams
- Junior High Public Speaking Timekeeper Instructions
- Contest Chair Instructions
- Reference List Formatting & Examples
- American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual