

# PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

The Public Speaking Contest is sponsored by the N.C. Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

## Eligible Titles:

A set of titles has been selected by the Association's Education Committee and adopted by the Association. The approved titles and rotation schedule is as follows:

2023-2024	The Living Soil
2024-2025	Wetlands are Wonderful
2025-2026	We all live in a Watershed

## Participant Eligibility:

Sixth grade competition is open to 6<sup>th</sup> grade students. Seventh grade competition is open to 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. The eighth grade competition is open to 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. Ninth-Twelfth grade competition is open to 9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> grade students (9-12 compete together in single competition)

## Contest Cycle:

Runs concurrently with the school year and takes place in participating Districts.

## Contest Procedure:

Contest will be conducted on the District, Area and State levels. District First Place winners will be eligible to enter Area Contests, and Area First Place winners will be eligible to enter the State contest. Each contest coordinator shall see that contestants and judges have a copy of the rules and shall urge them to study these rules, especially the sections on contest and judging criteria.

The contents and videotapes made of all speeches entered into District sponsored competition become the property of the respective District, Area or the Association. These entities are entitled to use the contents and video of these speeches for promotion of the Conservation District program.

## Time Limit:

The speech is limited from 4 to 6 minutes. If any speech is under 4 minutes or over 6 minutes, then 5 points will be subtracted from the final score by the judges. An official timekeeper will be appointed for all contests.

## Judging Criteria:

There is a standard score card to be used for all contest levels. Students will be judged on content and speaking skills as described on the score sheet. Visual aids may not be used. Contestants shall identify themselves by their assigned number only or not at all. Personal information such as name, school and hometown cannot be given.

## Infractions:

Points will be deducted for the following infractions:

- Use of visual aids 5 points
- Over or under the time limit 5 points
- Giving personal information 5 points

**District Contest:**

- Teachers should ask students to prepare a speech and then select several speeches for presentation at school.
- According to the local District's guidelines, each school may select one or more contestants from each grade level for grades 7 and 8 to represent the school at the District's Annual Speech Contest.
- At the District's Annual Speech Contest, contestants will draw numbers to determine their order of speaking.
- The Districts' three or five member judging team will rate the contestants and privately confer to select one winner from each grade level to compete in the Area contest.
- District contests may be conducted at any time during the school year provided that District winners are determined by the Area deadline. Names of District winners must be sent to the Area Chairmen.
- District may present awards they deem appropriate.

**Area Contest:**

- Each Area Chairperson will select a date and place for the Area Speech Contest and should notify all Districts in that Area at least 30 days before the date of the contest. Contestants should be notified immediately so they can arrange their schedules.
- The names of each Area winner must be sent to the Division of Soil & Water Conservation on or before **April 20**.
- Areas may present awards they deem appropriate.

**State Contest:**

- The Association with assistance from the Division of Soil and Water Conservation will select a date and place for the State Contest and notify Area Chairmen at least 30 days before the contest.
- The State contest will be held no later than May 15.
- State awards, as determined by the Association, will be presented at the State Contest when feasible:
- First Prize: \$200 cash or check
- Second Prize: \$100 cash or check
- Certificates will be given to all state –level participants via the District.
- Within 20 days after state judging, state winners for each grade level will be announced to all Districts.



# NCASWCD Public Speaking Contest

**OUR GOAL:** North Carolina Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts sponsors a public speaking contest at District, Area and State levels in order to give sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth through twelfth grade students an opportunity to gain knowledge and understanding of soil and water conservation while developing leadership and speaking skills which in turn foster self-confidence and personal growth.

## DO:

- ☺ Become familiar with the judging criteria on the 'Public Speaking Contest' score sheet
- ☺ Memorize your speech. Use of note cards is acceptable for back up.
- ☺ Dress appropriately (no costumes, logos or anything that would identify your school, hometown or county).
- ☺ Arrive early so you can relax and become comfortable with the microphone and podium.
- ☺ Make eye contact with the audience during your speech.
- ☺ Speeches may be videotaped at the state contest; and area and district contests may also be recorded for use in Soil and Water Conservation District educational programs. Your parent will be asked to sign a form giving permission for videotaping and/or photographing during the event.
- ☺ Be sure to stay in range of the podium microphone while making your speech.
- ☺ Contact your local SWCD office if you have any questions about participating in the speech contest.

## DON'T:

- ☹ Don't go under or exceed the time limit of 4-6 minutes. If any speech is under 4 minutes or over 6 minutes, 5 points will be subtracted from the final score by the judges.
- ☹ Don't use visual aids. 5 points will be subtracted from the final score by the judges if visual aids are used. If you have questions about what constitutes a visual aid, please ask.
- ☹ Don't give personal information: 5 points will be subtracted from final score by the judges if personal information is given.

# PUBLIC SPEAKING CONTEST

North Carolina Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts



JUDGE: \_\_\_\_\_ TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: 6, 7, 8, 9-12

\*A timekeeper will inform the judges of the contestants' official time.

\*Perfect Score = 100 points (Total of CONTENT + SPEAKING SKILLS)

\*Infractions: Outside the 4-6 minute time limit: minus 5 points

Use of visual aids: minus 5 points

Gives personal identification: minus 5 points

CONTENT CRITERIA	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>A. CONSERVATION MESSAGE: 20 Points</b> <i>Message shows clear understanding of why this natural resource is important &amp; explains how people can &amp; should conserve this natural resource.</i>								
<b>B. ORGANIZATION 15 Points</b> <i>Presented in meaningful order, shows continuity of ideas, uses orderly flow of thoughts, uses good transitions between thoughts</i>								
<b>C. ORIGINALITY 5 Points</b> <i>Entry expresses the contest theme in a fresh, inventive, or novel way of using independent thought and creative imagination, and using the unexpected to full advantage.</i>								
<b>D. SKILLFUL USE OF FACTS, EXAMPLES, DESCRIPTIONS AND ANALOGIES 10 Points</b> <i>Good choice of material, makes sense, factual, accurate, quotes are correct and appropriate. Elements of the speech flow together well and contribute to the quality of the presentation. Facts, examples, descriptions and analogies add to the quality of the presented message</i>								
<b>CONTENT SUB-TOTAL</b>								

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North Carolina Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts

**JUDGE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **TITLE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **GRADE: 6, 7, 8, 9-12**

- \*Students and judges should be informed of the judging criteria before the contest begins
- \*Perfect Score = 100 points (Total of CONTENT + SPEAKING SKILLS)
- \*Infractions: Outside the 4-6 minute time limit: minus 5 points  
 Use of visual aids: minus 5 points  
 Gives personal identification: minus 5 points

\*A timekeeper will inform the judges of the contestants' official time.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>SPEAKING SKILLS CRITERIA</b>								
<b>A. VOICE AND DICTION</b> <i>Quality and variety (not monotone), inflection, enunciation, pronunciation, proper emphasis, projection and control, appropriate volume</i>								
<b>B. STYLE</b> <i>Rapport with the audience, word selection, no distracting mannerisms, appealing presentation</i>								
<b>C. BODY LANGUAGE</b> <i>Eye contact, posture and poise, hand gestures used with restraint and good taste</i>								
<b>SPEAKING SKILLS SUB-TOTAL</b>								
<b>STUDENT'S OFFICIAL TIME (must be within 4-6 minutes)</b>								
<b>FINAL SCORING SECTION</b>								
<b>CONTENT SUB-TOTAL</b>								
<b>+ SPEAKING SKILLS SUB-TOTAL</b>								
<b>= TOTAL</b>								
<b>- INFRACTIONS (if any, subtract points)</b>								
<b>= FINAL TOTAL</b>								

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