2021 RULES AND REGULATIONS
FOR THE
84RD ANNUAL HIGH SCHOOL
ORATORICAL CONTEST
SPONSORED BY

THE AMERICAN LEGION
DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS

Jodie Pajak
Department Commander

Milton K. Lashus
Department Adjutant

Lisa A. McPhee, Chairman
Department Oratorical Committee

This competition is approved by the
National Association of Secondary School Principals
and the Department of Education Commonwealth of
Massachusetts

Inquiries may be directed to:
Lisa A. McPhee
157 Water Street
Clinton, MA 01510

cell 978-230-6208 – please leave a message if no answer

The rules governing the Department Contest are the same as those that regulate the National Contest.

THE DEPARTMENT PRIZES ARE AS follows:
First Prize $1,000*
Second Prize $ 800
Third Prize $ 700
Fourth Prize $ 600
* The first place winner receives the state prize of $1,000 and then receives a $2,000 scholarship upon participation in
the first round of the National Contest. The state oratorical champion will automatically advance into the National
American Legion Oratorical Competition. See the National Contest brochure for further details.
The National Finals Contest will be held April 9 – 11, in Indianapolis, Indiana.

ORGANIZATION
The contest will be under the direct supervision of the American Legion Oratorical Committee, appointed by the
Department Commander. Final authority on all issues raised shall remain with the Committee.
The State has been divided into four Zones as follows:
Zone 1 – Districts 1, 2, 3
Zone 2 – Districts 4, 5
Zone 3 – Districts 6, 7, 8
Zone 4 -- Districts 9, 10

Elimination contests will be held in the schools, Districts, and Zones in the order named. The Zone winners will
compete in the State Finals to be held on Sunday, March 6, 2021, at the Marlborough High School in Marlborough.
Each Department (state) of the American Legion is responsible for all arrangements for Department Contests.
Each Department can enter only one contestant into the National First Round Contest.

12 September 2019 version
SCHEDULE OF 2021 CONTESTS

CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS
DECEMBER 31, 2020

Contestants are to be selected by the school principals in any manner they deem suitable to represent the school. The name(s) shall be certified by the principal to the Oratorical Committee, postmarked no later than December 31, 2018, on a form that will be supplied to the school. Any American Legion Post may sponsor as many contestants from a school as they wish.

DISTRICT CONTESTS
2 JANUARY 2021 TO 31 JANUARY 2021

The first contest that a contestant enters, sponsored by the American Legion, is the District Contest. School authorities and contestants will be notified through the mail as well as the Department web site as to where these contests will be held. All contestants should be prepared to enter this contest by January 2, 2021.

ZONE CONTESTS
1 FEBRUARY 2021 TO 28 FEBRUARY 2021

The top two contestants in the District Contests next enter the Zone contest, of which there are four. Zone winners must be certified to the Oratorical Committee no later than February 28, 2021.

DEPARTMENT CONTEST
6 MARCH 2021

The four winners from the Zone Contests will compete for the Department Oratorical Championship.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligible participants in the contest shall be citizens of or lawful permanent residents of the United States.

All contestants must be bona fide students herein described as any student under the age of 20 years on the date of the national contest who is presently enrolled in a high school or junior high school (public, parochial, military, private or home school), commencing with grade nine and terminating with grade 12. Students must be enrolled in high school or junior high school during the time of participation at any level of the contest. High school students that graduate early during the school year are eligible to compete if they are not enrolled in a college, university, trade school or other institution of higher learning at the time of the department finals contest.

Contestants must either be legally domiciled within or attend an educational institution within the department (state) where they enter competition. Contestants can enter competition in only one department.

PREPARED ORATION

All contestants shall be required to deliver a prepared oration, which must be the original effort of each contestant, and must require not less than eight (8) nor more than ten (10) minutes for delivery.

The prepared oration must be based on some phase or phases of the Constitution of the United States which will give emphasis to the attendant duties and obligations of a citizen to our government. Failure to do this may result in disqualification. The same subject is to be used for the prepared oration throughout all contests.

The contestant may choose their own subject or they may select a title similar to topics which follow:

An American Citizen’s Rights and Responsibilities Under the Constitution
Our Constitution – Worth Having, Worth Defending
The Constitution In A Changing World
The Constitution In Our Everyday Life
The Bill of Rights – Reciprocal Rights and Duties
The Constitution – Guardian of People’s Rights

Contestants may have in their possession a copy of their prepared oration in the first holding room. The copy may be in electronic or paper form. They may consult the copy of their prepared oration, until they exit the holding room in order to begin the contest, at which time the copy of the prepared oration will be surrendered to the contest official who is monitoring the first holding room.

THE ASSIGNED TOPIC DISCOURSE FEATURE

The assigned topic discourse must not consume less than three (3) minutes or more than five (5) minutes for delivery. The purpose of the assigned topic discourse is to test the speaker’s knowledge of the subject, the extent of his or her research, and the ability to discuss the topic as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution.

Each contestant speaks on the same assigned topic which shall be drawn by the contest official in full view of the audience immediately before the last speaker begins delivery of his/her prepared oration, and will be made known to the audience and each contestant approximately five minutes prior to the time of delivery.

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Article I, Section 7

All Bills for raising Revenue shall originate in the House of Representatives; but the Senate may propose or concur with Amendments as on other Bills.

Every Bill which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become a Law, be presented to the President of the United States.[2] If he approve he shall sign it, but if not he shall return it, with his Objections to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the Objections at large on their Journal, and proceed to reconsider it. If after such Reconsideration two thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent, together with the Objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be reconsidered, and if approved by two thirds of that House, it shall become a Law. But in all such Cases the Votes of both Houses shall be determined by yeas and Nays, and the Names of the Persons voting for and against the Bill shall be entered on the Journal of each House respectively. If any Bill shall not be returned by the President within ten Days (Sundays excepted) after it shall have been presented to him, the Same shall be a Law, in like Manner as if he had signed it, unless the Congress by their Adjournment prevent its Return, in which Case it shall not be a Law.

Every Order, Resolution, or Vote to which the Concurrence of the Senate and House of Representatives may be necessary (except on a question of Adjournment) shall be presented to the President of the United States; and before the Same shall take Effect, shall be approved by him, or being disapproved by him, shall be repassed by two thirds of the Senate and House of Representatives, according to the Rules and Limitations prescribed in the Case of a Bill.

Article II, Section 3

He shall from time to time give to the Congress Information of the State of the Union, and recommend to their Consideration such Measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient; he may, on extraordinary Occasions, convene both Houses, or either of them, and in Case of Disagreement between them, with Respect to the Time of Adjournment, he may adjourn them to such Time as he shall think proper; he shall receive Ambassadors and other public Ministers; he shall take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed, and shall Commission all the Officers of the United States.

Article III, Section 1

The judicial Power of the United States shall be vested in one supreme Court, and in such inferior Courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish. The Judges, both of the supreme and inferior Courts, shall hold their Offices during good Behaviour, and shall, at stated Times, receive for their Services a Compensation, which shall not be diminished during their Continuance in Office.

Amendment XXII, Section 1

No person shall be elected to the office of the President more than twice, and no person who has held the office of President, or acted as President, for more than two years of a term to which some other person was elected President shall be elected to the office of the President more than once. But this Article shall not apply to any person holding the office of President when this Article was proposed by the Congress, and shall not prevent any person who may be holding the office of President, or acting as President, during the term within which this Article becomes operative from holding the office of President or acting as President during the remainder of such term.
JUDGING

The State Contest shall be judged by five judges. The District and Zone Contests shall be judged by three or five judges. Under no condition shall a judge be used for more than one contest in the same year. The decision of the judges shall be final.

CONTEST REGULATIONS

Dress – Uniforms are not permitted. Appropriate business attire is required for all contestants. Contestants may not wear awards and medals from previous competitions.

Copies of the Prepared Oration – Contestants participating in the State Finals shall submit to the State Chairman a neatly printed copy of their prepared oration. Titles of orations must be shown.

Order of Appearance – Contestants shall draw for the order in which they appear, the drawing to be conducted by the Chairman, who will introduce the speakers as Number 1, Number 2, etc.

Notes and Lecterns – The use of notes, amplification, lectern, or speaker's stand by contestants, or prompting in any manner, is not permitted.

Language – All contestants at each contest level are required to speak in the English language. It is acceptable to utilize or incorporate short phrases of a foreign language into the prepared oration and/or assigned topic in order to develop the argument, establish a point, etc. The vast majority of the prepared oration and/or assigned topic must be delivered in the English language.

Songs – The singing of a song in any language is not permitted and will result in the immediate disqualification of the contestant. The contestant may, however, quote a verse(s) of a song provided proper attribution is made.

Quotations – In both the prepared oration and the assigned topic discourse, quotations must be indicated as such. Where quotations are more than 10 words in length, the author's name must be given in the manuscript and cited orally.

HINTS, TIPS, AND UPDATES

Contestants are encouraged to visit the American Legion Department of Massachusetts web site at http://www.masslegion.org/ for hints, tips, and the latest updates, especially to the contest schedules. When you reach the Department web site, click on Programs Americanism Oratorical to reach the Oratorical page. The Chairman will post all updates on the Oratorical page as soon as they are available. Contestants are also encouraged to visit the American Legion National web site at http://www.legion.org/oratorical for further information including videos of the top three finalists in previous years' National contests delivering their orations [URL for videos is https://www.legion.org/oratorical/videos ]
THE ORATORICAL COMMITTEE

Chairman – Lisa A. McPhee, 157 Water St, Clinton, MA 01510
Cell 617-513-4484  chairman@maoratorical.org

Vice Chairman – Isaac Mass, 248 Green River Rd., Greenfield, MA 01301
Home 413-774-0123  isaacmass@gmail.com

Vice Chairman – Scott Connor, 7 Meadowbrook Rd, Spencer, MA 01562
Phone 508-885-5618  smconner@charter.net

ZONE CHAIRMAN

Zone 1 – Delfo Barabani Jr, 155 Langevin St., Chicopee, MA 01020
Home 413-530-2849  353vet111@gmail.com

Zone 2 – TBA

Zone 3 – Theodore Butler, 48 School St., Middleton, MA 01949
Home 978-774-7874  cvbsbutler@comcast.net

Zone 4 – TBA

DISTRIBUTION CHAIRMAN

District 1 (Berkshire County)
Kevin Hamel
Home 413-281-8397  hamelsnick@yahoo.com

District 2 (Franklin & Hampshire Counties)
Refer to Zone Chairman

District 3 (Hampden County)
Delfo Barabani Jr, P.O. Box 81, Chicopee, MA 01020
Home 413-530-2849  353vet111@gmail.com

District 4 (Worcester County)
Scott Connor, 7 Meadowbrook Rd., Spencer 01582
508-885-5618  smconner@charter.net

District 5 (Middlesex County)
TBA

District 6 (Norfolk County)
Wendy Eng, 49 Payne St., Quincy, MA
Home 617-584-0079

District 7 (Suffolk County)
William Chisholm, 115 Eutaw St., E. Boston, MA 02128
Home 339-226-1029  bigbillwjc@yahoo.com

District 8 (Essex County)
Theodore Butler, 48 School St., Middleton, MA 01949
Home 978-774-7874  cvbsbutler@comcast.net

District 9 (Bristol County)
Priscilla Fonseca
Home 508-994-4751

District 10 (Plymouth, Barnstable, Dukes & Nantucket Counties)
David Boucher
508-264-3545

12 September 2019 version
2021 AMERICAN LEGION, DEPARTMENT OF MASSACHUSETTS, ORATORICAL CONTEST
CERTIFICATION OF HIGH SCHOOL REPRESENTATIVE

Student's Name: ___________________________________________________________

Sponsored by American Legion Post No.: ___________ District: ________________

Street Address: _________________________________________________________

City: _________________________________________________________________

County: __________________________ State: _______ Zip Code: ________________

Date of Birth: _________________________ Age: ___________ Sex: ___________

E-mail Address: _________________________________________________________

Telephone Number: _____________________________________________________

Parent's Name: _________________________________________________________

Name and Location of High School Contestant Now Attends:

_____________________________________________________________________

Grade: __________________________

The principal of the high school must certify the contestant's age and the fact that they attend the particular school by signing this form:

Principal: ______________________________________________________________

The high school principal is authorized to select one or more school representative(s) in any manner deemed satisfactory. This application must be filled out completely and mailed, not later than 31 December 2020, to Lisa A. McPhee 157 Water St, Clinton, MA 01510. Applicants are also encouraged to send a copy of the completed and signed application as a readable PDF file to Lredsox1964@aol.com as a backup, particularly if applying close to the deadline date.