



# Rotary Club of Yonkers-East Yonkers

**"Service Above Self"**

**Chartered 1920**

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## **Rules for the Second Annual Youth Speech Contest**

- Youth who live or attend school in Yonkers and are enrolled in grades K through 12 are eligible to participate in the contest. Immediate family members of Rotary Club members are not eligible to participate in the contest.
- Students wishing to participate in the contest must, no later than **11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2023**, register and submit a video of their speech, as described below. Students may register by completing online registration form, available at <https://bit.ly/YonkersRotaryYSCRegister>
- Contestants are to prepare and deliver an original, English-language speech on the topic designated for their age group.
  - High school students (grades 9 through 12) should answer **either** "What should the role of the courts be to protect your rights in school?" **or** "What should the role of the courts be to protect the safety of everyone in the community?"
  - Middle school students (grades 6 through 8) and elementary school students (grades K through 5) should answer the question, "If you were the Mayor of Yonkers, what would be your top priority in office, and why?"
- For middle school students (grades 6 through 8) and high school students (grades 9 through 12), the allotted time for each speech is between five and seven minutes. Contestants will be penalized if their speech is less than 4 minutes and 30 seconds or exceeds 7 minutes and 30 seconds.
- For elementary school students (grades K through 5), the allotted time for each speech is between three and five minutes. Contestants will be penalized if their speech is less than 2 minutes and 30 seconds or exceeds 5 minutes and 30 seconds.
- Speeches are meant to be delivered, not read. While notes are permitted, contestants should not read their speeches from a script.
- **During their speeches, contestants may not identify the school that they attend, either by words, symbols, clothing, or otherwise.**
- All contestants must submit video recordings of their speeches, made in accordance with the video recording requirements set forth below, at or before **11:59 p.m. on March 31, 2023**. Contestants who are not able, or do not wish, to make their own video recording may schedule a time with the Yonkers Rotary Club to have their speech video recorded for them. Contestants are not scored differently whether they submit their own recording or schedule a time with the Yonkers Rotary Club to have their speech video recorded for them.
  - To the extent possible, contestants in any age group who wish to upload their own video recordings should submit their videos in one of the following formats (listed in no particular order): MP4; MPG; MPEG; MOV; WMV; AVI; FLV; or, MKV.
  - To the extent possible, contestants who wish to have their speech video recorded for them by the Yonkers Rotary Club should be accompanied to the video recording session by a parent or legal guardian, but in any event may be accompanied to the video recording session by up to two guests.
  - Contestants in any age group who wish to have their speech video recorded for them by the Yonkers Rotary Club will be offered time signals during their speech. If the contestant accepts, a contest coordinator present

in the contest room will display a green card when five minutes of speaking time have elapsed (three minutes for elementary school contestants), a yellow card when six minutes of speaking time have elapsed (four minutes for elementary school contestants), and a red card when seven minutes of speaking time have elapsed (five minutes for elementary school contestants).

- After the close of registration, contestants will be scored by at least three judges on demeanor, introduction, content, conclusion, and delivery. A sample scoresheet is available online. Once the results of the preliminary round have been announced, contestants may request copies of their scoresheets by emailing [speechcontest@yonkersrotary.org](mailto:speechcontest@yonkersrotary.org).
- The three contestants with the highest combined scores from the preliminary round judges (“finalists”) in each age group will be invited to deliver their speeches at the final round at **Yonkers City Hall on Wednesday, April 26, 2023, at 6:30 p.m.**
- All contestants will receive a certificate of achievement recognizing their participation in the contest.
- Finalists must appear and speak at the final round. If a contestant is unable or unavailable to appear and speak at the final round, the contestant(s) with the next highest combined scores from the preliminary round judges will be contacted and invited to appear and speak.
- Finalists will be scored in the final round by a panel of at least five judges on the same criteria as the preliminary round.
- Based on the scores of the final round judges, the finalists will receive plaques recognizing their participation in the final round, and cash prizes corresponding to their age groups:
  - For high school students (grades 9 through 12), the prize for first place is \$500; second place is \$400; and, third place is \$300.
  - For middle school students (grades 6 through 8), the prize for first place is \$400; second place is \$300; and, third place is \$200.
  - For elementary school students (grades K through 5), the prize for first place is \$300; second place is \$200; and, third place is \$100.
- In the event of a tie, in any age group, either among contestants in the preliminary round that would determine the finalists for that age group or among finalists in the final round, ties will be broken, first, by that round’s judges’ preference (i.e., which tied contestant/finalist was scored higher than the other tied contestant/finalist by more judges). If the tie remains, then ties will next be broken by determining which contestant or finalist has the highest combined score after subtracting that contestant or finalist’s lowest score in the round. If the tie remains, then ties will next be broken by determining which contestant or finalist was awarded more 5s on that contestant or finalist’s scoresheets among all of the round’s judges, then, if the tie remains, determining which contest or finalist was awarded more 4s, then 3s, and then 2s.
- The Rotary Club of Yonkers-East Yonkers and the Historical Society of the New York State Courts reserve the right to amend or change these rules at any time as they deem necessary. **Contestants are responsible for checking whether these rules have been updated prior to submitting their videos, and are responsible for complying with these rules as they may be updated.**

## Video Recording Requirements

Videos submitted as part of the Second Annual Youth Speech Contest must conform with the following requirements:

- The audio must be clear and without echo, static, ambient, background, or other excessive noise.
- Only single-camera setup is permitted; use of multiple camera angles is not allowed.
- The camera must have an unobstructed, in-focus view of the contestant.
- The camera must be mounted or secured to avoid unwanted movement.
- Zooming is not permitted.
- The speaking area must be fully lit.
- The speaker's facial expressions must be visible throughout the speech; the image should not be too bright or too dark; the speaker should remain in frame through the entire speech. Contestants should be visible at least from the torso up, although contestants may determine how close or distant the camera is set up in order to maximize both verbal and nonverbal communication.
- No lighting, artificial or natural, should point directly at the camera. Professional lighting equipment is NOT allowed. The use of lighting tricks (e.g., shadow puppets) is NOT permitted.
- To the extent possible, contestants should position themselves in front of a neutral background, such as a blank wall or a backdrop of a solid color with no special markings. Green screens, virtual backdrops, and professional equipment are NOT allowed.
- The recording must only contain the contestant's speech, and must contain the contestant's entire speech.
- The recording may not be edited in any way, such as by adding text, graphics, images, effects, or anything that does not meet these requirements.
- Contestants may NOT trim a recording, even to remove the seconds that they walk to and from the recording device to push start/stop. Contestants who submit their own video recording will not be penalized for being seen walking to and from the recording device to push start/stop, although they may, if they so choose, have someone off-camera assist with starting and stopping the recording.
- Other individuals may be present while filming, but audience interaction (e.g., laughing, applause) may NOT be included in the speech.
- The camera must remain on throughout the duration of the speech. Contestants may NOT turn off their video at any point during their recording.
- Professional business attire is encouraged, but not required.
- Contestants may use a lectern while speaking. The use of any other audio/visual aids or props is NOT permitted.
- **Contestants who submit their own video recordings are accountable for the video recordings that they submit. Accordingly, contestants are strongly encouraged to review their video recordings prior to submission in order to ensure compliance with these requirements.**