

Kentucky High School

SPEECH  
LEAGUE



# Kentucky Keynote

## Invitation 2026

### WHY

You know that first week back in January after the Holiday break? That's a hard week for everyone – getting sleep habits back into semester norms, getting lines back in your heads from speeches not performed in a fortnight or more, getting everything organized to travel when you really didn't want to do work over the break or fully give up that first Saturday back in the classroom . . .

That's where this new meet comes in. **Our fully online asynchronous Senior (grades 9-12) Speech contest, the Kentucky Keynote, will have its inaugural contest the first full school week/weekend of January.** We'll take video uploads of performances until 7 PM Eastern time on Thursday, January 8. Judging will be Friday/Saturday/Sunday. Awards will be posted Monday afternoon in a video ceremony your team can watch together in a team meeting. And you'll have feedback on your kids' performances for the upcoming big meets (three rounds' worth plus three more finals judges for the top six in each event)

without having to leave the house or deal with travel the first week back to school. Win. Win.

## WHO

You are cordially invited to the **Kentucky Keynote Speech Invitational** (grades 9-12) async online January 8 (registration deadline) to January 12 (awards), 2026.

This tournament is managed by the Kentucky High School Speech League (Steve Meadows, Executive Director) and **open to students worldwide**.

You may enter as many entries as you like in each event. We will honor six students in each event as Finalists; we will also honor our top six teams with sweepstakes awards. Rules for all events including tournament management / tiebreaking / sweepstakes are in the KHSSL Handbook – [www.khssl.org/handbook-and-constitution](http://www.khssl.org/handbook-and-constitution) Our awards are horse-themed and adorable. You'll want to win them.

## JUDGES

Judge quota is one per six entries or fraction thereof; hires are \$40. Judges must judge three rounds and a final. Judges must have a Tabroom account with a valid email address and phone #.

[KHSSL Video for Judging Virtual Tournaments](#) -- Judges, be sure to watch this if you are unfamiliar with judging online contests!

## WHEN

Rounds for the Kentucky Keynote will be held **asynchronously** online January 9-11. Coaches may upload videos through Thursday, January 8, at 7 PM Eastern. Judging will take place Friday and Saturday morning/afternoon January 9-10. Finals will be judged January 10-11; awards will be announced Monday (January 12) at 4 PM Eastern, on YouTube.

# MIND OVER CHATTER

**WHERE:** [www.kykeynote.tabroom.com](http://www.kykeynote.tabroom.com)

## Schedule

|   |                       |  |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| F   | <b>October 10</b>     | Tabroom site opens for registration  |
| T   | <b>January 6</b>      | 3 PM Eastern: Extemp, Impromptu, and Improv Duo topics posted plus Broadcasting scripts. |
| Th  | <b>January 8</b>      | 7 PM Eastern; deadline for video uploads and registration closes.                        |
| 7 AM <b>January 9</b> (Fr) to 2 PM <b>January 10</b> (Sat) Judging prelims (three rounds) |                       |  |
| 5 PM <b>January 10</b> (Sa) to 8 PM <b>January 11</b> (Sun) Judging finals (one round)    |                       |  |
| M   | <b>January 12</b> (M) | 4 PM Eastern Awards video goes live on YouTube   |

## WHAT

### EVENTS OFFERED

#### Senior Speech Division

Grades 9-12

Broadcasting

Declamation

Dramatic Interpretation

Duo Interpretation

Extemporaneous Speaking

Humorous Interpretation

Impromptu Speaking

Improvisational Duo

Informative Speaking

Oratory

Poetry

Program Oral Interpretation

Prose

Storytelling

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All events will use Kentucky rules and time limits, which are what most folks expect around the world (NSDA and CFL compatible for most events, though we offer longer time for Storytelling).

For the Kentucky High School Speech League Handbook, [browse here](#).

For the Kentucky High School Speech League ballots for each of the events, [browse here](#).

## MONEY

Fees: \$8 per competitor per event. A \$10 fee will added to each team's invoice to cover awards postage, and each team will pay this fee whether or not they win any awards. Community contribution.

Make checks payable and mail to: KHSSL, Inc. P. O. Box 23451 Lexington, KY 40523. W-9 form available on our Tabroom site if needed. You may also pay electronically at <https://www.khssl.org/payment>.

All entries that are not KHSSL member schools must pay all fees in full before the beginning of first round at 7 AM Eastern on January 9. All entries from unpaid non-Kentucky schools will be deleted at that time; Kentucky schools must be paid in full by February 1 to compete at Regionals (no awards will be mailed until fees are fully paid).

## HOW

Each entry will be judged three times over the four days of judging.

Kentucky tiebreaker rules will break all ties.

- RANKS TOTAL (LOWEST)
- (FINALS ONLY) JUDGES' PREFERENCE
- RECIPROCAL OF RANKS TOTAL (HIGHEST)
- RATINGS TOTAL (HIGHEST)

Sweepstakes will count the best three entries per event per team and use Kentucky sweeps rules for three-round + Finals tournaments.

Here are the **steps for video submission**:

- Record a performance. Kids can do this on their own or with you.
- Note these camera rules we require (violators will be disqualified):
  - The camera should stay STILL – kids can move, but not the camera.
  - No editing the videos – one continuous take, please.
- Note: for limited prep events, it's perfectly fine for kids to time themselves or for coaches or someone else to give them time signals.
- Upload the video to an online service. By far the easiest to do is YouTube, which is owned by Google, so most folks already have a Google ID they can use to create a YouTube account. Set the video to **Unlisted (NOT Private)** on YouTube, and then copy the link.
- Coaches upload this link in the Entry Details section on Tabroom (click the Edit button next to each entry from the Entry tab and paste the link in the "Link to performance video" box).

If you do something else besides use YouTube and Unlisted status, you risk getting your entry dropped as kids often leave Google Drive videos locked. I am a one-man band for this tournament and don't have the hours to check for locked videos. YouTube is really easy to use. Just use YouTube. We'll all be happier. 😊

For limited prep events (BROADCASTING, IMPROV DUO, IMPROMPTU, EXTEMP), the topics will be posted on the Tabroom site on Tuesday (1/6) at 3 PM Eastern time. The coaches will be on the honor system with their students to film with the time limits in place; they should record the prep time of the impromptu and improv kids but not the extempers and include that footage as part of the one continual take that is submitted as a video. **Remember** – no editing of videos, and keep the camera still (see rules above).

**Broadcasting will use a Round 3 script (extra practice on the new format!)** and should tape both the 3 minutes of prep time and the performance.

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## TABROOM.COM

Coaches and judges need Tabroom.com accounts for registration, online ballots, and video links for asynchronous events. See making a Tabroom.com account <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DyTqMwhRJpo>

Judges will use Tabroom.com to access their ballots. And, after the tournament is over, students can see their ballots on Tabroom.com and use those comments from their judges to help them improve their performances. Competitors must have Tabroom accounts to see their ballots.

## TECH TIPS

#1

For judging, you can use 2 devices: 1 for the video & 1 for your ballots. You can log into Tabroom on each device. Or you can use a desktop computer, open 2 tabs and position them so you can see the video (one tab) & type on the other one (the ballot) at the same time (that's what Mr. Meadows does when he judges at a desk, and it works swell).

#2

When judging, try to use a fairly large screen to watch the videos. If you're trying to watch videos on a phone, you may be losing facial expressions, etc. because the screen is so small.

#3

KHSSL rules require that cameras stay still when filming; competitors may move around as they wish in the camera frame including leaving/re-entering the frame. Videos must not be edited but should be one continuous take.

#4

**KHSSL Best Practices for Virtual Tournaments**; you can probably guess what this is about.

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We look forward to hosting you here in Kentucky – sort of!

May the words be with you!!

STEVE 😊

Steve Meadows

Executive Director, the Kentucky High School Speech League, Inc.

[www.khssl.org](http://www.khssl.org)



**2026**

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