

POETRY
OUT
LOUD ™
NEW JERSEY

PARTNER GUIDE 2020-2021

www.njpol.org
www.poetryoutloud.org



Presented by



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PROGRAM DEADLINES

September 1, 2020 POL online anthology live for 2020-21 school year

November 20, 2020 Deadline for schools and organizations to register for NJPOL

December 4, 2020 State finals date due

January 15, 2021 Deadline to receive champion submissions from schools and organizations

January 22, 2021 Deadline for all regional partners to have contest materials ready for judges

January 25th – January 29th Regional competition judging will take place. Regional videos released to public

January 29, 2021 Participating schools/organizations list due

January 29, 2021 Judges scores submitted to Program Coordinator

February 2, 2021 Regional winners are announced!

February 12, 2021 Deadline for all regional winners to submit poems and videos for state finals

March 9, 2021 NEW JERSEY POL STATE FINALS

March 15, 2021 Deadline to hold a state final competition

March 2021 TBD Deadline for state champs to register for National Finals*

Spring 2021 TBD Virtual Poetry Out Loud National Finals**

*Date(s) are still being determined for registration deadline(s) for the 2021 Poetry Out Loud National Finals. We will share with state coordinators as soon as possible.

**The 2021 Poetry Out Loud National Finals will take place virtually in Spring 2021. It will be a video submission-based competition, which will be streamed for free online at to be determined date(s). More information regarding the national finals will be shared to the state coordinators and POL community as soon as possible.

**indicates deadline for NJPOL Program Coordinator. For informational purposes only*

Thank you for being a valued partner to the New Jersey Poetry Out Loud program!

This guidebook breaks out the goals, information, and tasks for every Regional Partner of the New Jersey Poetry Out Loud program.

ABOUT POETRY OUT LOUD

Poetry Out Loud (POL) is a national arts education program that encourages the study of great poetry by offering free educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition for high school students across the country. This program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life. POL is a partnership of the National Endowment for the Arts, Poetry Foundation, and the state and jurisdictional arts agencies.

Since 2005, Poetry Out Loud has grown to reach more than 4 million students and 65,000 teachers from 16,000 schools in every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, and American Samoa.

ABOUT NEW JERSEY POETRY OUT LOUD

In New Jersey, POL is a project of the [New Jersey State Council on the Arts](#), in collaboration with [Mayo Performing Arts Center](#), [ArtPride New Jersey Foundation](#), [CavanKerry Press](#).

The program structure is further supported by a network of five regional partners, organizing NJ's 21 counties by geographic region, each established in response to a growing participation base.

- **Region 1:** (South/Central) Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Mercer counties
Partner: Rutgers-Camden Center for the Arts (RCCA), Camden
- **Region 2:** (South) Atlantic, Cape May, Cumberland and Salem counties
Partner: Appel Farm Arts & Music Center, Elmer
- **Region 3:** (Central) Middlesex, Monmouth and Ocean counties
Partner: Count Basie Center for the Arts, Red Bank
- **Region 4:** (Northwest) Bergen, Hunterdon, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex and Warren counties
Partner: Mayo Performing Arts Center, Morristown
- **Region 5:** (Northeast) Essex, Hudson, and Union counties
Partner: South Orange Performing Arts Center (SOPAC), South Orange

Our partner, CavanKerry Press, the only not-for-profit literary press serving art and community in New Jersey donates GiftBooks to participating students and supports recruitment strategies for judges and unique professional development initiatives.

2020-2021 POL NATIONAL FINALS + PROGRAM YEAR

In order to ensure the safety and health of participating students and staff, the 2021 POL National Finals will be held virtually in lieu of holding them on-site in Washington D.C. as previously planned. This decision is based on guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the World Health Organization, and General Counsel for the National Endowment for the Arts. At this time, the dates for the virtual 2021 National Finals are still to be determined, but will take place in the Spring as a video submission-based competition. When more details are available, they will be shared with the POL community-at-large.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND AWARDS

Poetry Out Loud can be conducted virtually or in-person. The program starts at the classroom/school or at the local level with an area organization. Winners then may advance to a regional and/or state competition, and ultimately to the national finals. Awards and placements are determined solely by the judges' scores based on the Poetry Out Loud evaluation criteria (see the 2020-2021 teacher's guide for more information).

New this year: Non-school organizations, such as after school clubs, libraries, or non-profit organizations, may also choose to run Poetry Out Loud. Students may only compete in one stream—either with their school or an organization. For individual students whose school is not participating in POL, and they are not participating with an organization or homeschool group, you may choose to involve them in the following ways:

- Hold a preliminary contest amongst the non-affiliated students and the winner/top contestant(s) advance to the next stage of competition.
- Have the individual students advance to the regional or semifinal level.

The rules still stand that students must compete in a competition prior to advancing to the state final, and competitors must be enrolled students in grade 9-12, with an exception made for 8th- grade students participating in a 9th- through 12th-grade class.

Each winner at the state level receives \$200 and competes in the national finals. The state winner's school receives \$500 for the purchase of poetry materials. The first runner-up in each state receives \$100, with \$200 for their school. At the national finals, a total of \$50,000 in awards and school stipends is awarded annually, including a \$20,000 award for the National Champion, \$10,000 for 2nd place, \$5,000 for 3rd place, and \$1,000 for 4th-9th places. The schools of the top 9 finalists receive \$500 for the purchase of poetry materials. There will be one honorable mention recipient in each of the three national semifinals competitions. Those students will not advance to the finals, but will receive a \$1,000 cash award and a \$500 school stipend. **The Poetry Foundation provides and administers all aspects of the monetary prizes awarded for Poetry Out Loud.**

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY

- **Grade Level:** Only currently enrolled students in grades 9-12 are eligible, with an exception made for 8th-grade students participating in a 9th- through 12th-grade class.
- **State Finals:** A student may not advance to the state finals without competing in a lower-level competition.
- **Legal Participation Requirements:** No student may be excluded from participating in Poetry Out Loud on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin. Schools may determine eligibility for classroom and school level Poetry Out Loud programming pursuant to local and state law.
- **Prize Requirements:** The Poetry Foundation provides and administers all aspects of the monetary prizes awarded in Poetry Out Loud. State champions and runners up will need a valid tax identification number or social security number at the time that monetary prizes are issued by the Poetry Foundation. Prizes are not transferable.
- **Homeschooled Students:** Homeschooled students may participate by competing in a contest at a local school (at the school's discretion) or with other local homeschooled students. Contact your state coordinator for specific guidelines.
- **Repeat Champions:** Only National Champions are not eligible to compete in subsequent years.
- **Relatives:** Avoiding any potential conflicts of interest (or the appearance of conflicts of interest) helps to preserve the integrity of the contest and make it fair for all students. Relatives* of national organizers (NEA and the Poetry Foundation) may compete in school, local, regional, and state competitions, but would not be able to advance to National Finals. Relatives* of State Art Agency Coordinators or affiliated contractors and sponsors may not compete past the school level in that particular state.

**Relatives for this age group are defined as child, sibling, or any member of the employee's household.*

POEM SELECTION/ELIGIBILITY

Students must have three poems prepared for state and national finals, selected from the official Poetry Out Loud [print](#) or [online anthology](#). Students will decide the poem order they will use in competition, but they may not change the order after the contest organizer's deadline.

Students competing in the **state and national finals** must meet specific criteria with their poem selections: one of the three poems selected must be pre-20th century and one of the three poems selected must be 25 lines or shorter in length. One poem may satisfy both criteria, and may be the student's third poem.

**Reminder: Students must choose poems from the print or current online version of the anthology. Every year, poems are retired and add new ones to keep the repertoire fresh. All ineligible poems for the 2020- 2021 competitions were removed from the website before September 1, 2020.*

COMPETITION

- **Contest Participants:** Poetry Out Loud competitions must have at least two students to select a winner. If the winner is unable to attend the next level of competition, the runner- up should be sent.
- **Evaluation:** Students must be judged according to the Poetry Out Loud evaluation criteria from the 2020-2021 Teacher's Guide.
- **Rounds:** State and national finals consist of three rounds of competition. Competitions at lower levels may have fewer rounds, but students must recite only one poem in each round.
- **Poem Order:** The order in which the poems are recited is up to the student, but poem order may not be switched once given to the competition organizer. Competition organizers may not dictate poem order.
- **Judging:** Rankings are based solely on evaluation sheets submitted by judges. Judges should not convene to discuss performances during the competition. Judges may not reconsider their scores after they are submitted. Judges' decisions are final.
- **Scoring:** Scoring is cumulative. The scores from all rounds should be added together to determine the winner.
- **Ties:** In the event of a tie, the tied student with the highest overall performance score should win; if that also results in a tie, look to the highest accuracy score. If scores remain tied, consider having students pick one poem to recite again as a separate score to break the tie.
- **Memorization:** Students must recite their poem from memory.
- **Props:** Students may not use props or wear costumes during their recitations.

Poetry Out Loud Resources

TEACHER TOOLKIT

The Poetry Out Loud teacher toolkit is updated every summer for the upcoming school year. Send a copy (whether digital or physical) to each teacher or organizer who participates in Poetry Out Loud and keep some on hand for the upcoming year.

The teacher toolkit contains:

- **Poetry Out Loud Teacher's Guide 2020-21***
- Student testimonials, guidance on contests, evaluation criteria
- **Poetry Out Loud Event Poster**
- **An insert** stating the 2021 national finals will be virtual and directing them to the POL website for guidance for virtual contests

*Please note that the teacher's guide was finalized earlier in the year and does not reflect information regarding virtual contests nor that the 2021 national finals will be held virtually.

ONLINE RESOURCES

There are many resources for students, teachers, judges, and state arts agencies on our website, www.poetryoutloud.org. Highlights include:

- **Poems & Performance:** online anthology of more than 1,100 eligible poems and poet biographies, poetry collections, learning recitation videos, and tips on reciting
- **Teaching Resources:** digital Teacher's Guide, lesson plans, guides on how to make your Poetry Out Loud program accessible, NCTE and Common Core Standards
- **The Competition:** Judge's Guide, Webinar for Judges, Digital Contest Evaluation Sheet and Accuracy Score Sheets, Sample Tally Sheet, Scoring Rubric, Poetry Out Loud logos
- **Poetry Out Loud Virtual Contests and Filming Requirements:** guidance on how to hold a virtual contest and tips for students on how to record their recitations

NEW JERSEY POETRY OUT LOUD COMPETITION PLAN 2021

SEPTEMBER 2020

- Prepare registration information and send communication to potential participants
- Contact registered schools and organizations with best practices for school competitions, professional development opportunities, and key program dates
- Contact any schools from prior years that are currently NOT-registered with registration information
- Invite schools and community organizations in your Region to participate

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2020

- Contact any schools from prior years that are currently NOT-registered with registration information
 - Registration closes THIRD WEEK of NOVEMBER (see calendar for each program year for specific date)
- Contact any schools who have registered for NJPOL, but have yet to register their Champion for a Regional Contest, giving them Champion registration information.
- Judge Recruitment begins. In partnership with NJPOL Program Coordinator, recruit Judges for Regional Competitions
- NJPOL Virtual classroom with Mayo Performing Arts Center begins.

DECEMBER 2021

STAFFING

- Confirm all staffing placements: judges, prompter & MC (if applicable), all event & tech staff
- Conduct Judges training in partnership with NJPOL Program Coordinator

MEDIA/VIP

- Send out all press releases and invitations to VIP attendees.
- Post event information via applicable web media.
 - Use current appropriate hashtags for online media

JANUARY 2021

- Gather Playbill information – bios for judges, student school information, etc.
- Confirm program order with NJPOL State Coordinator (January, end of month)
 - **Even year:** A-Z
 - **Odd year:** Z-A
- Begin gift bag gathering for all participants, if applicable
- Order any needed supplies for certificates/recognition items, if applicable
- Contact organizers with reminders of approaching School Champion deadline **January 15th**
All school champion submissions received. This includes champion information, poem and poet information on each submission. **At this time, all school finalists will need to submit 3 separate recordings for each round following the criteria set forth for poem selection.**

January 22nd

- Deadline for all regional partners to have all elements ready for judges:
 - Videos put together and shared with judges in competition order (3 regional judges and accuracy judge)
 - Copies of poems, scoring sheets should be sent 3-4 days prior so judges can familiarize themselves

January 25th – January 29th

- Regional competition judging will take place. Each Region will set a specific day and time for their judging to take place. (even though each Judge will be at their own location)

Example – Tuesday, January 26th – 10:00 – 1:00 – MPAC judging will take place. All judges will watch their competition compilation video at that time and submit scores as they go along.

WATCH WEEK!

During this week of judging the compilation videos will be released to the public to watch! Schools, families and the communities can enjoy and appreciate the students work before there is any announcement about winners, etc.

January 29th

All judging must be complete and all scores submitted and tallied by the regional partners.

FEBRUARY 2021

February 2nd

- Regional winners are announced *via email, social media and a short video announcement!*
 - On February 2nd all Regional Finalists will be sent information about competing in state finals. They will have the option to use the same videos that were submitted for their regional contest or they can choose new poems and record new videos (or a combination).
- Assist your Regional Winner with submitting required materials for the State Final competition

February 12th

- Deadline for all regional winners to submit poems and videos for state finals

MARCH 2021

March 16 – NEW JERSEY POL STATE FINALS

The State finals will be a live streamed event. The student videos will all be recorded ahead of time along with any other speeches and performances. This will all be led by an emcee who will be live and announcing the winners in real time. State Finals are produced by NJPOL staff. (specific plan tba)

NEW JERSEY POETRY OUT LOUD FILMING REQUIREMENTS 2021

All competitions will follow the guidelines set forth by the NEA. We have decided after careful consideration that we are going to follow their guidelines for the **Video Submission Contest**.

Video submission contest: *Each student records and saves each recitation as a separate video file. Students send video(s) via email **We Transfer** to the POL organizer. The organizer reviews submissions to ensure the videos meet film requirements and then forwards to the judges for their review. Contest judges and the accuracy judge must provide scores for each criterion and review independently—the same as live competitions. Organizers set a deadline for judges to submit scores and then tally the scores. For video submission contests, videos must not be edited, but students may record their recitations more than once and send their best recording for each recitation.*

How to film a POL recitation (NEA guidelines)

Filming requirements:

- Film with a horizontal orientation.
- Face the camera so it captures your head to mid-torso (medium shot).
- Each recitation should be filmed in one single shot from one static angle.
- The sound and picture must be clear.
- Videos cannot be edited. Do not add music, graphics, titles, virtual backgrounds, or computer animation.
- Use of professional recording studios is prohibited.
- For video submission contests, each recitation requires its own separate video.

Tips:

- Stand in front of a neutral background, if possible. Try to avoid wearing clothing in similar colors to the background.
- Do not place light sources behind you to avoid being backlit.
- Students may look directly into the camera, at a fixed spot, or at an imagined audience.
- Make sure you are the only visible and audible person in the video.
- Use a microphone, if possible. If the microphone is on the camera, position the camera close to you.
- Start recording a few seconds before the recitation and stop recording a few seconds after the end.
- For video submission contests, check with the contest organizer if there are file size limits to videos and if there is a preferred naming convention to save your videos.
- Examples of student filmed POL recitations can be found on the POL YouTube page.

Reminder – Recitation Requirements:

- Students must begin by stating the title of the poem and the poet's name, and the translator, if applicable.
- A student's own editorial comments before or after the poem are not allowed.
- Poems must be recited from memory.
- For more details regarding the evaluation criteria, please consult the Teacher's Guide.

Accessibility:

- Please refer to the National Endowment for the Arts' guide Resources to Help Ensure Accessibility of Your Virtual Events for People with Disabilities.
- Review POL Accessibility Checklist – Venue & Event Promotion for planning recommendations for captioning and sign language interpreter vendors, alternate formats of materials, and communication of access accommodations. Reach out to participating schools for the Deaf and Blind prior to event planning to inquire about preferences.
- Check the compatibility of your virtual platform for screen-reading software and captioning capabilities (do not rely on auto-generated captions and plan to work with a third-party). Avoid using only the chat feature for essential information that will not be said aloud.
- Set communication rules at the start, speak slowly, and introduce yourself before speaking, which is also helpful for captioners and interpreters.
- Research audio description vendors for live streamed competitions, in particular for participating schools for the Blind.
- If an access accommodation is requested by a judge or a teacher who will be in a breakout room, make sure the captioner or interpreter is directly assigned to the requester.

NEW JERSEY POETRY OUT LOUD ONLINE COMMUNITIES

f/NewJerseyPoetryOutLoud
f/Teacher Discussion Group
_twitter @NJPoetryOutLoud
_YouTube /PoetryOutLoudVideos

NEW JERSEY POETRY OUT LOUD PARTNERS

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