



Wisconsin Interscholastic Speech & Dramatic Arts Association

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State Speech Contest Announces School Awards

LA CROSSE, Wis. – Twenty-nine Wisconsin schools received recognition for their overall performance at the Wisconsin State Speech Festival. The event returned this year to UW-Madison, with some students participating virtually. This year, more than 3,150 students, representing nearly 300 schools advanced to the State Festival. While most schools participated in person, about a dozen only participated online, and one-third had at least one entry who submitting a video of their performance to be evaluated online.

Adjudicators rated each student or performing group to determine a medal award, and the **top five percent of medal-earning schools** are recognized with *Excellence in Speech Awards*, with the school and coach each presented with a plaque. This year, 14 schools earned this honor (sorted by school, alphabetically):

School (<i>city listed, if not in name of school</i>)	Coach(es)
Barneveld High School	Duane Draper
Burlington High School	Robbie Twohig, Matt Nie
Chippewa Falls High School	Karen Koehler, Nick Grunseth
Darlington High School	Clarey Schwartz, Carmen Rielly, Kalee Crist
Fennimore High School	Jaime Lathrop
Hudson High School	Jessica Flanagan, Megan Dougherty
Menomonie High School	Andrea Smith, Melissa Nolte
Muskego High School	Joe Meinecke
Platteville High School	Cheryl Schober
Sauk Prairie High School (Prairie du Sac)	Ryan Mussack, Alexandra Dorman
Southern Door Schools (Brussels)	JamieLynn Teska, Mary Hall, Josie Kennedy
Waunakee High School	Walter Stenz
Westosha Central High School (Salem)	Brenda Bursek-Krekling
Wrightstown High School	David Winkler

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Additionally, the following schools earned the *Distinction in Speech Award, for medal achievement in the top six to ten percent*. Those schools and coaches earning plaques are (sorted by school, alphabetically):

School (<i>city listed, if not in name of school</i>)	Coach(es)
Cameron High School	Sheri Hagen-Salm, Bambi Forcey, Ryan Mikula
Cuba City High School	Becky Sitts, Susan Meier, Kirstin Slaght
Eau Claire Memorial High School	Johannah Erffmeyer, Mielle Rundall, Mackenzie Pfund
Ellsworth High School	Jennifer Kieren
Fox Valley Lutheran High School (Appleton)	Aleah Friemark, Ben Perushek
Iowa-Grant High School	Amanda Linscheid, Michele Wetter
Mineral Point High School	Kristin Staver
Monroe High School	Carolyn Schultz, Megan Dilley, Michelle Kister
Niagara High School	Ginger Anderson
Randolph High School	Adam Iverson
Regis High School (Eau Claire)	Judine Brey
South Shore High School (Port Wing)	Rebecca Lallemon, Mikaela Franson, Emma Kimball
Waterford Union High School	Kelly West
Winnebago Lutheran Academy (Fond du Lac)	Scott Herrewig, Andrew Mildebrandt
Wisconsin Dells High School	Kaitlyn Bringe

During the COVID-19 pandemic, WISDAA, like many state activities associations, sought alternative approaches to holding speech contests, working with such organizations as the National Speech & Debate Association and National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS). After one year online, the Speech season culminated its event at nearby DeForest High School for three years.

“It was exciting to return to the institution that started our event, UW-Madison,” said WISDAA Executive Director Adam Jacobi. “The energy and enthusiasm of students was apparent on the beautiful April days we were on campus, and the College of Letters and Science was incredibly accommodating.”

Jacobi added: “It has been a challenging time for schools to participate in interscholastic academic sports like Speech. As an association affiliated with the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS), we are aware participation numbers among schools are lower across the country, and Wisconsin is no exception. In a time when we are bombarded by information, cultivating effective communication in young people through activities like interscholastic Speech is more important than ever.”

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About the Wisconsin Interscholastic Speech & Dramatic Arts Association

Founded in 1895, the Wisconsin Interscholastic Speech & Dramatic Arts Association (WISDAA) has provided programming for middle and students in theatre, debate, and public speaking (archaically called “forensics”) activities. Each year, our nonprofit organization serves about 7,000 Wisconsin students from more than 350 high schools, and 150 middle schools in the longest-running high school speech contests in the nation. Our aim is to empower students to enhance their skills in presentation through interscholastic assessment. For more information, visit www.wisdaa.org.

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