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National Speech & Debate Association Announces 2022-2023 Leading Chapter Awards

This is the highest recognition a speech and debate charter school can earn.

DES MOINES, IOWA (October 4, 2023) -- The National Speech & Debate Association is proud to award one chapter from each competition district with this year's Leading Chapter Awards. Only approximately 3% of schools are recognized as Leading Chapter Award winners.

"This award, which is based on student participation, represents a tremendous dedication to speech and debate education," said Executive Director J. Scott Wunn. "Our Leading Chapter schools understand the importance of speech and debate, and the life changing benefits of the activity. We are proud to recognize these hard-working schools with this coveted honor."

Each year the top chapter in accumulated members and degrees, not more than one per district, receives the Leading Chapter Award; then its accumulated total returns to zero and it begins a new record. Each school must wait at least five years before being eligible for the award again.

Leading Chapter schools are recognized based on student participation throughout the school year. Schools earning the Leading Chapter Award must have previously achieved Charter School Status in the National Speech & Debate Association. These speech and debate programs serve as an inspiration for new speech and debate teams around the United States.

"Speech and debate advances communication skills, develops interpersonal skills, improves reading, writing, speaking, and critical thinking, and prepares students for college, careers, and beyond," said Wunn. "Nowhere is this more evident than our Leading Chapter schools."

The 2022-23 Leading Chapter Award winners:

Spain Park High School, AL

Bentonville High School, AR

Desert Vista High School, AZ

Buhach Colony High School, CA

Bellarmino College Prep, CA

Mira Loma High School, CA
Flintridge Preparatory School, CA
College Prep, CA
Bakersfield High School, CA
Los Osos High School, CA
Crescenta Valley High School, CA
Eaglecrest High School, CO
Loveland High School, CO
Golden High School, CO
Lewis Palmer High School, CO
Palisade High School, CO
Cypress Bay High School, FL
Oxbridge Academy, FL
Lake Mary Preparatory School, FL
Southeast High School, FL
Our Lady Of Lourdes Academy, FL
Northview High School, GA
Woodward Academy, GA
Kamehameha Schools, HI
Bishop Kelly High School, ID
Twin Falls High School, ID
Belleville West High School, IL
Hinsdale Central High School, IL
Niles West High School, IL
Rossville High School, IN
Cathedral High School, IN
Concord High School, IN
Chesterton High School, IN
Bettendorf High School, IA
Johnston High School, IA
Shawnee Mission East High School, KS
Washburn Rural High School, KS
Southeast High School, KS
Pittsburg High School, KS
St Thomas Aquinas High School, KS
Great Bend High School, KS
Murray High School, KY
St Thomas More Catholic High School, LA
Cape Elizabeth High School, ME

Cranbrook Kingswood Upper School, MI
Marriotts Ridge High School, MD
Prior Lake High School, MN
Bemidji High School, MN
Edina High School, MN
Oxford High School, MS
Neosho High School, MO
Clayton High School, MO
Park Hill South High School, MO
Central High School, MO
Blue Springs South High School, MO
Bozeman High School, MT
Columbia Falls High School, MT
Lincoln Southwest High School, NE
Crete High School, NE
Palo Verde High School, NV
McQueen High School, NV
Catholic Memorial School, MA
Princeton High School, NJ
Albuquerque Academy, NM
Sayre Area High School, PA
Regis High School, NY
Cary Academy, NC
Scarsdale High School, NY
Asheville High School, NC
Fargo South High School, ND
Norton High School, OH
Vermilion High School, OH
Canfield High School, OH
Wauseon High School, OH
Oologah High School, OK
Enid High School, OK
Sam Barlow High School, OR
Marshfield High School, OR
Trinity High School, PA
McDowell High School, PA
Unionville High School, PA
Mauldin High School, SC
Brookings High School, SD

Washington High School, SD
Portland High School, TN
Sandra Day O'Connor High School, TX
Jersey Village High School, TX
McAllen High School, TX
Dripping Springs High School, TX
Melissa High School, TX
Carroll High School, TX
Jasper High School, TX
Strake Jesuit College Preparatory, TX
Seven Lakes High School, TX
Central High School, TX
Royse City High School, TX
El Paso Coronado High School, TX
A & M Consolidated High School, TX
Highland High School, UT
Alta High School, UT
Syracuse High School, UT
Fluvanna County High School, VA
Mount Si High School, WA
Bellevue High School, WA
Sheboygan North High School, WI
Brookfield East High School, WI
Douglas High School, SD
Star Valley High School, WY
Hebrew Academy Five Towns Rock, NY

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The National Speech & Debate Association is the authority on public speaking and debate in the United States. The Association builds the infrastructure for speech and debate competitions around the world by providing topics, educational resources, and training for students and coaches. For nearly 100 years, the National Speech & Debate Association has built a platform for youth voices that culminates in the National Tournament, the largest academic competition in the world. For more information, visit www.speechanddebate.org.