

OKLAHOMA ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS

**HANDBOOK
Chapter 3
OACD Youth Contest**



Revised March 2015

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CHAPTER 3

OACD YOUTH CONTESTS

CALENDAR AT A GLANCE

Local Contests

July-August: Poster theme for the following school year will be announced on the NACD website. Go to www.nacdnet.org for the new theme and for materials offered by the NACD that can support your poster contest. **REMEMBER: utilize the OACD contest rules and guidelines not the NACD guidelines for your contest.** The Area contests are held the second fall after the contest announcement giving the local conservation districts approximately 15 months to conduct their poster contest.

Local contests may be held at any time during the year. Essays and posters are to be submitted to the local conservation district. The local conservation district will hold speech contests. The exact due dates will be set by the local conservation district board.

Posters and essays eligible for the area contests as well as speech contestant names are to be sent to the Oklahoma Association of Conservation District Employees' (OACDE) Area Representative by **October 15th**.

Names of and entry records for the speech contestants eligible for the area contests are due to the OACDE Area Representative by **October 15th**.

OACD Area Contest

Area speech contests will be held during the meetings and awards will be presented as will the awards for area essay and poster contest winners.

OACD State Contest

State speech contest will be held on the opening Sunday of the OACD annual state meeting. The State Youth Contest awards program will be held at the conclusion of the speech contest.

OACD POSTER CONTEST GUIDELINES

➤ ELIGIBILITY

Public, private or home school students are eligible to submit one entry in their local conservation district poster contest. Students who live in one county and attend school in another county must enter in the county in which they attend school.

➤ DIVISIONS

Division K – Kindergarten	Division 7 – Seventh Grade
Division 1 – First Grade	Division 8 – Eighth Grade
Division 2 – Second Grade	Division 9 – Ninth Grade
Division 3 – Third Grade	Division 10 – Tenth Grade
Division 4 – Fourth Grade	Division 11 – Eleventh Grade
Division 5 – Fifth Grade	Division 12 – Twelfth Grade
Division 6 – Sixth Grade	Division 13 – Special Education

Note regarding division 13: This division is for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade who are enrolled in a special education class. Posters ***MUST NOT*** be labeled as “special education”. Poster should be labeled as **DIVISION 13**. Submitted posters will be judged in a separate division. The same guidelines used by the other divisions must be followed for the poster to be eligible. There is NOT a special education division at the national level; therefore state winners will not be submitted to the national contest.

➤ CONTEST RULES

Any media may be used to create a flat or two-dimensional effect (paint, crayon, colored pencil, charcoal, stickers, paper or other materials) on regular posters.

Posters should be 14” x 22” (no larger – no smaller, not even by ½”) or they will be disqualified. This size is accommodating as it is a regular size sheet of poster board cut in half. Although it is recommended to use poster board, it is not mandatory, however students should be reminded that posters will be mailed to area representative for the area contest and then possibly again for the state and national contests and therefore should be durable.

Poster should be packaged so they remain flat when sent for judging.

All posters must be created by an individual student rather than a team of students.

The current year’s title must be on the poster.

2015 Contest Theme - "Local Heroes – Your Hardworking Pollinators".

Although younger students will most likely receive help in planning from the parents or teachers, it is encouraged that each student do as much of the work as possible by him/herself. Entries completed by students in their handwriting and coloring will score better than those designed, drawn and colored by adult assistance.

It shall be left to the discretion of each district what information is needed on the back of every poster for their local contest, however once a poster is submitted to the area contest, each entry must have a completed, official NACD entry form, signed by a parent/guardian must be attached to the back of the poster. The official NACD entry form is found on the NACD website: www.nacdnet.org in the stewardship and education contest section. If the official NACD entry form is not attached to the back of the poster at the area level, the area representative will not be allowed to submit the poster to the state's youth contest coordinator. If a poster is submitted to the state contest without the official NACD entry form the poster will be disqualified from judging.

➤ **POSTER EVALUATIONS**

Posters will be scored on originality, neatness, degree to which the poster expresses an idea, importance, practicality of the subject and overall effect. The posters are to be evaluated on the following criteria:

Conservation message – 50%
Visual effectiveness – 30%
Originality – 10%
Universal appeal – 10%

Also taken into consideration is artwork completed on poster is that of participant (unless noted on entry form).

It is at the discretion of each district, area representative and state youth contest coordinator as to whether or not they wish to use the OACD poster contest score sheet (Form OACD-3D) and is their responsibility to make sufficient copies of the score sheet for judges at each level of the contest.

OACD Area Contest – the first place poster in each division of the local conservation district contests is eligible to compete in the OACD area poster contest. One winner from each category will be selected.

OACD State Contest – the first place poster in each of the division of the five OACD area contests is eligible to compete in the OACD state poster contest. One winner from each category will be selected. Then winners will be divided into the categories offered by NACD and an entry will be selected to represent OACD at the National Poster Contest.

National Poster Contest – the national poster contest is open to kindergarten through twelfth grade students. However, NACD only offers the following categories by grade: K-1; 2-3; 4-6; 7-9; 10-12.

➤ **SELECTING JUDGES**

It is left to the discretion of each district, area representative and state youth contest coordinator to select not less than three judges.

No individual who has a relative competing, and no teacher who has a student competing shall serve as a judge at any level. At the area and state levels, district directors, district and

NRCS personnel and individuals served by a district that has a participant cannot serve as judges.

Judges will each rank their top three choices in order: First place –1 point, second place –2 points and third place -3 points. The winner is the poster that receives the lowest total ranking points. In case of a tie, the winner will be the poster that received that majority of the first place rankings. A further tie can be broken according to the highest total points on “Items to Be Scored”.

➤ **DEADLINES**

Local Conservation District Contest - The conservation district board will select a date of the current calendar year as the deadline for the posters to be in the district office.

Should the district select a spring date for its poster contest, the winning posters may be held over to be entered in the fall area contest. The posters will be entered in the fall area contest within the same divisions that they were originally submitted and must not be altered or changed in any way between the spring district contest and the fall area contest.

Please fill out form OACD-3C and send in with your winning posters to your OACD Area Representative by **October 15th**.

OACD Area Contest – The conservation district must forward eligible posters to the OACDE Area Representative by **October 15th**.

The winning posters must have a completed official NACD entry form, signed by the parent/guardian of the child attached to the back of the poster as mentioned in the contest rules section. Again...failure to do this will result in disqualification of the poster.

A list of winners will be sent to those districts that have winners prior to the area meeting by their OACDE Area Representative.

Area Representatives, please send with your winning posters all of the information sheets provided to you from the districts titled: County entry to area contest. This information is necessary for the state youth contest coordinator to receive in order to complete the information sheet to be submitted to NACD. This information sheet shall replace the entry record for OACD Poster Contest (Form OACD-3C).

OACD State Contest –The state youth contest coordinator will notify the conservation district of the winners of the OACD state contest. This shall be done prior to the national deadline of December 1st of the contest year and after the date of the last OACD Area Meeting.

National Poster Contest – The state youth contest coordinator will notify the districts of the winners of the national contest upon his/her notification. He/she will receive notification of the judging results, copies of the judges’ comments and a news release announcing the winners.

The winning posters will be featured at the NACD Annual Meeting.

Posters not receiving national awards will be returned to him/her in a timely manner following judging. The National poster contest is not responsible for returning posters back to each individual poster winner.

➤ **AWARDS**

Local Conservation District Contest – The conservation district is solely responsible for selecting and providing appropriate awards.

OACD Area Contest – Plaques will be provided for the first place winners and medal for the second place winners in each of the divisions.

A list of winners will be distributed to those districts that have winners in the area contest prior to the area meetings and the awards will be presented at the meeting.

Students may attend to accept their award, but it will be the responsibility of the district to make necessary arrangements for transportation and luncheon expenses for students, parents and teachers who attend. The district will be responsible for receiving awards for any student unable to accept their award at the area meeting and should make the presentation to the student(s) at some local meeting.

OACD State Contest – A plaque and a \$20 cash award will be provided to each first place winner in each of the divisions. The awards will be presented at the Youth Awards Program on the opening Sunday of the annual state meeting in February.

Districts will be notified of the state poster contest winners and should make arrangements for their winners to attend the Youth Awards Program to accept their award. The district will be responsible for receiving awards for any student unable to accept their award at the state meeting and should make the presentation to the student(s) at some local meeting.

National Poster Contest – The top three posters in each of the five grade divisions will receive monetary prizes. First place winners will receive \$200, second place winners will receive \$150, and third place winners will receive \$100. Monetary prizes at the national level are sponsored by the NACD Auxiliary from their quilt project and the Albert I Pierce Foundation.

NOTE: Posters will be available to be picked up at the area and state meetings. It is the district's responsibility to pick up the posters and return them to the artists. The Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts, Oklahoma Conservation Commission and the local conservation districts are not responsible for lost posters.

www.NACDNET.ORG has an abundance of resources for you to use to help promote your poster contest locally in their Stewardship and Education section. The current year's theme will also be located on their website. Please refer to their website for the required Entry Form. If you have trouble locating the form, please contact your area contest coordinator the state youth contest coordinator for assistance.

ESSAY CONTEST GUIDELINES

➤ ELIGIBILITY

Local Conservation District Contest – Public, private or home school students are eligible to submit one entry in their local conservation district essay contest within the proper division as follows:

Division I – 6th grade
Division II – 7th grade
Division III – 8th grade

OACD Area Contest – The first place winner in each of the three divisions of the local conservation district contest is eligible to compete in the respective OACD area essay contest.

OACD State Contest - The first place winner in each of the three divisions of the five OACD area essay contests is eligible to compete in the OACD state contest.

➤ DEADLINES

Local Conservation District Contest – The conservation district board will select a date prior to October 15th of the current calendar year as the deadline for the essays to be in the district office. Consider allowing two weeks for judging essays.

Should the district select a spring date for its essay contest, the winning essays may be held for entry in the fall area contest. The essays will be entered in the fall area contest within the same divisions that they were originally submitted and must not be altered or changed in any way between the spring district contest and the fall area contest.

The district will retain a copy of the essay – either electronic or hard copy - for their file. The original winning essay for each division will be forwarded via e-mail to the OACDE Area Representative for consideration in the area contest.

The OACDE Area Representative will forward via e-mail the winning essay for each division to the state youth contest coordinator for the state contest. Printed copies of the essays will not be returned to the local districts.

It is the district's responsibility to pick up contest awards at the area and state meetings.

OACD Area Contest – The conservation district must forward eligible essays to the OACDE Area Representative by October 15th. A list of area contest winners will be sent to those districts that have winners prior to the area meeting.

OACD State Contest – The state youth contest coordinator will notify the conservation districts of the winners of the OACD state essay contest.

➤ **SELECTING JUDGES**

It is left to the discretion of each district, area representative and state youth contest coordinator to select not less than three judges. No individual who has a relative competing, and no teacher who has a student competing shall serve as a judge at any level. At the area and state levels, district directors, district and NRCS personnel and individuals served by a district that has a participant cannot serve as judges.

➤ **CONTEST RULES**

Essays must be typed with at least a font size 12, with lines spaced at 1.5 or 2, and no less than 300 and no more than 500 words in length. Essays less than 300 words or more than 500 words will be disqualified. Essays may be submitted electronically (via e-mail or on disk). Essays submitted on paper only must be typed on one side of the paper. Essays submitted on paper only may be scanned in and saved as an Adobe pdf file. The general theme of all essays must incorporate the annual Soil and Water Stewardship week theme.

2015 Contest Theme - "Local Heroes – Your Hardworking Pollinators".

The outermost cover of the essay must contain the following information:

ESSAY CONTEST DIVISION
OACD AREA
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
STUDENTS NAME
STUDENTS HOME ADDRESS
STUDENT'S GRADE
STUDENT'S SCHOOL
SCHOOL ADDRESS
TEACHER OR SPONSOR'S NAME
ESSAY WORD COUNT

BIBLIOGRAPHY NOTE: A list of the reference material used is required at the end of the essay. It is the responsibility of the district to see that this is included prior to submitting the essay for the area contest. Any legible form for reference material will be accepted and the list will not be judged on form or punctuation. The purpose of this requirement is to determine the amount of research and the accuracy of information. This is to encourage students to talk with districts about their programs.

➤ **ESSAY EVALUATIONS**

Essays will be judged on accuracy of information, evidence of understanding the conservation district and the specific topic, originality, neatness, legibility, spelling, punctuation, grammar, logical thought process, bibliography and overall effect. The judging criteria will be given the following weights:

Content 30%
Originality 20%
Understanding 10%
Neatness and legibility 10%
Mention of theme 10%

Bibliography 10%
Overall effectiveness 10%

Judges will each rank the essays in order: First place -1 point, Second place -2 points and third place -3 points, continuing until all essays are ranked. The winner is the essay that receives the lowest total ranking points. In case of a tie, the winner will be the essay that received that majority of the first place rankings. A further tie can be broken according to the highest total points on "Items to Be Scored".

➤ **AWARDS**

Local Conservation District Contest – The conservation district is solely responsible for selecting and providing appropriate awards.

OACD Area Contest – A plaque will be provided for the first place winner and a medal for the second place winner in each of the three divisions.

A list of the winners will be distributed to those districts that have winners in the area contest prior to the area meetings and the awards will be presented at the OACD area meetings.

Students may attend to accept their award, but it will be the responsibility of the district to make necessary arrangements for transportation and luncheon expenses for students, parents and teachers who attend.

The district will be responsible for receiving awards for any student unable to accept their award at the area meeting and should make the presentation to the student(s) at some local meeting.

OACD State Contest – A plaque and a \$60 cash award for the first place winner and a plaque and a \$40 cash award for the second place winner will be presented at the Youth Awards Program on the opening Sunday of the annual state meeting in February.

Districts will be notified of the first and second place state essay contest winners. Districts should make arrangements for their winners to attend the Youth Awards Program to accept their awards.

The district will be responsible for receiving awards for any student unable to accept their award at the Youth Awards Program and should make the presentation to the student(s) at some local meeting.

SPEECH CONTEST GUIDELINES

➤ **ELIGIBILITY**

Local Conservation District Contest – The contest is open to public, private or home school student enrolled in a school within the local conservation district. If a student lives in a different county than where they attend school, they will participate in the county in which their school is located.

Participants do not have to be a member of FFA or 4-H to participate and official FFA dress is not required.

➤ **DIVISIONS**

Division I: Grades 8-9-10

Division II: Grades 11-12

➤ **THEME**

Natural Resources

- Participants may choose any current subject that deals with topics such as soil, water, air, rural water, wildlife, forestry, aquaculture, conservation, recreation, recycling, energy, environmental issues, agronomy, etc.

- Also, the speaker must mention their local conservation district by name.

The purpose of the OACD speech contest is to acquaint students with their conservation district and operations.

➤ **TIME LIMITS**

The speech must be 4-6 minutes in length.

An official timekeeper, who may or may not be one of the judges, will time all speeches. A 5 point penalty will be deducted for speeches that go less than 4 minutes but more than 3 minutes and for speeches that go longer than 6 minutes but less than 7 minutes. Speeches less than 3 minutes or more than 7 minutes will be disqualified.

➤ **PROCEDURES**

- Speeches will be judged by a panel of judges individually scoring each speaker. Each judge will rank in order all contestants, highest score to lowest score. Then collectively, judges will add ranking scores to select the winner, lowest total ranking points wins the category. However, any contestant receiving a first place vote from two judges automatically wins. Scoring and potential points will include but not be limited to the following: content of manuscript, presentation of speech, organization and general effect.

- In the event of a tie, judges will break ties in scoring by first collectively adding a contestant's total points; the contestant with the highest score wins the tie. Should the tie

continue, judges will collectively add a contestant's total points in the "Delivery" portion of the score sheet, highest score wins the tie.

- It is the responsibility of the contest coordinator to provide to the best of their ability a contest room conducive to conducting a fair and non-prejudicial contest. Visitors and other contestants must conduct themselves in a polite and sportsmanlike manner. The contest coordinator has the right to remove any individuals who might compromise the integrity of the contest.
- The outermost cover of the speech must list the following information in this order:

CONTEST DIVISION
OACD AREA
CONSERVATION DISTRICT
STUDENT'S NAME
STUDENT'S HOME ADDRESS
GRADE
SCHOOL
SCHOOL'S ADDRESS
TEACHER OR SPONSOR'S NAME

- Each speaker must provide four typewritten copies of the speech to the judges at each level of the contest. This manuscript must be double-spaced and include a bibliography page. Three copies will be returned at the end of each level of the contest. One copy will be retained in the OACD files for a period of five years. Contestants will be penalized 2 points for failing to provide the correct number of copies.
- Previous winners in the speech contest are eligible to compete in subsequent years, however, must present a different speech each year.
- At the discretion of the judges, the use of notes, charts and props could adversely affect scoring. Electronic devices are discouraged.
- There will not be a question and answer period after a speech.
- The first and second place winners in each division from the local district contest are eligible to compete in the OACD area speech contest.
- The first and second place winners of both divisions of each OACD area speech contest will be eligible to compete in the state speech contest which is held on the opening Sunday of the annual state meeting at 1:30 p.m. Contests for Divisions I and II will be held concurrently.
- Critique sheets will not be returned to the contestants except at the option of the individual judge.

➤ **DEADLINES**

Local Conservation District Contest – The conservation district board will select a date for the speech contest to be held in the district office. Should the district select a spring date for its speech contest, the winning speech may be held for entry in the fall area contest. The speeches will be entered in the fall area contest within the same divisions that they were originally

submitted and must not be altered or changed in any way between the spring district contest and the fall area contest.

OACD Area Contest – The sponsoring district must complete an Entry Record for the OACD Area Speech Contest (Form OACD-3E) and forward it to the OACDE Area Representative. *Absolutely no entries will be accepted over the telephone.* The district should retain a copy of the completed entry record for its files. The area contest will be held on the date of the OACD area meeting unless the district is notified of other arrangements.

OACD State Contest – If a conservation district has a first or second place winner from an area speech contest, the district is responsible for seeing that the contestant is at the state speech contest held at 1:30 p.m. on the opening Sunday of the annual state meeting.

➤ **JUDGES**

No individual who has a relative competing and no teacher who has a student competing should serve as a judge at any level. At the area and state levels, district directors, district personnel, NRCS personnel, and individuals served by a district that has a participant competing will not serve as judges.

Local Conservation District Contest – The district board will select not less than three judges and will provide score sheets for judges' use. Although it isn't required, judges should be encouraged to critique contestants on the score sheet and return to students.

OACD Area Contest – The OACDE Area Representative and the Host of the OACD Area Meeting shall work together in the selection of three judges for each division of the contest. In some instances, the same three judges may be used to judge both divisions. The OACDE Area Representative will provide score sheets for the judges and will conduct the speech contest accordingly.

OACD State Contest – The OACD President will work with the OCC Education Coordinator in the selection of three judges for each division for the annual state meeting. OACD will provide score sheets for the judges at the state contest.

➤ **SCORING**

Judges will use the OACD Speech Contest Score Sheet (Form OACD-3F). It is the responsibility of the contest coordinator at each level to make sufficient copies of the score sheet for the judges. Each judge will rank all contestants in order: First place -1 point, Second place -2 points, Third place -3 points, Fourth place -4 points, etc. The winner is the speaker who receives the lowest total ranking points. In case of a tie judges will break ties in scoring by first collectively adding a contestant's total points, the contestant with the highest score wins the tie. Should the tie continues, judges will collectively add a contestant's total points in the "Delivery" portion of the score sheet, highest score wins.

➤ **AWARDS**

Local Conservation District Contest – The local conservation district is solely responsible for selecting and providing appropriate awards.

OACD Area Contest – Plaques for the first place winners and medals for the second place winners will be presented at the area meetings, following the area contest. The district is responsible for making necessary arrangements to provide transportation and expenses necessary for the students to attend the OACD state speech contest.

OACD State Contest – Plaques as well as a cash award will be given to first, second and third place winners in each of the two divisions. The cash awards are as follows:

First place - \$150

Second place - \$100

Third place - \$60

These awards will be presented at the Youth Awards Program immediately following the state speech contest.