

2024-25 Journalism contest for Nebraska high school newspaper and yearbook students

Entries for the JEA Nebraska Winter Contest must be postmarked by Friday, Dec. 6, 2024 or submitted digitally through a Google Form by midnight that day.

READ THE DIRECTIONS AND FOLLOW THEM CAREFULLY. No more than TWO entries per category will be accepted from any school.

New this year is to attempt to digitize this contest with Google. A gmail email address is needed to try this option. If you have a personal or school gmail address that can be used, that's great. If you do not have a gmail address that can be used, then please submit in hard copy form. It will also be acceptable to submit some entries digitally and some in hard copy. It sounds like chaos from a contest director point of view, but we're going to try. Thanks for your patience and for the attempt to be more sustainable with paper resources and save postage!

If using the hard copy option, please mount all entries on an 8 1/2 x 11 inch sheet with the student's name, high school, adviser's name, and category printed in the upper right corner of each entry.

All hard copy materials must be sent FIRST-CLASS or hand-delivered to:

2025 JEA NEB Winter Contest
Attn: Marsha Kalkowski, MJE, State Director
Marian High School
7400 Military Avenue
Omaha, NE 68134



Entries from each category will be judged by professional journalists, college students in journalism programs, and veteran high school advisers from across the nation. Certificates will be awarded for entries judged Superior, Excellent and Honorable Mention and mailed to winning schools in late January. Entries will not be returned and no individual feedback will be shared with entries. Judges do leave category comments that are shared with advisers with the results.

Electronic entries will be accepted in any category through the following Google Forms. Please pay attention on the Google Form to the file naming process and to the file size limits.

Part I - <https://forms.gle/GSiqfDupa87RDjdD8>

includes these categories: Advertising, Column Writing, Editorial Cartooning, Editorial Writing, Entertainment Review Writing, Newspaper Feature Writing, InfoGraphic Design, Newswriting, Newspaper Sports Feature Writing, Newspaper Sports News Writing, Newspaper Layout, Headline Writing, Photo/Artistic Illustration, Yearbook Feature Writing, Yearbook Sports Feature Writing and Yearbook Theme Copy Writing.

Part 2 - <https://forms.gle/s6eTJEZyJZT4WNKd9>

includes Feature Photography, Action Photography, Yearbook Layout, Yearbook Theme Package, Indepth Coverage, Literary Magazine and all Broadcast categories.

Yearbook entries must be selected from work that will be published in the 2025 yearbook OR work published in the 2024 book that was not previously entered into any contest if the student is still enrolled in the program. Photocopies of paste-ups also will be accepted. Newspaper entries must have been published between August 2024 and the contest deadline. Newspaper entries should be clippings from the paper in which they were published or dated print outs from the student publication web site. Photography entries do not necessarily have to be published. **DO NOT SEND THE WORK OF STUDENTS WHO HAVE GRADUATED OR WHO ARE NO LONGER STUDENTS IN YOUR SCHOOL. DO NOT SUBMIT ENTRIES THAT WERE PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED TO THE NSAA STATE CONTEST FROM 2024.**

Schools whose advisers are JEA members pay no fees for their students' entries. Schools whose advisers are **not** JEA members must pay a \$1 entry fee for each entry. Both member and non-member schools are limited to two (2) entries per category. Checks should be made payable to Marsha Kalkowski/Nebraska JEA Director, and mailed to the above address. Proceeds from the contest will be donated to the Student Press Law Center.

There are 21 traditional categories: Advertising, Column Writing, Editorial Cartooning, Editorial Writing, Review Writing, Newspaper Feature Writing, InfoGraphic Design, News Writing, Newspaper Sports Feature Writing, Newspaper Sports News Coverage, Newspaper Layout, Headline Writing & Design, Feature Photography, Action Photography, Photo Illustration, Yearbook Feature Writing, Yearbook Sports Writing, Yearbook Theme Copy Writing, Yearbook Layout, Yearbook Theme Development and InDepth Coverage. Five broadcast categories: News, Feature, Sports, PSA and Overall Program and one literary magazine category are also part of this contest. Brief descriptions for each are included.

Schools are limited to two entries per category (except in YB theme and Literary Magazine, which allow one entry per school). A school's two entries in an event may be from two different students or both from the same student. When one student has more than one entry in an event, the judge will choose the best from among that student's entries. A student cannot place more than once in an event.

All traditional categories must be entries from *individual* students with the exception of Yearbook Theme, which is the work of the staff/school and InDepth Coverage, which can be the work of a team of no more than six students (although 1 certificate will be printed for the winning teams). The Broadcast entries can be teams of two. Please identify each team member in these categories. Broadcast Program and Literary Magazine entries are by staff or school name, not individuals.

Note: Artist Statements were newly required at the 2024 NSAA for these contests: Advertising, Editorial Cartooning, Info Graphic and Photo/Artistic Illustration. Those statements will also be required as part of the entry in this contest, too. The NSAA manual explains that an Artist Statement is a short paragraph written by the student that explains:

- what parts of the entry did a student create from scratch
- what parts did the student pull from other places (like Canva or other templates)
- what process (including software or apps used) did the student take to achieve the finished design, how long did the process take and any other pertinent background information that would aid the judge in evaluating the design.

If you have questions or comments about any aspect of the contest, do not hesitate to call (402-571-2618 ext. 1134 school) or email (mkalkowski@omahamarian.org). Specific questions related to the Google Entry Forms can also be sent to jeaneb@omahamarian.org.

This is a great opportunity for your students to earn some recognition for their work before the state NSAA contest in the spring. Good luck!



2024-25 JEA Nebraska Winter Contest for Nebraska high school newspaper, yearbook & broadcast students Contest Descriptions

ADVERTISING: Criteria for judging: Enterprise, quality, reader appeal, display and design and printed reproduction. Must consist of a single advertisement. Student must have prepared the design and written the copy. An artist statement must be included as part of the entry.

COLUMN WRITING: Criteria for judging: Originality, good taste, reader appeal, and quality of writing. Do not send editorials for this contest, only columns. Headlines may be included. NOTE: If your column is a review, enter under the Review category.

EDITORIAL CARTOONING: Criteria for judging: Expression of editorial idea, neatness, and quality of artistry. An editorial may accompany the cartoon if necessary to better understand the issue being presented. An artist statement must be included as part of the entry.

EDITORIAL WRITING: Criteria for judging: Structure, reader interest, journalistic style, quality of writing, and accomplishment of purpose. DO NOT SEND COLUMNS for this contest, only editorials. Headlines may be included.

ENTERTAINMENT REVIEW WRITING: Criteria for judging: Creativity, writing ability, sound knowledge of subject matter. Copy can include reviews of movies, books, videos, concerts, restaurants, plays, etc. Headlines may be included.

FEATURE WRITING (Newspaper/Online): Criteria for judging: Originality, reader appeal or interest, quality of lead, emphasis or feature angle, color and quality of writing. Do not include poetry or columns in this contest. Examples include personality profiles, human-interest stories, historical perspectives, and single in-depth research articles. Remember that length is not a criterion of good feature writing. Headlines may be included.

INFOGRAPHIC DESIGN: Criteria for judging: Originality, readability, and appearance. Info-graphics may be hand-drawn or computer generated. Emphasis will be on how well the graphic blends with and conveys informational content. If not submitted on the digital Google Entry Form, these entries may be submitted on CD or flash drive or SD card, but must be clearly labelled with the category_school_student name. An artist statement must be included as part of the entry.

NEWSWRITING: Criteria for judging: Timeliness, accuracy, balance, news judgment, significance, journalistic style, objectivity. Please include date published on the entry form.

SPORTS FEATURE WRITING (NEWSPAPER): Criteria for judging: The entry should be a feature-oriented, sports angle story. Examples would be sports personality features, changes in rules, injuries, individuals who are behind the scenes in athletics, and any other feature story with a sports angle. Headlines may be included.

SPORTS NEWS COVERAGE (Newspaper/Online): Criteria for judging: Timeliness, accuracy, balance, news judgment, significance, journalistic style, objectivity and originality, reader appeal or interest, quality of lead, emphasis or feature angle, color and quality of writing. Headlines may be included.

NEWSPAPER LAYOUT: Criteria for judging: Principles of good layout, graphic effect, legibility, and neatness. An entry is ONE page. Any page layout may be entered. Submit tearsheets or photocopies. Double truck spreads will be judged as a single unit.

HEADLINE WRITING AND DESIGN: Criteria for judging: Accuracy and appropriateness of headline; visual appeal; cleverness and creativity. An entry includes ONE headline and the article for which the headline was written. (NOTE: NSAA State Contests require three headlines to be ONE entry, but that is difficult this early in the school year. This contest only requires ONE headline.)

FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY: Criteria for judging: Quality of image, appropriateness, composition and impact. The work of two individual students can be entered in this contest. Photos need not be published. Each student's entry is composed of TWO different images and must be submitted in electronic form. If not submitted on the digital Google Entry Form, save the images on a CD/flashdrive/SD card and label them as such: SCHOOL_STUDENT1f.jpg and SCHOOL_STUDENT2f.jpg. Label the device with school name. (Note: one CD/flashdrive/SD card can have all the electronic entries from all electronic categories.)

ACTION PHOTOGRAPHY: Criteria for judging: Quality of print, appropriateness, composition and impact. The work of two individual students can be entered in this contest. Photos need not be published. Each student's entry is composed of TWO different prints and must be submitted in electronic form. If not submitted on the digital Google Entry Form, please save them on a CD/flashdrive/SD card and label them as such: SCHOOL_STUDENT1a.jpg and SCHOOL_STUDENT2a.jpg. Label the device with school name. (Note: one CD/flashdrive/SD card can have all the electronic entries from all electronic categories.)

PHOTO/ARTISTIC ILLUSTRATION: This category will consist of a photo illustration or artistic illustration which combines a photo or photos with graphics or text, or it may be a photo that has been altered digitally to the extent that it is no longer remains a straight photograph. The photo illustration must be created with the intent to publish and include the layout showing the accompanying story or coverage. Criteria for judging — originality and composition. An entry will be composed of one illustration and the accompanying story. If not submitted on the digital Google Entry Form, these entries may be submitted on CD or flash drive or SD card, but must be clearly labelled with the category_school_student name. Note: this is a good category for YB covers if designed by students. (Note: one CD/flashdrive/SD card can have all the electronic entries from all electronic categories.) An artist statement must be included as part of the entry.

YEARBOOK FEATURE WRITING: Criteria for judging: Accuracy, quality of writing and reader appeal. Entry may be from a copy of an original yearbook page as it appeared or as it is intended to appear, or entry could be typed and double-spaced. Do not send ‘philosophical’ copy as found in opening, closing or division pages of the yearbook.

YEARBOOK SPORTS WRITING: Criteria for judging: Accuracy, quality of writing and reader appeal. Entry should be yearbook feature-oriented from the sports section. Entry may be from a copy of an original yearbook page as it appeared or as it is intended to appear, or entry could be typed and double-spaced. Headlines may be included.

YEARBOOK THEME COPY WRITING: Criteria for judging. Accuracy, quality of writing and reader appeal. Each entry is composed of ONE sample written by any one student from the opening, closing and any division spreads. If the writing is a feature, enter it under the Yearbook Feature Writing category. This contest is for the more “philosophical” or general theme related copy. Entry may be from a copy of an original yearbook page as it appeared or as it is intended to appear, or entry could be typed and double-spaced. Headlines may be included.

YEARBOOK LAYOUT: Criteria for judging: Principles of good layout, creativity and neatness. The entry will consist of a double- page spread. Entry may be from a copy of an original yearbook spread as it appeared or as it is intended to appear.

YEARBOOK THEME DEVELOPMENT: Criteria for judging: Creativity, writing ability, establishment of them, freshness of approach. Staffs can submit opening and division page copy, layouts, cover design, end sheet design, etc. that was done for the 2022 or 2023 yearbook. Do not submit if the theme package was entered into the NSAA state contest last spring. Do not submit the work of students who have graduated or who are no longer attending your school. Photocopies or computer printouts will also be accepted. It is understood that theme development is a team effort.

IN-DEPTH COVERAGE (NEWSPAPER): Criteria for judging: News worthiness, breadth of coverage, evidence of research, visual presentation. It is expected that entries include more than a single story, i.e., a story plus information graphics, two or more stories or a combination of stories, graphics and photos. Single in-depth stories should be entered in the feature writing category. Team entries are accepted. Limit the number of contributing students to six for each entry.

LITERARY MAGAZINE: (Not an NSAA category) One printed magazine from 2024 (could be spring 2024 or fall 2024). Content is not “journalistic” but “literary” with poetry, prose, art, illustration, photography and design elements. **WHAT THE JUDGES WILL LOOK FOR:** Clean layout and design relating to selected copy; impact, action or emotion in design; positioning of copy, title, art, photos and captions in relation to each other; use of current graphic trends. Originality and creativity in developing theme and design. Illustrations demonstrate originality in interpretation that captures the spirit of the prose or poetry. Photography demonstrates original interpretation.

JEA NEBRASKA BROADCAST CATEGORIES

* If not submitted on the digital Google Entry Form, Broadcast entries should be submitted via working URL on the entry form (**with an accompanying email**) with date of broadcast noted. Students may be entered as individuals or in teams of two students for the first four contests and as a school for the Program category. Contest criteria initially modelled after JEA National Student Media Contest guides and preliminary NSAA Contest Guidelines.

BROADCAST NEWS STORY: Total Running Time (TRT) 1:30 - 3 minutes. A package is a prerecorded news story containing (usually) a reporter's voice-over, videotaped shots and sound bites. The story must have been broadcast during the current school year, must be between 1:30 - 3 minutes long, may include an introduction or outro (tag) done by an anchor but it, too, must have been broadcast. **WHAT THE JUDGES WILL LOOK FOR:** Adherence to broadcast style (short sentences, present tense, conversational, clear). Contains all the necessary information and exhibits news judgment. Video sound bites are well-shot close-ups, relevant and interesting. A variety of shots are used and are steady and in focus. Editing is free of glitches and jump cuts, and natural sound is used effectively. Overall, the script and video complement each other, telling the story in an interesting and informative manner. The voice-over is effective and delivered with clarity. Use of copyrighted materials is strictly prohibited.

BROADCAST SPORTS STORY: Total Running Time (TRT) 1:30 - 3 minutes. A package is a pre-recorded sports story containing a reporter's voice over, videotaped shots and sound bites. The story must have been broadcast during the current school year. It must be between 1:30 - 3 minutes long, may include an introduction or outro (tag) done by an anchor but it, too, must have been broadcast. **WHAT THE JUDGES WILL LOOK FOR:** Adherence to broadcast style (short sentences, present tense, conversational, clear). Contains all the necessary information and provides a new perspective. Video sound bites are well shot close-ups, relevant and interesting. A variety of shots are used, steady and in focus. Editing is free of glitches and jump cuts, and natural sound is used effectively. Overall, the script and video complement each other, telling the story in an interesting and informative manner. The voice-over is effective and delivered with liveliness and clarity. Use of copyrighted materials is strictly prohibited.

BROADCAST FEATURE STORY: Total Running Time (TRT) 1:30 to 3 minutes. A package is a prerecorded feature story containing a reporter's voice-over, videotaped shots and sound bites. The story must have been broadcast during the current school year, may include an introduction or outro (tag) done by an anchor but it, too, must have been broadcast. **WHAT THE JUDGES WILL LOOK FOR:** Adherence to broadcast style (short sentences, present tense, conversational, clear). Contains all the necessary information, and story is told in a manner that sustains interest. Video sound bites are well-shot close-ups, relevant and interesting. A variety of shots are used and are steady and in focus. Editing is free of glitches and jump cuts, and natural sound is used effectively. Overall, the script and video complement each other, telling the story in an interesting and informative manner. The voice-over is well-recorded and delivered with liveliness and clarity. Use of copyrighted materials is strictly prohibited.

BROADCAST PSA: Total Running Time (TRT) exactly 30 seconds or exactly 60 seconds. The piece entered must be produced for school announcements or TV programs, should publicize school events, activities and social functions; PSAs should attempt to shed light on an issue or situation of importance to teens. Any commercial or PSA produced by students is eligible if it has been broadcast at school or in the community during the current school year. **WHAT THE JUDGES WILL LOOK FOR:** A strong overall impact is critical. Judges will watch for solid videography; editing, audio, graphics/effects and pacing will all be considered. Content material should be accurate and appropriate to the message being delivered. Time limit of exactly 30 seconds or 60 seconds is met. Use of copyrighted materials is strictly prohibited.

BROADCAST PROGRAM (Not an NSAA Category): Total Running Time (TRT) not to exceed 30 minutes. The program must have been broadcast during the current school year. **WHAT THE JUDGES WILL LOOK FOR:** Judges will look for accuracy, balance, news style, interesting lead-ins, transitions between stories, an effective opening and closing, and overall structure. A strong overall impact is critical. Judges will watch for solid videography; editing, audio, graphics/effects and pacing will all be considered. Use of copyrighted materials is strictly prohibited.

2024-25 JEA Nebraska Winter Contest Registration Form - to be used if NOT submitting through Google Form. If doing a combination of some on Google and some in hard copy, please indicate that below by simply checking the box next to the category. You do NOT need to fill out the names twice:

School _____ Adviser _____
 Please type or print neatly. You can copy/paste this text into a new document and type away!

The purpose of this registration form is to better track entries and help alleviate name misspellings on the final certificates.

Student Name _____ **First few words of headline or brief content description** _____

Advertising

1. _____
 2. _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**

Column Writing

1. _____
 2. _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**

Editorial Cartooning

1. _____
 2. _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**

Editorial Writing

1. _____
 2. _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**

Entertainment Review Writing

1. _____
 2. _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**

Newspaper Feature Writing

1. _____
 2. _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**

InfoGraphic Design (entries could be on CD/flashdrive) If on CD/flashdrive/SD card check this box

1. _____
 2. _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**

Newswriting

1. _____ Date published _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**
 2. _____ Date published _____

Newspaper Sports Feature Writing

1. _____
 2. _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**

Newspaper Sports News Writing

1. _____
 2. _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**

Newspaper Layout

1. _____
 2. _____ **Entries Submitted on Google Form**

NAME OF SCHOOL _____ ADVISER NAME _____

Headline Writing and Design

1. _____ Entries Submitted on Google Form
2. _____

Feature Photography (entries *should* be on CD/flashdrive/SD card if not on Google Form)

1. _____ Entries Submitted on Google Form
2. _____

Action Photography (entries *should* be on CD/flashdrive/SD card if not on Google Form)

1. _____ Entries Submitted on Google Form
2. _____

Photo/Artistic Illustration (entries could be on CD/flashdrive) If on CD/flashdrive/SD card check this box

1. _____ Entries Submitted on Google Form
2. _____

Yearbook Feature Writing

1. _____ Entries Submitted on Google Form
2. _____

Yearbook Sports Writing

1. _____ Entries Submitted on Google Form
2. _____

Yearbook Theme Copy Writing

1. _____ Entries Submitted on Google Form
2. _____

Yearbook Layout

1. _____ Entries Submitted on Google Form
2. _____

Yearbook Theme

1. _____ (What is your theme?) Staff/School Entry Entry Submitted on Google Form

InDepth Coverage (teams of six are possible)

1. _____, _____, _____ Entries Submitted on Google Form
_____, _____, _____
2. _____, _____, _____
_____, _____, _____

Literary Magazine (Not an NSAA Category)

1. _____ (school/magazine title) Date published _____ Entry Submitted on Google Form

NAME OF SCHOOL _____ ADVISER NAME _____

If not submitted on the Google Form,

PLEASE TAKE SPECIAL CARE TO WRITE URLS LEGIBLY or type this page. THANK YOU.

As a precaution, please email the links to mkalkowski@omahamarian.org as well as filling out this page.

Thank you.

Broadcast News Story

1. _____ Date broadcast _____

Current URL: _____

2. _____ Date broadcast _____

Current URL: _____

Broadcast Sports Story

1. _____ Date broadcast _____

Current URL: _____

2. _____ Date broadcast _____

Current URL: _____

Broadcast Feature Story

1. _____ Date broadcast _____

Current URL: _____

2. _____ Date broadcast _____

Current URL: _____

Broadcast PSA

1. _____ Date broadcast _____

Current URL: _____

2. _____ Date broadcast _____

Current URL: _____

Broadcast Program

1. _____ (school/program name) Date broadcast _____

Current URL: _____

2. _____ (school/program name) Date broadcast _____

Current URL: _____



**journalism education association
nebraska**

Postmark Deadline: Dec. 6, 2024

If you are close to the Omaha metro and want to hand-deliver, just give me a heads-up to look for you/your entries mkalkowski@omahamarian.org or 402-571-1618 x 1134

Please return this entry form (preceding three pages and this page) and entries to:

2024-25 JEA Nebraska Winter Contest
Attn: Marsha Kalkowski, MJE, State Director
Marian High School
7400 Military Avenue
Omaha, NE 68134

School _____

Adviser _____ which publication(s) _____

JEA Member: Yes or No

Adviser 2 _____ which publication _____

JEA Member: Yes or No

Adviser 3 _____ which publication _____

JEA Member: Yes or No

**if “No” to all advisers, entry fee applies. If there is one “Yes,” no entry fee!*

School Mailing Address _____ City _____ ZIP _____

Adviser Email _____ School phone _____

Adviser 2 Email _____ School phone _____

Adviser 3 Email _____ School phone _____

**Remember, if no adviser is a JEA member, there is a \$1 per individual entry fee.*

Entry fee enclosed for _____

Checks can be made to “Marsha Kalkowski/Nebraska JEA Director”