



TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF FUTURE EDUCATORS COMPETITIVE EVENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION FOR ALL EVENTS

(Event specific information begins on page 9)

Failure to follow stated guidelines may result in disqualification of students competing.

For a complete list you can view the [TAFE Policies and Procedures](#).

All students wishing to compete in TAFE or Educators Rising events must complete the following:

- Be an active paid member of Educators Rising for the current school year. **TAFE State dues must be paid in full by November 1st.** View the [EdRising Membership Page](#) for more information.
- Register to attend your TAFE Area Conference or the TAFE Teach Tomorrow Summit.
Registration for the conference does not register your students for competitive events.
- Sign up to compete in competitive events and submit all required materials by the stated deadline on the TAFE Guidelines & Rubrics page located on the [TAFE Website](#).

GENERAL RULES & REGULATIONS

NOTE: General rules and regulations apply to all competitive events and are in addition to each event's specific guidelines..

Eligibility

- Competitors must be a paid, active-level student member of Educators Rising prior to competing at an Area or State Conference.
- Competitors can only compete in 3 events of which no more than 2 can be national events.
 - ELF Test, Student of the Year, and Breakout Session do not count as part of the 3 events.
- Competitive Event entries will not be accepted after the area conference registration closes.
- For Educators Rising National Events:
 - For Competitions at the Area Level: students must have earned 70% of available points first, then the top 5 advance to the Teach Tomorrow Summit
 - For Contests at the Area Level: students must earn 90% of the overall possible points to advance to the Teach Tomorrow Summit.
 - For Competitions at the State Level: students must have earned 80% of available points first, then the top 10 advance to the Educators Rising Conference.
 - For Contests at the State Level: students must earn 97% of the overall possible points to advance to the Educators Rising National Conference.
 - ***Students may only compete in one event max, at the Educators Rising Conference.***

Competitive Event Entries

- All submitted materials must reflect original work from the 2025-2026 school year. Materials that may have been created or submitted in previous years are **ineligible**. All competitors must complete a [Statement of Originality](#) form for each event they are participating in.
- Each competitive event guideline will identify what materials are required for submission prior to the conference. Failure to submit required materials by the deadline will result in point deductions. Files should be uploaded using the competitor's **FORM ID found on the TTS Database**.
- All video files that are submitted in advance must be uploaded to [YouTube](#).



TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF FUTURE EDUCATORS COMPETITIVE EVENTS

Levels of Competition

- The breakdown of grades noted below is used to designate levels for competitive event entries. Not all competitive events are open to all divisions. Please refer to the event guidelines to check the divisions eligible to compete in that event. Teams consisting of students from varying grade levels should be registered in the level of the most senior member. **Students who do not compete in their correct division will be disqualified.**
 - **Middle School** - Grades 7 & 8
 - **Junior Varsity** - Grades 9 & 10
 - **Varsity** - Grades 11 & 12
 - **Collegiate** - Undergraduate Students, not dual credit high school students
 - **Special Edition** - This is for students who have an IEP. It is specifically designed to accommodate special needs students who require accommodation(s) to compete.

Substitutions

- Substitutions for individual events are not accepted, once registration has closed.
- Substitutions are allowed into team or dual events only, after registration has closed.
 - Events with more than one competitor can be substituted if at least one of the competitors was in the original group. A substitute must complete the [Competitive Event Change Form](#).
 - Substitutions into team or dual events must keep the entry in the same division, if not, this will result in a disqualification of the team or dual event.
- The number of competitors that compete in each level of competition is what is allowed to advance to the next level of competition.
- Failure to notify the competitive events team of a substitution may result in disqualification of the team or dual event.

Technology

- Students are required to bring their own device to Area and State conferences for competitive events. The devices must be checked prior to leaving home to make certain they can access wi-fi outside the district.
- All devices should be adequately charged before arriving at their competition room.
- No phones will be allowed in planning rooms.
- Wi-Fi is not always available at each conference location. Competitors need to have all videos, and presentations downloaded, so they are accessible without the internet.
- Screens/projectors are only guaranteed to be provided at the State conference.
 - Competitors will need to provide their own connectors/dongles to connect their computers to projectors.
- All presentations, presentation resources or videos should be available for offline use. Internet access may not be available at all locations.

Conference Registration, Attendance, & Participation in Events

- Teacher leaders must log in to the TAFE website and register for the conference they are attending. **Registration for the conference does not register your students for competitive events.** Please follow the instructions provided on the [TAFE Website](#) to register for competitive events.
- Students whose teacher leader fail to register for the conference or competitive events before the deadline will not be allowed to attend or compete.



TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF FUTURE EDUCATORS COMPETITIVE EVENTS

- Competitors should observe professional dress as defined by the [Dress Code Compliance Form](#). Students will not be allowed to compete if they are not compliant with the dress code. By attending any TAFE sponsored event or conference, you agree to be compliant with the dress code.
- Judges scores are final** - TAFE does not have an inquiry period for scores, all scores are final. **Teacher Leaders, Chaperones, and Parents are prohibited from approaching judges or competitive events headquarters to discuss scoring or feedback.** If a school/district is found in violation of this, they will lose IN GOOD STANDING status with the TAFE association. All questions or concerns should be brought to the attention of the officers and/or TAFE Staff putting on the event.
- The schedule of competitors will be followed as closely as possible. Please understand events can run behind and/or ahead of schedule throughout the day. Please be sure and follow all forms of TAFE communication so you do not miss the opportunity to compete.

Designation of Awards

- Students will receive awards based on the number of points scored on the event rubric. All State Qualifiers will be recognized on screen during the Closing General Session at Area Conferences and National Qualifiers, State Only Contests receiving Gold Certificates, and State Only Competitions Top 5 at the Teach Tomorrow Summit Closing General Session. The following awards will be given at Area & State Conferences:
 - National Qualifier** (Varying criteria - State Conference Only)
 - State Qualifier** (Area conference Only)
 - Gold Certificate** (90% to 100% of total points awarded only at State)
 - Silver Certificate** (80% to 89% of total points awarded only at State)
 - Bronze Certificate** (70% to 79% of total points awarded only at State)
 - Did Not Place** (0% to 69% of total points awarded only at State)

Area TAFE Conference To-Do List

- Register for your area conference (October 1- 15, 2025)
- Register for competitive events (October 1 - 15, 2025)
- For Bulletin Board and Project Visualize, submit a photo and summary sheet for an Originality Pre-Submission no later than the day before your area conference.

State TAFE Conference To-Do List

- Register to attend the TAFE State Conference (December 10, 2025 - January 30, 2026)
- Submit Prescored materials by January 30, 2026 @ 5:00pm
- Register for a time to compete at the TAFE State Conference (January 26-30, 2026)

EDUCATORS RISING LEADERSHIP AWARD COMPETITION

\$100 Scholarship to Highest Scorer

High School Varsity Only

National Qualifying Competition

Competitors may only compete in one event at the national level.

Entries Per Chapter	2 entries, Varsity Only
Type of Event	Individual (11 th and 12 th graders only)
State Competition	Yes
National Competition	Yes
Prescored Event	Yes, State and National

NATIONAL GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

NOTE: General rules and regulations apply to all national competitive events and are in addition to each event's specific guidelines. Guidelines are subject to change. Please refer to the EdRising Membership Portal for the latest version.

Failure to follow the stated guidelines will result in disqualification of student competing.

All students wishing to compete at the Educators Rising National Conference must complete 3 required steps:

1. **Be an Active level paid national member** of Educators Rising for the current school year. State-level membership must be paid, if applicable. [Click here to join.](#)
2. **Complete the online application** and upload all required materials in their final form by the stated deadline on the [National Competition page](#) located in the Student Resources section in the EdRising Membership Portal. **This is NOT done automatically if you competed at a state or regional conference.**
3. [Register to attend](#) the Educators Rising National Conference.

Eligibility

- Students must be a paid Active-level student member of Educators Rising no later than **February 1st** of the year in which they are competing. **Check or credit card payment must be received in the National Office by February 15th to be considered an Active-level member.**
- **Students may only compete in one competitive event.**
- **For contests:** Teacher leaders may enter up to two entries (individual or dual) per school in each event per division.
 - Dual means two students participating.
 - For dual entries consisting of students of varying grade levels, the entry will be placed in the division for the grade level of the most senior member.
- **For competitions:** Teacher leaders may enter up to two entries per school in each individual event per division and one team for team events per division. Competitions/contests that are marked as individual or dual will be considered individual events for this purpose.
 - All team events must have at least two students (and no more than four) per school to qualify.
 - For teams consisting of students of varying grade levels, the team will be placed in the division for the grade level of the most senior member.
- If a competitor is from a state that holds state competitions/contests, they must first qualify in that given event at their state conference before competing in that event at the Educators Rising National Conference. Contact your state/regional coordinator to see if your state offers competitive events. Visit our [state program page](#) on the Educators Rising national website to contact your state/regional coordinator.
- For states that offer state-level competitive events, the top ten places in each competition for each division offered by the state will be eligible to compete at the Educators Rising National Conference.
- For contests, you must compete in a state-level event in order to be eligible to compete at the Educators Rising National Conference. Only entries scoring 97-100 will be eligible to advance to nationals. No other entrants from states that offer the competitive events at the state level will be eligible for those state-level-offered competitive events.
- For nationals, schools are permitted to replace up to fifty percent of the original team members who qualified at the state-level. **Replacements can be made up to 7 days prior to the conference. No replacements can be made after this time or onsite.**
- For states that do not offer state-level competitive events, students may register to compete in those events at the Educators Rising National Conference. This applies to all Educators Rising national competitions. This does not apply to contests since you must qualify at state first before moving to nationals in any competition.
 - For example, if you want to compete in Public

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Speaking but place eleventh or lower in your state-level Public Speaking competition or don't compete in the state-level competitions at all — you cannot compete in Public Speaking at the National Conference this year. If you live in a state that didn't hold a Public Speaking state-level competition, you may register to compete in that event at the Educators Rising National Conference.

Division of Competition

- The breakdown of grades noted below is used to designate levels for competition entries. Not all competitions are open to all divisions.
 - Middle School — Grades 7, 8
 - High School Junior Varsity— Grades 9, 10
 - High School Varsity level — Grades 11, 12
 - Collegiate level – Undergraduates only
- Registering in the incorrect division will result in disqualification.
- Teams consisting of students from varying grade levels will be placed in the division for the grade level of the most senior member.

Application and Submission

- All submitted materials must reflect original work from the 2025-2026 school year. Material that may have been created or submitted in previous years is ineligible.
- **To be scheduled to compete in a national competition, all competitor applications, national dues, and required materials must be submitted online by the deadline stated on the [National Competitions page](#) in the Student Resources Section of the EdRising Membership Portal. **Deadline extensions will NOT be granted.****
 - **All competitions and contests require an online application submission even if no additional items need to be submitted.** Students who have won state-level competitive events must also submit their entries on the national website by the deadline to compete at the national conference. Your state does not do this for you.
 - **For team competitions only one application can be submitted** which lists all team members in all places indicated on the application form.
 - Each competition guideline will identify what materials are required for submission before the competition. Failure to submit the required materials by the submission deadline will result in disqualification. All submitted materials must be in their final form.

- All video files that are submitted in advance must be uploaded to either YouTube or Vimeo and be linked on the application form. Videos will not be accepted by mail. We recommend that competitors also bring a copy of the video file in MP3 format on a USB drive to the conference. Educators Rising competitions comply with FERPA regarding student privacy and video security. Competitors are responsible for ensuring that their competition videos comply with local and state requirements regarding student privacy.

- Except when explicitly specified, the Internet may not be used during a competition presentation at the Educators Rising National Conference. All relevant files and resources should be brought to the competition site on a USB drive. All Prezi files should be downloaded to the USB drive. Internet access may not be available during the competition. Laptops and projectors will be provided. Students should bring their own pointing device if needed.

Conference Registration, Attendance, and Participation in Events

- **All competitors must attend the Educators Rising National Conference and plan to arrive no later than 11 am on the first day of the conference and stay through the awards ceremony on the final day.** Conference dates and locations will be posted on the Educators Rising website and Membership Portal.
- Competitors must report to their assigned areas on time. Failure to report at their scheduled time can result in disqualification. ***Competition schedules will be posted in the [Educators Rising Membership Portal](#) one month before the conference.*** Be sure to check these schedules before planning your travel.
- Competitors are expected to dress in business-casual attire. (See the section Competition Dress Code for details on what is acceptable.) Points may be deducted from the entrant's score for failing to follow the dress code.
- Spectators are only permitted in the competitions marked "Open to Spectators." This includes parents, chaperones, teacher leaders, and other attendees. Spectators may not coach or offer any verbal or nonverbal assistance to a contestant during that contestant's assigned time slot with the judges. A breach of this guideline may result in the disqualification of the contestant.
- Teacher Leaders, Chaperones, and Parents are prohibited from approaching judges to discuss scoring or feedback. All questions or concerns should be brought to the attention of a national office staff member.

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Judging and Scoring

- Scoring is based on the posted individual competition rubric.
- Final scores will be based on a scaled score. Scaled scores are calculated through a number of methods including judges tie breakers and room normalizations.
- Judges will break ties in all competitive events.
- To accommodate a large number of competitors, we use multiple rooms each with its own set of judges. To ensure fairness across these rooms, we employ a well-established mathematical method to normalize scores. This method helps balance judge subjectivity and ensures all competitors have a fair shot, regardless of their assigned room.
- In each competitive event, each competitor gets an average score from the judges. That score is averaged with the partner judge. If there is a deviation of more than one standard deviation between rooms, the two rooms are normed against one another to that deviation. Final scores used for ranking are the normalized (also known as scaled scores).
- When normalizing scoring, perfect scores will be excluded from the normalization process. If more than one student in the same division in the same competition receives a perfect score, a second set of judges will review the recorded presentations for those students to make a final decision.

Awards

- For Competitions: Medals and certificates will be presented to the top three entries in each division for individual competitions. Trophies and certificates will be presented to the top three entries in each division for team competitions. All places will receive electronic certificates after the conference.
- For Contests: Ribbons will be awarded to students in each category in each division with scores as follows:
 - Blue-Scores 98-100
 - Red-Scores 94-97
 - White-Scores 90-93

Inquiry Process

- Following the conference, the student scores will be released directly to the participating student(s). The scores will provide individual judges' scores, the average score for the two judges, and the normalized score (if necessary.)
- Students will have 3 business days to file an inquiry regarding the validity of their score. Students will be required to complete the online inquiry request form and submit all required documentation for consideration. **No appeal will be accepted after the 3-day period.**
- Staff will review the scoring and respond to the inquiry within 30 days. **All decisions are final.**

Competition Dress Code

All competitors are expected to dress in business casual attire when competing. Refer to the guidelines below for a detailed explanation of what is and is not permissible as business casual.

- **Slacks, Pants, and Suit Pants**
Slacks that are similar to Dockers and other makers of cotton or synthetic material pants, wool pants, flannel pants, dressy capris, nice-looking dress synthetic pants and jeans without holes are acceptable. Inappropriate slacks or pants include jeans with holes, sweatpants, exercise pants, Bermuda shorts, short shorts, shorts, bib overalls, leggings, and any spandex or other form-fitting pants that people wear for biking.
- **Skirts, Dresses, and Skirted Suits**
Casual dresses and skirts, and skirts that are split at or below the knee are acceptable. Dress and skirt length should be at a length at which you can sit comfortably in public. Mini skirts, skorts, sun dresses, and spaghetti-strap dresses are inappropriate.
- **Shirts, Tops, Blouses, and Jackets**
Casual shirts, dress shirts, sweaters, tops, and polo shirts are acceptable. Educators Rising polo shirts are encouraged. Inappropriate attire includes tank tops; midriff tops; shirts with political messaging and/or potentially offensive, terms, logos, pictures, cartoons, or slogans; halter tops; tops with bare shoulders; sweatshirts, and t-shirts unless worn under another blouse, shirt, jacket, or dress.
- **Shoes and Footwear**
Conservative athletic or walking shoes, loafers, clogs, sneakers, boots, flats, dress heels, and leather deck-type shoes are acceptable. Flashy athletic shoes, thongs, flip-flops, and slippers are not acceptable.
- **Hats and Head Covering**
Hats are not appropriate inside the building. Head covers that are required for religious purposes or to honor cultural traditions are allowed.

Citations, References, and Copyrighted Material

- All ideas, text, images, and sound from other sources used for the competition must be cited in competition submissions.
- Competitors are strongly discouraged from using copyrighted material in their competition entries. If copyrighted material is used, written permission must be obtained to display and present media-related materials at the Educators Rising National Conference and post-media-related materials on the Educators Rising website. All permissions obtained to use copyrighted material must be included with the entry submission. (Note: This requirement applies to music used in videos, graphics taken from the

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internet, and other media-related materials. It does not apply to artifacts collected for a project.)

- Plagiarism is strictly prohibited in all documents submitted. Judges can disqualify students from competing if it is determined that any part of their documents have been plagiarized.

Use of AI

- Unless specifically stated in the guideline, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) software and programs is strictly prohibited in creating and preparing all materials submitted for Educators Rising competitions. This includes but is not limited to, documents, graphics, speeches, videos, and presentations. All submitted work must be the original and independent creation of the participant. Use of spelling and grammar check is allowed.
- Students competing will attest that they did not use any AI in the development and delivery of their competition. Students who are found in violation will be disqualified from the competition.

Electronic Devices

- Recording devices are not allowed in competitive events.
- All electronic devices—including but not limited to, cell phones, iPads/tablets, electronic readers, smart watches, etc.—must be turned off unless otherwise noted in specific event regulations.
- No electronic communication devices of any kind are permitted during competition.

Student Responsibilities for Competitions

- Students who participate in any Educators Rising competitive event are responsible for knowing all deadlines, updates, changes, and clarifications related to that event. Students and advisors must routinely check the EdRising Membership Portal for updated information.
- Entrants grant Educators Rising the right to use and publish the submission in print, online, or in any media without compensation.
- Entrants grant Educators Rising the right to post photos of students for promotional purposes on the Educators Rising website, Membership Portal, and social media sites.



DEADLINES AND CHECKLIST

Ready to compete at Nationals?

Here is a checklist to help you get prepared, registered,
and on the official schedule for nationals!

SUBMISSIONS OPEN: **FEBRUARY 1, 2026, 8:00 A.M.** EASTERN TIME

DEADLINE TO SUBMIT COMPETITION APPLICATIONS: **APRIL 6, 2026, 5:00 P.M.** EASTERN TIME

DEADLINE FOR COMPETITORS TO REGISTER FOR CONFERENCE: **APRIL 6, 2026, 5:00 P.M.** EASTERN TIME

- ☐ [Review the full national competition guidelines and rubric.](#) Check the Resources Section in the EdRising Membership Portal. *Some processes may be different from your state/regional conference.*
- ☐ **Update your contact information in the EdRising Membership Portal for the summer.** It is recommended that students use a personal mail address where they can receive Educators Rising email communication. Confirmations and reminder emails will be sent to the email listed on the competition application. Often school emails do not allow for Educators Rising emails to be received.
- ☐ **Step one:** [Go to the National Competition page in the EdRising Membership Portal.](#) **Step two:** Click on the title of the competition for which you are signing up to compete. **Step three:** Read the guidelines and rubrics. **Step four:** Click Apply, which will take you to the national competition online application platform. All competitors must submit the online competition application even if no additional documents need to be submitted. Only one application is to be submitted for Dual or Team competitions. *This only registers you for the competitions, you will still need to register for the conference separately.*
- ☐ **Complete the online application, upload any required documents/video links, and submit by the stated deadline.** Depending on your competition, some of these items are judged before the conference so make sure they are in their final form. Recommendation: Have someone proofread your documents before submitting them. Only competitors who register by the deadline will be scheduled to compete.

For competitions that have multiple students participating only one application should be submitted and all students need to be listed as team members in all places indicated on the application form.
- ☐ **Print and save your confirmation email and application number.** You will need the application number when you register for the conference.
- ☐ **Register as a competitor for the Educators Rising National Conference.** All national conference information, including how to register, can be found on the [Educators Rising National website](#).
- ☐ **Find out when you are scheduled to compete onsite.** [Competition schedules](#) will be posted in the EdRising Membership Portal one month prior to the conference. Go to the Resources section to find the posted schedules. Be sure to check these schedules prior to planning your travel. Competitors should plan to be available for competitions from 1 PM (conference time zone) on opening day through the awards celebration on the afternoon of the last day.
- ☐ **Practice, practice, practice!** The best way to prepare for your on-site competition is to practice in front of your peers. Recommendation: Reread the National Competition Guidelines and Rubric for your competition.
- ☐ **Head to Nationals!** National placers will be announced at the National Conference Awards Celebration on the final day of the conference. Don't miss your chance to be recognized! Be sure that when you plan your transportation for the conference you can attend this final celebration.



EDUCATORS RISING LEADERSHIP AWARD COMPETITION

COMPETITION TYPE: Individual - Closed to spectators

ELIGIBILITY LEVELS: High School Varsity

EDUCATORS RISING STANDARDS:

- Standard I: Understanding the Profession
- Standard II: Learning About Students
- Standard III: Building Content Knowledge
- Standard IV: Engaging in Responsive Planning
- Standard V: Implementing Instruction
- Standard VI: Using Assessments and Data
- Standard VII: Engaging in Reflective Practice

Contest Purpose

The Educators Rising Leadership Award Competition, sponsored by the PDK Greater San Antonio chapter, encourages inspired, proactive Educators Rising members to make an impact in their communities. Competitors seek to exemplify sound leadership and a strong commitment to improving education in their communities. The final award is given to one Educators Rising member who has made notable, voluntary contributions to his or her community through education.

To enter this competition, Educators Rising members must successfully complete a *self-initiated* service-learning project that meets several requirements:

- The project benefits individuals with special needs.
- The project includes a sustainability strategy so that the project's impact will not end when the Educators Rising Leadership Award Competition is over.
- The project cannot be part of the required curriculum for a course.
- The project requires a minimum of 40 hours of work.
- The project must be led by a single Educators Rising member. (While collaboration is encouraged, only one student per project will be eligible to win the scholarship.)
- Submit the complete project portfolio by the competition registration deadline stated in the General Competition Information sheet.

In addition to submitting the project portfolio, competitors must deliver a presentation to a panel of judges at the Educators Rising National Conference.

One student will be chosen as the winner of this competition and the recipient of a \$1,000 scholarship, provided by the PDK Greater San Antonio chapter.

Competition Guidelines

The student must complete an education-related service-learning project that makes a concrete and visible impact for individuals with special needs in the school or community. A minimum of 40 hours is required. The student must then complete a well-organized portfolio that includes an essay describing the project, as well as supporting artifacts. ***There are two components to the project portfolio: the essay and the artifacts. If the artifacts are not included, the application will be disqualified.***

ESSAY GUIDELINES

The essay must be typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, and written in English. The essay cannot exceed 12 pages. The student should address the following sections in his or her essay. These sections must be clearly labeled.

A. Title page

Include your name, your teacher leader's name, your school's name and address, and the title of your project.

B. Executive Summary

Give an overview of your project that is two pages or less. Include highlights from each section of the essay (background, project description, and reflection). For example, an executive summary might include a brief summary of the reasoning behind your project, what the project entailed, and the primary lessons that you learned from this experience.

C. Background

Why did you choose this project? Why is this project necessary and appropriate for this time and place? What is the intended impact of the project and how will you know if you achieved it?

D. Project description

Describe the process of completing your project. Questions to consider include:

- How did you determine a plan for your project? What was your method for gathering information and making strategic decisions?
- Did you need specific materials or volunteers? If so, how did you obtain them? How did you

keep everything, and everyone organized?

- How much time did you spend on this project? How did you spend most of your time? Was that different than what you anticipated? If so, how? How did you keep a record of progress?
- Did you make any significant changes to your project during the process? If so, did that affect the overall outcome? How?
- How did you know when the project was completed? Was there any presentation or debut of the final product?
- Did you undertake the project in a way that maximized its potential effectiveness?
- What is your strategy for keeping the project going once the competition is over?

E. Reflection

Reflect on the overall experience. Think about what you learned about yourself and those who benefited from the project. Consider how this experience will influence you in your future career in education. Questions to consider include:

- What did you learn about yourself as a project leader? What skills did you acquire that you can use in your career as an educator? How did this project affect you personally?
- What impact did this project have on your community? How did you measure or determine this impact? Given the project's outcome, did you spend your time well?
- What did you learn about working with others or managing people?
- What would you do differently, if anything?
- What do those who benefited from this project think of the work that you led? How has your project positively impacted education or supported the work of Educators Rising?

F. References

If you cited any research within your essay, be certain to include a works cited section. Follow APA, MLA, or Chicago citation style when writing your works cited section.



ARTIFACTS GUIDELINES

In addition to your essay, you ***must include five to eight artifacts*** in your project portfolio. An artifact is anything that demonstrates or exemplifies the work that you put into your service project. This is your chance to show the evidence and impact of your hard work. All artifacts should clearly and directly relate to the project objectives. Here is a list of sample artifacts that you might include:

- Photographs
- Newspaper articles, blogs, or other media coverage of your project
- Reflective journal
- Project timeline
- Log of how time was spent
- Testimonials from beneficiaries of your project (especially students and parents)
- Letters of commendation

Only artifacts submitted at the submission deadline will be considered for scoring. Artifacts brought on-site to the competition but not previously submitted will NOT be considered for scoring.

PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

- A. Students will deliver a slide deck presentation no shorter than five minutes and no longer than seven minutes describing their experience and insights gained through the project. Students should bring their presentation on a USB drive.
- B. One judge will also serve as timekeeper. Speakers will receive a visual, non-verbal indication that there is one-minute remaining when they reach the six-minute mark of their speeches. Speakers will be stopped at seven minutes.
- C. Students will respond to judges' follow-up questions. The entire presentation and question session will last a total of no more than 15 minutes.



EDUCATORS RISING LEADERSHIP AWARD COMPETITION

LEVEL (HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY)

DETAILED SCORING RUBRIC

Judges should use this rubric as a guide to assigning points on the Feedback & Tally Sheet.

PRE-SCORED COMPONENTS

Essay

Points Available	20-16 Accomplished	15-11 Commendable	10-6 Developing	5-1 Needs Improvement
Impact	The essay makes a clear and compelling, professional-caliber case for the project’s meaningful impact. Judges can clearly understand specifically why and how the student took on this project.	The essay makes a logical case for the project’s impact. Judges can mostly understand why and how the student took on this project.	The essay makes an inconsistent or superficial case for the project’s meaningful impact. Judges can partially understand why and how the student took on this project.	The essay makes a limited case for the project’s impact. Significant aspects of the essay may not be satisfactorily completed. Judges are left with significant questions as to why and how the student took on this project.
Special Needs Focus	The essay clearly and compellingly demonstrates the project’s well-executed focus on individuals with special needs. Well-articulated and backed by research and experience, the student demonstrates knowledge of how to effectively support individuals with special needs.	The essay demonstrates the project’s focus on individuals with special needs. Invoking some research and experience, the student demonstrates his/her project’s strategy for supporting individuals with special needs.	The essay inconsistently or superficially focuses on individuals with special needs. Invoking minimal research and experience, the student demonstrates a largely unpersuasive project strategy for supporting individuals with special needs.	The essay offers a limited, nonexistent, or not credible focus on individuals with special needs. Invoking limited or no research and experience, the student demonstrates a limited, nonexistent, or not credible strategy for supporting individuals with special needs.
Sustainability	The essay demonstrates a clear, compelling case for how the project’s work and impact will continue beyond the end of this competition.	The essay demonstrates a case for how the project’s work and impact will continue beyond the end of this competition.	The essay demonstrates an inconsistent or potentially superficial case for how the project’s work and impact will continue beyond the end of this competition.	The essay makes a limited, nonexistent, or not credible case for how the project’s work and impact will continue beyond the end of this competition.

Essay Cont.

Points Available	20-16 Accomplished	15-11 Commendable	10-6 Developing	5-1 Needs Improvement
Overall Quality	Overall, the essay represents an exceptional, professional-caliber effort at creating focused, sustainable, meaningful change.	Overall, the essay represents a good effort at creating meaningful change.	Overall, the essay represents an inconsistent or superficial effort at creating meaningful change.	Overall, the essay represents limited impact, effort, or quality.

Guideline Adherence

Points Available	2	0
Essay Format	Adheres to guideline requirements--typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, and written in English. The essay cannot exceed 12 pages.	Does not adhere to guideline requirements--typed in 12-point font, double-spaced, and written in English. The essay cannot exceed 12 pages.
Title Page	Includes student name, teacher leader's name, school's name and address, and title of project.	Does not include student name, teacher leader's name, school's name and address, and title of project.
Executive Summary	Is two pages or less and includes highlights from each section of the essay (background, project description, reflection).	Is more than two pages and/or does not include highlights from each section of the essay (background, project description, reflection).
Background	Section is complete.	Section is not complete.
Project Description	Section is complete.	Section is not complete.
Reflection	Section is complete.	Section is not complete.

Essay References and Mechanics

Points Available	5 Accomplished	4 Commendable	3 Developing	2-1 Needs Improvement
References (Works Cited Section)	Comprehensive, clear, error-free documentation formatting or content. Professional-caliber work.	One error or missing aspect in the documentation.	Two or three errors or missing aspects in the documentation.	Four or more errors or missing aspects in the documentation.
Grammar & Mechanics	Error-free grammar, spelling, punctuation, mechanics, and usage. Professional-caliber work.	One error in grammar, spelling, punctuation, mechanics, and usage.	Two or three errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, mechanics, and usage.	Four or more errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, mechanics, and usage.



Artifacts

Points Available	10-9 Accomplished	8-6 Commendable	5-3 Developing	2-1 Needs Improvement
Impact	Each artifact powerfully demonstrates the project's real-world impact.	Each artifact, with varying levels of success, demonstrates the project's real-world impact.	Not every artifact demonstrates the meaningful impact of the project.	Few artifacts demonstrate the meaningful impact of the project. Some aspects of artifacts may be distracting or irrelevant.
Comprehensiveness	The 5-8 artifacts collaboratively tell a compelling, comprehensive story of the project's outstanding focus, powerful impact, and genuine sustainability.	The 5-8 artifacts relate useful information about the project. More or deeper information, or more variety, would have taken the artifacts' impact from good to great.	The 5-8 artifacts show some information about the project but may be confusing or lacking important aspects.	The 5-8 artifacts do not convey a story of the project's focus, impact, or sustainability.

COMPONENTS SCORED ON-SITE

Presentation

Points Available	15-13 Accomplished	12-9 Commendable	8-5 Developing	4-1 Needs Improvement
Content	The student displays impressive, professional-level depth of knowledge and understanding of the project's outstanding focus, powerful impact, and genuine sustainability, based on his/her experience and research.	The student displays knowledge and understanding of the selected project's focus, impact, and sustainability, based on his/her experience and research.	The student displays an inconsistent or incomplete understanding of the project's focus, impact, or sustainability. Aspects of the assignment may not be satisfactorily addressed.	The student displays a limited understanding of the project's focus, impact, or sustainability. Significant aspects of the assignment are not satisfactorily addressed.
Vocal Delivery	Clarity of voice, pacing, and modulation of tone are professional-caliber and expertly crafted to deliver to the listener maximum impact and understanding.	Clarity of voice, pacing, and modulation of tone are strong. The listener is able to understand what the competitor is conveying.	Clarity of voice, pacing, and modulation of tone are basic and straightforward. The listener is able to understand, but the impact would be increased with a more dynamic or consistent vocal delivery.	Clarity of voice, pacing, and modulation of tone are inconsistent during the presentation. At times, the vocal delivery distracts from the content of the presentation and diminishes its potential impact.

Presentation Cont.

Points Available	15-13 Accomplished	12-9 Commendable	8-5 Developing	4-1 Needs Improvement
Q&A	The student's responses in the Q&A session demonstrate consistent thoughtfulness and professional-caliber insight, rooted in a deep understanding of the project and its impact.	The student's responses in the Q&A session demonstrated thoughtfulness and reflected successful attempts to address most of the material posed to him/her.	The student's responses in the Q&A session reflect inconsistent thoroughness and clarity from answer to answer.	The student's responses in the Q&A session may offer limited depth, accuracy, understanding, or insight into the project and its impact.
Overall Impact	The student delivered a professional-caliber and highly compelling presentation of the project's outstanding focus, powerful impact, and genuine sustainability.	The student delivered a good and mostly engaging presentation of the project's focus, impact, and sustainability.	The student delivered a decent effort, but the presentation was inconsistent or unclear at times. Stronger clarity on the project's focus, impact, and sustainability would have strengthened the presentation.	The student delivered an unclear, distracting, or incomplete presentation that lacked clarity.

Length

Points Available	5	3	1
Length	Initial presentation (before Q&A) is between 5 and 7 minutes.	Initial presentation (before Q&A) is at least 3 minutes and less than 5 minutes.	Initial presentation (before Q&A) is less than 3 minutes or had to be stopped at 7 minutes.



EDUCATORS RISING LEADERSHIP AWARD COMPETITION

LEVEL (HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY)

Student Name: _____

Student's School, City, State: _____

- Judges will use the Detailed Scoring Rubric as their guide to score students' competition entries.
- Points and feedback will be emailed to the student competitors no later than two weeks after the conference.

PRE-SCORED COMPONENTS

Essay

	Accomplished	Commendable	Developing	Needs Improvement	Score
Impact	20-16	15-11	10-6	5-1	
Special Needs Focus	20-16	15-11	10-6	5-1	
Sustainability	20-16	15-11	10-6	5-1	
Overall Quality	20-16	15-11	10-6	5-1	

Guideline Adherence

	Adheres	Does Not Adhere	Score
Essay Format	2	0	
Title Page	2	0	
Executive Summary	2	0	
Background	2	0	
Project Description	2	0	
Reflection	2	0	

Essay Reference & Mechanics

	Accomplished	Commendable	Developing	Needs Improvement	Score
Reference (Works Cited Section)	5	4	3	2-1	
Grammar & Mechanics	5	4	3	2-1	

ESSAY PRE-SCORE _____/102

Artifacts

	Accomplished	Commendable	Developing	Needs Improvement	Score
Impact	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	
Comprehensiveness	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	

ARTIFACTS PRE-SCORE_____/20

COMPONENTS SCORED ON-SITE

Presentation

	Accomplished	Commendable	Developing	Needs Improvement	Score
Content	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	
Vocal Delivery	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	
Q&A	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	
Overall Impact	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	

Length

	5 - 7 Minutes.	3 – less than 5 Minutes	Less than 3 Minutes or had to be stopped at 7 Minutes	Score
Length	5	3	1	

PRESENTATION ON-SITE SCORE_____/65

TOTAL SCORE_____/187

FEEDBACK FOR STUDENTS: Write two or more sentences.