



## GENERAL COMPETITION INFORMATION

*Failure to follow the stated guidelines could 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.
2. Sign up to compete at the national conference and submit any required materials by the stated deadline through 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.

### LEVELS 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 level — Grades 7, 8
  - High School Junior Varsity level — Grades 9, 10
  - High School Varsity level — Grades 11, 12
  - Collegiate level – Undergraduates only
- Teams consisting of students from varying grade levels will be placed in the division for the grade level of the most senior member.
- If there are not at least three competitors registered for a competition in a division, the competitors will be moved to the next highest division. The collegiate division will compete in their own division regardless of the number of competitors.
- 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, 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 competitions. Visit [bit.ly/EdRisingAffiliates](http://bit.ly/EdRisingAffiliates) to contact your state/regional coordinator.
- For states that offer state-level competitions, 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; no other entrants from states that offer the competition at the state level will be eligible for those state-level-offered competitions.
- For states that do not offer state-level competitions, students may register to compete in those events at the Educators Rising National Conference. This applies to all Educators Rising national competitions.
  - For example, if you want to compete in Impromptu Speaking but place sixth or lower in your state-level Impromptu Speaking competition or don't compete in the state level competitions at all — you unfortunately can't compete in Impromptu

### GENERAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

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

#### Eligibility

- Students must be a paid Active-level student member of Educators Rising no later than February 1 of the year in which they are competing.
- Students may enter up to a total of two events. This can be either two individual events, two team events, or one individual and one team event.
- Teacher leaders may enter up to two students per school in each individual event per division and one team for team events per division.

# GENERAL COMPETITION INFORMATION CONT.

Speaking at the Educators Rising National Conference this year. If you live in a state that didn't hold an Impromptu Speaking state-level competition, you may register to compete in that event at the Educators Rising National Conference.

## Competition Entries

- All submitted materials must reflect original work from the 2020-2021 school year. Material that may have been created or submitted in previous years is ineligible.
- **In order to be scheduled to compete in a national competition, all competitor applications, national dues and required materials must be submitted by the deadline stated in the Student Resources Section of the EdRising Membership Portal.**
  - Each competition guideline will identify what materials are required for submission prior to the competition. Failure to submit required materials by the submission deadline will result in disqualification.
  - ***Students who have won state-level competitions 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 entries in national competitions, competitors must submit or bring to the event all required materials described in the national competition guidelines. Any materials or forms submitted at previous state or local presentations need to be resubmitted for the national competition in order to count in national competitions.
- All video files that are submitted in advance must be in .mp4 format. Videos that are not in this file format will not be accepted and will be immediately disqualified. Videos will not be accepted by mail. The maximum file size for any video submitted in advance is 2 GB. **All competitors should also bring a copy of the video file on a USB drive to the conference.** Educators Rising competitions comply with FERPA in regard to 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. 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.** Conference dates and location 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 prior to the conference. Be sure to check these schedules prior to your arrival.
- Competitors are expected to dress in business-casual attire. **(See the section Competition Dress Code for details on what is acceptable.)** Points will be deducted from the entrant's score for failure to follow the stated dress code.
- 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 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.

## 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, and nice-looking dress synthetic pants are acceptable. Inappropriate slacks or pants include jeans, sweatpants, exercise pants, Bermuda shorts, short shorts, shorts, bib overalls, leggings, and any spandex or other form-fitting pants such as those in which people wear for biking.

# GENERAL COMPETITION INFORMATION CONT.

- **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, beach 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 potentially offensive words, 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 of the building. Head covers that are required for religious purposes or to honor cultural tradition 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 competitive entries. If copyrighted material is used, written permissions must be obtained for the rights to display and present media-related materials at the Educators Rising National Conference and to post media-related materials on the Educators Rising website. All permissions obtained to use copyrighted material must be included with entry submission. (Note: This requirement applies to music used in videos, graphics

taken from the 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 competing if it is determined that any part of their documents have been plagiarized.

### Electronic Devices

- Recording devices are not allowed in competitive events.
- Special approval from the event coordinator and the competitor is required before any event may be recorded.
- 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 and advisors must routinely check the EdRising Membership Portal for updated information about general rules and competitive event guidelines
- Students who participate in any Educators Rising competitive event are responsible for knowing all updates, changes, and clarifications related to that event.
- Certificates will be awarded to the top 10 entries. Awards will be presented to the top three entries in each category.
- 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.



ENTRIES WILL BE SUBMITTED THROUGH THE EDRISING MEMBERSHIP PORTAL ([members.pdkintl.org](https://members.pdkintl.org)) IN THE STUDENT RESOURCES SECTION.

HAVE ANY QUESTIONS? CALL 800-766-1156 OR EMAIL [INFO@EDUCATORSRISING.ORG](mailto:INFO@EDUCATORSRISING.ORG).

# CHECKLIST FOR APPLYING FOR EDUCATORS RISING NATIONAL COMPETITIONS

## 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, 2021 8:00 A.M. EASTERN TIME**  
DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR ON-SITE SCHEDULING: **APRIL 19, 2021 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.
- Log in to the EdRising Membership Portal, go to the Educators Rising High School Resources section, and click on the Student Resources tab.** Select the competition you are interested in from the list. Read the guidelines and rubrics and then click Apply, which will take you to the national competition online platform.
- Complete the online application, upload any required documents/videos, and submit.** 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 prior to submitting them. Many points have been lost in past years by competitors who had many spelling, grammar, and mechanics errors in their work.

*You must complete and submit the online application by the deadline stated in the Student Resources section of the EdRising Membership Portal to be scheduled to compete at the Educators Rising National Conference. **Participating at a state or regional conference does not provide a pass on completing this process.***

- Print and save your confirmation email.** You will need this information when you register for the conference.
- Register to attend the Educators Rising National Conference.** All national conference information, including how to register, can be found in the Resources section of the EdRising Membership Portal.
- Find out when you are scheduled to compete on-site.** Competition schedules will be posted in the EdRising Membership Portal one month prior to the conference. After this date, you can log in and go to the Resources section to find the posted schedules.
- 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.
- See you at Nationals!** The top 10 for each competition 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 that you can attend this final celebration.



## RESEARCHING LEARNING CHALLENGES COMPETITION

**COMPETITION TYPE:** Team — Closed to spectators

**ELIGIBILITY LEVELS:** High School Junior Varsity, High School Varsity, Collegiate

**EDUCATORS RISING STANDARDS:**

- Standard I: Understanding the Profession
- Standard II: Learning About Students
- Standard VI: Using Assessments and Data
- Standard VII: Engaging in Reflective Practice

### Contest Purpose

Approximately 6.7 million students in American public schools have been diagnosed with learning disabilities and receive special education services. (Citation: [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator\\_cgg.asp](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgg.asp)) Understanding how to support students with special needs is central to success as an educator. This competition offers Educators Rising students the opportunity to explore deeply and to develop recommendations regarding effective educational supports for students with special needs.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) groups students into fourteen disability categories. They are:

1. Autism
2. Deaf-blindness
3. Developmental delay
4. Emotional disturbance
5. Hearing impairment
6. Intellectual disability
7. Multiple disabilities
8. Orthopedic impairment
9. Other health impairments
10. Preschool disabled
11. Specific learning disability (e.g., dyslexia)
12. Speech or language impairment
13. Traumatic brain injury
14. Visual impairment

**This year's competition focuses on autism.** According to IDEA, autism means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three, that adversely affects a child's educational performance. Other characteristics often associated with autism are engagement in repetitive activities and stereotyped movements, resistance to environmental change or change in daily routines, and unusual responses to sensory experiences.

Due to their desire for consistency, structure, and routine, individuals with autism experience unique challenges when schools are required to implement distance learning. This disruption to the normal school day, along with the potential loss of extra support and specially designed instruction, can cause immense learning challenges and increase symptoms of anxiety and depression.

The purpose of this competition is to work collaboratively to learn more about this specific learning challenge and to produce a research-supported position paper and presentation to explain and to advocate for positive practices in schools to support students diagnosed with autism in situations where they are required to learn remotely. Taking into consideration the inherent challenges of distance learning for all students, how can educators prepare to support and reach students with autism learning within this type of structure?

Team members should research autism and best practices to support the education of students with this learning challenge. You are encouraged to embark on this research using traditional sources as well as primary sources (ex. conducting interviews with individuals impacted by this disability or professionals who support individuals with this disability, etc.). Then team members should discuss the research in order to determine recommendations for their paper and presentation.

Team members will collaborate on a research-supported position paper, which will be no shorter than four full pages and no longer than six full pages, to offer their recommendations. The minimum number of student collaborators is two, but there is no maximum. The position paper must include cited references (MLA, APA, or Chicago style are acceptable) and a works cited sheet, which will not count toward the four-to-six-page length requirement. (Also, the title page doesn't count toward the length requirement. If you are unable to reach the minimum length required, resume the research process — there is a lot of quality material out there on this topic.) The position paper will be submitted with the competition application and will be scored by judges prior to the national conference.

## Competition Guidelines

*There are two components to this competition:*

- *A position paper, submitted and scored by judges prior to the national conference, and*
- *An interactive session (including a presentation) with judges on-site at national conference.*

A. Team members will use the information collected in the research phase to collaborate in creating two products: a position paper and a slide deck presentation.

B. The position paper will include a title page, a works cited page (using MLA, APA, or Chicago citation style) and four-to-six full pages of research-supported recommendations with appropriate context. The works cited and title pages will not count towards the four-to-six-page length. The position paper must be submitted online.

C. The slide deck presentation (ex. PowerPoint, Prezi) should engagingly complement and

deliver the team's research findings and recommendations.

D. At the Educators Rising National Conference, qualifying representatives (two to four students) must present to a panel of expert judges for up to 10 minutes about their research using the slide deck as their visual aid. Students will also respond to judges' questions on the assigned topic and presentation; the entire interactive session with judges may last up to 15 minutes. Educators Rising will provide the laptop, LCD projector, and screen for the competition.

E. Team members should bring the file of their slide deck on a USB drive.

## Judging and scoring

1. The judges' decisions are final.
2. Scoring is based on the Researching Learning Challenges Competition rubric.

# RESEARCHING LEARNING CHALLENGES COMPETITION

**DETAILED SCORING RUBRIC**

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

**Position Paper**

Points Available	10-9 Accomplished	8-6 Commendable	5-3 Developing	2-1 Needs Improvement
Structure	The paper is expertly sequenced and structured in a way that maximizes understanding and impact.	The paper is sequenced and structured in a way that supports comprehension.  A more strategic approach to structure and sequence could yield greater impact.	The paper's structure and sequence reflect limited strategy for supporting understanding or impact.  Key aspects of the paper may be missing or superficial in their inclusion	The paper's structure and sequence reflect a lack of strategy and may distract the reader from the intended understanding or impact.
Clarity	The paper's professional-caliber recommendations are entirely clear, contextualized, justified, and feasible.	The paper's commendable student-level recommendations are mostly clear, contextualized, justified, and feasible.	The paper's recommendations may not be clear, contextualized, justified, or feasible.  Revision is recommended.	The paper's recommendations are not clear, contextualized, justified, or feasible.
Depth of Research	The paper makes informed, evidence-based recommendations by referencing at least three well-chosen sources of relevant information.	The paper makes recommendations that correlate to research that is referenced.  The paper may reference fewer than three sources or the source material may not directly correlate to the paper's central purpose.	The paper makes limited connections to relevant research.	The paper makes virtually no connections to relevant research.

**Position Paper Cont.**





# EDUCATORS RISING

Points Available	10–9 Accomplished	8–6 Commendable	5–3 Developing	2–1 Needs Improvement
Mechanics & Professionalism	Reflects a professional-quality document.  Contains no errors in mechanics (spelling, grammar, punctuation, formatting, capitalization).	Reflects a commendable, student-level document with one or two errors in mechanics (spelling, grammar, punctuation, formatting, capitalization).	Reflects a document in need of some proofreading and/or revision.  Contains three or four errors in mechanics (spelling, grammar, punctuation, formatting, capitalization).	Reflects a document in need of a significant review.  Contains more than four errors in mechanics (spelling, grammar, punctuation, formatting, capitalization).
Overall Impact	The paper’s professional-caliber and highly persuasive exploration of the issue and explanation of recommendations delivers maximum impact and understanding to the audience.	The paper reflects a commendable student-level effort.  With minor revisions and delivery tweaks, the paper could be considered professional-caliber	The minimally persuasive paper demonstrates effort.  At multiple points, the content may not effectively articulate or justify its recommendations. This may limit the impact of the presentation.	The unpersuasive paper demonstrates inconsistent, unprofessional, or superficial aspects of its content and structure.  The reader is frequently distracted from the intended impact by aspects of the content, structure, or lack of professionalism.

## Position Paper Guideline Adherence

Points Available	3	0
Title Page	Contains title, contestants’ names, schools, contact information, date.	Does not contain title, contestants’ names, schools, contact information, date.
Citations	Accurately uses MLA, APA, or Chicago-style format.	Does not accurately use MLA, APA, or Chicago-style format.
Works Cited	Accurately uses MLA, APA, or Chicago-style format.	Does not accurately use MLA, APA, or Chicago-style format.
Length	Four to six full pages of research-supported recommendations with appropriate context.	Less than four full pages or more than six full pages of research-supported recommendations with appropriate context.
Grammar & Mechanics	Contains two or fewer errors related to grammar and mechanics, including spelling, capitalization, punctuation, usage, and subject- verb agreement.	Contains more than two errors related to grammar and mechanics, including spelling, capitalization, punctuation, usage, and subject- verb agreement.

## Presentation and Q&A





# EDUCATORS RISING

Points Available	15-13 Accomplished	12-9 Commendable	8-5 Developing	4-1 Needs Improvement
Content of Slide Deck	<p>The content of the slides reflects professional-caliber thoughtfulness and thoroughness.</p> <p>The contestants expertly leverage the visual medium to bring out key insights and recommendations with clarity.</p>	<p>The commendable, student-level quality of the content of the slides reflects a commitment to sharing key facts and details of the contestants' insight and recommendations.</p>	<p>The content of the slides reflects compliance but minimal insight.</p> <p>The images employed may be basic or not entirely effective at amplifying the contestants' messages.</p>	<p>The content of the slides reflects inconsistent focus and quality.</p> <p>The images or text may distract the audience from the contestants' intended messages, or that message may lack focus.</p>
Depth & Insight	<p>The content of the presentation reflects professional-caliber, in-depth understanding and striking insight into all key facets of the issue.</p> <p>The excellent depth of research and preparation is clearly apparent throughout the presentation</p>	<p>The content of the presentation offers useful, well-detailed ideas that warrant further exploration beyond this session.</p> <p>The presentation may explore many but not all key facets of the issue.</p>	<p>The presentation offers basic, intuitive ideas that would have benefited from further unpacking in this session. Some material may be superficial or reflect limited research.</p> <p>The presentation may not explore many of issues or perspectives at play in the scenario.</p>	<p>The presentation may offer ideas that are flawed, illogical only partially developed and feel incomplete.</p> <p>Few perspectives or issues at play in the scenario are explored.</p>
Vocal Delivery	<p>Clarity of voice, pacing, and modulation of tone are professional-caliber and expertly crafted to deliver to the listener maximum impact and understanding</p>	<p>Clarity of voice, pacing, and modulation of tone are strong. The listener is able to understand what the contestants are conveying.</p>	<p>Clarity of voice, pacing, and modulation of tone are basic and straightforward.</p> <p>The listener is able to understand, but the impact would be increased with a more dynamic or consistent vocal delivery.</p>	<p>Clarity of voice, pacing, and modulation of tone are inconsistent during the presentation.</p> <p>At times, the vocal delivery from multiple team members distracts from the content of the speech and diminishes its potential impact</p>



# EDUCATORS RISING

Points Available	15-13 Accomplished	12-9 Commendable	8-5 Developing	4-1 Needs Improvement
Q&A Discussion	<p>The contestants' responses in the Q&amp;A session demonstrated consistent thoughtfulness and professional-caliber insight, rooted in the deep experience of the material.</p> <p>The contestants display impressive, professional-level depth of knowledge and understanding given his/her experience and research.</p>	<p>The contestants' responses in the Q&amp;A session demonstrated thoughtfulness and reflected successful attempts to address most of the material posed to him/her.</p> <p>The contestant displays some substantive knowledge and understanding of the selected topic based on his/her experience and research.</p>	<p>The contestants' responses in the Q&amp;A session reflected a broad spectrum of levels of quality, depth, or insight from answer to answer.</p>	<p>The contestants' responses in the Q&amp;A session may reflect evident effort and passion, but are inconsistent in the depth, accuracy, understanding, or insight offered in responses.</p>
Overall Impact	<p>The presentation reflects professional-caliber and highly persuasive recommendations via a deep exploration of the issue and context.</p> <p>The presentation content &amp; delivery effectively complement each other to craft a highly impactful, professional-caliber experience.</p>	<p>The content and delivery work together to offer a largely persuasive presentation.</p> <p>With deeper research, more realistic proposals or revisions to delivery, the project could be considered professional-caliber.</p>	<p>The minimally persuasive presentation does demonstrate effort.</p> <p>At multiple moments, the depth or strategy related to content or delivery may reflect a partial lack of understanding of key facets of the issue</p>	<p>The unpersuasive presentation demonstrates inconsistent, unprofessional, or superficial aspects in content or delivery.</p> <p>The audience is frequently distracted from the intended impact by aspects of the content or delivery.</p>



# RESEARCHING LEARNING CHALLENGES COMPETITION

LEVEL (HIGH SCHOOL JUNIOR VARSITY, HIGH SCHOOL VARSITY, COLLEGIATE)

Students' Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Students' 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.

## Position Paper

	Accomplished	Commendable	Developing	Needs Improvement	Score
Structure	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	
Clarity	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	
Depth of Research	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	
Mechanics & Professionalism	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	
Overall Impact	10-9	8-6	5-3	2-1	

## Overall Impact

	Adheres	Does Not Adhere	Score
Title Page	3	0	
Citations	3	0	
Works Cited	3	0	
Length	3	0	
Grammar & Mechanics	3	0	

POSITION PAPER PRE-SCORE \_\_\_\_\_/65

Continued

## Presentation and Q&amp;A

	Accomplished	Commendable	Developing	Needs Improvement	Score
Content of Slide Deck	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	
Depth & Insight	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	
Vocal Delivery	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	
Q&A Discussion	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	
Overall Impact	15-13	12-9	8-5	4-1	

**PRESENTATION AND Q&A ON-SITE SCORE \_\_\_\_\_/75**

**TOTAL SCORE \_\_\_\_\_/140**

**FEEDBACK FOR STUDENTS:** Write two or more sentences.