

2026 Law Day Speech Contest

For Louisville-Area Students Grades 9-12



Friends of **JCPLL** 

★ **Law**
Day 

The 2026 Law Day Speech Contest is sponsored by the Friends of the Jefferson County Public Law Library.

Friends of the JCPLL Law Day 2026 Welcome Letter

Louisville-area high school educators and students,

Law Day is an event sponsored by the American Bar Association designed to bring awareness to the legal profession and the legal system observed in the United States of America. The Jefferson County Public Law Library (JCPLL) is in downtown Louisville and offers legal information and resources to the community. It is the largest public law library in the state.

Since 2017, the Friends of JCPLL has hosted a Law Day in the Park in Jefferson Square here in downtown Louisville. Law Day in the Park is an event that involves representatives from local organizations and offices who come together to share resources and information about their programs. The event also includes speakers, panel discussions, food trucks, and live music.

This year, the Friends of JCPLL are sponsoring a speech contest. We are inviting any Louisville-area high school students (grades 9-12) to participate. Speeches should be focused on this year's Law Day theme assigned by the ABA: "The Rule of Law and the American Dream." You can learn more about the specific theme by visiting https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/law-day/. Speeches should be between five and seven minutes (between 600-750 words based on an average speaking rate of 125 to 150 words per minute).

We would like for educators to make this available to students in their classrooms and perhaps provide extra credit or make participation in this contest a graded assignment. The deadline for submissions is Friday, May 15th at 12:00PM noon. Three finalists will be selected by a panel of judges and invited to deliver their speeches at our Law Day in the Park celebration scheduled for June 4th, 2026. The winner, chosen that day, will be awarded a \$500 prize, while second and third place will be awarded \$250 and \$100 respectively.

Good luck to all who participate, and we look forward to your creativity and understanding of the importance of the Rule of Law and the American Dream.

Speech Contest Rules

- Use of artificial intelligence is prohibited
 - Each speech contest entry must be a student's original work. Entries created, partially or in whole, by generative AI (including, but not limited to, ChatGPT, DeepSeek, Google Gemini, Claude, and Copilot) are not acceptable. Each entry will be thoroughly vetted for AI use and any determined to include it will be rejected.
- Entries containing plagiarized material will be rejected
 - As previously stated, each speech contest entry must be a student's original work. This means that any writing or thoughts taken from another's work and presented as the entrant's own will invalidate the entry.
- Entries should be submitted as both a text document and video.
 - Entrants should upload a typed version of their speech and a video recording of them reciting the speech to Google Drive and share it via links included in an email to outreach@jcpllky.org. The email subject line should read "[FIRST NAME] [LAST NAME] Law Day 2026 Speech Contest Entry." Once the files are validated, the entrant will receive a confirmation email response.
- Speeches should be between five and seven minutes long when recited
 - With an average speaking rate of 125 to 150 words-per-minute, a five-to-seven-minute speech would be around 600-750 words.
- Submissions are due by 12:00PM Noon on May 15th, 2026
 - All entrants will be contacted by May 22nd.
- Finalists will be selected to speak at Law Day in the Park on Thursday, June 4th, 2026
 - To receive any prize, finalists must deliver their speech at Law Day in the Park. Finalists will be ranked first, second, and third and will receive \$500, \$250, or \$100 checks respectively.

Law Day in the Park Details

- Law Day in the Park will take place on Thursday, June 4th, 2026 from 11:00AM to 2:00PM in Jefferson Square Park. The address is 301 S 6th St, Louisville, KY 40202.
- Finalists will be contacted about a specific time for the speech contest.

Speech Contest Scoring Guidelines

- Each valid speech entry will be scored using each of the following criteria:
 - Ideas and Development
 - Organization, Unity, and Coherence
 - Word Choice
 - Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics
 - Creativity
 - Adherence to Theme and Understanding of Content
 - Delivery
- Each criterion will be scored 1-4 and a total composite score will be assigned to the speech. Three judges will score each speech. Using the final, combined scores of all three judges, speeches will be ranked and the top three will be deemed finalists.
- In the event of a tie, an additional, fourth judge will be asked to score each tying speech, and their scores will be used to determine the winner.
- A different panel of judges will score the finalists' live delivery of their speeches during Law Day in the Park using the same criteria. Their composite scores will be used to rank the finalists.