



High School Competition 2026 Contest Rules

Essay

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Columbia State Community College will sponsor an Essay Competition as part of our High School Competition Day on **March 20, 2026**. We encourage as many teachers as possible to accompany students to the competitions on this day.

The deadline for registration for the Essay Competition will be Friday, March 6, 2026. No late registration will be accepted. No one will be allowed to register on the day of the competition.

Please note that the maximum number of participants per high school for the Essay Competition is **three (3) students**. (**Please submit names of any alternate students as well**). The three students may be chosen from grades 9-12.

Rules for Essay Competition:

- 1. TOPIC:** The topic for the essay competition will be announced at the time of the contest.
- 2. ESSAY LENGTH:** Essays should be 300 - 400 words in length and written during a 45-minute time period.
- 3. JUDGING:** Essays will be scored by a panel of English faculty members from Columbia State. Scoring will be based upon a holistic scale of 1 to 6.
- 4. REFERENCE TOOLS:** Students may bring a thesaurus and a dictionary. Paper will be supplied.
- 5. AWARDS:** There will be awards for first, second, and third place in the essay competition.
- 6. SPECIAL NOTES:** All essays will be retained by the college and become the property of Columbia State. Individual scores will be sent to participating schools if they request them. They will be reported according to assigned student

numbers, not by student names. Essay participants will each be assigned a number, so that student names do not appear on the essays themselves.

For additional information please contact Mr. Graham Harkness.