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**Students from 17 Oregon High Schools Compete for Scholarships in  
Nationwide *Poetry Out Loud* Competition  
State Winner Will Represent Oregon at Nationals in Washington, D.C.**

This year, the Oregon Arts Commission, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation, brings *Poetry Out Loud* to 17 high schools in 13 communities, reaching more than 4,000 students across Oregon. The program, now in its fourth year in Oregon, involves the memorization and recitation of classic poetry and culminates in a statewide competition. Nationwide, more than 200,000 students are expected to participate. Participants compete for more than \$50,000 in college scholarships awarded at the state and national levels.

After months of classroom study and preparation, students participate in school wide recitation contests, with each winner eligible to compete in the state contest to be held March 14, 2009 in Salem.

Oregon's 2008 State Champion, Sophia Soberon from Brookings-Harbor High School, took second place related in the 2008 national competition. She won a total of \$10,200 (\$200, state; \$10,000 national) in scholarships for her education at Southern Oregon University, while her school received \$1,000 (\$500 each, state and national) to purchase poetry books for its library.

A number of new schools adopted Oregon's *Poetry Out Loud* program this year. With the Oregon School for the Deaf competing for the first time, Oregon enjoys the distinction of being the first state in the nation to host a deaf student at the state contest. The schedule of school competitions follows. Please contact the school coordinator for permission to cover a contest.

(\* denotes a school new to the program)

**Fri January 23 11 AM – 2 PM**  
Oregon School for the Deaf\*  
999 Locust St. NE, **Salem**  
Coordinator: Gayle Robertson  
503-378-1328, [gayle.robertson@osd.k12.or.us](mailto:gayle.robertson@osd.k12.or.us)

**Mon February 2 7 PM**  
Salem Academy  
942 Lancaster Dr., NE, **Salem**  
Coordinator: Sara Patrick  
503-378-1219, [spatrick@salemacademy.org](mailto:spatrick@salemacademy.org)

**Wed February 4 8:30 AM**  
Woodburn Arts & Communications Academy  
1785 N. Front St., **Woodburn**  
Coordinator: Desiree Kiesel  
503-982-3398, [dkiesel@woodburn.k12.or.us](mailto:dkiesel@woodburn.k12.or.us)

**Thu February 5 7 PM**  
Redmond High School\*  
675 SW Rimrock, **Redmond**  
Coordinator: Rachel Sarrett  
541-923-4800,  
[rachel.sarrett@redmond.k12.or.us](mailto:rachel.sarrett@redmond.k12.or.us)

**Mon February 9 7 PM**  
Crook County High School  
1100 SE Lynn Blvd., **Prineville**  
Coordinator: Anita Hoffman  
541-416-6900,  
[anita.hoffman@crookcounty.k12.or.us](mailto:anita.hoffman@crookcounty.k12.or.us)

**Tue February 10 Time TBA**  
Sam Barlow High School\*  
5105 SE 302nd Ave., **Gresham**  
Coordinator: Robyn Rose  
503-674-5668,  
[robyn\\_Rose@gbsd.gresham.k12.or.us](mailto:robyn_Rose@gbsd.gresham.k12.or.us)

**Wed February 11 8:45 AM**  
Veritas School  
401 Mission Dr., **Newberg**  
Coordinator: Megan Hills  
503-538-1962, [mhills@veritasschool.net](mailto:mhills@veritasschool.net)

**Thu February 12 7 PM**  
Hidden Valley High School\*  
651 Murphy Creek Rd., **Grants Pass**  
Coordinator: Julia Richardson  
541-862-2124,  
[Julia.Richardson@threerivers.k12.or.us](mailto:Julia.Richardson@threerivers.k12.or.us)

**Tue February 17 3 PM**  
West Salem High School\*  
1776 Titan Drive NW, **Salem**  
Coordinator: Christina Eddy  
503-399-5533,  
[eddy\\_christina@salkeiz.k12.or.us](mailto:eddy_christina@salkeiz.k12.or.us)

**3:30 PM**  
Bandon High School\*  
550 9th St. SW, **Bandon**  
Coordinator: Ellen Howard  
541-347-4413, [ellenh@bandon.k12.or.us](mailto:ellenh@bandon.k12.or.us)

**Thu February 19 9:30 AM – 2 PM**  
Hood River Valley High School  
1220 Indian Creek Rd., **Hood River**  
Coordinator: Regena Rafelson  
541-386-4500, [rrafelson@hoodriver.k12.or.us](mailto:rrafelson@hoodriver.k12.or.us)

The state *Poetry Out Loud* Contest takes place:

**Saturday March 14, 9 AM – 3 PM**  
Salem Public Library, Loucks Auditorium  
585 Liberty St. SE, **Salem**  
Coordinator: Deb Vaughn  
503-986-0085, [deborah.vaughn@state.or.us](mailto:deborah.vaughn@state.or.us)

This year's competition will be judged by Lawson Inada, Oregon poet laureate; Sophia Soberon, 2008 national POL runner-up and Oregon state champion; Scott Poole, poet-in-residence, *Live Wire!*; Mindi L. Logan, theater professor, University of Portland; and Scott Wildenstein, poet and sign interpreter at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.

**Fri February 20 12:25 PM**  
Cascade Christian High School\*  
855 Chevy Way, **Medford**  
Coordinator: Suzanne Ray  
541-772-0606, [sray@gmail.com](mailto:sray@gmail.com)

**Tue February 24 2:45 PM**  
Arlington High School\*  
1200 Main Street, **Arlington**  
Coordinator: Charles Van Gorder  
541-454-2632, [cvangorder@arlington.k12.or.us](mailto:cvangorder@arlington.k12.or.us)

**3 PM**  
Sherwood High School  
16956 SW Meinecke Rd., **Sherwood**  
Coordinator: Jared Jones  
503-825-5500, [jjones@sherwood.k12.or.us](mailto:jjones@sherwood.k12.or.us)

**Wed February 25 2:35 PM – 4 PM**  
South Medford High School  
815 S. Oakdale Ave., **Medford**  
Coordinator: Clancy Rone  
541-842-1441, [clancy.rone@medford.k12.or.us](mailto:clancy.rone@medford.k12.or.us)

**6 PM**  
Center for Advanced Learning  
1484 NW Civic Dr., **Gresham**  
Coordinator: Rita Ramstad  
503-667-4978,  
[rita\\_ramstad@thecenterforadvancedlearning.org](mailto:rita_ramstad@thecenterforadvancedlearning.org)

**Tue March 3 12:35 PM**  
Madison High School  
2735 NE 82nd Ave., **Portland**  
Coordinator: Daniel Fredgant  
503-916-5220, [dfredgan@pps.k12.or.us](mailto:dfredgan@pps.k12.or.us)

In addition to winning a \$200 scholarship and \$500 for the school library’s poetry collection, the state champion receives an all-expense-paid trip, with a chaperone, to Washington, DC to compete in the national finals, April 26-28, 2009. April is National Poetry Month.

*Poetry Out Loud* seeks to foster the next generation of literary readers by capitalizing on the latest trends in poetry – recitation and performance. The program builds on the resurgence of poetry as an oral art form, as seen in the slam poetry movement, and brings aspects of slam poetry, spoken word and theater into the English class.

“Learning great poetry by heart develops the mind and imagination,” observes Dana Gioia, chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts. “*Poetry Out Loud* isn’t just an arts program. By immersing themselves in powerful language and ideas, students develop their ability to speak well, especially in public. This is a skill they will use in the workplace and the community for the rest of their lives.”

The Oregon Arts Commission, the NEA and the Poetry Foundation partner to sponsor *Poetry Out Loud*. The Arts Commission has developed an Oregon Curriculum Guide that can be used to connect *Poetry Out Loud* classroom activities to Oregon’s Content and Performance Standards in Language Arts and the Arts/Drama.

For further information on *Poetry Out Loud*, contact the Oregon Arts Commission at 503-986-0082, or visit the national website at [www.poetryoutloud.org](http://www.poetryoutloud.org)

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The Oregon Arts Commission provides leadership, funding and arts programs through its grants, special initiatives and services. Nine commissioners, appointed by the Governor, determine arts needs and establish policies for public support of the arts. The Arts Commission became part of the Economic Development Department in 1993 in recognition of the expanding role the arts play in the broader social, economic and educational arenas of Oregon communities. In 2003, the Oregon legislature moved the operations of the Oregon Cultural Trust to the Arts Commission, streamlining operations and making use of the Commission’s expertise in grantmaking, arts and cultural information and community cultural development. The Arts Commission is supported with general funds appropriated by the Oregon legislature and with federal funds from the National Endowment for the Arts as well as funds from the Oregon Cultural Trust. For more information about the Oregon Arts Commission: [www.oregonartscommission.org](http://www.oregonartscommission.org).