REACH FOR THE STARS
2020-2021

CATALOGUE OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

More than 120 academic enrichment programs, activities, challenges, competitions, events and opportunities for Minnesota K–12 students.
REACH FOR THE STARS — EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS
Reach for the Stars is your guide to high-quality academic enrichment programs and activities to supplement classroom teaching and learning and broaden or increase student performance. The programs featured in this catalogue cover a wide range of subject areas and grade levels from kindergarten to adult. Whether offered outside the school day or embedded within classroom curricula, these programs will help students discover and develop their interests, passions and talents. They will help schools and communities support and integrate programs for students to stretch their abilities, learn new skills and reach new heights in learning.

With more than 120 programs included in Reach for the Stars, we believe you will find one or more programs to help students, families and schools meet personal expectations and local, state or national academic goals and standards. Programs listed have met the criteria for approval set by the Minnesota Academic League Council.

Find a Program
All programs and activities are listed alphabetically by program name and each listing includes a brief description, appropriate grade or age level, skill sets used, curricular area, and contact information to learn more. Programs are also listed by academic content area and program category. If you have difficulty finding a program, look in the table of contents under the program sponsor name or under Minnesota, MN or National as that may be part of the formal program name. Please contact the sponsoring organization directly using the information provided in the listing to participate in the activity or for schedules and program updates.

Access and Share
Reach for the Stars has gone virtual this year! You can access this great resource in a PDF and/or text-only Word document format on the new Synergy & Leadership Exchange website at www.synergyexchange.org. To assist you in sharing this resource with others, a promotional postcard has been created that can be distributed to others and posted as a visual reminder of the numerous programs available to students statewide. Email reach@synergyexchange.org for your postcards today.

Support For
Reach for the Stars is published as a public service by Synergy & Leadership Exchange, working in conjunction with the Minnesota Academic League Council. Preparation of the catalogue is supported in part by the affiliate members of the Minnesota Academic League and by the generous support from The Minnesota Service Cooperatives. Distribution is facilitated through an expanded partnership network including several statewide and regional education organizations and associations as referenced in the catalogue. A special thanks to the hundreds of volunteers, organizations and program providers whose combined efforts result in tens of thousands of Minnesota students enjoying challenging, stimulating and entertaining academic enrichment opportunities!
MINNESOTA ACADEMIC LEAGUE COUNCIL
Sam Alley
Wendy Behrens
Eric Billiet
Paul Brinkman, Chair
Patti Haasch
Carol Malueg
Deborah Moore
Bonnie Vagasky
Kristine Wehrkamp

LOCAL ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES
Enrichment programs and activities may not be listed in Reach for the Stars because they are only offered locally and not statewide, a criterion for inclusion. For local program ideas, contact your area school district, community education program, city park and recreation board, public library, university or college, or after school regional network. Find a school or public library at www.education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/lib/. Examples of after school regional networks:

- Brooklyn Center/Brooklyn Park – www.brooklynsallianceforyouth.org
- Duluth – www.activityhero.com/in/duluth-mn/activity-providers
- Itasca – www.getlearning.org/page/2694
- Northfield – www.northfieldhci.org/primetime
- Minneapolis – www.ycb.org/whatsup612
- St. Paul – www.sprocketssaintpaul.org/program-finder

PROMOTING ACADEMIC ENRICHMENT

★ MINNESOTA ACADEMIC LEAGUE AFFILIATES

- Academic Decathlon®
- Academic Pentathlon®
- BestPrep’s Financial Matters
- BestPrep’s The Stock Market Game™
- CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition
- Engineering Machine Design Contest
- Gathering of Champions
- Genes in Space
- H2O for Life
- LifeSmarts
- MAAP STARS
- Math Masters
- MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math Enrichment
- Minnesota ArcGIS Online Student Competition
- Minnesota Business Professionals of America
- Minnesota DECA
- Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA)
- Minnesota Future City Competition
- Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program
- Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)
- Minnesota MATHCOUNTS
- Minnesota Scholars of Distinction Award Program
- Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division B)
- Poetry Out Loud
- School Chess Association
- SkillsUSA Minnesota
- Spelling Bee
- WordMasters Challenge
- YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)
- YMCA Model United Nations
- YMCA Respectful Conversations in Schools
- YMCA Student Election Judge Network
- YMCA Students Voting Minnesota
- YMCA Youth in Government
Think outside the classroom.

- Academic Decathlon
- Art Show
- Knowledge Bowl
- Math Masters
- Science Fair
- Spelling Bee
- Tech Mobile
- Young Authors Conference
We are proud to be Minnesota Academic League strategic partners, distributing **Reach for the Stars** to schools, educators & families.

Visit [www.mnservcoop.org](http://www.mnservcoop.org) or the service cooperative in your region to view the activities offered.

- **Northwest Service Cooperative**
  - [www.nw-service.k12.mn.us](http://www.nw-service.k12.mn.us)
  - Regions 1 and 2

- **Lakes Country Service Cooperative**
  - [www.lcsc.org](http://www.lcsc.org)
  - Region 4

- **SWWC Service Cooperative**
  - [www.swwc.org](http://www.swwc.org)
  - Regions 6 and 8

- **Northeast Service Cooperative**
  - [www.nescmn.net](http://www.nescmn.net)
  - Region 3

- **Sourcewell**
  - [www.sourcewell-mn.gov](http://www.sourcewell-mn.gov)
  - Region 5

- **Resource Training and Solutions**
  - [www.resourcecoop-mn.gov](http://www.resourcecoop-mn.gov)
  - Region 7

- **Metro ECSU**
  - [www.metroecsu.org](http://www.metroecsu.org)
  - Region 11

- **Southeast Service Cooperative**
  - [www.ssc.coop](http://www.ssc.coop)
  - Region 10

- **South Central Service Cooperative**
  - [www.mnscsc.org](http://www.mnscsc.org)
  - Region 9
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LISTING OF PROGRAMS BY CATEGORY

AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS
- FIRST LEGO® League
- FIRST LEGO® League Junior
- FIRST® Tech Challenge
- Gathering of Champions
- Jostens Renaissance Education
- Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program
- MAAP STARS
- Math Masters
- Minnesota Academy of Science – Junior Science & Humanities Symposium (JSHS)
- Minnesota Academy of Science – State Science & Engineering Fair
- Minnesota ArcGIS Online Student Competition
- Minnesota Business Professionals of America
- Minnesota DECA
- Minnesota Envirothon
- Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA)
- Minnesota FFA
- Minnesota Future City Competition
- Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program
- Minnesota High School Music Listening Contest
- Minnesota Junior High Math League
- Minnesota MATHCOUNTS
- Minnesota Mathematics League
- Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division A)
- Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division B)
- Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division C)
- Minnesota State High School Mathematics League
- Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society Mondale-Quie Essay Contest

CHALLENGES & COMPETITIONS
- Academic Decathlon®
- Academic Pentathlon®
- Academic WorldQuest
- American Mathematics Competitions – 8
- American Mathematics Competitions – 10 & 12
- BestPrep’s Minnesota Business Venture
- BestPrep’s The Stock Market Game™
- Continental Mathematics League
- CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition
- Destination Imagination
- Dream It. Do It. Minnesota
- Economics Challenge
- Engineering Machine Design Contest
- Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis Essay Contest
- FIRST LEGO® League
- FIRST® Tech Challenge
- Genes in Space
- German Language and Culture Festival
- Global Food Challenge
- Junior Achievement Capstone Programs
- Junior Achievement K–12 Classroom Programs
- Kids Philosophy Slam
- Knowledge Bowl Competitions – Jr. and Sr. High
- LifeSmarts
- MAAP STARS
- Math Masters
- Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools (MOEMS®)
- MathWorks Math Modeling (M3) Challenge
- Minnesota Academy of Science – Junior Science & Humanities Symposium (JSHS)
• WordWright Challenge
• World Savvy Classrooms & Festival
• YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)

CLASSROOM ENRICHMENT
• Academic Decathlon®
• Academic Pentathlon®
• Being the Change
• BestPrep’s Classroom Plus
• BestPrep’s eMentors
• BestPrep’s Financial Matters
• BestPrep’s The Stock Market Game™
• Calendar in the Classroom
• Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University
• Classroom Connection
• Close Up Washington D.C.
• Continental Mathematics League
• Dream It. Do It. Minnesota
• Engineering Machine Design Contest
• Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis Essay Contest
• FIRST LEGO® League Junior
• H2O for Life
• Junior Achievement Capstone Programs
• Junior Achievement K–12 Classroom Programs
• Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program
• LifeSmarts
• MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math Enrichment
• Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools (MOEMS®)
• Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom (MAITC)
• Minnesota ArcGIS Online Student Competition
• Minnesota Future City Competition
• Minnesota High School Music Listening Contest
• Minnesota MATHCOUNTS
• Minnesota Youth Institute
• Mock Trial Program
• National History Day in Minnesota
• Northwestern University Midwest Academic Talent Search (NUMATS)
• Perennial Math Online Math Competition
• Poetry Out Loud
• Student Television Network (STN)
• Sumdog
• TEAMS
• Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl
• University of Minnesota Talented Youth Math Program (UMTYMP)
• Unsung Hero Projects
• Walker Art Center Art Today Tour
• WordMasters Challenge
• YMCA Respectful Conversations in Schools
• YMCA Students Voting Minnesota

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT
• American Legion Auxiliary Girls State
• American Legion Boys State
• Being the Change
• BestPrep’s eMentors
• BestPrep’s Minnesota Business Venture
• Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University
• HOBY Youth Leadership Seminar
• Jostens Renaissance Education
• Minnesota 4H Youth Development
• Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA)
• Minnesota FFA
• Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program
• Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)
• Minnesota Scholars of Distinction Award Program
• SkillsUSA Minnesota
• United States Senate Youth Program
• World Savvy Classrooms & Festival
• YMCA Model United Nations
• YMCA Student Election Judge Network
• YMCA Youth in Government

OUT OF SCHOOL TIME ENRICHMENT
• College Dollars & Sense
• Concordia Language Villages
• Crazy 8s Math Club
• German Language and Culture Festival
• Girls Who Code Clubs
• H2O for Life
• MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math Enrichment
• Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools (MOEMS®)
• Minnesota 4H Youth Development
• Minnesota Academy of Science – Middle School and High School Science Bowl
• Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)
• Minnesota PTA Reflections
• MN Cup Competition – Youth Division
• Sumdog
• Technovation [MN]
• U.S. Academic Triathlon
• University of Minnesota Talented Youth Math Program (UMTYMP)
• WAM Teen Architecture Workshop
• YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)
• YMCA Student Election Judge Network

CONFERENCES & INSTITUTES
• American Legion Auxiliary Girls State
• American Legion Boys State
• HOBY Youth Leadership Seminar

• Minnesota Business Professionals of America, Secondary Division
• Minnesota DECA
• Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA)
• Nobel Conference at Gustavus Adolphus College
• YMCA Model United Nations
• YMCA Youth in Government

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• Minnesota Business Professionals of America, Secondary Division
• Minnesota DECA
• Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA)
• Nobel Conference at Gustavus Adolphus College
• YMCA Model United Nations
• YMCA Youth in Government
### LISTING OF PROGRAMS BY ACADEMIC CONTENT

Search for opportunities by academic content area. Key for program grade levels:

- **E** = Elementary school (grades K–5)
- **M** = Middle school (grades 6–8)
- **H** = High school (grades 9–12)
- **P** = Post-secondary

#### ARTS
- Academic Decathlon®
- Academic Pentathlon®
- Calendar in the Classroom
- Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University
- Classroom Connection
- College Dollars & Sense
- Gathering of Champions
- Girls Who Code Clubs
- H2O for Life
- Jostens Renaissance Education
- Knowledge Bowl Competitions – Jr. and Sr. High
- LifeSmarts
- MAAP STARS
- Minnesota 4H Youth Development
- Minnesota Future City Competition
- Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program
- Minnesota High School Music Listening Contest
- Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)
- Minnesota PTA Reflections
- Minnesota Scholars of Distinction Award Program
- Minnesota Scholastic Art Awards
- Mock Trial Program
- MSHSL Music, One Act Play, Visual Arts
- Poetry Out Loud
- SkillsUSA Minnesota
- Student Television Network (STN)
- Unsung Hero Projects
- U.S. Academic Triathlon

#### BUSINESS/CAREER EDUCATION
- Academic WorldQuest
- BestPrep’s Classroom Plus
- BestPrep’s eMentors
- BestPrep’s Financial Matters
- BestPrep’s Minnesota Business Venture
- BestPrep’s The Stock Market Game™
- Girls Who Code Clubs
- Junior Achievement Capstone Programs
- Junior Achievement K–12 Classroom Programs
- LifeSmarts
- MAAP STARS
- Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom (MAITC)
- Minnesota Business Professionals of America
- Minnesota DECA
- Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA)
- Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program
- Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)
- MN Cup Competition – Youth Division
- Mock Trial Program
- Personal Finance Decathlon
- SkillsUSA Minnesota
- Student Television Network (STN)
- World Savvy Classrooms & Festival

#### LANGUAGE ARTS
- Academic Decathlon®
- Academic Pentathlon®
- Being the Change
- BestPrep’s eMentors
- Calendar in the Classroom
- Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University
- Classroom Connection
- College Dollars & Sense
- Gathering of Champions
- Girls Who Code Clubs
- H2O for Life
- Jostens Renaissance Education
- Knowledge Bowl Competitions – Jr. and Sr. High
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- Minnesota 4H Youth Development
- Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom (MAITC)
- Minnesota Future City Competition
- Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program
- Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)
- Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society Mondale-Quie Essay Contest
- Mock Trial Program
- MSHSL Debate, Speech
- National Language Arts League
- NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing
- NCTE Promising Young Writers Program
- Poetry Out Loud
- Spelling Bee
- U.S. Academic Triathlon
- Unsung Hero Projects

#### GENERAL
- BestPrep’s eMentors
- BestPrep’s The Stock Market Game™
- BestPrep’s Minnesota Business Venture
- BestPrep’s Financial Matters
- World Savvy Classrooms & Festival
### STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATH)

- WordMasters Challenge
- WordWright Challenge
- World Savvy Classrooms & Festival
- YMCA Model United Nations
- YMCA Respectful Conversations in Schools
- YMCA Youth in Government
- FIRST LEGO® League
- FIRST LEGO® League Junior
- FIRST® Tech Challenge
- Genes in Space
- Girls Who Code Clubs
- Junior Achievement Capstone Programs
- Junior Achievement K–12 Classroom Programs
- Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program
- LifeSmarts
- MAAP STARS
- Math Masters
- MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math Enrichment
- Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools (MOEMS®)
- MathWorks Math Modeling (M3) Challenge
- Minnesota 4H Youth Development
- Minnesota Academy of Science – Junior Science & Humanities Symposium (JSHS)
- Minnesota Academy of Science – Middle School and High School Science Bowl
- Minnesota Journal of Science
- Minnesota Mathematics League
- Minnesota Junior High Math League
- Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)
- Minnesota Future City Competition
- Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division C)
- Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division B)
- Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division A)
- Minnesota Scholars of Distinction Award Program
- Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society
- World Savvy Classrooms & Festival
- WAM Teen Architecture Workshop
- University of Minnesota Talented Youth Math Program
- U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad
- U.S. Academic Triathlon
- Technovation
- Technovation [MIN]
- Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards
- U.S. Academic Triathlon
- U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad
- University of Minnesota Talented Youth Math Program
- WAM Teen Architecture Workshop
- World Savvy Classrooms & Festival
- YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)

### WORLD LANGUAGES

- Academic WorldQuest
- Classroom Connection
- Concordia Language Villages
- German Language and Culture Festival
- World Savvy Classrooms & Festival
**ACADEMIC DECATHLON**

Grades 9–12  
**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment  
**Academic Content:** Arts, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM

A national scholastic competition designed to stimulate intellectual growth and encourage greater respect for knowledge. The format includes students from each GPA category, honor (3.80–4.0), scholastic (3.20–3.799) and varsity (0.0–3.199) competing in 10 curricular areas. Competitions range from local scrimmages to national contests. This year’s theme is “The Cold War.”

**Academic Skills:** Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, factual recall, interdisciplinary, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, research, teamwork, time/budget management and verbal reasoning

**Program Provider:** South Central Service Cooperative  

**Website:** [www.mnscsc.org/decathlon](http://www.mnscsc.org/decathlon)  
**Email:** jswenson@mnscsc.org  
**Phone:** (507) 389-5017 or (612) 578-3377  
**Contact:** Joyce Swenson

**ACADEMIC PENTATHLON**

Grades 6–8  
**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment  
**Academic Content:** Arts, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM

Academic Pentathlon, the premier national scholastic competition for middle school students, challenges students to rigorous team and individual competition. Using the USAD curriculum, which addresses several national education content and curriculum standards, students compete in five events: fine arts, literature, mathematics, science and social science. This year’s theme is “The Cold War.”

**Academic Skills:** Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, factual recall, interdisciplinary, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, research, teamwork, time/budget management and verbal reasoning

**Program Provider:** South Central Service Cooperative  

**Website:** [www.mnscsc.org/pentathlon](http://www.mnscsc.org/pentathlon)  
**Email:** jswenson@mnscsc.org  
**Phone:** (507) 389-5017 or (612) 578-3377  
**Contact:** Joyce Swenson
ACADEMIC WORLDQUEST
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Business/Career Education, Social Studies, World Languages & Cultures

Academic WorldQuest builds global competency and is the only international knowledge team competition of its kind in the state! Interactive and fun, this event challenges high school students to think globally and quiz locally about critical issues facing the U.S. and the world. The winners go to Washington, D.C.!

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, factual recall, global citizenship, research and teamwork
Program Provider: Global Minnesota
Fees and Deadlines: Free to participate. Registration opens in October. Check website for competition details.
Website: www.globalminnesota.org/education/high-school-programs/academic-worldquest/
Email: info@globalminnesota.org
Phone: (612) 625-1662
Contact: Sylvia Oxenham

AMERICAN LEGION AUXILIARY GIRLS STATE
Grade 11
Program Category: Conferences & Institutes, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Social Studies

The program trains young women to be leaders grounded in patriotism and Americanism. Participants learn about the democratic process and how the republic works at the state and national level.

Academic Skills: Cooperation, problem solving and critical thinking
Program Provider: American Legion Auxiliary
Fees and Deadlines: Fees paid by American Legion Auxiliary Units (local chapters). Visit website for details.
Website: www.mnala.org
Email: deptoffice@mnala.org
Phone: (651) 224-7634
Contact: MN American Legion Auxiliary

AMERICAN LEGION BOYS STATE
Grade 11
Program Category: Conferences & Institutes, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Social Studies

American Legion Boys State is a week-long experience of learning about Minnesota government at the local, county and state levels by "doing." It is a week of intensive study and involvement. Highlights of the week include political speakers, mock trials, campaigning, elections, and announcement of the Boys State Governor and State Constitutional Officers.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking and creativity
Program Provider: American Legion Boys State
Fees and Deadlines: Fees paid by sponsoring American Legion Post. Applications accepted on first-come, first-serve basis if qualified.
Website: www.mnboysstate.org
Email: jkelley@mnlegion.org
Phone: (651) 291-1800 or toll free (866) 259-9163
Contact: Jennifer Kelley
AMERICAN MATHEMATICS COMPETITIONS – 8
Grades 6–8
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

American Math Competitions seek to increase interest in mathematics and develop problem-solving skills. The competition consists of a 25-question, 40-minute, multiple choice test with no penalty for guessing. Problems draw on material from the middle school mathematics curriculum. No problem requires the use of algebra or a calculator. Students compete for individual recognition rather than as part of a team.

Academic Skills: Problem solving
Program Provider: Mathematical Association of America
Fees and Deadlines: Please see website for details.
Website: www.maa.org/math-competitions
Email: amcinfo@maa.org
Phone: (800) 527-3690
Contact: Jennifer Barton

AMERICAN MATHEMATICS COMPETITIONS – 10 & 12
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

American Math Competitions seek to increase interest in mathematics and develop problem-solving skills. The competition consists of a 25-question, 75-minute, multiple choice tests administered by your school. The AMC 10 covers subject matter normally associated with grades 9 and 10. The AMC 12 covers the high school mathematics curriculum, excluding calculus.

Academic Skills: Problem solving
Program Provider: Mathematical Association of America
Fees and Deadlines: Please see website for details.
Website: www.maa.org/math-competitions
Email: amcinfo@maa.org
Phone: (800) 527-3690
Contact: Jennifer Barton

BEING THE CHANGE
Grades 6–12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Language Arts, Social Studies

Interested in applying your leadership skills to peace-building? Get inspired by Nobel Peace Prize laureates whose lives are captured in an iBook, "Being the Change." Developed by Youthrive, the resource enriches in- or out-of-school programs for middle or high school students.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Youthrive
Fees and Deadlines: Enrollment to become a site is ongoing; email the organization for details.
Website: www.youthrive.wixsite.com/youthrive/being-the-change
Email: info@youthrive.net
Phone: (651) 353-2492
BESTPREP’S CLASSROOM PLUS
Grades 6–12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Business/Career Education

Program staff coordinate volunteer speakers, tours, mock interviews and career days to supplement classroom curricula. More than 600 volunteers from across Minnesota bring their business and career expertise into the classroom. They help connect students’ classroom learning with real world applications while serving as positive role models.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, leadership development, public speaking, teamwork, career skills and career exploration
Program Provider: BestPrep
Fees and Deadlines: Program is free. Educators may request speakers for classes of 10 or more students. Please allow four weeks to schedule speakers.
Website: www.bestprep.org/classroom-plus
Email: cpinfo@bestprep.org
Phone: (763) 233-6320
Contact: Sarah Hammel

BESTPREP’S EMENTORS
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Business/Career Education, General, Language Arts, STEM

Mentoring can have a tremendous impact on the life of a young person both now and in the future. eMentors offers students the chance to develop a relationship with a caring adult role model. eMentors helps students increase academic motivation, improve their reading and writing skills, provide pathways to career awareness, and promote social competence and self-confidence. eMentors also has curriculum specifically created for AVID, STEM and personal finance classes.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary and leadership development
Program Provider: BestPrep
Fees and Deadlines: No cost to participate, but schools must provide their own bus transportation to the Meet & Greet held at the mentors’ worksite.
Website: www.bestprep.org/ementors
Email: ementors@bestprep.org
Phone: (763) 233-6332
Contact: Julie Anderson

★ BESTPREP’S FINANCIAL MATTERS
Grades 6–12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Business/Career Education

BestPrep’s Financial Matters program equips students with the tools necessary to develop sound money management skills through industry professionals who help develop and deliver presentations focused on financial literacy. From investing to credit, budgeting to buying a car, the program provides real-life lessons in money management.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, time/budget management, financial literacy and personal finance
Program Provider: BestPrep
Fees and Deadlines: Program is free. Educators may request speakers for classes of 10 or more students. Please allow four weeks to schedule speakers.
Website: www.bestprep.org/financial-matters
Email: fm@bestprep.org
Phone: (763) 233-6320
Contact: Sarah Hammel
BESTPREP’S MINNESOTA BUSINESS VENTURE
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Business/Career Education, STEM

Minnesota Business Venture is for students dreaming of starting a business, searching for career direction, heading to college or just eager to get into the workforce. Students spend a week during the summer on a college campus developing leadership, teamwork and communication skills as well as gaining business experience from professionals.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving, teamwork and time/budget management
Program Provider: BestPrep
Fees and Deadlines: July 11–16, 2021 at the University of St. Thomas; July 25–30, 2021 at St. John's University. Students pay $200, save $50 with early bird discount.
Website: www.bestprep.org/mbv
Email: mbv@bestprep.org
Phone: (763) 233-6325
Contact: Janae Olinger

BESTPREP’S THE STOCK MARKET GAME™
Grades 4–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Business/Career Education, General, Social Studies, STEM

Students work in teams of 2–5 to invest $100,000 in stocks, bonds and mutual funds, managing their portfolios in an online portal. SMG is an experiential learning program and can be used during or after school, every day or once per week. Students gain business, math, economics and financial literacy skills, collaborating to research and make smart investment decisions.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, interdisciplinary, problem solving, research and teamwork
Program Provider: BestPrep
Fees and Deadlines: Visit bestprep.org for session dates. Registration opens in June. Three-week trials are available for educators. Contact Stephanie directly to waive the fee to participate.
Website: www.stockmarketgame.org
Email: smg@bestprep.org
Phone: (763) 233-6328
Contact: Stephanie Musgrove

CALENDAR IN THE CLASSROOM
Grades K–5
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts, General, Language Arts, STEM

Calendar in the Classroom provides a series of lessons utilizing information and principles contained in the Minnesota Weatherguide Environment™ Calendar. With the help of an informative video and complementary workshop, these lessons are presented in such a way that the generalist teacher can teach real science with confidence and ease.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, environmental stewardship, global citizenship and interdisciplinary
Program Provider: Jeffers Foundation
Fees and Deadlines: No cost. Program is ongoing.
Website: www.jeffersfoundation.org/resources-partners/
Email: tbwesterhaus@gmail.com
Phone: (715) 629-7223
Contact: Tom Westerhaus
CENTER FOR TALENT DEVELOPMENT AT NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY
Age 3–Grade 12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Arts, General, Language Arts, STEM

Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University is dedicated to helping gifted students, age 3 through grade 12, reach their full potential. CTD offers myriad programs from online and hybrid offerings to summer residential experiences. Enrichment and accelerated, credit-bearing courses are available in a range of subject areas.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, leadership development and problem solving
Program Provider: Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University
Fees and Deadlines: Visit www.ctd.northwestern.edu/tuition for tuition and fees.
Website: www.ctd.northwestern.edu
Email: ctdmarketingcommunications@gmail.com
Phone: (847) 467-1575
Contact: Admissions and Advising Office

CLASSROOM CONNECTION
Grades K–8
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: General, Language Arts, Social Studies, World Languages & Cultures

Classroom Connection brings the world to your school! It is an interactive program that brings students, teachers and international volunteers together for a series of cross-cultural lessons. It provides global perspectives, introduces positive role models, promotes understanding and respect, and supports Minnesota education standards. Online options are available for the fall.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, interdisciplinary, verbal reasoning
Program Provider: Global Minnesota
Fees and Deadlines: Free. Check the website for registration details.
Website: www.globalminnesota.org/education/elementary-school-program/how-it-works/
Email: soxenham@globalminnesota.org
Phone: (612) 625-1662
Contact: Sylvia Oxenham

CLOSE UP WASHINGTON D.C.
Grades 6–12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Social Studies

Close Up offers transformative programs in Washington, D.C. for middle school and high school students. Teacher incentives and free participation with a minimum number of students. Many of Close Up's curriculum components meet or exceed state and national history and social studies standards.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, creativity, cooperation, American history and governmental studies
Program Provider: Close Up Foundation
Fees and Deadlines: Call for fees. Registration is rolling; programs run year round.
Website: www.closeup.org
Email: info@closeup.org
Phone: (800) CLOSE UP
COLLEGE DOLLARS & SENSE
Grades 9–11
Program Category: Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: General (Personal Finance, College Readiness)

College Dollars & Sense offers students the personal finance and college preparation skills needed for success after high school and an understanding of how their personal finances will affect their lives. In this one-week summer program, students are introduced to personal finance concepts, learn strategies for affording and saving for college, experience life on a major university campus, and interact with students, professors, and business leaders.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, research, time/budget management and personal finance for life after high school
Program Provider: Minnesota Council on Economic Education
Fees and Deadlines: Applications for the 2021 program will be open Nov. 2020–April 2021. Participation is free. Priority will be given to those who are first in their family to attend college, are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch and/or are students of color.
Website: z.umn.edu/MCEE-CDS
Email: mcee@umn.edu
Phone: (612) 625-3727
Contact: Angela Zappa

CONCORDIA LANGUAGE VILLAGES
Ages 2–18
Program Category: Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: World Languages & Cultures

Concordia Language Villages is the premier language and culture immersion program for youth, families and adults. Youth ages 2–18 can learn one of 15 languages. Summer programs include day camps, one- and two-week residential camps and a four-week high school credit option. School groups can attend Village Weekends during the academic year. In addition to language skills, emphasis is placed on cultural awareness.

Academic Skills: World language proficiency, global citizenship, environmental stewardship, recall, problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, cooperation and leadership
Program Provider: Concordia College
Fees and Deadlines: Check website for fees, scholarships and dates.
Website: www.ConcordiaLanguageVillages.org
Email: clv@cord.edu
Phone: (800) 222-4750

CONTINENTAL MATHEMATICS LEAGUE
Grades 2–9
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

This program is designed to maximize student opportunities to participate and to improve students’ problem-solving skills. Students compete in their own schools with others at the same grade level across the United States. Activities can be held during regular class time. Math books are available. The meets and books provide excellent support to the Common Core Standards program.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking and problem solving
Program Provider: Continental Mathematics League
Fees and Deadlines: Grades 2–3: $85 per team; Grades 4–9: $95 first team and $80 additional teams; Calculus League for Advanced Placement students: $95 first team and $80 additional teams; Computer Science Grades 3–8: $75 first team and $60 additional teams; Registration by November 2020; Meet dates: November 2020–April 2021.
Website: www.cmleague.com
Email: support@cmleague.com
Phone: (631) 584-2016
Contact: Joseph Quartararo
CRAZY 8S MATH CLUB
Grades K–5
Program Category: Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

Crazy 8s is an over-the-top after-school club that is designed to get you fired up about math. You will learn the math behind your favorite activities. It is math gone wild, nothing like your usual math club! You will build glow-in-the-dark structures, crack secret spy codes and play games like the Toilet Paper Olympics.

Academic Skills: Factual recall, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Bedtime Math Foundation
Fees and Deadlines: Free
Website: www.bedtimemath.org
Email: liz@bedtimemath.org
Phone: (908) 344-3290
Contact: Liz Ross

CYBERPATRIOT NATIONAL YOUTH CYBER DEFENSE COMPETITION
Grades 6–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

CyberPatriot is the premier national youth cyber-defense competition created to inspire middle and high school students toward careers in cyber-security or other science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) disciplines critical to our nation's future.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, critical thinking and computer skills
Program Provider: Air Force Association
Website: www.uscyberpatriot.org
Email: info@uscyberpatriot.org
Phone: (877) 885-5716

DESTINATION IMAGINATION
Grades K–12, Post-secondary
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

Destination Imagination (DI) inspires and equips students to become the next generation of innovators and leaders. The organization is a leader in project-based learning experiences, where students work together in teams to solve open-ended STEM and service learning challenges and then present their solutions at tournaments.

Academic Skills: STEM concepts, problem solving, critical thinking, time/budget management, creativity, cooperation, improvisation, research and teamwork
Program Provider: Intermediate District 287
Fees and Deadlines: For more information, please visit the website.
Website: www.mndi.org
Email: pfschroeder@district287.org
Phone: (763) 550-7212
Contact: Pamela Schroeder, affiliate director
DREAM IT. DO IT. MINNESOTA
Grades 6–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

Dream It. Do It. Minnesota helps develop the pipeline of manufacturing workforce, improves the industry image and increases knowledge about manufacturing career paths.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: 360 Manufacturing & Applied Engineering Center of Excellence
Fees and Deadlines: Varies by resource/event. Tour of Manufacturing in October is free as well as the Teacher Guide, Build It Better! game app and other resources that are available year-round.
Website: www.dreamitdoitmn.com
Email: jaimee.meyer@bemidjistate.edu
Phone: (218) 755-2206
Contact: Jaimee Meyer

ECONOMICS CHALLENGE
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Social Studies

In the Economics Challenge, teams of high school students compete in a series of tests on economic problems, theory and current events to demonstrate their critical-thinking abilities. Teams can compete online or at one of the in-person competitions across Minnesota to qualify for the state championship.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, factual recall, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Minnesota Council on Economic Education
Fees and Deadlines: No fee to participate, but transportation to competitions is required. Registration for the competition will open on Jan. 1, 2021.
Website: z.umn.edu/EconomicsChallenge
Email: mcee@umn.edu
Phone: (612) 625-3727
Contact: Angela Zappa

★ ENGINEERING MACHINE DESIGN CONTEST
Grades 5–8 (Junior Division), 9–12 (Senior Division)
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts, Business/Career Education, STEM

Using everyday objects, teams of 3-10 students design and build a complex, multi-step machine that achieves a simple task with the guidance of a coach. Teams showcase and exhibit their machines at a regional contest with the opportunity to advance to the Championship. Teams are scored on a Team Journal, Team Presentation, and Machine Design and Operation.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Minnesota State Engineering Center of Excellence
Fees and Deadlines: Varies by contest site; regional contests: February–April; check website for fees and deadlines.
Website: engineering.mnsu.edu/engineering-machine-design-contest/
Email: engineering@mnsu.edu
Phone: (507) 389-2110
Contact: Melissa Huppert
FEDERAL RESERVE BANK OF MINNEAPOLIS ESSAY CONTEST

Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Social Studies

The essay topic for this economic education contest provides an opportunity for teachers and students in the Ninth Federal Reserve District to study issues concerning economics, banking and the Federal Reserve.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, research and writing
Program Provider: Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis
Fees and Deadlines: No fees. Please check website for specific topic and dates.
Website: www.minneapolisfed.org/essaycontest
Email: EssayContest@mpls.frb.org
Phone: (612) 204-6689

FIRST LEGO® LEAGUE

Grades 4–8
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

FIRST LEGO League encourages young innovators to build self confidence in STEM while developing critical thinking and team building skills. Teams design, build and program an autonomous LEGO robot as well as research and solve a real world problem associated with a yearly theme.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, research and teamwork
Program Provider: High Tech Kids
Fees and Deadlines: Visit the website for detailed information.
Website: www.hightechkids.org
Email: vicki@hightechkids.org
Phone: (612) 781-2203
Contact: Vicki Coaty

FIRST LEGO® LEAGUE JUNIOR

Grades K–4
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

FIRST LEGO League Junior teams work together to discover how science and technology impact the world around them. Teams work with LEGO WeDo and LEGO elements to build a motorized model and create a Show Me poster related to their research on a yearly theme.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, public speaking, research and teamwork
Program Provider: High Tech Kids
Fees and Deadlines: Visit the website for detailed information.
Website: www.hightechkids.org
Email: vicki@hightechkids.org
Phone: (612) 781-2203
Contact: Vicki Coaty
FIRST® TECH CHALLENGE
Grades 7–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

FIRST Tech Challenge is a hands-on and rapid prototyping robotic experience for students in grades 7–12. Teams build and program robots, based on sound engineering principles, to compete in an alliance format. FTC helps kids develop strategic, problem solving and team building skills.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, teamwork, time/budget management and verbal reasoning

Program Provider: High Tech Kids
Fees and Deadlines: Visit the website for detailed information.
Website: www.hightechkids.org
Email: vicki@hightechkids.org
Phone: (612) 781-2203
Contact: Vicki Coaty

GATHERING OF CHAMPIONS
Grades K–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions
Academic Content: General

An annual event to celebrate academic excellence and to honor outstanding K–12 students as Academic All-Stars. Teachers, administrators and/or academic challenge coaches may nominate their top students or those that have made a dramatic improvement in their academic work for recognition as Academic All-Stars. Nominations may be placed online each spring on the website.

Program Provider: Synergy & Leadership Exchange
Fees and Deadlines: No fees. Statewide recognition event is on the first Friday in August.
Website: www.synergyexchange.org/gathering-of-champions
Email: goc@synergyexchange.org
Phone: (507) 389-5115
Contact: Leah Garry

CALLING ALL STUDENTS . . .
DESIGN THE 2021 GATHERING OF CHAMPIONS LOGO!

Submit your original logo design ideas for the 2021 Gathering of Champions, which will appear on the certificates of achievement, T-shirts, banners and other materials. The winner receives $100 and a framed copy of their winning design. The contest is open to all Minnesota K–12 students. All entries must be designed by a currently enrolled student and be received by March 31, 2021. See complete rules for submission on the Synergy & Leadership Exchange website. Teachers, make this a classroom activity; celebrate the importance of academics and the arts with your students!

Congratulations to Caroline Stockinger, a fifth-grader at Poplar Bridge Elementary School, winner of the 2020 Logo Contest!
GENES IN SPACE
Grades 7–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

Students in grades 7–12: pioneer research on the International Space Station (ISS) by designing DNA experiments for space! We invite students to propose experiments that address real-life challenges and opportunities of space exploration. One winning experiment will launch to the ISS and be carried out by astronauts. There is no cost to enter the competition and entry does not require equipment.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, problem solving and research
Fees and Deadlines: The 2021 contest will close in April 2021; see website for further details.
Website: www.genesinspace.org
Email: genesinspace@minipcr.com
Phone: (781) 990-8727
Contact: Katy Martin

GERMAN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE FESTIVAL
Grades 7–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: World Languages & Cultures

The German Language and Culture Festival brings together students from Minnesota and Wisconsin for a half-day immersion experience in which they engage in level-appropriate activities in German and build a sense of community with other language learners. Additionally, the festival invites students to showcase their talents by submitting projects to a competition based on a predetermined theme.

Academic Skills: Creativity, global citizenship, interdisciplinary and teamwork
Program Provider: German Studies Program, University of Minnesota Duluth
Fees and Deadlines: No fees. Notifications regarding the deadlines will be sent via email.
Email: hbrining@d.umn.edu
Phone: (218) 726-8245
Contact: Holly Brining

GIRLS WHO CODE CLUBS
Grades 3–12
Program Category: Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: Business/Career Education, General, STEM

Clubs are FREE programs where girls in grades 3–12 join our sisterhood of supportive peers and role models while using computer science to impact their community! They can be hosted in any non-profit space, and facilitators can come from any level of computer science background—teachers, parents and community members welcome!

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Girls Who Code
Fees and Deadlines: Completely free! Includes curricula, customizable lesson guides, ongoing support, grant funding and more. Clubs can begin at any point and run for 10 or more sessions.
Website: www.girlswhocode.com
Email: keyonne.session@girlswhocode.com
Contact: Keyonne Session
GLOBAL FOOD CHALLENGE
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Social Studies

The Global Food Challenge is a unique competition for students to engage in research about food issues around the world and solve problems using their economic knowledge. Participants research a question or issue they are curious about in food trade, markets, safety, or food security. Using this research and their understanding of economics, students communicate their conclusions in a paper that is entered to win cash prizes.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, research and global citizenship
Program Provider: Minnesota Council on Economic Education
Fees and Deadlines: No fees. The state contest is held in the spring. Registration for the competition will open on Jan. 1, 2021. Curriculum materials are free upon request.
Website: z.umn.edu/globalfood
Email: mcee@umn.edu
Phone: (612) 625-3727
Contact: Angela Zappa

H2O FOR LIFE
Grades K–12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: General

H2O for Life provides a service-learning opportunity for schools in the United States that raise awareness about the global water crisis while taking action to provide funds for a water, sanitation and hygiene education project for a partner school in the developing world.

Academic Skills: Environmental stewardship, global citizenship, interdisciplinary, leadership development and teamwork
Program Provider: H2O for Life
Fees and Deadlines: None
Website: www.h2oforlifeschools.org
Email: mitchell@h2oforlifeschools.org
Phone: (651) 756-7577
Contact: Mitchell LeGrand

HOBY YOUTH LEADERSHIP SEMINAR
Grade 10
Program Category: Conferences & Institutes, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Social Studies

HOBY is a three-day transformative youth leadership training seminar. Areas of focus include communication for understanding, critical thinking, teamwork and individual leadership. Participants explore current issues facing our communities, develop tools for planning and action, and receive access to a world-wide network of HOBY alumni.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork, leadership development, global citizenship and time/budget management
Program Provider: Hugh O’Brian Youth Leadership – Minnesota, Inc.
Fees and Deadlines: Cost for the first student at each school is $225; additional students pay the full cost of $495 per student.
Leadership Seminar occurs every June. See packet sent to school guidance counselor or website for more details.
Website: www.hobyminnesota.org
Email: info@hobyminnesota.org
JOSTENS RENAISSANCE EDUCATION
Grades K–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Leadership Development
Academic Content: General

Jostens partners with educators to renew school climate and culture through Jostens Renaissance Education. Resources such as The Harbor by Jostens weekly video series, The Idea Exchange library of activities that work and the annual Jostens Renaissance National Conference provide a framework for using recognition to connect with students and help everyone feel like part of the school community.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking and teamwork
Program Provider: Jostens Renaissance Education
Fees and Deadlines: No cost for Jostens customers. Visit the website for information on resources and events.
Website: www.jostensrenaissance.com
Email: renaissance@jostens.com
Phone: (800) 624-5534

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT CAPSTONE PROGRAMS
Grades 5–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Business/Career Education, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM

Junior Achievement Capstone Programs combine practical applications in real world situations with principles learned in the classroom. Students explore lessons of entrepreneurship, financial literacy and work readiness, and put those skills to work in simulated communities and workplace settings. Programs include JA Finance Park, JA Titan, JA Company Program and JA Job Shadow.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, public speaking, teamwork, leadership development, global citizenship, environmental stewardship, time/budget management and personal development
Program Provider: Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest
Fees and Deadlines: Fees vary by location; contact program for details.
Website: www.jaum.org
Email: mbjerkness@jaum.org
Phone: (651) 255-0055
Contact: Michelle Bjerkness

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT K–12 CLASSROOM PROGRAMS
Grades K–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Business/Career Education, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM

Junior Achievement Classroom Programs inspire and prepare K–12 students to succeed in school and beyond through relevant, experiential curriculum. Elementary age students learn how they can impact the world around them as individuals, workers and consumers. Secondary age students learn how to take control of their economic success, start and run a business, and prepare for college and a career.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, public speaking, teamwork, leadership development, global citizenship, environmental stewardship, time/budget management and personal development
Program Provider: Junior Achievement of the Upper Midwest
Fees and Deadlines: Fees vary by location; contact program for further details.
Website: www.jaum.org
Email: mbjerkness@jaum.org
Phone: (651) 255-0055
Contact: Michelle Bjerkness
**JUNIOR DUCK STAMP CONSERVATION PROGRAM**  
Grades K–12  
**Program Category:** Awards & Recognitions, Classroom Enrichment  
**Academic Content:** Arts, STEM  

The Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program is a standards-based education program designed to spark interest in habitat conservation through science, art, math and technology. It focuses on wildlife observation, nature journaling, photography, enjoying and exploring the outside world, and investigating the treasures of the National Wildlife Refuge System.  

**Academic Skills:** Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, research, environmental stewardship and artistic expression  
**Program Provider:** U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
**Fees and Deadlines:** No fee. Entry deadline for the Minnesota Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest is in March but specific date is subject to change. Contact Lynda Knutsen for details.  
**Website:** [www.fws.gov/juniorduck](http://www.fws.gov/juniorduck)  
**Email:** lynda_knutsen@fws.gov  
**Phone:** (218) 449-4115, ext. 202  
**Contact:** Lynda Knutsen

**KIDS PHILOSOPHY SLAM**  
Grades K–12  
**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions  
**Academic Content:** Social Studies  

A philosophical competition designed to make philosophy accessible and fun for kids, promote a philosophical dialogue between kids and adults, and promote a greater awareness of philosophy and education in everyday life. More than $2,500 in prizes are available to students and schools. Home school participation is encouraged.  

**Academic Skills:** Creativity and critical thinking  
**Fees and Deadlines:** There is a $25 registration fee for schools to participate and a fee of $2 per home school. See website for topic and entry deadlines.  
**Website:** [www.philosophyslam.org](http://www.philosophyslam.org)  
**Email:** info@philosophyslam.org  
**Phone:** (507) 467-0102  
**Contact:** John Davis

**KNOWLEDGE BOWL COMPETITIONS – JR. AND SR. HIGH**  
Grades 7–8, 9–12  
**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions  
**Academic Content:** General  

Knowledge Bowl is an interdisciplinary academic contest for junior and senior high school students. Teams of students answer questions in a variety of academic areas. Senior High Knowledge Bowl students can compete for state championships.  

**Academic Skills:** Recall, critical thinking, cooperation and problem solving  
**Program Provider:** Lakes Country Service Cooperative  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Fees and dates vary by region. Senior High State Knowledge Bowl meets spring 2020.  
**Website:** [www.lcsc.org/Domain/47](http://www.lcsc.org/Domain/47)  
**Email:** sward@lcsc.org  
**Phone:** (218) 739-3273  
**Contact:** Susan Ward
LifeSmarts provides teens with the skills and knowledge they need to evaluate risks and opportunities in order to make informed decisions regarding personal finance, consumerism, health/safety, technology and the environment. Free LifeSmarts curriculum materials and lessons can be used in the classroom or within other student organizations. Students can choose to participate in online and/or live competitions on things they have learned.

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, environmental stewardship, interdisciplinary, problem solving and time/budget management

**Program Provider:** South Central Service Cooperative

**Fees and Deadlines:** Participation is free. Online competitions take place September–January. In-person state competition is in early February. The national competition is held in April in a major U.S. city.

**Website:** www.mnscsc.org/lifesmarts or www.lifesmarts.org

**Email:** lifesmarts@mnscsc.org

MAAP STARS (Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs: Success, Teamwork, Achievement, Recognition, Self-esteem) is a broad-based vocational-oriented program to help students develop professional employment, academic and social skills. STARS helps students gain self-confidence, increases motivation to graduate and creates a desire for life-long learning. There are regionals and three statewide events.

**Academic Skills:** Artistic expression, critical thinking, leadership development, public speaking and teamwork

**Program Provider:** Minnesota Association of Alternative Programs (MAAP)

**Fees and Deadlines:** Annual STARS membership fees plus Fall Leadership Conference is $50/participant in Oct. 7–8, 2020 at Lake Beauty Camp, Long Prairie; Legislative Day at the State Capitol in St. Paul is Feb. 17, 2021; and Spring Events Conference in Mankato is $135/participant, April 8–9, 2021.

**Website:** www.maapmn.org

**Email:** pjhaasch@yahoo.com

**Phone:** (612) 751-2490

**Contact:** Patti Haasch, MAAP STARS Chair
**MATH MASTERS**
Grades 5–6
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

Math Masters challenges students to use critical thinking skills and problem-solving abilities in mathematics, while recognizing academic effort and achievement. Students compete as individuals and in teams. There are eight rounds of competition. Students are recognized with plaques, medallions and ribbons in the fact drill round, individual rounds and team competition.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, factual recall, problem solving, teamwork and time/budget management
Program Provider: Math Masters
Fees and Deadlines: Competition dates: Grade 6: Feb. 25–May 1, 2021; Grade 5: April 23–May 1, 2021 at more than 42 different sites. Check website for locations, dates and deadlines.
Website: www.mathmastersmn.org
Email: mathmasters@austin.k12.mn.us
Phone: (507) 460-1843
Contact: Janel Horner

**MATHCEP – SATURDAY MORNING MATH ENRICHMENT**
Grades 5–7
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

Spend your Saturdays delving into what keeps the internet working, takes us to space, lets us talk about infinity and helps us win more games: math! The School of Mathematics Center for Educational Programs (MathCEP) at the University of Minnesota offers Saturday Morning Math Enrichment programs during the school year where students in grades 5–7 engage in innovative activities that focus on mathematical topics that go beyond the classroom.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, analytic ability, STEM concepts and mathematical skills
Program Provider: University of Minnesota – MathCEP
Fees and Deadlines: For fees and calendar dates call or visit the website. Registration opens in August.
Website: www.mathcep.umn.edu/saturday-enrichment
Email: mathcep@umn.edu
Phone: (612) 625-2861

**WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR PROGRAM TO BE PART OF REACH FOR THE STARS?**

The Minnesota Academic League Council reviews and approves applications from academic challenges and competitions, awards and recognitions, classroom enrichment, conferences and institutes, leadership development, and out of school time programs available on a statewide basis in Minnesota for inclusion in Reach for the Stars. Applications available at www.synergyexchange.org/reach-for-the-stars. Questions? Email reach@synergyexchange.org.
MATHEMATICAL OLYMPIADS FOR ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOLS (MOEMS®)
Grades 4–6 (Division E), Grades 6–8 (Division M)
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

Math Olympiads is a series of five contests (November–March) in each division. Contests may be administered in the classroom or in a before/after school program. Tournaments are exciting face-to-face competitions that may be offered by any school or professional organization in the spring.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking and problem solving
Program Provider: MOEMS® – Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools
Fees and Deadlines: Early bird fee is $99 due by June 30. The standard fee to enroll a team is $119 between July 1–Oct. 15 and $139 between Oct. 16–31.
Website: www.moems.org
Email: info@moems.org
Phone: (516) 781-2400
Contact: Nicholas J. Restivo

MATHWORKS MATH MODELING (M3) CHALLENGE
Grades 11–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

M3 Challenge is a free, internet-based applied math competition known for inspiring students to pursue STEM majors and careers. Working in teams of 3–5, participants solve an open-ended problem focused on a realistic issue in 14 hours. Teams with the best solution papers receive tuition scholarships for their college education. Extra credit awards available for outstanding and optional code.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM)
Fees and Deadlines: No fees. Registration opens in November. Challenge weekend in late Feb./early March. Visit website for deadlines.
Website: M3Challenge.siam.org
Email: m3challenge@siam.org
Phone: (267) 350-6333
Contact: Adrianne Ali

MATH MANIA TOURNAMENT
Want more MOEMS? Join us for a live competition! Teams of five students will participate in individual, team and playoff rounds of competition surrounding mathematical thinking and problem solving. Coaches are provided sample problems in advance of the competition and solutions for reviewing with teams afterward. Team and individual awards will be presented at a ceremony following the competition. Schools or other youth groups are invited to form teams, or students can register individually and will be placed on teams for the competition. Visit www.mnscsc.org/math-mania for more information.
MINNESOTA 4H YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
Grades K–13
Program Category: Leadership Development, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts, General, STEM

Minnesota 4-H Youth Development programs are found in urban, suburban, tribal and rural communities across Minnesota. There are many ways to participate: 4-H clubs, 4-H afterschool programs, project-based learning, 4-H day and residential camps, and regional and state programs and events.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development and public speaking
Program Provider: University of Minnesota Extension – Minnesota 4-H Youth Development
Fees and Deadlines: See website for details.
Website: www.extension.umn.edu/4-h
Email: fourh@umn.edu
Phone: (612) 624-2116
Contact: Jennifer A. Skuza, Ph.D.

MINNESOTA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE-JUNIOR SCIENCE & HUMANITIES SYMPOSIUM (JSHS)
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

A scientific research paper competition for high school students. Students present their original research in science, technology, engineering or mathematics at the North Central Regional JSHS and compete for scholarships, recognition and awards. The top five papers participate in the National JSHS.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, public speaking and research
Program Provider: Minnesota Academy of Science
Fees and Deadlines: See website for competition dates, deadlines and fees.
Website: www.mnmas.org/junior-science-humanities-symposium
Email: saragomez@mnmas.org
Phone: (612) 643-0627
Contact: Sara Gomez

MINNESOTA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE-MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL SCIENCE BOWL
Grades 6–8, 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: General, STEM

The competition consists of five-person teams buzzing in to answer science and math questions in a fast-paced format. Each team competes in a round-robin tournament with the top teams advancing to a double-elimination championship. The winning team represents Minnesota with a paid trip to the National Science Bowl in Washington, D.C.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, factual recall, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Minnesota Academy of Science
Fees and Deadlines: See website for competition dates and deadlines. $150 per team of four to five students.
Website: www.mnmas.org/science-bowl
Email: laramaupin@mnmas.org
Phone: (612) 704-8469
Contact: Lara Maupin, M.Ed.
MINNESOTA ACADEMY OF SCIENCE-STATE SCIENCE & ENGINEERING FAIR
Grades 6–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM
Since 1938, Minnesota State Science & Engineering Fair has been the pinnacle of project-based STEM education in Minnesota, the culmination of regional science fairs throughout the state with 500 students selected to present their research. The four top projects participate in an all-expense paid trip to the International Fair with more than 70 countries.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, public speaking and research
Program Provider: Minnesota Academy of Science
Fees and Deadlines: See website for fees, deadlines and competition dates.
Website: www.mnmas.org/about-science-engineering-fair
Email: saragomez@mnmas.org
Phone: (612) 643-0627
Contact: Sara Gomez

MINNESOTA AGRICULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM (MAITC)
Grades K–12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Business/Career Education, General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM
MAITC seeks to improve student achievement by applying authentic, agricultural-based content as the context to teach core concepts in science, social studies, language arts and nutrition. By encouraging teachers to embed agriculture into their curriculum, MAITC cultivates an understanding and appreciation of the food system that we rely on every day.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, environmental stewardship, global citizenship, interdisciplinary and agricultural literacy
Program Provider: MAITC at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture
Fees and Deadlines: All MAITC resources are free except the Children’s Literature Book Bundle.
Website: www.minnesota.agclassroom.org
Email: Sue.knott@state.mn.us
Phone: (651) 201-6486
Contact: Sue Knott

★ MINNESOTA ARCGIC ONLINE STUDENT COMPETITION
Grades 4–8, 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competition, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Social Studies, STEM
The competition asks middle and high school students to investigate and create a story map based on a Minnesota topic. Each school may submit up to five entries to the state competition. The top five receive prizes. The first-place entry in each division represents Minnesota in Esri’s national competition.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, geographic inquiry, problem solving and research
Program Provider: Minnesota Alliance for Geographic Education (MAGE)
Fees and Deadlines: There are no competition fees. Each school is required to have a free Esri ArcGIS Online school software bundle account that students use to create entries. See the competition website for information on registering and applying for a free account. 2021 competition deadlines: schools must register for the competition by April 9, 2021. School entries must be submitted to the state competition committee no later than May 7, 2021.
Website: http://bit.ly/MNMapComp
Email: jimsoli@mac.com
Phone: (612) 590-6422
Contact: Jim Hanson

2019 Minnesota and Esri’s national middle school competition winner from Hubert Olson Middle School in Bloomington.
MINNESOTA BUSINESS PROFESSIONALS OF AMERICA, SECONDARY DIVISION

Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Conferences & Institutes
Academic Content: Business/Career Education

The mission of Business Professionals of America is to contribute to the preparation of a world-class work force through the advancement of leadership, citizenship, academic and technological career skills for business and office students. It combines school-based and work-based learning.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, research, teamwork, time/budget management and verbal reasoning

Program Provider: MN Business Professionals of America

Website: www.mnbpa.org
Email: jackie@arvig.net
Phone: (218) 847-5355

MINNESOTA DECA

Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Conferences & Institutes
Academic Content: Business/Career Education

DECA is a school-to-work student organization that provides marketing related activities and leadership development. It combines school-based and work-based learning, focusing on careers in marketing, management and entrepreneurship. Competition is in occupational skills, leadership and management.

Academic Skills: Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, research, teamwork, time/budget management and verbal reasoning

Program Provider: Minnesota Secondary DECA

Website: www.mndeca.org
Email: jackie@arvig.net
Phone: (218) 847-5355

MINNESOTA ENVIROTHON

Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

The Minnesota Envirothon is an outdoor environmental learning competition where teams of high school students compete in five learning stations including soils, aquatics/wetlands, wildlife, forestry and a current environmental topic. Teams are tested in each area and also prepare and give an oral presentation on the current events topic. It is a one-day event; teams must qualify from an area event to compete at state.

Academic Skills: Knowledge of natural resource issues and topics, public speaking, research, critical thinking, problem solving skills, interdisciplinary, creativity and teamwork

Program Provider: NCF Envirothon (national), Association of Conservation District (State), and Minnesota Area and Local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (area events)
Fees and Deadlines: No fees for regional and state level. Regional events are in late April/early May; state event is the third Monday in May; national event is typically held in July or August.

Website: www.maswcd.org/envirothon.htm
Email: judy.johnston@stevensswcd.org
Phone: (320) 589-4886, ext. 114
Contact: Judy Johnston
MINNESOTA FAMILY, CAREER AND COMMUNITY LEADERS OF AMERICA (FCCLA)
Grades 6–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Conferences & Institute, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Business/Career Education, General, STEM

Minnesota FCCLA is a career and technical student organization where you can learn to be an effective leader in your school and community and explore possible careers. Youth leaders in FCCLA gain confidence, practical knowledge, character development and skills in presenting, working in teams, and creative and critical thinking.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, interdisciplinary, research, public speaking, teamwork, leadership development, global citizenship, environmental stewardship, time/budget management and artistic expression

Program Provider: MN FCCLA
Fees and Deadlines: Annual individual membership fee is $20. Middle level chapters pay a lump sum through their school. Membership fee collected in early fall by chapter advisers. Competitive Events (STAR Events) are held in January–February for regions and in April for state competition. Check website for more information.

Website: www.mnfccla.org
Email: wendy.ambrose@state.mn.us
Phone: (651) 330-2950
Contact: Wendy Ambrose

MINNESOTA FFA
Grades 7–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development
Academic Content: General

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of young people by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agriculture education.

Academic Skills: Communications, leadership and decision-making skills
Program Provider: Minnesota FFA
Fees and Deadlines: Please visit www.mnffa.org for information.
Website: www.mnffa.org
Email: jtolosky@umn.edu
Phone: (518) 832-0313
Contact: Juleah Tolosky

MINNESOTA FUTURE CITY COMPETITION
Grades 6–8
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM

Students in grades 6–8 imagine, research, design and build cities of the future. Students form teams and are guided by an educator and engineer mentor to complete on the following projects: project plan, research essay, physical city model and team presentation. The 2020–21 theme is "Building a City on the Moon." The first place Minnesota team wins an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C. to compete in the National FCC.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, research and teamwork
Program Provider: Success Beyond the Classroom
Website: www.futurecity.org/Minnesota
Email: colleen.feller@metroecsu.org
Phone: (612) 638-1511
Contact: Colleen Feller

Minnesota national delegation in Anaheim, CA.
MINNESOTA FUTURE PROBLEM SOLVING PROGRAM

Grades K–3 (Non-competitive Primary Division), Grades 4–6 (Junior Division), Grades 7–9 (Middle Division), Grades 10–12 (Senior Division)

Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Arts, Business/Career Education, General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM, World Languages & Cultures

Teaching students how to think, not what to think; learning lifelong problem-solving skills. Critical and creative thinking skills are applied to real topics. The 2020–21 topics are: Youth in Competitive Sports, Wearable Technology, Human Environmental Impact and Personalized Medicine. Classroom curriculum available for grades K–9. Competitive opportunities for grades 4–12 include Global Issues Problem Solving, Community Problem Solving, Scenario Writing and Scenario Performance.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program
Fees and Deadlines: Visit the website for fees and deadlines.
Website: www.mnfpssp.org
Email: cheryl@mnfpssp.org
Phone: (507) 450-4227
Contact: Cheryl Whitesitt

MINNESOTA HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC LISTENING CONTEST

Grades 9–12

Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts

The Music Listening Contest assists teachers in their efforts to expand the music experiences of students. Students gain understanding and appreciation of other cultures through listening and learning about music from various areas and time periods. They also develop teamwork skills as they work in teams of three to compete in the regional and championship contests.

Academic Skills: Active listening, artistic expression, critical analysis, factual recall and teamwork
Program Provider: Music Listening Contest Board
Fees and Deadlines: Registration opens in September and closes in November. See website for specific dates. Fees: $99 per three-member team (includes t-shirts, free one-year subscription to Naxos Music Library, practice test and study guide); $75 new schools/organizations.
Website: www.musiclisteningcontest.com
Email: deb_nelson@musiclisteningcontest.com
Phone: (763) 862-7647
Contact: Deb Nelson

★ MINNESOTA INSTITUTE FOR TALENTED YOUTH (MITY)

Grades 1–12

Program Category: Leadership Development, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts, Business/Career Education, General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM

MITY offers unique STEM, humanities and fine arts courses in three academic programs. Students engage in hands-on, inquiry-based learning during the summer and on Saturdays during the school year. Highlights include exceptional teachers, small class sizes, guest speakers and field trips. Older students can live in dorms at Macalester College.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, problem solving and teamwork
Fees and Deadlines: Check website for details.
Website: www.mity.org
Email: mity@macalester.edu
MINNESOTA JUNIOR HIGH MATH LEAGUE

Grades 6–8
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

Minnesota Junior High Math League encourages students to participate in math contests, enables students to meet mathletes from other schools and provides recognition for students excelling in mathematics. The program also serves as preparation for the annual MATHCOUNTS competition. The meet topics are based on the MATHCOUNTS topics.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, factual recall, problem solving and teamwork
Fees and Deadlines: First team: $175, each additional team $75. Competitions run from October–January (five meets). Fee due at time of registration.
Website: www.mnjhml.com
Email: mnjhml1@gmail.com
Phone: (651) 252-1766
Contact: Luke Olson

★ MINNESOTA MATHCOUNTS

Grades 6–8
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

MATHCOUNTS is a middle school math competition, coaching and enrichment program. Through three distinct programs, middle school students of all ability levels and backgrounds are empowered to reach their full potential in mathematics: MATHCOUNTS Competition Series, The National Math Club and the Math Video Challenge.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Minnesota MATHCOUNTS/MN Society of Professional Engineers
Fees and Deadlines: Save $5/student and $50/team off regular rates by registering through early November; Title I schools save $2.50/student and $25/team! Late fee of $20 after December deadline. Registration fees includes the School Competition Kit, entry into the Chapter Competition (1–10 Mathletes), competition entry for the school’s students for as far as they progress in the competition series including the state or national level. The National Math Club and Math Video Challenge programs are free.
Website: www.mathcountsmn.org
Email: katie@mathcountsmn.org
Phone: (651) 457-2347
Contact: Katie Jamieson

MINNESOTA MATHEMATICS LEAGUE

Grades 4–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

Minnesota Mathematics League encourages student interest and confidence in mathematics through solving worthwhile problems. There are contests for students in grades 4–8, Algebra 1 and high school. Every contest has questions from different areas of mathematics. Schools compete in statewide or multi-state league competitions.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, critical thinking and creativity
Program Provider: The Math League
Fees and Deadlines: Please see website for contest dates, fees and deadlines.
Website: www.themathleague.com
Email: Dan@mathleague.com
Phone: (201) 568-6328
Contact: Daniel Fleger
MINNESOTA PTA REFLECTIONS
Grades K–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts

Reflections arts program encourages students to explore their artistic talent and is designed to promote expression and creativity. Students create their artwork based on an annual theme. This year's theme is "I Matter Because..." Students are able to show the world how they matter through their visual artwork, photography, music composition, film production, dance and literature.

Academic Skills: Artistic expression and creativity
Program Provider: Minnesota PTA
Fees and Deadlines: No fees, but school or student must have MN PTA membership. Entry deadline is Feb. 5, 2021.
Website: www.mnpta.org/reflections
Email: reflections@mnpta.org
Phone: (952) 767-4909
Contact: Lori Ortega

★ MINNESOTA SCHOLARS OF DISTINCTION AWARD PROGRAM
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Arts, General, Social Studies, STEM

This program recognizes high school students who have demonstrated expert or highly accomplished levels of performance in social studies, leadership, mathematics, science, STEM or theater arts. Students may pursue one or more areas of focus throughout all or part of their K–12 education.

Academic Skills: Factual recall, problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, interdisciplinary, research, public speaking, leadership development, time/budget management and artistic expression
Program Provider: Minnesota Department of Education
Fees and Deadlines: No fees. Deadlines, scoring rubrics and project consultants are listed on the website.
Website: www.education.state.mn.us/MDE/fam/gifted/sod/index.htm
Email: Wendy.Behrens@state.mn.us
Phone: (651) 582-8786
Contact: Wendy A. Behrens

MINNESOTA SCHOLASTIC ART AWARDS
Grades 7–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions
Academic Content: Arts

Minnesota high school students, grade 7–12, are invited to enter a juried art exhibition. Award winners are recognized and honored at an award ceremony and reception.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, creativity and problem solving
Program Provider: Co-sponsored by Art Educators of Minnesota, University of Minnesota’s Regis Art Center and the Weisman Art Museum, with additional support from Triarco Art Supplies
Fees and Deadlines: Submissions open in September and are due the first week in December.
Website: www.artandwriting.org/affiliate/MN001A/ or www.aem-mn.org/advocacy/minnesota-scholastic-art-awards
Email: dscully94@gmail.com
Phone: (612) 834-6881
Contact: Diane Scully
MINNESOTA SCIENCE OLYMPIAD (DIVISION A)
Grades 3–6
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

The Minnesota Science Olympiad is devoted to improving the quality of science education, increasing student interest in science and providing recognition for outstanding achievement. Team competition includes challenging and motivational events ranging from earth science to physics. The winning team from each division will be invited to the National Science Olympiad.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, factual recall, critical thinking and teamwork
Program Provider: Minnesota Science Olympiad
Fees and Deadlines: Registration: $50 per team (15 students per school) covers both the national and state fees. Each additional team from a school is $50. Check website for registration link.
Website: www.minnesotaso.org
Email: hans1355@isd194.org
Phone: (651) 621-7177
Contact: Mason Huberty

MINNESOTA SCIENCE OLYMPIAD (DIVISION B)
Grades 6–9
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

Science Olympiad is a nationwide organization dedicated to improving science education through competitions like academic track meets of team events. Each year, students prepare for competition by studying a wide range of STEM topics with an emphasis on group participation. Through Science Olympiad, participants bond together and work toward shared goals.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, environmental stewardship, factual recall, interdisciplinary, problem solving, research and teamwork
Program Provider: Minnesota Science Olympiad
Fees and Deadlines: Registration fee of $150 per team (15 students per school) covers both the national and state fees. The fee registers your team with the National Science Olympiad allowing the team to advance to the state and national tournaments. Each additional team from a school is $100. Check website for registration link.
Website: www.minnesotaso.org
Email: hans1355@isd194.org
Phone: (952) 232-3999, ext. 6864
Contact: Brandy Gordon

MINNESOTA SCIENCE OLYMPIAD (DIVISION C)
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

The Minnesota Science Olympiad offers competitions to encourage students to solve problems and become proficient in a variety of topic areas. Participants compete as a team. The winning team from each division at the state competition will be invited to the National Science Olympiad held in May.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, factual recall, critical thinking and teamwork
Program Provider: Minnesota Science Olympiad
Fees and Deadlines: Registration fee of $150 per team (15 students per school) covers both the national and state fees. The fee registers your team with the National Science Olympiad allowing you to advance to the state and national tournaments, covers the cost of awards, rule books and helps cover costs for the Science Olympiad. Each additional team from a school is $100. Check website for registration link.
Website: www.minnesotaso.org
Email: kfoley@edenpr.org
Phone: (612) 597-2499
Contact: Katie Foley
MINNESOTA STATE HIGH SCHOOL MATHEMATICS LEAGUE

Grades 6–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

Schools send students to five meets in their geographic region with both individual and team competitions. Top teams in geographic regions and top 50 scoring students participate in a state tournament. Top individuals in state are invited to join the All-State Team that represents Minnesota in national competitions. The Summer Math Institute, a residential summer camp, is in June.

Academic Skills: Mathematical problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Augsburg College
Fees and Deadlines: $600 per school, unlimited number of students from school may participate. Individual students may participate if school does not have a team, cost is $100. Registration deadline is Sept. 15; payment is due Oct. 15. Meet dates are November–February. State tournament is held on the second Monday in March.

Website: www.mnmathleague.org
Email: mathleague@augsburg.edu
Phone: (612) 330-1788
Contact: Dana Koletar

MINNESOTA SUPREME COURT HISTORICAL SOCIETY MONDALE-QUIE ESSAY CONTEST

Grades 11–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Language Arts, Social Studies

The Mondale-Quie Essay Contest provides Minnesota high school juniors and seniors with an opportunity to compete for $500 scholarships by writing essays that analyze and take a position on a current topic relevant to Minnesota’s judicial system.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, problem solving and research
Program Provider: Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society
Fees and Deadlines: No fees. The essay contest topic and other contest information is posted on the Minnesota Supreme Court Historical Society website in the fall. The online essay submission deadline is winter each year. Check website for topic information and deadlines.

Website: www.mncourthistory.wildapricot.org/Essay-Contest
Email: director.mschs@gmail.com
Phone: (612) 492-6178
Contact: Brian Bell

MINNESOTA YOUTH INSTITUTE

Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: General, Social Studies, STEM, World Languages

Become a leader in the global fight against hunger. Students research food security in a developing country, write the findings in an essay and discuss with experts. Students who participate earn a $1,000 scholarship to study in the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences at the University of Minnesota, recognition as a Borlaug Scholar, and qualify for domestic and international internships and further opportunities.

Academic Skills: Factual recall, problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, interdisciplinary, research, public speaking, leadership development, global citizenship and environmental stewardship
Program Provider: University of Minnesota
Fees and Deadlines: No fee. Visit website for registration and essay deadline details.
Website: www.mnyi.cfans.umn.edu
Email: mnyi@umn.edu
Phone: (612) 624-6348
Contact: Mary Buschette
MN CUP COMPETITION – YOUTH DIVISION

Grades K–12

Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: Business/Career Education

The Minnesota Cup is an early-stage business competition that takes place annually between April and October. Through the Youth and Student divisions, young entrepreneurs are provided a supportive environment from which to start a new business and compete for prize money.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, verbal reasoning
Program Provider: Holmes Center for Entrepreneurship, University of Minnesota
Fees and Deadlines: The competition is free to enter. Applications available starting in March. Check the website for more detailed information.
Website: www.mncup.org
Email: hellomncup@umn.edu
Phone: (612) 625-4772
Contact: Jessica Berg

MOCK TRIAL PROGRAM

Grades 7–12

Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts, Business/Career Education, Language Arts, Social Studies

The program gives students an insider’s look at the American legal system while helping them develop critical thinking, communication and teamwork skills. A volunteer attorney works with each team to prepare for the simulated trials held in actual courtrooms during January and February. State tournament is held in March; state champion competes at the national tournament in May.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, problem solving, public speaking, teamwork and verbal reasoning
Program Provider: Minnesota State Bar Association
Fees and Deadlines: $275 per team; registration deadline is Nov. 1.
Website: www.mnbar.org/public-resources/mock-trial
Email: kbasting@mnbars.org
Phone: (612) 278-6306
Contact: Kim Basting

MSHSL DEBATE, SPEECH

Grades 7–12

Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Language Arts

For each program, see Fine Arts Rules and Policies manual available on the MSHSL website. Debate competition events in policy debate, Lincoln-Douglas debate, public forum debate and congressional debate. Speech contests are held in creative expression, discussion, duo interpretation, extemporaneous reading, extemporaneous speaking, great speeches, humorous interpretation, informative speaking, original oratory, serious drama interpretation, serious poetry interpretation, serious prose interpretation and storytelling.

Program Provider: MSHSL
Fees and Deadlines: Fees vary by school. Registration deadline is Dec. 1.
Website: www.mshsl.org
Email: adoherty@mshsl.org
Phone: (763) 560-2262
Contact: Amy Doherty
MSHSL MUSIC, ONE ACT PLAY, VISUAL ARTS
Grades 7–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Arts
For each program, see Fine Arts Rules and Policies manual available on the MSHSL website. For Music, the contest events provide for competition in major groups (choir, orchestra and band), special groups, ensembles and solos. For Visual Arts, artwork may be submitted in the categories of drawing, painting, sculpture, film-based photograph, digital photography, video art, computer-based artwork, crafts, print making, ceramics, 2D mixed media/collage and graphic design.
Program Provider: MSHSL
Fees and Deadlines: Fees vary by school. Registration deadline is Dec. 1.
Website: www.mshsl.org
Email: tleighton@mshsl.org, adoherty@mshsl.org, jnickleby@mshsl.org
Phone: (763) 560-2262
Contact: Tim Leighton (Music), Amy Doherty (One Act Play), Jason Nickleby (Visual Arts)

MSHSL/FIRST® ROBOTICS
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM
MSHSL/First Robotics is an extra-curricular opportunity for students with an interest in engineering and robotics.
Academic Skills: STEM and Communications
Program Provider: MSHSL/First
Fees and Deadlines: Fees vary by school. Program kick-off first Saturday in January; MSHSL tournament in May.
Website: firstuppermidwest.org
Email: kr71@aol.com
Phone: (952) 884-5169
Contact: Ken Rosen

MTEEA SUPER MILEAGE COMPETITION
Grades 7–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM
This program joins classroom learning with imagination, ingenuity and teamwork to produce the most fuel-efficient vehicle. Ideas are tempered with calculation to produce optimum design. Students are in charge of this project from the vehicle’s conception to planning, fabrication and testing.
Academic Skills: Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, interdisciplinary, research, teamwork, leadership development and time/budget management
Program Provider: Minnesota Technology & Engineering Educators Association (MTEEA)
Fees and Deadlines: Visit website for fees and dates.
Website: www.mteea.net/index.php/competitions/supermileage
Email: mteeesupermileage@gmail.com
Phone: (320) 396-3393
Contact: Luke Becker
NATIONAL CURRENT EVENTS LEAGUE
Grades 4–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Social Studies
Current events competition with four meets per year.
Academic Skills: Critical thinking and factual recall
Program Provider: National Current Events League
Website: www.cmleague.com
Email: support@cmleague.com
Phone: (631) 584-2016
Contact: Joseph Quartararo

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC BEE
Grades 4–8
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Social Studies
The National Geographic Bee is an annual competition designed to inspire and reward students' curiosity about the world. Students compete for a chance to win college scholarships and the glory of being the National Geographic Bee Champion. It is designed for any public, private or homeschool; registration is not open to individual students.
Program Provider: National Geographic Bee
Fees and Deadlines: Visit website for fees and deadlines. Registration opens Aug. 1. There must be a minimum of six eligible students in order for the school to participate.
Website: www.nationalgeographic.org/education/student-experiences/geobee/
Email: ngbee@ngs.org
Phone: (202) 828-5455

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHY CHALLENGE
Grades 2–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Social Studies
National geography contest that takes place in the classroom. Five levels: grade(s) 2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–9 and 10–12. Contests reflect the main themes of geography, appropriate to each grade level.
Academic Skills: Critical thinking and factual recall
Program Provider: National Geography Challenge
Fees and Deadlines: First team $80, additional teams $55; Registration through March 2021; Meet date: Any date between April 26–May 7, 2021.
Website: www.cmleague.com
Email: support@cmleague.com
Phone: (631) 584-2016
Contact: Joseph Quartararo
NATIONAL HISTORY DAY IN MINNESOTA
Grades 6–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Social Studies

National History Day is a co-curricular academic fair in which students learn academic research, analysis and effective presentation of ideas with the help of staff and partnership organizations. Students are eligible to compete in school, regional, state and national contests. The 2020–21 annual theme is "Communication in History: The Key to Understanding.”

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, factual recall, interdisciplinary, research and teamwork
Program Provider: Minnesota Historical Society and the University of Minnesota
Fees and Deadlines: Regional events take place in March and registration fees begin at $12 per student. There is no classroom fee to participate and program materials are sent to teachers free of charge.

Website: http://education.mnhs.org/historyday/
Email: sarah.aschbrenner@mnhs.org
Phone: (651) 259-3489
Contact: Sarah Aschbrenner

NATIONAL LANGUAGE ARTS LEAGUE
Grades 2–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Language Arts

National language arts contest that takes place in the classroom. Multiple-choice questions appropriate for grades 2 and 3–4. Multiple-choice questions based on spelling, vocabulary, reading comprehension, analogies and grammar available for grades 5–6, 7–9 and 10–12.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking and factual recall
Program Provider: National Language Arts League
Fees and Deadlines: $105 for two teams, $55 for additional teams. Registration through March 2021. Meet date: Any date between April 26–May 7, 2021.

Website: www.cmleague.com
Email: support@cmleague.com
Phone: (631) 584-2016
Contact: Joseph Quartararo

NATIONAL SCIENCE LEAGUE
Grades 2–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

National science contest that takes place in the classroom. Contests in general science for grades 2, 3–4 and 5–6. Contests for middle and high school levels in life science, physical science, earth science, biology, chemistry and physics. Questions based on both factual knowledge and students’ understanding of scientific processes.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking and factual recall
Program Provider: National Science League
Fees and Deadlines: $105 for two teams, $55 for additional teams. Registration through March 2021. Meet date: Any date between April 26–May 7, 2021.

Website: www.cmleague.com
Email: support@cmleague.com
Phone: (631) 584-2016
Contact: Joseph Quartararo
NATIONAL SOCIAL STUDIES LEAGUE
Grades 2–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Social Studies

National social studies contest that takes place in the classroom. Five levels: grade(s) 2, 3–4, 5–6, 7–9 and 10–12. Questions for grades 2–9 based on topics appropriate to each grade level in American Studies, U.S. Geography and U.S. Government. Two contests available for grades 10–12 in American History and World History.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking and factual recall
Program Provider: National Social Studies League
Fees and Deadlines: $105 for 2 teams, $55 for additional teams. Registration through March 2021. Meet date: Any date between April 26–May 7, 2021.
Website: www.cmleague.com
Email: support@cmleague.com
Phone: (631) 584-2016
Contact: Joseph Quarteraro

NCTE ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS IN WRITING
Grade 11
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions
Academic Content: Language Arts

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Achievement Awards in Writing encourages high school juniors to write and to publicly recognize the best student writers. Juniors, who have been nominated by their schools, submit a best and a themed writing to be evaluated by judges. Juniors earn either a Certificate of Superior Writing or a Certificate of Nomination.

Academic Skills: Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, verbal reasoning and writing
Program Provider: National Council of Teachers of English
Fees and Deadlines: Submissions due Feb. 15. See website for further program details. No fee.
Website: https://ncte.org/awards/achievement-awards-in-writing/
Email: aa@ncte.org
Phone: (217) 328-3870 or (877) 369-6283

NCTE PROMISING YOUNG WRITERS PROGRAM
Grade 8
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions
Academic Content: Language Arts

The purpose of the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Promising Young Writers Program is to stimulate and recognize the writing talents of eighth-grade students and to emphasize the importance of writing skills among them. Eighth graders, nominated by their schools, submit a best and a themed writing piece. Judges evaluate their works. Students can earn a Certificate of Recognition or a Certificate of Participation.

Academic Skills: Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, verbal reasoning and writing
Program Provider: National Council of Teachers of English
Fees and Deadlines: Submissions due Feb. 15. Check the website for deadlines. No fee.
Website: https://ncte.org/awards/promising-young-writers/
Email: pyw@ncte.org
Phone: (217) 328-3870 or (877) 369-6283
NOBEL CONFERENCE AT GUSTAVUS ADOLPHUS COLLEGE
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Conferences & Institutions
Academic Content: STEM
Join nearly 1,000 high school students at the 2020 Nobel Conference, "Cancer in the Age of Biotechnology." It will explore the science of new cancer treatments, the structural and societal factors that will determine who has access to these life-saving treatments, and the therapies and practices that will enable people to live with cancer for the long term.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, environmental stewardship, global citizenship and interdisciplinary
Program Provider: Gustavus Adolphus College
Fees and Deadlines: The 56th Nobel Conference is held Oct. 6–7, 2020. High school delegations are FREE but need to register in advance.
Website: www.gustavus.edu/nobelconference
Email: nobelconference@gustavus.edu
Phone: (507) 933-7520
Contact: Office of Marketing and Communication

NOETIC LEARNING MATH CONTEST
Grades 2–8
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM
The Noetic Learning Math Contest is a semiannual problem solving contest for elementary and middle school students. The goal of the competition is to encourage students' interest in math, to develop their problem-solving skills and to inspire them to excel in math. During the contest, students are given 45 minutes to solve 20 problems.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, problem solving
Program Provider: Noetic Learning
Fees and Deadlines: See website for details.
Website: www.noetic-learning.com/mathcontest/index.jsp
Email: info@noetic-learning.com
Phone: (913) 735-4088
Contact: Li Kelty

NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY MIDWEST ACADEMIC TALENT SEARCH (NUMATS)
Grades 3–9
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: General
NUMATS is an opportunity for students to take internationally recognized tests such as PSAT, ACT or SAT before the grade levels at which they are normally administered. NUMATS identifies academic ability, measures growth, and highlights resources and opportunities for advanced students. It also helps parents and educators better understand their students' educational needs.

Academic Skills: Recall, problem solving, critical thinking and writing
Program Provider: Northwestern University Center for Talent Development
Fees and Deadlines: Visit website for details.
Website: www.ctd.northwestern.edu/numats
Email: numa ts@ctd.northwestern.edu
Phone: (847) 491-3782, ext. 3
PERENNIAL MATH ONLINE MATH COMPETITION
Grades 3–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM
Math is COOL! The goal of this competition is to stimulate students’ enthusiasm for problem solving. Students in grades 3–12 can join the online competition, travel to an on-site tournament or compete in virtual tournaments. Visit the website or Facebook page at www.facebook.com/perennialmath for more information.

Academic Skills: Mathematics
Program Provider: Perennial Math
Fees and Deadlines: $75 per team (up to 30 students); $25 for individual student membership.
Website: www.perennialmath.com
Email: info@perennialmath.com
Phone: (888) 835-2366

PERSONAL FINANCE DECATHLON
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Business/Career Education, Social Studies
The Personal Finance Decathlon is an exciting competition for high school students to practice real-world skills in managing money and solving problems. Teams of students compete online to demonstrate their knowledge of fundamental personal finance topics, with the top teams being invited to the state competition to showcase their talent in solving problems and communicating effectively.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, problem solving, public speaking, teamwork and verbal reasoning
Program Provider: Minnesota Council on Economic Education
Fees and Deadlines: There is no registration cost to teachers or students to participate. Registration for the competition will open on Jan. 1, 2021.
Website: z.umn.edu/PFDstudentcomp
Email: mcee@umn.edu
Phone: (612) 625-3727

POETRY OUT LOUD
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts, Language Arts
Poetry Out Loud encourages students to learn about great poetry through memorization and recitation. This program helps students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence, and learn about literary history and contemporary life. Educator resources are provided free of charge. Contests begin at the classroom level and progress through the all-expenses-paid national competition.

Academic Skills: Public speaking
Program Provider: South Central Service Cooperative in partnership with the Minnesota State Arts Board, National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation
Fees and Deadlines: Free. Registration in the fall; please check website for details.
Website: www.mnscsc.org/poetry-out-loud or www.poetryoutloud.org
Email: mhillmann@mnscsc.org
Contact: Mary Hillmann

★ SCHOOL CHESS ASSOCIATION
Grades K–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM
Learn a lifetime activity – CHESS! The School Chess Association sponsors tournaments, matches, instruction, camps and clubs at schools. The Tournament of Champions takes the top 16 players in both primary and elementary sections of the statewide tournament to compete in a United States Chess Federation rated tournament. The winner of the primary and elementary sections will earn the title of School Chess Association Primary and Elementary Champion.

Academic Skills: Problem solving and critical and analytical thinking
Program Provider: School Chess Association
Fees and Deadlines: Call for fees and dates or check the website for more information.
Website: www.schoolchess.org
Email: loren@schoolchess.org
Phone: (763) 593-1168
Contact: Lorene Lampert

★ SKILLSUSA MINNESOTA
Grades 9–12, Post-secondary
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Business/Career Education
Ever thought about a career in construction, transportation, culinary arts, manufacturing, arts and communication, IT, health and human services, or STEM? SkillsUSA is the perfect organization for you! Leadership training is an integral part of our programming and there are plenty of opportunities to participate in contests and conferences. Chapters are easy to form if your school doesn't already have one!

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, interdisciplinary, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: SkillsUSA Minnesota
Fees and Deadlines: Check website for fees and deadlines.
Website: www.mnskillsusa.org
Email: executive.director@mnskillsusa.org
Phone: (715) 225-4784
Contact: Jessa Dahmes

★ SPELLING BEE
Grades 5–8
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Language Arts
In addition to improving students’ spelling skills and increasing their vocabularies, spelling bee participation provides valuable experience in developing poise—a necessary skill for success in public speaking, performing arts and other activities.

Academic Skills: Factual recall and verbal reasoning
Program Provider: Spelling sponsors vary by region.
Fees and Deadlines: Visit the website for details.
Website: http://spellingbee.com/
STUDENT TELEVISION NETWORK (STN)

Grades 7–12

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment

**Academic Content:** Arts, Business/Career Education

STN supports and encourages scholastic broadcasting and provides a forum for teachers to share ideas, ask questions and learn from professionals in the industry. Since 1999, STN has expanded to include film, media and other forms of communication taught in high schools and middle schools. STN serves teachers and students with curriculum, communication and competitions year-round.

**Academic Skills:** Artistic expression, creativity, leadership development, public speaking and teamwork

**Program Provider:** Student Television Network

**Fees and Deadlines:** $75 annual membership for school/broadcast/film program. STN Convention will be held Feb. 28–March 3, 2021 in Phoenix, AZ.

**Website:** www.studenttelevision.org

**Email:** info@studenttelevision.com

**Phone:** (877) 786-1001

**Contact:** Nancy Held Loucas

SUMDOG

Grades K–8

**Program Category:** Classroom Enrichment, Out of School Time Enrichment

**Academic Content:** Language Arts, STEM

Sumdog provides engaging learning and practice in numeracy for children ages 5–14 and literacy for children ages 5–11. The online learning service adapts to each individual, using engaging game-based learning to motivate and build confidence. A learning engine reports progress to student’s teachers and parents and frees educators to target their interventions.

**Academic Skills:** Numeracy and literacy

**Program Provider:** Sumdog, Inc.

**Fees and Deadlines:** Free login. Family membership and school subscription available for add access.

**Website:** www.sumdog.com

**Email:** See form on website

**Phone:** (877) 978-6364

TEAMS

Grades 7–12

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment

**Academic Content:** STEM

TEAMS (Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics and Science) is an annual theme-based STEM competition challenging students to work collaboratively and apply their math and science knowledge in practical, creative ways to solve real everyday engineering challenges. Teams of four to eight students compete.

**Academic Skills:** Problem solving, critical thinking and cooperation

**Program Provider:** Technology Student Association (TSA)

**Fees and Deadlines:** Online registration opens in September. Registration fees are determined by the competition site. Statewide competitions take place during February and March.

**Website:** https://teams.tsaweb.org/

**Email:** jglover@tsaweb.org

**Phone:** (888) 860-9010
TECHNOVATION [MN]
Grades 5–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

Technovation [MN], the Minnesota chapter of the Global Technovation Challenge, the world's largest all girls entrepreneurship and technology program. We inspire and enable teen girls to dream up, design, code and pitch mobile phone apps supported by trained mentors in the business community. In May, the Minnesota Appapalooza event celebrates our girls' success and the Minnesota quarter-finalists are announced.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, public speaking and teamwork
Program Provider: Code Savvy
Fees and Deadlines: The program is free to all girls and non-binary individuals. Registration opens in October. Check the website for deadlines and meet dates.
Website: www.technovationmn.org
Email: jean@codesavvy.org
Phone: (612) 963-3344
Contact: Jean Weiss

THINKING CAP QUIZ BOWL
Grades 5–8
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: General

Fun scholastic competitions in school. All quizzes are self-scoring, online contests of 100 multiple-choice questions. Areas covered include math, geography, government, sports, spelling, science, literature, language arts, history, general information and fun trivia. An adult is needed to monitor but no adult help can be given. See website for details.

Academic Skills: Factual recall, problem solving, critical thinking, research, teamwork, leadership development, time/budget management and verbal reasoning
Program Provider: Harvey Kimble, owner
Fees and Deadlines: Check website for entry forms, info, fees and deadlines.
Website: www.thinkingcapquizbowl.com
Email: thinkcap5@gmail.com
Phone: (515) 278-5097
Contact: Harvey Kimble

TOSHIBA/NSTA EXPLORAVISION AWARDS
Grades K–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

ExploraVision is a science competition which challenges students to envision and communicate new technology 20 years in the future through collaborative brainstorming and research of current science and technology. A teacher will sponsor and guide students as they work in groups of 2–4 to simulate real research and development. Each student may submit one project online per year.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity and cooperation
Program Provider: Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision
Fees and Deadlines: No entry fee. Projects must be received online; deadline is early February. See website for submission details.
Website: www.exploravision.org
Email: exploravision@nst.org
Phone: 1-800-explor-9
U.S. ACADEMIC TRIATHLON
Grades 5–8
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts, General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM

Established 30 years ago, U.S. Academic Triathlon is an extra-curricular academic and creativity competition encouraging students to think outside the box to solve problems while promoting teamwork and leadership. Teams of five students compete in three round robins to build up to the regional and state competitions. Each competition includes three parts: Face-Off!, Mind Sprints and PARTY in a Box.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: U.S. Academic Triathlon
Fees and Deadlines: Season runs December –April. Check website for fees, registration and competition dates. Discounts available for new districts.
Website: www.usacademictriathlon.com
Email: sarah@usacademictriathlon.com
Phone: (507) 645-2560
Contact: Sarah Sheldon

U.S. NATIONAL CHEMISTRY OLYMPIAD
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: STEM

The U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad is a multi-tiered competition sponsored by the American Chemical Society. Participants compete in a series of qualifying events and the top four students of the national competition represent the United States in the annual International Chemistry Olympiad.

Academic Skills: Problem solving, chemistry and mathematical skills
Program Provider: American Chemical Society
Fees and Deadlines: No fees. Local event in March; National event in April; International event in July (Location changes every year). Visit website for rules and eligibility.
Website: www.acs.org/olympiad
Email: USNCO@acs.org
Phone: (202) 872-6328 or (800) 227-5558, ext. 6328

UNITED STATES SENATE YOUTH PROGRAM
Grades 11–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Social Studies

Two high school junior or senior leaders will spend a week experiencing their national government in action and be awarded a $10,000 college scholarship for undergraduate studies, with encouragement to pursue coursework in history and political science. The 59th annual program will be held in Washington, D.C. March 6–13, 2021. For more information and eligibility requirements visit www.education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/youth.

Academic Skills: Leadership, critical thinking and cooperation
Program Provider: Minnesota Department of Education
Fees and Deadlines: Application available August. For more information and eligibility requirements visit www.education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/youth.
Website: www.ussenateyouth.org
Email: MDE.communications@state.mn.us
Phone: (651) 582-8734
Contact: Gloriann McDonald
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA TALENTED YOUTH MATH PROGRAM (UMTYMP)

Grades 5–12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

An accelerated math program where middle and high school students take rigorous, fast-paced math courses once a week on the University of Minnesota campuses. UMTYMP students learn traditional high school math – Algebra I and II, Geometry, and Precalculus – in just two years. Students then take university-level Calculus courses over three years. Participants earn college credits while learning in a community of highly talented and hardworking peers.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, analytic ability, STEM concepts and mathematical skills
Program Provider: UMTYMP – MathCEP
Fees and Deadlines: Registration for the entrance exam begins in mid-December for admission the following fall; fee varies per University of Minnesota campus (Twin Cities, Rochester, Duluth). Check the website for exam registration and fees. Scholarships available for students with financial need.

Website: www.mathcep.umn.edu/umtymp
Email: mathcep@umn.edu
Phone: (612) 625-2861

UNSUNG HERO PROJECTS

Grades K–12
Program Category: Awards & Recognitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts, Language Arts, Social Studies

The Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes works across diverse academic disciplines to discover and share the stories of individuals who have made a profound and positive impact in history. Through a unique project-based learning approach, students produce documentaries, plays, websites and visual arts projects that champion unsung heroes.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, research and teamwork
Program Provider: Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes
Fees and Deadlines: Free. See website for program details.
Website: www.lowellmilkencenter.org/programs/projects/about
Email: info@lowellmilkencenter.org
Phone: (620) 223-1312
Contact: Norm Conard

WALKER ART CENTER ART TODAY TOURS

Grades K–12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts

Public, school and self-guided tours exploring contemporary art through Walker’s permanent collection and special exhibitions. Interactive, learner-centered and inquiry-based explorations of the Walker galleries and/or the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. Customized tour options available for Special Education classrooms.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, creativity and art appreciation
Program Provider: Walker Art Center
Fees and Deadlines: Discounted admission for groups of 10 or more. Group tours must be scheduled at least three weeks in advance and self-guided group visits must be scheduled at least one week in advance to qualify for the special group rate.

Website: www.walkerart.org/visit/tours-field-trips
Email: tours@walkerart.org
Phone: (612) 375-7609
WAM TEEN ARCHITECTURE WORKSHOP
Grades 10–12
Program Category: Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: Arts, STEM

Have you ever dreamed of being an architect? If so, this week-long, immersive architecture workshop may be for you! Students explore the world of architecture with professional architects, engineers and designers from the University of Minnesota. No specific design experience is necessary. All sessions are held at the Weisman Art Museum on the Minneapolis campus of the University of Minnesota.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, public speaking and teamwork
Program Provider: Weisman Art Museum
Fees and Deadlines: See website for fee and registration information.
Website: www.wam.umn.edu/visits/workshops
Email: jtyung@umn.edu
Phone: (612) 625-9656
Contact: Jamee Yung

WE THE STUDENTS ESSAY CONTEST
Grades 8–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Social Studies

We the Students is an essay contest that tackles current events. The contest is open to students ages 14–19 and features cash prizes.

Academic Skills: Creativity, critical thinking and research
Program Provider: Bill of Rights Institute
Fees and Deadlines: No fees. See website for contest dates.
Website: www.billofrightsinstitute.org/engage/students-programs-events/scholarship/
Email: cjanson@mybri.org
Phone: (703) 894-1776
Contact: Chris Janson

★ WORDMASTERS CHALLENGE
Grades 3–8
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: Language Arts

Students use vocabulary they have studied in advance to complete analogies expressing various kinds of logical relationships. Competitions are held three times per year at your school. Aligns perfectly with CCSS ELA Literacy standards for Vocabulary Acquisition and Use. More than 125,000 students participate annually. Now enrolling teams for our 34th year of competition!

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, verbal reasoning and vocabulary enrichment
Program Provider: WordMasters, LLC
Fees and Deadlines: $99 per team (same grade/division; no limit to number of students on a team). Discounts available to schools that enroll 5+ teams or districts that enroll 5+ schools. Competition begins Oct.1, so register by Sept. 30 to maximize preparation time for your students. Check website for Challenge Schedule and discount details.
Website: www.wordmasterschallenge.com
Email: lisa.lombardi@wordmasterschallenge.com
Phone: (888) 385-5656
Contact: Lisa Lombardi
WORDWRIGHT CHALLENGE
Grades 9–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions
Academic Content: Language Arts

The WordWright Challenge is a national reading competition for students in grades 9–12 that requires analytical reading of many kinds of prose and poetry. It emphasizes perceptive interpretation, sensitivity to language and an appreciation of style. More than 64,000 students from some of the best public and private high schools in 48 states participated last year.

Academic Skills: Close reading, analysis and interpretation
Program Provider: WordWright
Fees and Deadlines: See website for fees and deadlines.
Website: www.wordwrightchallenge.com
Email: n.mcgrath213@gmail.com
Phone: (201) 327-4201
Contact: Nancy McGrath

WORLD SAVVY CLASSROOMS & FESTIVAL
Grades 6–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Arts, Business/Career Education, General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM, World Languages

The World Savvy Classrooms program integrates real-world global content, high-quality collaborative coaching for teachers and the most promising methods for student engagement into the school day. Students in the program explore how to take action on local and global issues. They have the opportunity to submit a project for the World Savvy Festival and compete for prizes or display their work in a non-competitive showcase.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, global citizenship, problem solving, research and teamwork
Program Provider: World Savvy
Fees and Deadlines: See website for more information.
Website: www.worldsavvy.org/our-programs/schools/
Email: erica@worldsavvy.org
Phone: (612) 259-7849
Contact: Erica Ahlgren

★ YES! (YOUTH ECO SOLUTIONS)
Grades 7–12
Program Category: Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: STEM

Join YES! and be part of a statewide network of students working to create solutions for today’s ecological challenges. Students work in teams to build solar boats, grow produce for their school, plant pollinator gardens, restore shorelines, design supermileage cars and more! The year culminates in a state championship event at a Minnesota Twins game.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, environmental stewardship, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork
Program Provider: Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center, Ney Nature Center and Laurentian Environmental Center
Fees and Deadlines: Registration: early fall; Competition dates: spring; fees vary.
Website: www.yesmn.org
Email: shelli-kae@yesmn.org
Phone: (320) 441-9254
Contact: Shelli-Kae Foster

YES! State Champions receive award at Minnesota Twins game!
YMCA MODEL UNITED NATIONS
Grades 7–12
Program Category: Conferences & Institutions, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Language Arts, Social Studies

Model United Nations gives students the opportunity to gain an international outlook on issues that affect the way we live, while playing a role as an international diplomat. Student delegates form alliances, debate resolutions and seek solutions to world problems, all from another country’s perspective. Focus is placed on diplomacy and cooperation among diverse opinions and world-views.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, leadership development, public speaking and teamwork
Program Provider: YMCA Center for Youth Voice
Fees and Deadlines: Approximately $375 (includes lodging) plus minimal local expenses. Registration is in December. Conference is March 26–28, 2021.
Website: www.mnyig.org
Email: yig@ymcamn.org
Phone: (612) 823-1381
Contact: Orville Lindquist

YMCA RESPECTFUL CONVERSATIONS IN SCHOOLS
Middle and High School
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: General, Language Arts

The Respectful Conversations in Schools (RCS) protocol is designed to provide teachers and students with tools for approaching controversial public issues that are responsive to the current political climate, particularly the increase in political polarization.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development, public speaking and social emotional skills
Program Provider: YMCA Center for Youth Voice
Fees and Deadlines: Workshop fees are determined by the number of teacher participants.
Website: www.ymcamn.org/kid__teen_activities/center_youth_voice/programs
Email: amy.anderson@ymcamn.org
Phone: (612) 330-3045
Contact: Amy Anderson

YMCA STUDENT ELECTION JUDGE NETWORK
Ages 16+
Program Category: Leadership Development, Out of School Time Enrichment
Academic Content: General, social studies

The YMCA Center for Youth Voice works with Minnesota cities, counties and high schools to help recruit and coordinate student election judges.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, global citizenship, research, teamwork, civic awareness
Program Provider: YMCA Center for Youth Voice
Fees and Deadlines: No fees. Students get paid by the election offices for both training and for working as an election judge.
Website: www.ymcamn.org/kid__teen_activities/center_youth_voice/programs
Email: amy.anderson@ymcamn.org
Phone: (612) 330-3045
Contact: Amy Anderson
YMCA STUDENTS VOTING MINNESOTA

Grades K–12
Program Category: Classroom Enrichment
Academic Content: General, social studies

The YMCA and the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State are working together to help students statewide discover the importance of elections and the power of their voice – and their vote – in our democracy. Students Voting gives teachers at all grade levels the tools and resources to expose their students to a realistic voting experience that includes learning about candidates and issues, voter registration, and casting a ballot on or before Election day.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, global citizenship, research, teamwork, civic awareness
Program Provider: YMCA Center for Youth Voice and Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State
Fees and Deadlines: Free
Website: www.ymcamn.org/kid__teen_activities/center_youth_voice/programs
Email: amy.anderson@ymcamn.org
Phone: (612) 330-3045
Contact: Amy Anderson

YMCA YOUTH IN GOVERNMENT

Grades 8–12
Program Category: Conferences & Institutions, Leadership Development
Academic Content: Language Arts, Social Studies

Students form groups through local YMCAs and high schools. They research and discuss state issues, draft legislation and develop legal opinions. The culmination is a four-day model state government session at the State Capitol and a conference facility. Focus is on state government with an emphasis on leadership development, personal skill building and developing friendships with peers from across Minnesota.

Academic Skills: Critical thinking, leadership development, public speaking, teamwork and verbal reasoning
Program Provider: YMCA Center for Youth Voice
Fees and Deadlines: Approximately $450 (includes lodging) plus minimal local expenses. Registration is in early October via local school or YMCA group. State conference is Jan. 9–12, 2021.
Website: www.ymcamn.org/kid__teen_activities/center_youth_voice/programs
Email: yig@ymcamn.org
Phone: (612) 823-1381
Contact: Orville Lindquist

NOMINATE YOUR ACADEMIC CHALLENGE COACH FOR A $15,000 AWARD!

Did you know that only coaches of programs approved by the Minnesota Academic League Council and listed in Reach for the Stars are eligible to be nominated for the Academic Challenge Coach category of the WEM Outstanding Educator Awards Program? The program was created to bring recognition to the often “unsung heroes” who meet the challenges of teaching in a variety of settings. Nominees are invited to submit an application packet to become eligible for the award. State honorees receive a crystal apple and an unrestricted $15,000 check. Regional honorees receive an unrestricted $1,500 check, trophy and the opportunity to compete in the state competition the following year. Synergy & Leadership Exchange administers the award program on behalf of the WEM Foundation. To place a nomination, visit www.synergyexchange.org/wem-outstanding-educator-awards
MINNESOTA ACADEMIC LEAGUE
Synergy & Leadership Exchange provides administrative support for the Minnesota Academic League Council, which reviews and approves programs and activities that meet the criteria to appear in the Reach for the Stars catalogue, as well as advocates for academic enrichment opportunities.

REACH FOR THE STARS
This free guide lists more than 120 academic enrichment programs and activities that have been approved by the Minnesota Academic League Council. It is created, published and distributed as a public service by Synergy & Leadership Exchange with support from The Minnesota Service Cooperatives and other partners.

CHARACTER RECOGNITION AWARDS
This event celebrates the statewide achievements of schools and community programs in their efforts to improve achievement, behavior and climate. Recognitions include the Minnesota Schools of Character, Minnesota Promising Practices Awards and Minnesota Ethical Leadership Award.

GATHERING OF CHAMPIONS
Each year K-12 students who are consistent top academic performers; have shown significant improvement in achievement or have overcome barriers to academic achievement; or are local, regional or state champions in a Minnesota Academic League Council approved event are named Minnesota Academic All-Stars and recognized at a free event hosted by Synergy and its partners.

WEM OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR AWARDS PROGRAM
Synergy administers the WEM Outstanding Educator Awards Program on behalf of the WEM Foundation in support of teachers and their important role in helping all students achieve academically and seeks to bring recognition to the often “unsung heroes” who meet the challenges of teaching in a variety of settings. Educators, administrators, academic challenge coaches and athletic coaches from Minnesota public or non-public schools and educational institutions are eligible.
THANK YOU TO THE
MINNESOTA ACADEMIC LEAGUE STRATEGIC PARTNERS

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Distribution of Reach for the Stars is facilitated through a partnership network that supports the catalogue by distributing it directly to schools, educators, families and students or promoting it in publications, newsletters and websites.
To become a Reach for the Stars strategic partner, contact us at reach@synergyexchange.org.

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