

# 2025-2026 CATALOGUE OF PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

# Reach for the Stars

Your guide to 130 high-quality  
academic enrichment programs,  
competitions, events and activities.





## Nurture Your Students' Talents Through Programming in Reach for the Stars!



**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 pre-kindergarten to post-secondary. All programs listed have met the criteria for approval set by the Minnesota Academic League Council.

Whether offered during or outside the school day these programs empower students to explore their interests, ignite their passions, develop their talents, build new skills and achieve new heights in learning!

### Find A Program

Programs are listed alphabetically by 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, category and grade level. Please contact the sponsoring organization directly using the information provided in the listing to participate in the activity or for schedules and program updates.

### Accessing and Sharing Reach for the Stars

You can access Reach for the Stars electronically as a PDF and/or text-only Word document format at [www.synergyexchange.org/reach-for-the-stars](http://www.synergyexchange.org/reach-for-the-stars). Informational postcards are available to share with your students, families, and staff. A limited number of print catalogues are also available. Email [reach@synergyexchange.org](mailto:reach@synergyexchange.org) to make your request.

### Supported By

Reach for the Stars is published as a public service by Synergy & Leadership Exchange in conjunction with the Minnesota Academic League Council. Publication and distribution of the catalogue is supported by donations from The Minnesota Service Cooperatives, South Central Service Cooperative, Sourcewell, and by the affiliate members of the Minnesota Academic League. Distribution is facilitated through a partnership network including statewide and regional education organizations and associations. 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

Keem Anderson  
Wendy Behrens  
Paul Brinkman, Chair  
Patti Haasch  
Carol Malueg  
Melanie Schmidt  
Bonnie Vagasky



**Mission:** To promote high-quality educational opportunities for students through academic challenges and academic enrichment activities.

**Vision:** A future in which all students have access to high-quality academic enrichment challenges and activities positively affecting achievement and growth.

### \* MINNESOTA ACADEMIC LEAGUE AFFILIATES

BestPrep's Minnesota Business Venture  
BestPrep's The Stock Market Game  
Continental Mathematics League  
Gathering of Champions  
JumpStart Bridge  
LifeSmarts  
MAAP STARS  
Math Masters  
Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools  
MathWorks Math Modeling Challenge  
Minnesota Bilingual Seals Program  
Minnesota Future City Competition  
Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program  
Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)  
National Geography Challenge  
National History Day in Minnesota  
National Language Arts League  
National Science League  
National Social Studies League  
Poetry Out Loud  
Scholars of Distinction  
School Chess Association  
Spelling Bee  
The Liminal Essay Contest  
WordMasters Challenge



# Minnesota Academic League Strategic Partners

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.nwservice.org](http://www.nwservice.org)  
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

Northwest Service Cooperative

Lakes Country Service Cooperative

SWWC Service Cooperative

Sourcewell

Resource Training & Solutions

BrightWorks

**South Central Service Cooperative**  
[www.mnscsc.org](http://www.mnscsc.org)  
Region 9

Northeast Service Cooperative

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

**BrightWorks**  
[www.brightworksmn.org](http://www.brightworksmn.org)  
Region 11

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



# Think outside the classroom

Sourcewell 

- Art Show
- Knowledge Bowl
- Math Masters
- Spelling Bee
- Student Leadership Conference
- STEMbound
- Young Authors Conference
- Young Scientists Conference

[mn.sourcewell.org](http://mn.sourcewell.org)

## REACH FOR THE STARS WITH SOUTH CENTRAL SERVICE COOPERATIVE STUDENT PROGRAMS

Based in North Mankato, South Central Service Cooperative provides a variety of enrichment options for students in south central Minnesota and beyond. Visit the SCSC website to learn more about the academic conferences, activities, challenges and classroom extension opportunities available!

- Academic Decathlon/Pentathlon\*
- Career Academies
- Career Expo
- Career Navigator
- Chess Tournaments
- Construct Tomorrow
- CRAVE Culinary Arts
- Knowledge Bowl\*
- LifeSmarts\*
- Math Mania Tournament
- Math Masters\*
- Poetry Out Loud\*
- Science & Nature Conference
- Scrubs Camp
- SCSC Writing Contest
- Social Studies Spectacular
- SOCRATES Online
- Spelling Bee\*
- Summer STEAM
- Tour of Manufacturing
- Transportation Works!
- Young Writers & Artists Conference

\* See individual listing for more on these programs.



[fb.com/mnscsc](https://fb.com/mnscsc)

[WWW.MNSCSC.ORG/STUDENT](http://WWW.MNSCSC.ORG/STUDENT)

**SCSC**   
**South Central  
Service Cooperative**  
Quality Through Cooperation Since 1976

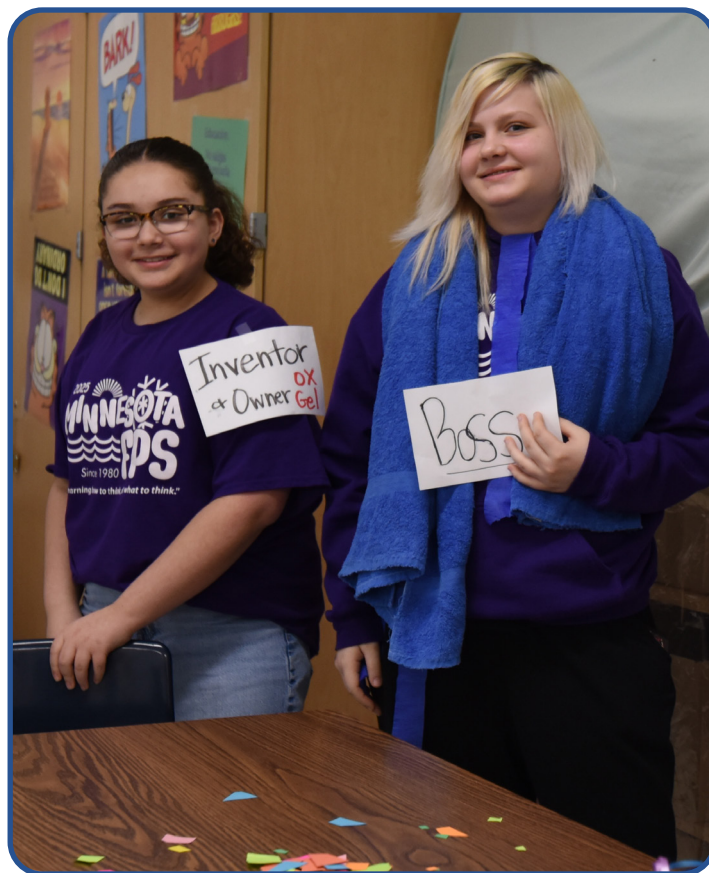


## Table of Contents

### Contents

Above-Grade-Level Assessment.....	7	MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math Enrichment.....	24
Academic Decathlon.....	7	Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools.....	24
Academic Pentathlon.....	7	MathWorks Math Modeling Challenge.....	25
Academic WorldQuest.....	8	Minnesota 4-H Youth Development.....	25
AMC 8.....	8	Minnesota Academy of Science – Middle School and High School Science Bowl.....	25
AMC 10 & 12.....	8	Minnesota Academy of Science – State Science & Engineering Fair.....	26
American Legion Auxiliary Girls State.....	9	Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom.....	26
American Legion Boys State.....	9	Minnesota Bilingual Seals Program <b>NEW!</b> .....	26
ARTEFFECT.....	9	Minnesota Business Professionals of America.....	27
BestPrep's Classroom Plus.....	10	Minnesota DECA.....	27
BestPrep's eMentors.....	10	Minnesota Envirothon.....	27
BestPrep's Financial Matters.....	10	Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America.....	28
BestPrep's Minnesota Business Venture.....	11	Minnesota FFA.....	28
BestPrep's Student Spotlight Competition.....	11	Minnesota Future City Competition.....	29
BestPrep's The Stock Market Game.....	12	Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program.....	29
Calendar in the Classroom.....	12	Minnesota High School Music Listening Contest.....	30
Cancer Unwrapped Teen Writing Contest.....	12	Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY).....	30
Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration – Community of Learning.....	13	Minnesota Junior High Math League.....	30
Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University.....	13	Minnesota MATHCOUNTS.....	31
Classroom Connection.....	13	Minnesota Mathematics League.....	31
Close Up Washington D.C.....	14	Minnesota PTA Reflections.....	31
Code Savvy: Technovation Girls Minnesota.....	14	Minnesota Regional High School Ethics Bowl.....	32
Concordia Language Villages.....	14	Minnesota Scholastic Art Awards.....	32
Continental Mathematics League.....	15	Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division A).....	32
Crazy 8s Math Club.....	15	Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division B).....	33
CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition.....	15	Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division C).....	33
Destination Imagination.....	16	Minnesota SkillsUSA.....	34
Discovery Award Competition.....	16	Minnesota State High School Mathematics League.....	34
Economics Challenge.....	16	Minnesota Student Digital Mapping Competition.....	34
Engineering Machine Design Contest.....	17	Minnesota Youth Institute.....	35
FIRST LEGO League Challenge.....	17	MN Cup Competition – Youth Division.....	35
FIRST LEGO League Explore.....	17	Mock Trial Program.....	35
FIRST Tech Challenge.....	18	Mondale-Quie Essay Contest.....	36
Gathering of Champions.....	18	MSHSL Debate, Speech.....	36
Genes in Space.....	19	MSHSL Music, One Act Play, Visual Arts.....	36
Girls Who Code Clubs.....	19	MSHSL/FIRST Robotics.....	37
H2O for Life.....	19	MTEEA Supermileage Challenge.....	37
HOBY Youth Leadership Seminar.....	20	National Geography Challenge.....	37
Jostens Renaissance Education.....	20	National History Day in Minnesota.....	38
JumpStart Bridge <b>NEW!</b> .....	20	National Language Arts League.....	38
Junior Achievement Experiential Learning Programs.....	21	National Science League.....	39
Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program.....	21	National Social Studies League.....	39
Knowledge Bowl Competitions – Jr. and Sr. High.....	21	NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing.....	39
Laws of Life Essay Contest.....	22	NCTE Promising Young Writers Program.....	40
LifeSmarts.....	22	Nobel Conference at Gustavus Adolphus College.....	40
MAAP STARS.....	23	Noetic Learning Math Contest.....	40
Math Masters.....	23		

Perennial Math Online Math Competition.....	41
Personal Finance Challenge.....	41
Poetry Out Loud.....	41
Poster Contest .....	42
Real World Design Challenge.....	42
Scholars of Distinction.....	43
School Chess Association .....	43
Science and Nature Live Virtual Programs.....	44
Science from Scientists.....	44
Show Us Your Mussels .....	44
Spelling Bee.....	45
Student Television Network .....	45
Sumdog .....	45
TEAMS.....	46
The Liminal Essay Contest <b>NEW!</b> .....	46
Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl.....	47
Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards.....	47
U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad.....	47
United States Senate Youth Program .....	48
University of Minnesota Talented Youth Math Program ..	48
Unsung Hero Projects .....	48
Walker Art Center Art Today Tours .....	49
WordMasters Challenge.....	49
World Savvy.....	49
YES! (Youth Eco Solutions).....	50
YMCA Model United Nations.....	50
YMCA Respectful Conversations in Schools.....	50
YMCA Student Election Judge Network.....	51
YMCA Students Voting .....	51
YMCA Youth in Government .....	51
Youth Environmental Activist Network.....	52
Youth for Human Rights.....	52
ZOOMS STEM Design Challenge .....	52
Listing of Programs by Grade Level.....	53
Listing of Programs by Academic Content.....	55
Listing of Programs by Category.....	57



## LOCAL ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The focus of Reach for the Stars is academic enrichment opportunities offered statewide. For other opportunities, please check your local school district, community education program, city parks and recreation board, public library, university and college, or after school regional network. Find a school or public library at <https://www.education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/lib/>. Examples of after school regional networks:

- **Brooklyn Bridge Alliance for Youth**  
[www.brooklynallianceforyouth.org](http://www.brooklynallianceforyouth.org)
- **Duluth**  
[www.activityhero.com/in/duluth-mn/activity-providers](http://www.activityhero.com/in/duluth-mn/activity-providers)
- **Greater St. Cloud Area**  
[www.unitedwayhelps.org/21st-century](http://www.unitedwayhelps.org/21st-century)
- **Itasca Networks for Youth**  
[www.getlearning.org/page/2694](http://www.getlearning.org/page/2694)
- **Northfield Healthy Community Initiative**  
[www.northfieldhci.org/primetime](http://www.northfieldhci.org/primetime)
- **Minneapolis Afterschool Network**  
[www.ycb.org/afterschool](http://www.ycb.org/afterschool)
- **Sprockets of St. Paul**  
[www.sprocketssaintpaul.org/program-finder](http://www.sprocketssaintpaul.org/program-finder)



## Above-Grade-Level Assessment

### Grades 2–9

Above-Grade-Level Assessment is an opportunity for students to take tests designed for older students and for parents and educators to better understand their students' educational needs. This research-based approach to assessment helps pinpoint strengths, indicate readiness for acceleration and guide long-term planning. Assessment tools include Cognitive Abilities Test, and practice (non-official) ACT, Pre ACT, PSAT and SAT.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Recall, problem solving, critical thinking and writing
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Northwestern University Center for Talent Development
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit website for details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/above-grade-level-assessment">https://www.ctd.northwestern.edu/above-grade-level-assessment</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:ctd-assessment@northwestern.edu">ctd-assessment@northwestern.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(847) 491-3782, ext. 2

## Academic Decathlon

### Grades 9–12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, factual recall, interdisciplinary, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, research, teamwork, time/budget management and verbal reasoning
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Contact Amy Dosch
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.usad.org/">https://www.usad.org/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:amy@usad.org">amy@usad.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(712) 326-9589
<b>Contact:</b>	Amy Dosch

## Academic Pentathlon

### Grades 6–8

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, factual recall, interdisciplinary, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, research, teamwork, time/budget management and verbal reasoning
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Contact Amy Dosch
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.usad.org/pentathlon">https://www.usad.org/pentathlon</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:pentathlon@usad.org">pentathlon@usad.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(712) 326-9589
<b>Contact:</b>	Amy Dosch



## Academic WorldQuest

Grades 9-12

Passionate about global affairs? Join Academic WorldQuest, the only international knowledge competition of its kind in the state, and showcase your global knowledge and critical thinking skills. Compete with other teams answering pressing questions facing the U.S. and the world. The winning team earns a trip to Washington, D.C. to compete nationally — all travel and hotel expenses are covered!

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, Social Studies, World Languages & Cultures
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, factual recall, global citizenship, research and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Global Minnesota
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Free to participate. Registration opens in October. Check website for competition details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.globalminnesota.org/education/high-school-programs/academic-worldquest/">www.globalminnesota.org/education/high-school-programs/academic-worldquest/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@globalminnesota.org">info@globalminnesota.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 625-1662
<b>Contact:</b>	Sylvia Oxenham

## AMC 8

Grades 6-8

Dive into mathematics with the AMC 8, a 25-question, 40-minute competition designed for developing and enhancing problem-solving skills. The AMC 8 provides an opportunity for middle school students to develop positive attitudes towards analytical thinking and mathematics that can assist in future careers. Students apply classroom skills to unique problem-solving challenges in a low-stress and friendly environment.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Mathematical Association of America
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit website for details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://maa.org/student-programs/amc/">https://maa.org/student-programs/amc/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:amcinfo@maa.org">amcinfo@maa.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(800) 527-3690
<b>Contact:</b>	MAA American Mathematics Competitions

## AMC 10 & 12

Grades 9-12

AMC 10 & 12 are both 25-question, 75-minute, multiple-choice examinations in high school mathematics designed to promote the development and enhancement of problem-solving skills. The AMC 10 is for students in 10th grade and below and covers the high school curriculum up to 10th grade. The AMC 12 covers the entire high school curriculum including trigonometry, advanced algebra, and advanced geometry, but excluding calculus.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Mathematical Association of America
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit website for details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://maa.org/student-programs/amc/">https://maa.org/student-programs/amc/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:amcinfo@maa.org">amcinfo@maa.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(800) 527-3690
<b>Contact:</b>	MAA American Mathematics Competitions

## American Legion Auxiliary Girls State

### Grade 11

American Legion Auxiliary Minnesota Girls State is a week-long experience of learning about Minnesota government at the local, county and state levels by their participation in the process.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Conferences & Institutes, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Cooperation, leadership, problem solving and critical thinking
<b>Program Provider:</b>	American Legion Auxiliary
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Fees paid by American Legion Auxiliary Units (local chapters). Visit website for details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.mnala.org/girls-state/">https://www.mnala.org/girls-state/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:deptoffice@mnala.org">deptoffice@mnala.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 224-7634
<b>Contact:</b>	MN American Legion Auxiliary

## American Legion Boys State

### Grade 11

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Conferences & Institutes, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking and creativity
<b>Program Provider:</b>	American Legion Boys State
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Fees paid by sponsoring American Legion Post. Applications accepted on first-come, first-serve basis if qualified.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnboysstate.org">www.mnboysstate.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:jkelley@mnlegion.org">jkelley@mnlegion.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 291-1800
<b>Contact:</b>	Jennifer Kelley

## ARTEFFECT

### Grades 6–12

Be an artist who inspires others! ARTEFFECT is a visual arts competition for students in grades 6–12, accepting entries in 2D, 3D, digital media and more! Each year, ARTEFFECT awards up to \$30,000 in cash prizes to young artists who create works inspired by the stories of Unsung Heroes who changed the course of history. Visit our website to learn more!

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking and interdisciplinary
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Free entry! Competition dates: Oct. 1, 2025–May 1, 2026
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://arteffectlmc.org/">https://arteffectlmc.org/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:arteffect@lowellmilken.org">arteffect@lowellmilken.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(310) 570-4859
<b>Contact:</b>	Toni Guglielmo, Ph.D.

## BestPrep's Classroom Plus

Grades 6-12

Program staff coordinate volunteer speakers, 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. Speakers are available virtually or in-person.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, General, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, leadership development, public speaking, teamwork and time/budget management
<b>Program Provider:</b>	BestPrep
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Program is free. Educators may request speakers for classes of 10 or more students.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.bestprep.org/classroom-plus">www.bestprep.org/classroom-plus</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:cp@bestprep.org">cp@bestprep.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(763) 233-6329
<b>Contact:</b>	Emma Richards

## BestPrep's eMentors

Grades 9-12

eMentors is an online mentoring program that offers high school students the opportunity to develop a relationship with a mentor in a professional field. Over the course of eight weeks, students and mentors discuss topics including college and career experience, interviewing skills, workplace etiquette and more. eMentors has curriculum specifically created for AVID, STEM and personal finance classes.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, General, Language Arts, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, leadership development and time/budget management
<b>Program Provider:</b>	BestPrep
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No cost to participate. eMentors connections are available throughout the school year.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://bestprep.org/ementors/">https://bestprep.org/ementors/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:ementors@bestprep.org">ementors@bestprep.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 247-8140
<b>Contact:</b>	Kim Graff

## BestPrep's Financial Matters

Grades 6-12

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 housing, the program provides real-life lessons in money management. Speakers are available virtually or in-person.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, General, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving, teamwork and time/budget management
<b>Program Provider:</b>	BestPrep
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Program is free. Educators may request speakers for classes of 10 or more students.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.bestprep.org/financial-matters">www.bestprep.org/financial-matters</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:fm@bestprep.org">fm@bestprep.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(763) 233-6329
<b>Contact:</b>	Emma Richards



## \* BestPrep's Minnesota Business Venture

Grades 9-12

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.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development

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

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving, teamwork and time/budget management

**Program Provider:** BestPrep

**Fees and Deadlines:** Registration opens in January 2026 for two different July camp weeks at the University of St. Thomas. Students pay \$300, save \$100 with April early bird discount.

**Website:** [www.bestprep.org/minnesota-business-venture](http://www.bestprep.org/minnesota-business-venture)

**Email:** [mbv@bestprep.org](mailto:mbv@bestprep.org)

**Phone:** (763) 233-6325

**Contact:** Gemma Sprecher



 **bestprep**

## BestPrep's Student Spotlight Competition

Grades 9-12

BestPrep's Student Spotlight Competition allows all students in grades 9-12 to respond to a prompt with any type of art form: written word, art, sculpture, music and other artforms. The competition prompt is announced in September and the deadline is November. BestPrep hopes for a wide variety of submissions and offers prizes for the top 20 winners and their teacher. This competition is held in conjunction with BestPrep's Educational Forum.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions

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

**Academic Skills:** Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking and research

**Program Provider:** BestPrep

**Fees and Deadlines:** No fee to participate; deadline is late November (typically the week of Thanksgiving).

**Website:** <https://bestprep.org/educational-forum/>

**Email:** [xthomas@bestprep.org](mailto:xthomas@bestprep.org)

**Phone:** (763) 710-8988

**Contact:** Xavier Thomas



## \* BestPrep's The Stock Market Game

Grades 4-12

Students work in teams to invest \$100,000 in stocks, bonds and mutual funds using an online platform. The Stock Market Game is a flexible simulation that builds financial literacy, economics and teamwork skills. It can be used during or after school. No prior investing experience is needed—teachers receive full support. Students research real-world companies, make investment decisions and compete for awards, gaining practical experience in a fun, engaging way.

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

**Academic Content:** Business/Career Education, General, STEM

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, global citizenship, research and time/budget management

**Program Provider:** BestPrep

**Fees and Deadlines:** Registration is open immediately and there are no fees for Minnesota schools and students. When registering, select “Pay Later.”

**Website:** <https://www.stockmarketgame.org/>

**Email:** [smg@bestprep.org](mailto:smg@bestprep.org)

**Phone:** (763) 233-6324

**Contact:** Tovin Sannes-Venhuizen



 **bestprep**

## Calendar in the Classroom

Grades K-5

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.

**Program Category:** Classroom Activity

**Academic Content:** Arts, General, Language Arts, STEM

**Academic Skills:** Creativity, critical thinking, environmental stewardship, global citizenship and interdisciplinary

**Program Provider:** Jeffers Foundation

**Fees and Deadlines:** No cost. Program is ongoing.

**Website:** <https://jeffersfoundation.org/programs/calendar-in-the-classroom/>

**Email:** [info@jeffersfoundation.org](mailto:info@jeffersfoundation.org)

**Phone:** (952) 226-7156

## Cancer Unwrapped Teen Writing Contest

Grades 9-12

We invite you to write a 500–1500 word essay about your experiences, emotions and realities when dealing with cancer for the opportunity to win one of several \$1,000 cash prizes. Essays can be about your own diagnosis or that of a loved one (e.g., a family member, teacher or friend). Winning essays from this national contest are shared on our website for others to read and know that they are not alone.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions

**Academic Content:** Language Arts

**Academic Skills:** Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, factual recall and verbal reasoning

**Program Provider:** Cancer Pathways

**Fees and Deadlines:** No fees. Visit the website for contest information and deadline.

**Website:** [www.cancerpathways.org/programs/cancer-unwrapped/](http://www.cancerpathways.org/programs/cancer-unwrapped/)

**Email:** [info@cancerpathways.org](mailto:info@cancerpathways.org)

**Phone:** (206) 709-1400

**Contact:** Paige Hansen-Shankar

## Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration – Community of Learning

### Grades K-6

Learners from around the world are invited to tune in for CILC's free Community of Learning series to learn about interdisciplinary topics from renowned experts. CILC's educational livestreams are focused on a variety of subjects including literacy, art, STEM and history at 12PM CT most weekdays.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, environmental stewardship, global citizenship and interdisciplinary
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Free. Register anytime for the programs.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.cilc.org/community">www.cilc.org/community</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@cilc.org">info@cilc.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(507) 388-3672
<b>Contact:</b>	Tami Moehring

## Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University

### PreK-Grade 12

Discover how your advanced learner can thrive at Northwestern University's Center for Talent Development. Serving PreK through grade 12, CTD offers a wide range of enrichment and accelerated programs—online, hybrid, and on-campus summer options included. Whether your child is curious about science, writing, math or more, CTD provides the challenge and support they need to grow, connect and reach their full potential.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Leadership Development, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, Business/Career Education, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM, World Languages & Cultures
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development and problem solving
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Check website for fees and deadlines.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.ctd.northwestern.edu">www.ctd.northwestern.edu</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:ctd-admissions@northwestern.edu">ctd-admissions@northwestern.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(847) 467-1575
<b>Contact:</b>	Admissions and General

## Classroom Connection

### Grades 3-12

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. Visits can be conducted either in-person or online.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General, Language Arts, Social Studies, World Languages & Cultures
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, interdisciplinary and verbal reasoning
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Global Minnesota
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Free! Visit the website for registration details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://globalminnesota.org/education/elementary-school-program/">https://globalminnesota.org/education/elementary-school-program/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:soxenham@globalminnesota.org">soxenham@globalminnesota.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 625-1662
<b>Contact:</b>	Sylvia Oxenham



## Close Up Washington D.C.

Grades 6-12

Close Up offers transformative programs in Washington, D.C. for middle 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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, creativity, cooperation, American history and governmental studies
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Close Up Foundation
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Call for fees. Registration is rolling; programs run year round.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.closeup.org">www.closeup.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@closeup.org">info@closeup.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(703) 706-3300 or (800) CLOSE UP

## Code Savvy: Technovation Girls Minnesota

Ages 8-18

The Global Technovation Girls Challenge inspires and enables teen girls to dream up, design, code and pitch a mobile or web application supported by trained mentors in the business community. In May, the teams participate in a live pitch event and award ceremony to celebrate the girls' success.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Code Savvy
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	The program is free to all girls and non-binary individuals. Registration opens in fall. Sign up for our Code Savvy newsletter to stay current with the latest information!
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.codesavvy.org/for-students/technovation-girls-minnesota/">https://www.codesavvy.org/for-students/technovation-girls-minnesota/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:contactus@codesavvy.org">contactus@codesavvy.org</a> or <a href="mailto:girlscode@technovationmn.org">girlscode@technovationmn.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 963-3344

## Concordia Language Villages

Ages 2-18

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	World Languages & Cultures
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	World language proficiency, global citizenship, environmental stewardship, recall, problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, cooperation and leadership
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Concordia College
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit the website for fees, scholarships and dates.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.concordiaLanguageVillages.org">www.concordiaLanguageVillages.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:clvregister@cord.edu">clvregister@cord.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	1-800-222-4750

## \* Continental Mathematics League

Grades 2-9

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. The program is a Better Business Bureau member with an A+ rating.

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

**Academic Content:** STEM

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking and problem solving

**Program Provider:** Continental Mathematics League

**Fees and Deadlines:** Grades 2-3: \$90 per team; Grades 4-9 and Calculus League for Advanced Placement: \$100 first team and \$85 additional teams. Meet dates: Grades 2-3: Jan. 9, Feb. 6, March 6; Grades 4-9: Nov. 7, Dec. 5, Jan. 9, Feb. 6, March 6; Calculus League: Dec. 5, Feb. 6, March 6, April 10.

**Website:** [www.cmleague.com](http://www.cmleague.com)

**Email:** [support@cmleague.com](mailto:support@cmleague.com)

**Phone:** (631) 921-6627

**Contact:** Christine Pette



## Crazy 8s Math Club

Grades K-5

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.

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

**Academic Content:** STEM

**Academic Skills:** Factual recall, problem solving and teamwork

**Program Provider:** Bedtime Math Foundation

**Fees and Deadlines:** Free!

**Website:** <https://crazy8sclub.org/>

**Email:** [joy@bedtimemath.org](mailto:joy@bedtimemath.org)

**Phone:** (908) 444-4539

**Contact:** Joy Kalfus

## CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition

Grades 6-12

The CyberPatriot competition puts teams of middle and high school students in the position of newly hired IT professionals tasked with managing the network of a small company. Through a series of online rounds, teams must find and fix cybersecurity vulnerabilities in virtual operating systems while maintaining critical services. The top teams in the nation earn all-expense-paid trips to Maryland for the National Finals Competition, where they can earn national recognition and scholarship money.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions

**Academic Content:** STEM

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, problem solving and teamwork

**Program Provider:** Air and Space Forces Association

**Fees and Deadlines:** \$225 for open division high school team and \$175 for middle school division team. 20% discount for teams registered by July 1. Fees waived for JROTC, Title I and all-girl teams. Registration is open between April 1—Oct. 1, 2025. Visit website for competition schedule.

**Website:** [www.uscyberpatriot.org](http://www.uscyberpatriot.org)

**Email:** [info@uscyberpatriot.org](mailto:info@uscyberpatriot.org)

**Phone:** (877) 885-5716

## Destination Imagination

Grades K-12, Post-secondary

Destination Imagination 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 STEAM and service learning challenges and then present their solutions at tournaments.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	STEAM concepts, problem solving, critical thinking, time/budget management, creativity, cooperation, improvisation, research and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Intermediate District 287
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit the website for more information.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mndi.org">www.mndi.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:pfschroeder@district287.org">pfschroeder@district287.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(763) 550-7212
<b>Contact:</b>	Pamela Schroeder, affiliate director

## Discovery Award Competition

Grades 4-12

DISCOVER extraordinary individuals who positively impacted history, yet are not well known. CREATE a documentary, performance or website that honors the legacy of your Unsung Hero. CHANGE the world for the better by using your project to inspire the hero within everyone. Participants can submit individual or group projects. Cash prizes for winning projects!

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General, Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary and research
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Lowell Milken Center
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Submit topics for pre-approval in February. Submissions due July 1. Visit the website for additional information.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.lowellmilkencenter.org/competitions/discovery-award">https://www.lowellmilkencenter.org/competitions/discovery-award</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:nconard@lowellmilkencenter.org">nconard@lowellmilkencenter.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(620) 223-1312
<b>Contact:</b>	Norm Conard

## Economics Challenge

Grades 9-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, factual recall, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Council on Economic Education
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	There is no registration cost for teachers or students to participate. Registration opens on Jan. 1 of the competition year; exact dates can be found on the MCEE calendar.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://z.umn.edu/EconomicsChallenge">https://z.umn.edu/EconomicsChallenge</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mcee@umn.edu">mcee@umn.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 625-3727
<b>Contact:</b>	Angela Zappa



## Engineering Machine Design Contest

Grades 5–8 (Junior Division), 9–12 (Senior Division)

Using everyday objects, teams of 3–12 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 Team Journal, Team Presentation, and Machine Design and Operation. Each year a competition theme is chosen to guide the machine build and allow for whimsical creativity to flourish.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, Business/Career Education, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota State Engineering Center of Excellence
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit the website for fees, deadlines and competition theme. Regional contest dates vary by site: February–April.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://engineering.mnsu.edu/engineering-machine-design-contest/">https://engineering.mnsu.edu/engineering-machine-design-contest/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:melissa.huppert@mnsu.edu">melissa.huppert@mnsu.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(507) 389-2110
<b>Contact:</b>	Melissa Huppert

## FIRST LEGO League Challenge

Grades 4–8

FIRST LEGO League Challenge encourages young innovators ages 9–14 to build confidence in STEM while developing critical thinking and team building skills. In this holistic program, teams design, build and program autonomous LEGO robots to navigate a playing field, as well as research a real-world problem associated with a yearly theme. Teams attend competitions where they share their research, explain their engineering design process and compete with their robot.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	High Tech Kids
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit the website for fees and deadlines.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://hightechkids.org/fll-overview/">https://hightechkids.org/fll-overview/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:vicki@hightechkids.org">vicki@hightechkids.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 781-2203
<b>Contact:</b>	Vicki Coaty

## FIRST LEGO League Explore

Grades K–4

FIRST LEGO League Explore teams work together to discover how science and technology impact the world around them. Teams of 2–6 participants between the ages of 6–9 work with LEGO SPIKE Essentials and LEGO elements to build a motorized model and create a poster related to their research on a yearly theme. Teams attend festivals where they share what they have learned and discovered.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, problem solving, teamwork and innovation
<b>Program Provider:</b>	High Tech Kids
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit the website for fees and deadlines.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://hightechkids.org/fll-explore-overview/">https://hightechkids.org/fll-explore-overview/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:vicki@hightechkids.org">vicki@hightechkids.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 781-2203
<b>Contact:</b>	Vicki Coaty

## FIRST Tech Challenge

Grades 6-12

FIRST Tech Challenge is a hands-on and rapid prototyping robotic experience for students. Teams of 3–15 participants in grades 6–12 build and program robots, based on sound engineering principles, to compete in an alliance format. FIRST Tech Challenge helps kids develop strategic, problem solving and team building skills. Teams participate in qualifying events November–January with the state championship in February.

**Program Category:** Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions  
**Academic Content:** General, STEM  
**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving, teamwork and innovation  
**Program Provider:** High Tech Kids  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Visit the website for detailed information.  
**Website:** <https://hightechkids.org/ftc-overview/>  
**Email:** [vicki@hightechkids.org](mailto:vicki@hightechkids.org)  
**Phone:** (612) 781-2203  
**Contact:** Vicki Coaty

## \* Gathering of Champions

Grades K-12

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 Category:** Awards & Recognitions  
**Academic Content:** General  
**Program Provider:** Synergy & Leadership Exchange  
**Fees and Deadlines:** No fees. Statewide recognition event is held on the first Friday in August.  
**Website:** <https://synergyexchange.org/gathering-of-champions>  
**Email:** [goc@synergyexchange.org](mailto:goc@synergyexchange.org)  
**Phone:** (507) 389-5115  
**Contact:** Leah Garry



### CALLING ALL STUDENTS...DESIGN THE 2026 GATHERING OF CHAMPIONS LOGO!

Submit your original logo design ideas for the 2026 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 May 1, 2026. See complete rules for submission and download the logo contest entry form 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 Aria Wobbema, winner of the 2025 Gathering of Champions Logo Contest!** Aria Wobbema is a 6th grade student at Olson Middle School in Bloomington.



## Genes in Space

Grades 7-12

Students in grades 7–12 pioneer research on the International Space Station by designing DNA experiments for space! Students are invited 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. You can work alone or in a team up to two students.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions

**Academic Content:** STEM

**Academic Skills:** Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, research and teamwork

**Program Provider:** Genes in Space

**Fees and Deadlines:** There is no cost to enter the competition and entry does not require equipment. The 2026 contest will open in January and close in April; see website for further details.

**Website:** [www.genesinspace.org](http://www.genesinspace.org)

**Email:** [genesinspace@minipcr.com](mailto:genesinspace@minipcr.com)

## Girls Who Code Clubs

Grades 3-12

Clubs are free computer science programs for 3rd–12th graders to learn to code and change the world. Club participants build websites, applications, and games tackling important topics from climate change to cybersecurity and artificial intelligence. No computer science experience required to start a Club! Girls Who Code provides everything you need, including a \$300 Clubs Fund for supplies!

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

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

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork

**Program Provider:** Girls Who Code

**Fees and Deadlines:** Completely free to start a Club! No deadline, apply anytime.

**Website:** <https://girlswhocode.com/clubsapply>

**Email:** [kibret.yebetit@girlswhocode.com](mailto:kibret.yebetit@girlswhocode.com)

**Contact:** Kibret Yebetit

## H2O for Life

Grades K-12

H2O for Life provides free educational resources to classrooms to bring the discussion of the world water crisis to life for your students. These resources range from free classroom presentations by our staff to online curriculum and service-learning grants. After your students learn about the issue, they have the opportunity to take on a service-learning project to support a partner school in need of help with a water project.

**Program Category:** Classroom Activity, Leadership Development

**Academic Content:** General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM

**Academic Skills:** Environmental stewardship, global citizenship, interdisciplinary, leadership development and problem solving

**Program Provider:** H2O for Life

**Fees and Deadlines:** All resources provided by H2O for Life are free to participants!

**Website:** [www.h2oforlifeschools.org](http://www.h2oforlifeschools.org)

**Email:** [mitchell@h2oforlifeschools.org](mailto:mitchell@h2oforlifeschools.org)

**Phone:** (651) 377-1096

**Contact:** Mitchell LeGrand



## HOBY Youth Leadership Seminar

Grade 10

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

<b>Program Category:</b>	Conferences & Institutes, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving, critical thinking, teamwork, leadership development, global citizenship and time/budget management
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Hugh O'Brian Youth Leadership – Minnesota, Inc.
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Cost for the first student at each school is \$225; additional ones 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.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.hobyminnesota.org">www.hobyminnesota.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:dexterhanson@hobyminnesota.org">dexterhanson@hobyminnesota.org</a>
<b>Contact:</b>	Dexter Hanson

## Jostens Renaissance Education

Grades K-12

Jostens Renaissance is a framework for building a culture where teachers love their job and students thrive in school. Through online resources, regional and national events, and a robust community of educators, Jostens Renaissance strategies can lead to improved staff morale, academic achievement and student character development.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development, public speaking and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Jostens, Inc.
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No cost for Jostens customers. Visit the website for information on resources and events.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.jostensrenaissance.com">www.jostensrenaissance.com</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:renaissance@jostens.com">renaissance@jostens.com</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(800) 624-5534

## \* JumpStart Bridge NEW!

Grades K-8, 9-12

JumpStart Bridge is the Ultimate Mind Sport for your Students! Do you need something that all your students can play, challenges high achievers, improves math skills, increases socialization, fosters teamwork, is a card game that is easy to teach, offers a stipend to teachers (\$350) and is completely free?!

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, General, Personal Finance, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, factual recall, problem solving, teamwork, and verbal reasoning
<b>Program Provider:</b>	JumpStart Bridge
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	There are no fees, deadlines or cost to schools, teachers or students.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.jumpstartbridge.org">http://www.jumpstartbridge.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:patty@jumpstartbridge.org">patty@jumpstartbridge.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(404) 735-4779
<b>Contact:</b>	Patty Tucker



# JumpStart Bridge

## Junior Achievement Experiential Learning Programs

Grades 5-12

Junior Achievement Experiential Learning Programs combine practical applications in real world situations with classroom principles, which allows learning to come to life! 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 BizTown, JA Finance Park, JA Dream Accelerator and JA Company Program.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, Language Arts, Personal Finance, Social Studies, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, public speaking, teamwork, leadership development, global citizenship, environmental stewardship, time/budget management and personal development
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Junior Achievement North
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Fees vary by location; contact program for details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.janorth.org">www.janorth.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@janorth.org">info@janorth.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 255-0055

## Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program

Grades K-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, research, environmental stewardship and artistic expression
<b>Program Provider:</b>	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No fee. Entry deadline for the Minnesota Junior Duck Stamp Design Contest is March 15 annually.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.fws.gov/juniorduck">www.fws.gov/juniorduck</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:lynda_knutsen@fws.gov">lynda_knutsen@fws.gov</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(218) 449-4115, ext. 202
<b>Contact:</b>	Lynda Knutsen

## Knowledge Bowl Competitions - Jr. and Sr. High

Grades 7-8, 9-12

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. Some regions also offer this for students in grades 5-6.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Recall, critical thinking, cooperation and problem solving
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Lakes Country Service Cooperative
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Fees and dates vary by region. Senior High State Knowledge Bowl meets will take place in the spring.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.mnservcoop.org/knowledge-bowl">https://www.mnservcoop.org/knowledge-bowl</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mthompson@lcsc.org">mthompson@lcsc.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(218) 737-6540
<b>Contact:</b>	Monica Thompson

## Laws of Life Essay Contest

Grades 4–6, 7–8, 9–12

The Laws of Life writing program encourages elementary, middle school and high school students to reflect and write about a core value that means the most to them — and why.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Language Arts, Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, environmental stewardship, interdisciplinary, problem solving and time/budget management
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Character.org
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Free to participate. Annual participation encouraged. Check website for submission deadline.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://character.org/laws-of-life-contest/">https://character.org/laws-of-life-contest/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:lawsoflife@character.org">lawsoflife@character.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(608) 548-4454
<b>Contact:</b>	Wendy Horbinski

## \* LifeSmarts

Grades 9–12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, General, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, environmental stewardship, interdisciplinary, problem solving and time/budget management
<b>Program Provider:</b>	South Central Service Cooperative
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	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.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnscsc.org/lifesmarts">www.mnscsc.org/lifesmarts</a> or <a href="https://lifesmarts.org/">https://lifesmarts.org/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:lifesmarts@mnscsc.org">lifesmarts@mnscsc.org</a>



### CONNECT YOUR STUDENTS, STAFF AND FAMILIES WITH REACH FOR THE STARS!

*Reach for the Stars* opens the door to exciting academic enrichment opportunities for students — and you can help spread the word! Here are three simple ways to get involved:

1. Share the news: Include a short blurb about Reach for the Stars in your newsletters (print or digital), websites, or other communications.
2. Promote access: Add the Reach for the Stars QR code or website link so students can easily download the PDF.
3. Distribute materials: Request free informational postcards to hand out in your school or community.

Need help putting these ideas into action? Email us at [reach@synergyexchange.org](mailto:reach@synergyexchange.org) — we're here to support you!



## \* MAAP STARS

Grades 9–12

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 regional and three statewide events.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development

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

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

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

**Fees and Deadlines:** Annual STARS Chapter fee \$150; October 9–10, 2025 STARS Fall Leadership Conference: \$60/person; Feb. 25, 2026 Legislative Day at the State Capitol; MAAP STARS Spring Events Conference May 7–8, 2026.

**Website:** [www.maapmn.org](http://www.maapmn.org)

**Email:** [maapstarschair@gmail.com](mailto:maapstarschair@gmail.com)

**Phone:** (218) 731-7418

**Contact:** Kristin Tuel



## \* Math Masters

Grades 4–6

The Math Masters mathematics competition program challenges fourth, fifth and sixth grade students to use critical thinking and problem-solving skills in mathematics. Students compete as individuals and on teams in 7–8 competition rounds. Competitions are held at dozens of sites throughout Minnesota and in other states. Students' academic effort and achievement is recognized with plaques, medallions and ribbons in each competition element: Fact Drill, Individual Round and Team Competition.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development

**Academic Content:** STEM

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, factual recall, problem solving, teamwork and time/budget management

**Program Provider:** Math Masters

**Fees and Deadlines:** Visit website for current fee and registration details. Registration opens in September; competitions are held in March–April. Team and individual registration options available.

**Website:** [www.math-masters.org](http://www.math-masters.org)

**Email:** [mathmasters@math-masters.org](mailto:mathmasters@math-masters.org)

**Phone:** (507) 389-2509

**Contact:** Mary Detloff



## MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math Enrichment

Grades 5–7

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 mathematic topics that go beyond the classroom.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, analytic ability, STEM concepts and mathematical skills
<b>Program Provider:</b>	University of Minnesota – MathCEP
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	For fees and calendar dates call or visit the website. Registration opens in August.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://cse.umn.edu/mathcep/saturday-morning-math-enrichment">https://cse.umn.edu/mathcep/saturday-morning-math-enrichment</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mathcep@umn.edu">mathcep@umn.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 625-2861

## \* Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools

Grades 4–6 (Division E), Grades 6–8 (Division M)


Math Olympiads is a series of five contests in each division that run from November–March. Contests may be administered in the classroom or in a before/after school program. The contests can be administered in-person or virtually. We also sponsor tournaments, which are exciting face-to-face competitions that may be offered by any school or professional organization in the spring.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking and problem solving
<b>Program Provider:</b>	MOEMS – Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Early bird fee deadline is July 31 each year. The standard fee to enroll a team is \$200 between Aug. 1–Oct. 15, 2025 and \$250 between Oct. 16–31, 2025.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.moems.org">www.moems.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@moems.org">info@moems.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(516) 781-2400
<b>Contact:</b>	Meryl Fordin

**OLYMPIAD - 10/24/22**

The product of two numbers is 504 and each of the two numbers is divisible by 6. However, neither of the two numbers is 6. What is the larger of the two numbers?

???



### 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](http://www.mnscsc.org/math-mania) for more information.

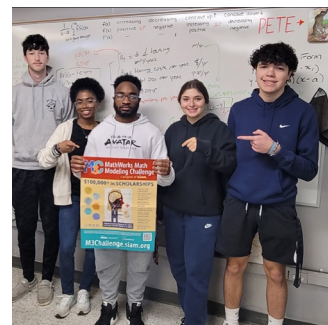


## \* MathWorks Math Modeling Challenge

Grades 11-12

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 use math and data to solve a real-world problem in 14 hours. Teams with the best solution papers receive tuition scholarships for their college education.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (SIAM)
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No fees. Registration opens in November and closes in February. Challenge weekend is late February/early March; visit the website for deadlines.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://M3Challenge.siam.org">https://M3Challenge.siam.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:m3challenge@siam.org">m3challenge@siam.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(267) 350-6336
<b>Contact:</b>	Karen Bliss



**M3** MathWorks Math Modeling Challenge  
A program of **SIAM**

## Minnesota 4-H Youth Development

Grades K-13

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Leadership Development, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, General, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development and public speaking
<b>Program Provider:</b>	University of Minnesota Extension – Minnesota 4-H Youth Development
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	See website for details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.extension.umn.edu/4-h">www.extension.umn.edu/4-h</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:fourh@umn.edu">fourh@umn.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 624-2116

## Minnesota Academy of Science – Middle School and High School Science Bowl

Grades 6-8, 9-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, factual recall, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Academy of Science
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	\$150 per high school team and \$125 per middle school team. Visit the website for competition dates and deadlines.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnmas.org/science-bowl">www.mnmas.org/science-bowl</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:kfowler@mnmas.org">kfowler@mnmas.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 917-3994
<b>Contact:</b>	Kris Fowler



## Minnesota Academy of Science – State Science & Engineering Fair

Grades 6-12

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 up to 500 students selected to present their research. The four top projects receive an all-expense-paid trip to the International Fair with more than 70 countries participating.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, environmental stewardship, problem solving and public speaking
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Academy of Science
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	See website for fees, deadlines and competition dates.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnmas.org/about-science-engineering-fair">www.mnmas.org/about-science-engineering-fair</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@mnmas.org">info@mnmas.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 917-3994
<b>Contact:</b>	Science & Engineering Fair manager

## Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom

Grades K-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, environmental stewardship, global citizenship, interdisciplinary and agricultural literacy
<b>Program Provider:</b>	MAITC at the Minnesota Department of Agriculture
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	All MAITC resources are free.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://minnesota.agclassroom.org">https://minnesota.agclassroom.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:Sue.knott@state.mn.us">Sue.knott@state.mn.us</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 201-6486
<b>Contact:</b>	Sue Knott

## \* Minnesota Bilingual Seals Program NEW!

Grades 10-12

Minnesota Bilingual Seals are a recognition awarded to graduating high school students who demonstrated language skills in languages other than English. There are three levels of awards and many Minnesota State Colleges and Universities award free college credits. The award notated on your transcript serves as an official documentation of your language skills boosting your opportunities to expanded career or enriched activities beyond post-secondary.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	World Languages & Cultures
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Global citizenship, language skills in listening, reading, speaking and writing
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota public, charter, and private schools through the Minnesota Department of Education.
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Vary depending on school or district.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/stds/world/seals/">https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/stds/world/seals/</a> or Minnesota Seals Toolkit: <a href="https://www.minnesotabilingualseals.com/home">https://www.minnesotabilingualseals.com/home</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mde.worldlang@state.mn.us">mde.worldlang@state.mn.us</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 582-8707
<b>Contact:</b>	Ayumi Stockman



## Minnesota Business Professionals of America

Grades 9-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Conferences & Institutes
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, research, teamwork, time/budget management and verbal reasoning
<b>Program Provider:</b>	MN Business Professionals of America
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit website for details on state and national fees as well as conference dates and locations.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnbpa.org">www.mnbpa.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:jackie@arvig.net">jackie@arvig.net</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(218) 847-5355
<b>Contact:</b>	Jackie Schiller

## Minnesota DECA

Grades 9-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Conferences & Institutes
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, research, teamwork, time/budget management and verbal reasoning
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Secondary DECA
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit website for details on state and national fees as well as conference dates and locations.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mndeca.org">www.mndeca.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:jackie@arvig.net">jackie@arvig.net</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(218) 847-5355
<b>Contact:</b>	Jackie Schiller

## Minnesota Envirothon

Grades 9-12

The Minnesota Envirothon is an outdoor environmental learning competition where teams of high school students compete in five learning stations including aquatics, forestry, soils, wildlife and a current environmental topic. Teams are tested in each area and students also 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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Knowledge of natural resource issues and topics, public speaking, research, critical thinking, problem solving skills, interdisciplinary, creativity and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	NCF Envirothon (national), Association of Conservation District (State), and Minnesota Area and Local Soil and Water Conservation Districts (area events)
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	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.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.maswcd.org/envirothon.htm">www.maswcd.org/envirothon.htm</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:MNEnvirothon@gmail.com">MNEnvirothon@gmail.com</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(320) 589-4886
<b>Contact:</b>	Judy Johnston

## Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America

Grades 6-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Conferences & Institutes, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving, creative and critical thinking, interdisciplinary, public speaking, teamwork, leadership development, environmental stewardship and time/budget management
<b>Program Provider:</b>	MN FCCLA
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Annual individual membership fee is \$20. 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.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnfccla.org">www.mnfccla.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:patrick.mitchell@mnfccla.org">patrick.mitchell@mnfccla.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 330-2950
<b>Contact:</b>	Patrick Mitchell

## Minnesota FFA

Grades 7-12

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

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Communications, leadership and decision-making skills
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota FFA
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit the website for more information.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnffa.org">www.mnffa.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:acrowson@mnffa.org">acrowson@mnffa.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(605) 695-1861
<b>Contact:</b>	Ashley Crowson





## \* Minnesota Future City Competition

Grades 6–8, 9–12

Future City is a hands-on cross-curricular educational program that brings STEM to life for students in grades 6–12. Using the Engineering Design Process and project management skills, students imagine, design, build and showcase their solutions to a citywide sustainability issue.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, problem solving, public speaking, research and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	SparkPath
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Grades 6–8: \$25 per school registration fee, due by Oct. 31, 2025. Grades 9–12: \$300–\$450 per school registration fee.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://futurecity.org/future-city-regions/minnesota/">https://futurecity.org/future-city-regions/minnesota/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:colleen.feller@brightworksmn.org">colleen.feller@brightworksmn.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 638-1511
<b>Contact:</b>	Colleen Feller



## \* Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program

Grades K–12

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 2025–26 topics are: Invasive Species, Space Exploration, Video Games and Surveillance. Classroom curriculum is available for grades K–9. Competitive opportunities for grades 4–12 include Global Issues Problem Solving, Community Problem Solving, Scenario Writing, Visual Arts and Scenario Performance.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, Business/Career Education, General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM, World Languages & Cultures
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, global citizenship, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit the website for fees and deadlines.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnfpssp.org">www.mnfpssp.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:cheryl@mnfpssp.org">cheryl@mnfpssp.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(507) 450-4227
<b>Contact:</b>	Cheryl Whitesitt



## Minnesota High School Music Listening Contest

Grades 9-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Active listening, artistic expression, critical analysis, factual recall and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Music Listening Contest Board
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Fees: \$110 per three-member team (includes study guides, MPR Playlist guide and practice test). Registration opens in September and closes in October. See website for specific dates.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.musiclisteningcontest.com">www.musiclisteningcontest.com</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:musiclisteningcontestinfo@gmail.com">musiclisteningcontestinfo@gmail.com</a>

## ✳ Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)

Grades 1-12

Our mission is to inspire and challenge intellectually curious students to pursue their passions within a diverse, inclusive community and empower them by building skills and relationships for lifelong success. MITY offers unique STEM, humanities and fine arts courses in three academic programs. Students engage in hands-on, inquiry-based learning during the summer or on Saturday mornings during the school year. Older students can live in dorms at Macalester College.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Leadership Development, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Institute For Talented Youth
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Check website for details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mity.org">www.mity.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@mity.org">info@mity.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 243-2221
<b>Contact:</b>	Erica Brewinski



**MITY**  
MINNESOTA INSTITUTE  
for Talented Youth

## Minnesota Junior High Math League

Grades 6-8

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, factual recall, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	First team: \$150, each additional team \$50. Competitions run from October–February (five meets). Fee due at time of registration.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnjhml.com">www.mnjhml.com</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mnjhml1@gmail.com">mnjhml1@gmail.com</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 252-1766

## Minnesota MATHCOUNTS

Grades 6–8

Teachers, your students' math success starts here! At MATHCOUNTS, we boost students' confidence, foster a positive attitude toward math and problem-solving, and make learning fun — all while respecting your packed schedule. MATHCOUNTS is for all middle school math students. Whether you're running a classroom or a math club, our free, ready-to-use resources provide what you need to make a math team happen in your school — no extra prep required.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota MATHCOUNTS/MN Society of Professional Engineers
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Registration opens in August and closes in December.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mathcountsmn.org">www.mathcountsmn.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:katie@mathcountsmn.org">katie@mathcountsmn.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 457-2347
<b>Contact:</b>	Katie Jamieson

## Minnesota Mathematics League

Grades 4–12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving, critical thinking and creativity
<b>Program Provider:</b>	The Math League
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit see website for contest dates, fees and deadlines.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.themathleague.com">www.themathleague.com</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:dan@mathleague.com">dan@mathleague.com</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(201) 568-6328
<b>Contact:</b>	Daniel Fleger

## Minnesota PTA Reflections

Grades PreK–12

Reflections arts program encourages students to explore their artistic talent and is designed to promote expression and creativity. Students create their artwork based on a student-created annual theme. Students are able to show the world how they matter through their visual arts, photography, music composition, film production, dance choreography and literature.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Artistic expression, creativity and critical thinking
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota PTA
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No fees, but school or student must have MN PTA membership. See website for annual theme and other details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.mnpta.org/programs-events/pta-reflections">https://www.mnpta.org/programs-events/pta-reflections</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:reflections@mnpta.org">reflections@mnpta.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(952) 767-4909

## Minnesota Regional High School Ethics Bowl

Grades 9–12

Ethics Bowl competitions provide a supportive, respectful environment that prepares high school students for the intellectual rigors of a college education while giving them the opportunity to think carefully (and philosophically!) about meaningful ethical questions. Each year, students study a set of cases, which are the foundation for the competition. Winners of the Minnesota Bowl may go on to compete at the National Bowl at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, General, Language Arts, Social Studies, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, Critical thinking, Public speaking, Research, Verbal reasoning
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Registration fees (\$125) paid by UMN Philosophy Department. Registration due Oct. 31, 2025. Meeting dates: September 2025–February 2026; Competition: Feb. 3, 2026.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://ethicsbowl.umn.edu/">https://ethicsbowl.umn.edu/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:ethicsbowl@umn.edu">ethicsbowl@umn.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 625-6563
<b>Contact:</b>	Cat Saint-Croix

## Minnesota Scholastic Art Awards

Grades 7–12

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, either in person or virtually.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, creativity and problem solving
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Co-sponsored by Art Educators of Minnesota, The University of Minnesota's Art Department & Regis Art Center and the Weisman Art Museum
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Submissions open in September and are due the first week in December.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.artandwriting.org/affiliate/MN001A/">www.artandwriting.org/affiliate/MN001A/</a> or <a href="https://www.aem-mn.org/student-opportunities-2/scholastics">https://www.aem-mn.org/student-opportunities-2/scholastics</a>

## Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division A)

Grades 3–6

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, environmental stewardship, factual recall, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Science Olympiad
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Registration: \$50 per team (15 students per school) covers both the national and state fees. Visit the website for registration link.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.minnesotasoo.org">www.minnesotasoo.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mnsoliy@gmail.com">mnsoliy@gmail.com</a>
<b>Contact:</b>	Michael Huberty



## Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division B)

Grades 6-9

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.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions

**Academic Content:** STEM

**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. Visit the website for the registration link.

**Website:** [www.minnesotaso.org](http://www.minnesotaso.org)

**Email:** [hans1355@isd194.org](mailto:hans1355@isd194.org)

**Phone:** (952) 232-3877

**Contact:** Brandi Gordon

## Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division C)

Grades 9-12

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.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions

**Academic Content:** STEM

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, factual recall, problem solving 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 and registers your team with the National Science Olympiad allowing you to advance to the state and national tournaments and covering the cost of awards and rule books. Each additional team from a school is \$100. Visit the website for registration link.

**Website:** [www.minnesotaso.org](http://www.minnesotaso.org)

**Email:** [kfoley@edenpr.org](mailto:kfoley@edenpr.org)

**Phone:** (612) 597-2499

**Contact:** Katie Foley



## Minnesota SkillsUSA

Grades 9–12, Post-secondary

SkillsUSA helps students become future leaders by developing their personal, workplace and technical skills. Students engaged in technically skilled courses and programming as well as those looking for career exploration activities and opportunities can benefit!

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving, teamwork and communication
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota SkillsUSA
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit the website for fees and deadlines.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnskillsusa.org">www.mnskillsusa.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:executive.director@mnskillsusa.org">executive.director@mnskillsusa.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(218) 639-2278
<b>Contact:</b>	Heidi Mattson

## Minnesota State High School Mathematics League

Grades 6–12

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 the state are invited to join the All-State Team that represents Minnesota in national competitions. The Summer Math Institute, a residential summer camp, is held in June.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Augsburg University
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	\$600 per school, unlimited number of students from the school may participate. Individual students may participate if the school does not have a team, cost is \$100. Registration deadline is Sept. 1; payment is due Sept. 30. Meet dates are November–February. State tournament is held in March.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.mnmathleague.org/home.php">https://www.mnmathleague.org/home.php</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mathleague@augsb.org">mathleague@augsb.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 330-1788
<b>Contact:</b>	Tom Young

## Minnesota Student Digital Mapping Competition

Grades 6–8, 9–12

The competition empowers students to develop skills in spatial analysis, critical thinking, and storytelling through digital mapping. It's an opportunity to gain recognition, earn awards, and explore the fascinating world of digital mapping (GIS) technology. Students can participate individually or as a team of two. Prizes for the top three entries.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competition, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Social Studies, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, geographic inquiry, problem solving and research
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Alliance for Geographic Education
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No competition fees. All competition entries must be created using a free Esri ArcGIS Online School Software Bundle Account. Visit the website for registration details and applying for a free account.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://minnesota-alliance-for-geographic-education-mage.hub.arcgis.com/">https://minnesota-alliance-for-geographic-education-mage.hub.arcgis.com/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:jimsoli@mac.com">jimsoli@mac.com</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 590-6422
<b>Contact:</b>	Jim Hanson

## Minnesota Youth Institute

Grades 9-12

The Minnesota Youth Institute challenges high school students to solve local and global food security issues. MNYI is a half-day program where high school students from across Minnesota share research, participate in interactive experiences and network with research/industry leaders in agricultural/food/natural resource fields. Participating students are eligible for scholarships, international and domestic internships, and an opportunity to represent Minnesota at the Global Youth Institute and World Food Prize International Borlaug-Dialogue Symposium.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General, Social Studies, STEM, World Languages
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Factual recall, problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, interdisciplinary, research, public speaking, leadership development, global citizenship and environmental stewardship
<b>Program Provider:</b>	University of Minnesota
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No fee. Visit website for registration and essay deadline details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mnyi.cfans.umn.edu">www.mnyi.cfans.umn.edu</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mnyi@umn.edu">mnyi@umn.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 624-1745
<b>Contact:</b>	Mary Buschette

## MN Cup Competition – Youth Division

Grades K-12

The Minnesota Cup is an early-stage business competition. Through the Youth and Student divisions, young entrepreneurs are provided a supportive environment to start a new business and compete for prize money. More information about the competition is available on the website.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Business/Career Education
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving, public speaking, verbal reasoning
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Holmes Center for Entrepreneurship, University of Minnesota
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	The competition is free to enter. Applications available starting in March. Visit the website for more information.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mncup.org">www.mncup.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:hellomncup@umn.edu">hellomncup@umn.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 625-4772
<b>Contact:</b>	Kailin Oliver

## Mock Trial Program

Grades 7-12

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 in January/February. The state tournament is held in March; the state champion competes at the national tournament in May.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, Business/Career Education, Language Arts, Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, problem solving, public speaking, teamwork and verbal reasoning
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota State Bar Association
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	\$300 per team. Registration opens in September and closes in October.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://mnbars.org/?pg=High_School_Mock_Trial&amp;commpg=High_School_Mock_TrialHome">https://mnbars.org/?pg=High_School_Mock_Trial&amp;commpg=High_School_Mock_TrialHome</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:kbasting@mnbars.org">kbasting@mnbars.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 278-6306
<b>Contact:</b>	Kim Basting

## Mondale-Quie Essay Contest

Grades 11-12

The Mondale-Quie Essay Contest provides Minnesota high school juniors and seniors with an opportunity to compete for up to \$1,000 in scholarship money by writing essays that analyze and take a position on a current topic relevant to Minnesota's judicial system.

**Program Category:** Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions  
**Academic Content:** Language Arts, Social Studies  
**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 in the winter each year. Check website for topic information and deadlines.  
**Website:** <https://mncourthistory.org/Essay-Contest/>  
**Email:** [director@mncourthistory.org](mailto:director@mncourthistory.org)

## MSHSL Debate, Speech

Grades 7-12

For each program, see Fine Arts Rules and Policies manual available on the MSHSL website. Debate is a MSHSL winter activity. Competition events in policy debate, Lincoln-Douglas debate, public forum debate and congressional debate. Speech is a MSHSL spring activity. 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 Category:** Challenges & Competitions  
**Academic Content:** Language Arts  
**Program Provider:** MSHSL  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Fees vary by school. Registration deadline is Dec. 1.  
**Website:** [www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/debate](http://www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/debate); [www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/speech](http://www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/speech)  
**Email:** [adoherty@mshsl.org](mailto:adoherty@mshsl.org)  
**Phone:** (763) 560-2262  
**Contact:** Amy Doherty

## MSHSL Music, One Act Play, Visual Arts

Grades 7-12

For each program, see Fine Arts Rules and Policies manual available on the MSHSL website. Music is a spring MSHSL activity. The contest events provide for competition in major groups (choir, orchestra and band), special groups, ensembles and solos. One Act Play is a winter MSHSL activity. Visual Arts is a spring MSHSL activity. Artwork may be submitted in the categories of drawing, painting, sculpture, film-based photograph, digital photography, video art, computer-based artwork, crafts, printmaking, ceramics, 2D mixed media/collage and graphic design.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions  
**Academic Content:** Arts  
**Program Provider:** MSHSL  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Fees vary by school. Registration deadline is Dec. 1.  
**Website:** [www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/music](http://www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/music); [www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/one-act-play](http://www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/one-act-play); [www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/visual-arts](http://www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/visual-arts)  
**Email:** [tleighon@mshsl.org](mailto:tleighon@mshsl.org), [adoherty@mshsl.org](mailto:adoherty@mshsl.org)  
**Phone:** (763) 560-2262  
**Contact:** Tim Leighton (Music, Visual Arts), Amy Doherty (One Act Play)



## MSHSL/FIRST Robotics

Grades 9-12

MSHSL/FIRST Robotics is an extracurricular opportunity for students with an interest in engineering and robotics.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	STEM and communications
<b>Program Provider:</b>	MSHSL/FIRST
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Fees vary by school. FIRST Kickoff events start in January; regional events are in March; state championship is in May. Visit website for full schedule and details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/robotics">https://www.mshsl.org/sports-and-activities/robotics</a>
<b>Email:</b>	kr71@aol.com
<b>Phone:</b>	(952) 884-5169
<b>Contact:</b>	Ken Rosen

## MTEEA Supermileage Challenge

Grades 7-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, interdisciplinary, research, teamwork, leadership development and time/budget management
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Technology & Engineering Educators Association
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Register by November. The Supermileage Challenge takes place annually in May. Visit website for fees and specific dates.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mteea.net/index.php/competitions/supermileage">www.mteea.net/index.php/competitions/supermileage</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mteasupermileage@gmail.com">mteasupermileage@gmail.com</a>
<b>Contact:</b>	Luke Becker

## \* National Geography Challenge

Grades 2-12

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. The program is a Better Business Bureau member with an A+ rating.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking and factual recall
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Continental Mathematics League, Inc.
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	First team \$85, additional teams \$60. Registration through March. Meet dates: April 20-May 1, 2026.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.cmleague.com">www.cmleague.com</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:support@cmleague.com">support@cmleague.com</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(631) 921-6627
<b>Contact:</b>	Christine Pette



## \* National History Day in Minnesota

Grades 6–12

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 2025–2026 theme is “Revolution, Reaction, Reform in History.”

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

**Academic Content:** Social Studies

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, factual recall, interdisciplinary, research and teamwork

**Program Provider:** Minnesota Historical Society

**Fees and Deadlines:** There is no classroom fee to participate and program materials are sent to teachers free of charge. Regional events take place in March and registration fees begin at \$12 per student.

**Website:** [www.mnhs.org/historyday](http://www.mnhs.org/historyday)

**Email:** [samantha.papas@mnhs.org](mailto:samantha.papas@mnhs.org)

**Phone:** (651) 259-3439

**Contact:** Sammi Jo Papas



national  
historyday MN

## \* National Language Arts League

Grades 2–12

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. The program is a Better Business Bureau member with an A+ rating.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions

**Academic Content:** Language Arts

**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking and factual recall

**Program Provider:** Continental Mathematics League, Inc.

**Fees and Deadlines:** \$110 for the first two teams, \$60 for additional teams. Registration through March. Meet dates: April 20–May 1, 2026.

**Website:** [www.cmleague.com](http://www.cmleague.com)

**Email:** [support@cmleague.com](mailto:support@cmleague.com)

**Phone:** (631) 921-6627

**Contact:** Christine Pette

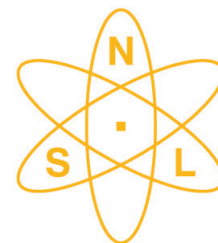


## \* National Science League

Grades 2-12

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. The program is a Better Business Bureau member with an A+ rating.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions  
**Academic Content:** STEM  
**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking and factual recall  
**Program Provider:** Continental Mathematics League, Inc.  
**Fees and Deadlines:** \$110 for the first two teams, \$60 for additional teams. Registration through March. Meet dates: April 20-May 1, 2026.  
**Website:** [www.cmleague.com](http://www.cmleague.com)  
**Email:** [support@cmleague.com](mailto:support@cmleague.com)  
**Phone:** (631) 921-6627  
**Contact:** Christine Pette



## \* National Social Studies League

Grades 2-12

National social studies contest that takes place in the classroom. 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. The program is a Better Business Bureau member with an A+ rating.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions  
**Academic Content:** Social Studies  
**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking and factual recall  
**Program Provider:** National Social Studies League  
**Fees and Deadlines:** \$110 for the first two teams, \$60 for additional teams. Registration through March. Meet dates: April 20-May 1, 2026.  
**Website:** [www.cmleague.com](http://www.cmleague.com)  
**Email:** [support@cmleague.com](mailto:support@cmleague.com)  
**Phone:** (631) 921-6627  
**Contact:** Christine Pette



## NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing

Grade 10-11

The National Council of Teachers of English Achievement Awards in Writing encourages high school sophomores and juniors to write and to publicly recognize the best student writers. Students who have been nominated by their schools may submit a themed writing that is up to 10 pages in length. Electronic submissions only.

**Program Category:** Awards & Recognitions  
**Academic Content:** Language Arts  
**Academic Skills:** Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, verbal reasoning and writing  
**Program Provider:** National Council of Teachers of English  
**Fees and Deadlines:** No fee. Visit the website for yearly prompt theme, timeline, submission due date and further program details.  
**Website:** <https://ncte.org/awards/achievement-awards-in-writing/>  
**Email:** [studentwriting@ncte.org](mailto:studentwriting@ncte.org)  
**Phone:** (217) 328-3870 or (877) 369-6283

## NCTE Promising Young Writers Program

### Grade 8

The purpose of the 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. Students who have been nominated by their schools may submit a themed writing that is up to 10 pages in length. Electronic submissions only.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Language Arts
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Artistic expression, creativity, critical thinking, verbal reasoning and writing
<b>Program Provider:</b>	National Council of Teachers of English
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No fee. Visit the website for yearly prompt theme, timeline, submission due date and further program details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://ncte.org/awards/promising-young-writers/">https://ncte.org/awards/promising-young-writers/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:studentwriting@ncte.org">studentwriting@ncte.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(217) 328-3870 or (877) 369-6283

## Nobel Conference at Gustavus Adolphus College

### Grades 9-12

Join hundreds of high school students at the 2025 Nobel Conference, “Sugar: Bringing Sweetness to Light.” The 61st Nobel Conference will explore the complicated ways sugar is connected to human life from nutrition, disease and economics to global trade and cultural celebrations.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Conferences & Institutions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, environmental stewardship, global citizenship and interdisciplinary
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Gustavus Adolphus College
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	The 61st Nobel Conference will be held Oct. 7–8. High school delegations are FREE but need to register in advance.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.gustavus.edu/nobelconference">www.gustavus.edu/nobelconference</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:nobelconference@gustavus.edu">nobelconference@gustavus.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(507) 933-7520
<b>Contact:</b>	Office of Marketing and Communication

## Noetic Learning Math Contest

### Grades 2-8

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 have 45 minutes (50 minutes online) to solve 20 creative problems independently without a calculator. The contest is offered in both paper-pencil form and online.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, problem solving
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Noetic Learning LLC
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit the website for details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.noetic-learning.com/mathcontest">www.noetic-learning.com/mathcontest</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@noetic-learning.com">info@noetic-learning.com</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(913) 735-4088
<b>Contact:</b>	Li Kelty



## Perennial Math Online Math Competition

Grades 3-12

Math is COOL! The goal of this competition is to stimulate students' enthusiasm for problem solving. Students can join the online competition (grades 3-8), travel to an on-site tournament (grades 3-8) or compete in WebEx virtual tournaments (grades 3-12). Visit the website or Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/perennialmath](http://www.facebook.com/perennialmath) for more information.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity  
**Academic Content:** STEM  
**Academic Skills:** Mathematics  
**Program Provider:** Perennial Math  
**Fees and Deadlines:** \$100 team membership (up to 30 students at one competition level); \$25 for individual student membership. Homeschool teams are also welcome.  
**Website:** [www.perennialmath.com](http://www.perennialmath.com)  
**Email:** [info@perennialmath.com](mailto:info@perennialmath.com)  
**Phone:** (888) 835-2366

## Personal Finance Challenge

Grades 9-12

The Personal Finance Challenge 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.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions  
**Academic Content:** Business/Career Education, Social Studies  
**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 for teachers or students to participate. Registration opens on Jan. 1 of the competition year; exact dates can be found on the MCEE calendar.  
**Website:** <https://z.umn.edu/PFChallenge>  
**Email:** [mcee@umn.edu](mailto:mcee@umn.edu)  
**Phone:** (612) 625-3727  
**Contact:** Angela Zappa

## \* Poetry Out Loud

Grades 9-12

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.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity  
**Academic Content:** Arts, Language Arts  
**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 is in the fall; visit the website for details.  
**Website:** [www.mnscsc.org/poetry-out-loud](http://www.mnscsc.org/poetry-out-loud) or [www.poetryoutloud.org](http://www.poetryoutloud.org)  
**Email:** [mhillmann@mnscsc.org](mailto:mhillmann@mnscsc.org)  
**Phone:** (507) 389-2509  
**Contact:** Mary Hillmann



## FREE OPPORTUNITIES FROM POETRY OUT LOUD

Learn more through the virtual workshop that was compiled by the Minnesota Poetry Out Loud participants, educators and competition judges to help educators and students increase knowledge about the program and to improve poetry presentation skills. Check out the other events offered at <https://mnscsc.org/poetry-out-loud>.

### Poster Contest

Grades K-8

Unleash your students' creativity, imagination and talent by exploring economic ideas and competing in the Poster Contest. Using our topics and guides, teachers can support students in connecting economic concepts to their own lives while encouraging student self-expression through visual art. Teachers may submit the excellent work done by their students and possibly be selected for recognition.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, Business/Career Education, Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Artistic expression, creativity and critical thinking
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Council on Economic Education
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	There is no registration cost for teachers or students to participate. Registration opens on Jan. 1 of the competition year; exact dates can be found on the MCEE calendar.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://z.umn.edu/PosterContest">https://z.umn.edu/PosterContest</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mcee@umn.edu">mcee@umn.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 625-3727
<b>Contact:</b>	Minnesota Council on Economic Education

### Real World Design Challenge

Grades 9-12

Real World Design Challenge is a competition that provides students the opportunity to work on real world engineering challenges in a team environment. Teams address a challenge that confronts our nation's leading industries. Students utilize professional engineering software to develop their solutions and generate business-style presentations. RWDC provides students with opportunities to apply the lessons of the classroom to the technical problems that are being faced in the workplace.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, leadership development, problem solving, teamwork and time/budget management
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Real World Design Challenge
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Visit the website for fees and deadlines.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.realworlddesignchallenge.org">www.realworlddesignchallenge.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:bryan.farmer@isd832.net">bryan.farmer@isd832.net</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 762-5934
<b>Contact:</b>	Bryan Farmer

## \* Scholars of Distinction

Grades 11-12

Scholars of Distinction is a significant capstone project in a student's academic area of interest, which is recognized by their high school and the Minnesota Department of Education. This project creates an ideal opportunity for students to develop and refine skills that are increasingly required in today's world. Through the project students will exercise their creativity, stretch what they have learned and challenge themselves.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Computer Science, Cultural Studies, Environmental Leadership, Social Studies, STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Independent and critical thinking at complex levels, creative problem solving, learning across disciplines, and synthesizing/integrating a variety of viewpoints.
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Department of Education
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No fees. Oct. 1 deadline for Intent to Apply; important dates, scoring rubrics and project consultants are listed on the website.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/sod/">https://education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/sod/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mde.academic-standards@state.mn.us">mde.academic-standards@state.mn.us</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 582-8786
<b>Contact:</b>	Wendy Behrens



## \* School Chess Association

Grades K-12

Learn a lifetime activity — CHESS! The School Chess Association sponsors tournaments, matches, instruction, camps and clubs at school. The Tournament of Champions takes the top 16 players in primary, elementary and middle school sections of the statewide tournament to compete in a United States Chess Federation rated tournament. The winner of each of the sections will earn the title of School Chess Association Primary and Elementary and Middle School Champion.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving and critical and analytical thinking
<b>Program Provider:</b>	School Chess Association
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Call for fees and dates or visit the website for more information.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.schoolchess.org">www.schoolchess.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:lorene@schoolchess.org">lorene@schoolchess.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(763) 593-1168
<b>Contact:</b>	Lorene Lampert



## Science and Nature Live Virtual Programs

### Grades K-12

These 45-minute virtual programs are designed to connect your students with a museum educator online for a live, interactive program about our natural world and the universe around us. Hybrid cohort groups, distance learners, and in-person classrooms are all possible with our virtual field trips. We are happy to meet your learners where they are!

**Program Category:** Classroom Activity  
**Academic Content:** STEM  
**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, environmental stewardship, global citizenship and problem solving  
**Program Provider:** Bell Museum, University of Minnesota  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Fees are \$125 for the first program and \$90 for each additional program for the same group. Limited scholarships are available. Visit the website for more details.  
**Website:** <https://www.bellmuseum.umn.edu/virtual-k12/>  
**Email:** [bellinfo@umn.edu](mailto:bellinfo@umn.edu)  
**Phone:** (612) 626-9660

## Science from Scientists

### Grades 3-8

Science from Scientists is a STEM education non-profit that sends real STEM professionals into the community to teach engaging, hands-on, standards-aligned STEM lessons with elementary and middle schoolers. Choose from our lesson library of over 100 STEM topics that can either be delivered in-person or virtually. Programs include multiple visit school engagements, single day school engagements and out-of-school programs.

**Program Category:** Classroom Activity, Out of School Time Enrichment  
**Academic Content:** STEM  
**Academic Skills:** Creativity, Critical thinking, Problem solving, Research, Teamwork  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Science from Scientists provides programming year-round with schools and community partners. We can customize our frequency and length of visits to accommodate your schedule and budget. Please contact us for more information on fees.  
**Website:** <https://www.sciencefromscientists.org/>  
**Email:** [minnesota@sciencefromscientists.org](mailto:minnesota@sciencefromscientists.org)  
**Phone:** (612) 701-2125  
**Contact:** Bekki Hansen

## Show Us Your Mussels

### Grades 6-12

Be a freshwater mussel advocate! Participants create an original digital media campaign to educate the public about the importance of native mussels, the impact of water quality has on native mussels, and what actions we need to take to ensure their survival. The schools who reach the most community members combined with receiving the most votes win a FREE field trip to the Minnesota Zoo!

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity  
**Academic Content:** Language Arts, STEM  
**Academic Skills:** Artistic expression, creativity, environmental stewardship, interdisciplinary and research  
**Program Provider:** Minnesota Zoo  
**Fees and Deadlines:** No cost to participate. Registration opens in August and closes Dec. 31. Challenge/Voting is Feb. 1-28. Check website for more information and important dates.  
**Website:** <https://mnzoo.org/mussels-challenge-2/>  
**Email:** [digitalmussels@mnzoo.org](mailto:digitalmussels@mnzoo.org)  
**Phone:** (952) 431-9200



## \* Spelling Bee

Grades 5–8

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.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity  
**Academic Content:** Language Arts  
**Academic Skills:** Factual recall and verbal reasoning  
**Program Provider:** Spelling sponsors vary by region.  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Visit the website for details.  
**Website:** [www.spellingbee.com](http://www.spellingbee.com)



## Student Television Network

Grades 7–12

STN is committed to supporting teachers and students with curriculum materials that enhance the classroom experience. Affiliate members have access to STN national standards, lesson plans, training videos, and various webinars that teach television and film production.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity  
**Academic Content:** Arts, Business/Career Education  
**Academic Skills:** Artistic expression, creativity, leadership development, public speaking and teamwork  
**Program Provider:** Student Television Network  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Affiliate membership is required, see website for more details. STN Convention will be held Feb. 28–March 3, 2026 in Tampa Bay, FL.  
**Website:** [www.studenttelevision.org](http://www.studenttelevision.org)  
**Email:** [info@studenttelevision.com](mailto:info@studenttelevision.com)  
**Phone:** (760) 692-2299

## Sumdog

Grades K–8

Sumdog provides engaging learning and practice in numeracy for children aged 5–14, and literacy for children aged 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.

**Program Category:** Classroom Activity, Out of School Time Enrichment  
**Academic Content:** Language Arts, STEM  
**Academic Skills:** Numeracy and literacy  
**Program Provider:** Sumdog, Inc.  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Free login. Family membership and school subscription available for additional access.  
**Website:** <https://learn.sumdog.com/en-us/>  
**Email:** [support@sumdog.com](mailto:support@sumdog.com)  
**Phone:** (877) 978-6364



## TEAMS

Grades 7-12

TEAMS (Tests of Engineering Aptitude, Mathematics and Science) is a one-day competition for middle school and high school students. Focused on a new theme each year, TEAMS challenges students to collaboratively solve real-world engineering issues by applying their STEM knowledge in practical and creative ways. Teams of 2-4 students work together on multiple choice, essay and design/build components.

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

**Academic Content:** STEM

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

**Program Provider:** Technology Student Association

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

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

**Email:** [awilliams@tsaweb.org](mailto:awilliams@tsaweb.org)

**Phone:** (888) 860-9010

**Contact:** Amber Williams

## \* The Liminal Essay Contest NEW!

Grades 9-12

Take a dive into the deep with the Liminal Essay Contest! The liminal provides a way of looking at the difficult and confusing times in life as integral and necessary parts of it, providing a much needed paradigm for discussion of such experiences in a pluralistic society. Students will explore liminality in a short story and write an essay. Cash prizes available!

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions

**Academic Content:** Arts, Language Arts

**Academic Skills:** Creativity, critical thinking, writing skills and story analysis

**Program Provider:** Author S. K. Kruse and The Guild for Engaged Liminality

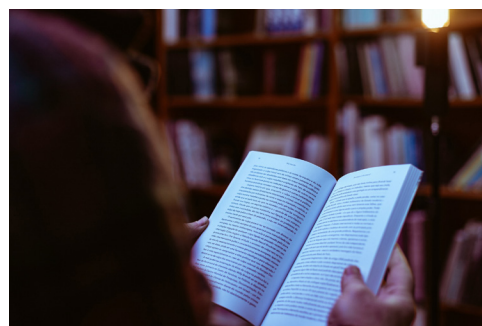
**Fees and Deadlines:** No fees. Submission period opens in January. March 31 deadline. See website for details.

**Website:** <https://www.skkruse.com/>

**Email:** [skaye@skkruse.com](mailto:skaye@skkruse.com)

**Phone:** (608) 345-9115

**Contact:** Sandra K. Kruse



## Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl

Grades 5-8

Fun scholastic team competition for students in their own 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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Factual recall, problem solving, critical thinking, research, teamwork, leadership development, time/budget management and verbal reasoning
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Harvey Kimble, owner
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Check website for entry forms, information fees and deadlines.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.thinkingcapquizbowl.com">www.thinkingcapquizbowl.com</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:thinkcap5@gmail.com">thinkcap5@gmail.com</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(525) 422-2722
<b>Contact:</b>	Harvey Kimble

## Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards

Grades K-12

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. Students enter as a team of two to four with a teacher/coach and optional mentor (no individual entries). Students may submit only one project online per year.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving, critical thinking, creativity and cooperation
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No entry fee. Projects must be received online. Visit the website for details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.exploravision.org">www.exploravision.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:exploravision@nsta.org">exploravision@nsta.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	1-800-explor-9

## U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad

Grades 9-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Problem solving, chemistry and mathematical skills
<b>Program Provider:</b>	American Chemical Society
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No fees. Local exam: March; National exam: April; Study Camp: June; International event: July (location changes every year). Visit website for rules and eligibility.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.acs.org/olympiad">www.acs.org/olympiad</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:USNCO@acs.org">USNCO@acs.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(800) 333-9511

## United States Senate Youth Program

Grades 11-12

Two student leaders from each state 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 64th annual United States Senate Youth Program Washington Week will be held in Washington, D.C., March 7–14, 2026.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Leadership, critical thinking and cooperation
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Department of Education
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	For more information and eligibility requirements visit <a href="http://www.education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/youth">www.education.mn.gov/MDE/fam/youth</a> .
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.ussenateyouth.org">www.ussenateyouth.org</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mde.USSYP@state.mn.us">mde.USSYP@state.mn.us</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 582-8484
<b>Contact:</b>	Brittany Rawson Haeg

## University of Minnesota Talented Youth Math Program

Grades 6-12

UMTYMP provides a challenging alternative for Minnesota's talented mathematics students in grades 6–12. The highly accelerated courses are specially designed to provide students with an intense academic experience that will stimulate their mathematical interest and abilities.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, problem solving, teamwork, analytic ability, STEM concepts and mathematical skills
<b>Program Provider:</b>	UMTYMP – MathCEP
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	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). Visit the website for exam registration and fees. Scholarships are available for students with financial needs.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.mathcep.umn.edu/umtymp">www.mathcep.umn.edu/umtymp</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:mathcep@umn.edu">mathcep@umn.edu</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 625-2861

## Unsung Hero Projects

Grades K-12

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.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Awards & Recognitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Arts, Language Arts, Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, research and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Lowell Milken Center for Unsung Heroes
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Free. Visit the website for program details.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.lowellmilkencenter.org/programs/projects">https://www.lowellmilkencenter.org/programs/projects</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:info@lowellmilkencenter.org">info@lowellmilkencenter.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(620) 223-1312
<b>Contact:</b>	Norm Conard



## Walker Art Center Art Today Tours

Grades K-12

The Walker offers virtual and onsite tours for schools and students. Content is interactive, learner-centered, and inquiry-based explorations of the galleries and/or the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden. These tours are led by our professional museum educators and can be customized to focus on specific themes and exhibitions.

**Program Category:** Classroom Activity  
**Academic Content:** Arts  
**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, creativity and art appreciation  
**Program Provider:** Walker Art Center  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Visit the website for details.  
**Website:** <https://walkerart.org/visit/tours-group-visits/k-12-and-university-tours/>  
**Email:** [tours@walkerart.org](mailto:tours@walkerart.org)  
**Phone:** (612) 375-7609

## \* WordMasters Challenge

Grades 3-8

Now in our 39th year of competition! Students use vocabulary they have studied in advance to solve analogies expressing various types 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.

**Program Category:** Challenges & Competitions, Out of School Time Enrichment  
**Academic Content:** Language Arts  
**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, teamwork and verbal reasoning  
**Program Provider:** WordMasters, LLC  
**Fees and Deadlines:** \$110 per team (same grade/division; no limit to number of students per team). Discounts available to schools that enroll 5+ teams or districts that enroll 5+ schools. Competition begins Oct. 1. Visit our website for Challenge Schedule, discount details and study tools.  
**Website:** [www.wordmasterschallenge.com](http://www.wordmasterschallenge.com)  
**Email:** [lisa.lombardi@wordmasterschallenge.com](mailto:lisa.lombardi@wordmasterschallenge.com)  
**Phone:** (888) 385-5656  
**Contact:** Lisa Lombardi



USING ANALOGIES TO  
MASTER VOCABULARY

## World Savvy

Grades K-12

World Savvy envisions a K-12 education system that prepares all students with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for success and active engagement in the global community. Our Comprehensive School Partnerships are tailored to meet the needs of each school and collaboratively designed with school leaders to align with each building's strategic vision and goals.

**Program Category:** Classroom Activity, Conferences & Institutions  
**Academic Content:** General  
**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, global citizenship, interdisciplinary, problem solving and teamwork  
**Program Provider:** World Savvy  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Visit the website for more information.  
**Website:** [www.worldsavvy.org/our-programs/schools/](http://www.worldsavvy.org/our-programs/schools/)  
**Email:** [jonathan.filzen@worldsavvy.org](mailto:jonathan.filzen@worldsavvy.org)  
**Phone:** (612) 834-7952  
**Contact:** Jonathan Filzen

## YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)

Grades 6-12

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 plant trees, restore prairies and shorelines, recycle, educate others, connect with their local community, learn from green career professionals, build community with like-minded peers and more! The year begins with the annual YES Fall Summit and concludes with a spring event to celebrate the students' accomplishments.

**Program Category:** Leadership Development, Out of School Time Enrichment  
**Academic Content:** Arts, Business/Career Education, STEM  
**Academic Skills:** Creativity, critical thinking, environmental stewardship, leadership development and teamwork  
**Program Provider:** Prairie Woods Environmental Learning Center  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Fees vary. Registration is in early fall.  
**Website:** [www.yesmn.org](http://www.yesmn.org)  
**Email:** [kalley@yesmn.org](mailto:kalley@yesmn.org)  
**Phone:** (320) 894-8538  
**Contact:** Kalley Pratt

## YMCA Model United Nations

Grades 7-12

Students in Model United Nations take on the role of a diplomat from one of 193 countries and spend three days in downtown Minneapolis exploring solutions to international challenges. Students discuss and debate global issues, pass resolutions, form alliances, and draft legal opinions while practicing cooperation and diplomacy.

**Program Category:** Conferences & Institutions, Leadership Development  
**Academic Content:** Language Arts, Social Studies  
**Academic Skills:** Critical thinking, global citizenship, leadership development, public speaking and teamwork  
**Program Provider:** YMCA Center for Youth Voice  
**Fees and Deadlines:** Approximately \$449 (includes lodging) plus local expenses. Registration is in December. Conference is in April.  
**Website:** [www.ymcanorth.org/locations/center\\_for\\_youth\\_voice/programs](http://www.ymcanorth.org/locations/center_for_youth_voice/programs)  
**Email:** [youthvoice@ymcanorth.org](mailto:youthvoice@ymcanorth.org)  
**Phone:** (612) 263-9893  
**Contact:** Brianne Leibham

## YMCA Respectful Conversations in Schools

Grades 6-12

The Respectful Conversations in Schools is a structured, content-neutral classroom discussion model that gives educators and students a framework to speak from their own experience, listen carefully to others and ask questions of genuine interest. Participants deepen their connections with peers and develop a greater sense of empathy and understanding.

**Program Category:** Classroom Activity  
**Academic Content:** General, Language Arts  
**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 participants.  
**Website:** [www.ymcanorth.org/locations/center\\_for\\_youth\\_voice/programs](http://www.ymcanorth.org/locations/center_for_youth_voice/programs)  
**Email:** [youthvoice@ymcanorth.org](mailto:youthvoice@ymcanorth.org)  
**Phone:** (612) 263-9893  
**Contact:** Brianne Leibham

## YMCA Student Election Judge Network

**Ages 16+**

The YMCA Center for Youth Voice works with Minnesota cities, counties and high schools to recruit student election judges to help run elections in their communities.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Leadership Development, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General, Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, global citizenship, research, teamwork and civic awareness
<b>Program Provider:</b>	YMCA Center for Youth Voice
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No fees. Students get paid by the election offices for pre-election training and for working as an election judge on Election Day.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.ymcanorth.org/locations/center_for_youth_voice/programs">www.ymcanorth.org/locations/center_for_youth_voice/programs</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:youthvoice@ymcanorth.org">youthvoice@ymcanorth.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 263-9893
<b>Contact:</b>	Brianne Leibham

## YMCA Students Voting

**Grades K-12**

The YMCA Center for Youth Voice and the Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State work together to help students statewide discover the importance of elections and the power of their voice—and their vote—in our democracy. Elementary, middle and high school students across the state learn about the candidates and offices on the ballot in their community and cast their vote on or before Election Day through Students Voting, an authentic, hands-on mock election program.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	General, Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, global citizenship, research, teamwork and civic awareness
<b>Program Provider:</b>	YMCA Center for Youth Voice and Office of the Minnesota Secretary of State
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Free. Registration is open, and Students Voting runs in the fall of even-numbered years.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.ymcanorth.org/locations/center_for_youth_voice/programs">www.ymcanorth.org/locations/center_for_youth_voice/programs</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:youthvoice@ymcanorth.org">youthvoice@ymcanorth.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 263-9893
<b>Contact:</b>	Brianne Leibham

## YMCA Youth in Government

**Grades 8-12**

Students in Minnesota YMCA Youth in Government become legislators, lawyers, judges, lobbyists, journalists or cabinet members and spend four days running a state model government at the Minnesota State Capitol. Students elect their own leaders, debate their own ideas, and support policies and laws that highlight their values.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Conferences & Institutions, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Language Arts, Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Critical thinking, leadership development, public speaking, teamwork and verbal reasoning
<b>Program Provider:</b>	YMCA Center for Youth Voice
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Approximately \$559 (includes lodging) plus local expenses. Registration is open from mid-August until late-October. State conference is in January.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="http://www.ymcanorth.org/locations/center_for_youth_voice/programs">www.ymcanorth.org/locations/center_for_youth_voice/programs</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:youthvoice@ymcanorth.org">youthvoice@ymcanorth.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 263-9893
<b>Contact:</b>	Brianne Leibham

## Youth Environmental Activist Network

Grades 9–12

We provide the support and co-mentorship you need to step into climate leadership in your community. Attend our youth-led meetings, apply for funding for a project of your own or get involved in YEA! Campaigns to lead your own effort rooted in environmental justice to shift public will and practice civic engagement.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Leadership Development, Out of School Time Enrichment
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, environmental stewardship, global citizenship, leadership development and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Climate Generation
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	No fees; student leaders are paid. Registration in September. Meet dates October–May.
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://climategen.org/youth-environmental-activists/">https://climategen.org/youth-environmental-activists/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:yea@climategen.org">yea@climategen.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(612) 278-7147
<b>Contact:</b>	Ramiro Vazquez Jr

## Youth for Human Rights

Grades 1–12

Youth for Human Rights educates students of all ages on their human rights as put forth by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The interactive curriculum, with audio-visual presentations and group activities, makes human rights easy to understand to ensure each individual knows their rights and helps to make them known to others.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Classroom Activity, Leadership Development
<b>Academic Content:</b>	Social Studies
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Global citizenship, leadership development
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Youth for Human Rights International
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	None
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://www.youthforhumanrights.org/">https://www.youthforhumanrights.org/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:activities@youthforhumanrights.org">activities@youthforhumanrights.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(323) 663-5799
<b>Contact:</b>	Leslie Browning

## ZOOMS STEM Design Challenge

Grades 3–12

The ZOOMS STEM Design Challenge offers students a chance to develop a solution to a ‘real’ problem faced by zookeepers and staff at the Minnesota Zoo. From designing an animal enrichment, to building a model of a renovated animal exhibit, the problem will challenge students to use their science and math knowledge, creativity, problem solving and research skills to best solve the problem and present a solution.

<b>Program Category:</b>	Challenges & Competitions, Classroom Activity
<b>Academic Content:</b>	STEM
<b>Academic Skills:</b>	Creativity, critical thinking, environmental stewardship, problem solving and teamwork
<b>Program Provider:</b>	Minnesota Zoo
<b>Fees and Deadlines:</b>	Free to participate! Register by Nov. 14, 2025. Teachers can also attend a free in-person teacher training in late September to support the challenge!
<b>Website:</b>	<a href="https://mnzoo.org/zooms-stem-challenge/">https://mnzoo.org/zooms-stem-challenge/</a>
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:stem@mnzoo.org">stem@mnzoo.org</a>
<b>Phone:</b>	(651) 539-6605
<b>Contact:</b>	Kristi Berg



# Listing of Programs by Grade Level

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (GRADES K-5)

Above-Grade-Level Assessment  
 BestPrep's The Stock Market Game  
 Calendar in the Classroom  
 Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration – Community of Learning  
 Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University  
 Classroom Connection  
 Code Savvy: Technovation Girls Minnesota  
 Concordia Language Villages  
 Continental Mathematics League  
 Crazy 8s Math Club  
 Destination Imagination  
 Discovery Award Competition  
 Engineering Machine Design Contest  
 FIRST LEGO League Challenge  
 FIRST LEGO League Explore  
 Gathering of Champions  
 Girls Who Code Clubs  
 H2O for Life  
 Jostens Renaissance Education  
 JumpStart Bridge  
 Junior Achievement Experiential Learning Programs  
 Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program  
 Laws of Life Essay Contest  
 Math Masters  
 MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math Enrichment  
 Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools  
 Minnesota 4-H Youth Development  
 Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom  
 Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program  
 Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)  
 Minnesota Mathematics League  
 Minnesota PTA Reflections  
 Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division A)  
 MN Cup Competition – Youth Division  
 National Geography Challenge  
 National Language Arts League  
 National Science League  
 National Social Studies League  
 Noetic Learning Math Contest  
 Perennial Math Online Math Competition

Poster Contest  
 School Chess Association  
 Science and Nature Live Virtual Programs  
 Science from Scientists  
 Spelling Bee  
 Sumdog  
 Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl  
 Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards  
 Unsung Hero Projects  
 Walker Art Center Art Today Tours  
 WordMasters Challenge  
 World Savvy  
 YMCA Students Voting  
 Youth for Human Rights  
 ZOOMS STEM Design Challenge

## MIDDLE SCHOOL (GRADES 6-8)

Above-Grade-Level Assessment  
 Academic Pentathlon  
 AMC 8  
 ARTEFFECT  
 BestPrep's Classroom Plus  
 BestPrep's Financial Matters  
 BestPrep's The Stock Market Game  
 Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration – Community of Learning  
 Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University  
 Classroom Connection  
 Close Up Washington D.C.  
 Code Savvy: Technovation Girls Minnesota  
 Concordia Language Villages  
 Continental Mathematics League  
 CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition  
 Destination Imagination  
 Discovery Award Competition  
 Engineering Machine Design Contest  
 FIRST LEGO League Challenge  
 FIRST Tech Challenge  
 Gathering of Champions  
 Genes in Space  
 Girls Who Code Clubs  
 H2O for Life  
 Jostens Renaissance Education  
 JumpStart Bridge  
 Junior Achievement Experiential Learning Programs

Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program  
 Knowledge Bowl Competitions – Jr. and Sr. High  
 Laws of Life Essay Contest  
 MAAP STARS  
 Math Masters  
 MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math Enrichment  
 Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools  
 Minnesota 4-H Youth Development  
 Minnesota Academy of Science – Middle School and High School Science Bowl  
 Minnesota Academy of Science – State Science & Engineering Fair  
 Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom  
 Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America  
 Minnesota FFA  
 Minnesota Future City Competition  
 Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program  
 Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)  
 Minnesota Junior High Math League  
 Minnesota MATHCOUNTS  
 Minnesota Mathematics League  
 Minnesota PTA Reflections  
 Minnesota Scholastic Art Awards  
 Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division A)  
 Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division B)  
 Minnesota State High School Mathematics League  
 Minnesota Student Digital Mapping Competition  
 MN Cup Competition – Youth Division  
 Mock Trial Program  
 MSHSL Debate, Speech  
 MSHSL Music, One Act Play, Visual Arts  
 MTEEA Supermileage Challenge  
 National Geography Challenge  
 National History Day in Minnesota  
 National Language Arts League  
 National Science League  
 National Social Studies League  
 NCTE Promising Young Writers Program  
 Noetic Learning Math Contest  
 Perennial Math Online Math Competition  
 Poster Contest

School Chess Association  
 Science and Nature Live Virtual Programs  
 Science from Scientists  
 Show Us Your Mussels  
 Spelling Bee  
 Student Television Network  
 Sumdog  
 TEAMS  
 Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl  
 Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards  
 University of Minnesota Talented Youth Math Program  
 Unsung Hero Projects  
 Walker Art Center Art Today Tours  
 WordMasters Challenge  
 World Savvy  
 YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)  
 YMCA Model United Nations  
 YMCA Respectful Conversations in Schools  
 YMCA Students Voting  
 YMCA Youth in Government  
 Youth for Human Rights  
 ZOOMS STEM Design Challenge

#### **HIGH SCHOOL (GRADES 9-12)**

Above-Grade-Level Assessment  
 Academic Decathlon  
 Academic WorldQuest  
 AMC 10 & 12  
 American Legion Auxiliary Girls State  
 American Legion Boys State  
 ARTEFFECT  
 BestPrep's Classroom Plus  
 BestPrep's eMentors  
 BestPrep's Financial Matters  
 BestPrep's Minnesota Business Venture  
 BestPrep's Student Spotlight Competition  
 BestPrep's The Stock Market Game  
 Cancer Unwrapped Teen Writing Contest  
 Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University  
 Classroom Connection  
 Close Up Washington D.C.  
 Code Savvy: Technovation Girls Minnesota  
 Concordia Language Villages  
 Continental Mathematics League  
 CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition  
 Destination Imagination  
 Discovery Award Competition

Economics Challenge  
 Engineering Machine Design Contest  
 FIRST Tech Challenge  
 Gathering of Champions  
 Genes in Space  
 Girls Who Code Clubs  
 H2O for Life  
 HOBY Youth Leadership Seminar  
 Jostens Renaissance Education  
 JumpStart Bridge  
 Junior Achievement Experiential Learning Programs  
 Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program  
 Knowledge Bowl Competitions – Jr. and Sr. High  
 Laws of Life Essay Contest  
 LifeSmarts  
 MAAP STARS  
 MathWorks Math Modeling Challenge  
 Minnesota 4-H Youth Development  
 Minnesota Academy of Science – Middle School and High School Science Bowl  
 Minnesota Academy of Science – State Science & Engineering Fair  
 Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom  
 Minnesota Bilingual Seals Program  
 Minnesota Business Professionals of America  
 Minnesota DECA  
 Minnesota Envirothon  
 Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America  
 Minnesota FFA  
 Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program  
 Minnesota High School Music Listening Contest  
 Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)  
 Minnesota Mathematics League  
 Minnesota PTA Reflections  
 Minnesota Regional High School Ethics Bowl  
 Minnesota Scholastic Art Awards  
 Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division B)  
 Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division C)  
 Minnesota SkillsUSA  
 Minnesota State High School Mathematics League  
 Minnesota Student Digital Mapping Competition  
 Minnesota Youth Institute  
 MN Cup Competition – Youth Division

Mock Trial Program  
 Mondale-Quie Essay Contest  
 MSHSL Debate, Speech  
 MSHSL Music, One Act Play, Visual Arts  
 MSHSL/FIRST Robotics  
 MTEEA Supermileage Challenge  
 National Geography Challenge  
 National History Day in Minnesota  
 National Language Arts League  
 National Science League  
 National Social Studies League  
 NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing  
 Nobel Conference at Gustavus Adolphus College  
 Perennial Math Online Math Competition  
 Personal Finance Challenge  
 Poetry Out Loud  
 Real World Design Challenge  
 Scholars of Distinction  
 School Chess Association  
 Science and Nature Live Virtual Programs  
 Show Us Your Mussels  
 Student Television Network  
 TEAMS  
 The Liminal Essay Contest  
 Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards  
 U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad  
 United States Senate Youth Program  
 University of Minnesota Talented Youth Math Program  
 Unsung Hero Projects  
 Walker Art Center Art Today Tours  
 World Savvy  
 YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)  
 YMCA Model United Nations  
 YMCA Respectful Conversations in Schools  
 YMCA Student Election Judge Network  
 YMCA Students Voting  
 YMCA Youth in Government  
 Youth Environmental Activist Network  
 Youth for Human Rights  
 ZOOMS STEM Design Challenge

# Listing of Programs by Academic Content

## ARTS

Academic Decathlon  
Academic Pentathlon  
ARTEFFECT  
BestPrep's Student Spotlight Competition  
Calendar in the Classroom  
Center for Interactive Learning and  
Collaboration – Community of Learning  
Center for Talent Development at  
Northwestern University  
Destination Imagination  
Engineering Machine Design Contest  
Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program  
MAAP STARS  
Minnesota 4-H 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 Regional High School Ethics  
Bowl  
Minnesota Scholastic Art Awards  
Mock Trial Program  
MSHSL Music, One Act Play, Visual Arts  
Poetry Out Loud  
Poster Contest  
Student Television Network  
The Liminal Essay Contest  
Unsung Hero Projects  
Walker Art Center Art Today Tours  
YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)

## BUSINESS/CAREER EDUCATION

Academic WorldQuest  
BestPrep's Classroom Plus  
BestPrep's eMentors  
BestPrep's Financial Matters  
BestPrep's Minnesota Business Venture  
BestPrep's Student Spotlight Competition  
BestPrep's The Stock Market Game  
Center for Talent Development at  
Northwestern University  
Code Savvy: Technovation Girls  
Minnesota  
Economics Challenge

Engineering Machine Design Contest  
Girls Who Code Clubs  
JumpStart Bridge  
Junior Achievement Experiential Learning  
Programs  
LifeSmarts  
MAAP STARS  
Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom  
Minnesota Business Professionals of  
America  
Minnesota DECA  
Minnesota Family, Career and Community  
Leaders of America  
Minnesota Future Problem Solving  
Program  
Minnesota SkillsUSA  
MN Cup Competition – Youth Division  
Mock Trial Program  
Personal Finance Challenge  
Poster Contest  
Student Television Network  
YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)

## GENERAL

Above-Grade-Level Assessment  
BestPrep's Classroom Plus  
BestPrep's eMentors  
BestPrep's Financial Matters  
BestPrep's Student Spotlight Competition  
BestPrep's The Stock Market Game  
Calendar in the Classroom  
Center for Interactive Learning and  
Collaboration – Community of Learning  
Classroom Connection  
Discovery Award Competition  
FIRST LEGO League Challenge  
FIRST LEGO League Explore  
FIRST Tech Challenge  
Gathering of Champions  
H2O for Life  
Jostens Renaissance Education  
JumpStart Bridge  
Knowledge Bowl Competitions – Jr. and  
Sr. High  
LifeSmarts  
MAAP STARS  
Minnesota 4-H Youth Development  
Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom  
Minnesota FFA

Minnesota Future Problem Solving  
Program  
Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth  
(MITY)  
Minnesota Regional High School Ethics  
Bowl  
Minnesota Youth Institute  
Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl  
World Savvy  
YMCA Respectful Conversations in  
Schools  
YMCA Student Election Judge Network  
YMCA Students Voting

## LANGUAGE ARTS

Academic Decathlon  
Academic Pentathlon  
BestPrep's eMentors  
BestPrep's Student Spotlight Competition  
Calendar in the Classroom  
Cancer Unwrapped Teen Writing Contest  
Center for Interactive Learning and  
Collaboration – Community of Learning  
Center for Talent Development at  
Northwestern University  
Classroom Connection  
H2O for Life  
Junior Achievement Experiential Learning  
Programs  
Laws of Life Essay Contest  
MAAP STARS  
Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom  
Minnesota Future City Competition  
Minnesota Future Problem Solving  
Program  
Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth  
(MITY)  
Minnesota Regional High School Ethics  
Bowl  
Mock Trial Program  
Mondale-Quie Essay Contest  
MSHSL Debate, Speech  
National Language Arts League  
NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing  
NCTE Promising Young Writers Program  
Poetry Out Loud  
Show Us Your Mussels  
Spelling Bee  
Sumdog



The Liminal Essay Contest  
 Unsung Hero Projects  
 WordMasters Challenge  
 YMCA Model United Nations  
 YMCA Respectful Conversations in  
 Schools  
 YMCA Youth in Government

### **SOCIAL STUDIES**

Academic Decathlon  
 Academic Pentathlon  
 Academic WorldQuest  
 American Legion Auxiliary Girls State  
 American Legion Boys State  
 Center for Interactive Learning and  
 Collaboration – Community of Learning  
 Center for Talent Development at  
 Northwestern University  
 Classroom Connection  
 Close Up Washington D.C.  
 Discovery Award Competition  
 Economics Challenge  
 H2O for Life  
 HOBY Youth Leadership Seminar  
 Junior Achievement Experiential Learning  
 Programs  
 Laws of Life Essay Contest  
 Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom  
 Minnesota Future City Competition  
 Minnesota Future Problem Solving  
 Program  
 Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth  
 (MITY)  
 Minnesota Regional High School Ethics  
 Bowl  
 Minnesota Student Digital Mapping  
 Competition  
 Minnesota Youth Institute  
 Mock Trial Program  
 Mondale-Quie Essay Contest  
 National Geography Challenge  
 National History Day in Minnesota  
 National Social Studies League  
 Personal Finance Challenge  
 Poster Contest  
 Scholars of Distinction  
 United States Senate Youth Program  
 Unsung Hero Projects  
 YMCA Model United Nations  
 YMCA Student Election Judge Network  
 YMCA Students Voting  
 YMCA Youth in Government

Youth for Human Rights

### **STEM (SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, MATH)**

Academic Decathlon  
 Academic Pentathlon  
 AMC 8  
 AMC 10 & 12  
 BestPrep's Classroom Plus  
 BestPrep's eMentors  
 BestPrep's Financial Matters  
 BestPrep's Minnesota Business Venture  
 BestPrep's The Stock Market Game  
 Calendar in the Classroom  
 Center for Interactive Learning and  
 Collaboration – Community of Learning  
 Center for Talent Development at  
 Northwestern University  
 Code Savvy: Technovation Girls  
 Minnesota  
 Continental Mathematics League  
 Crazy 8s Math Club  
 CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber  
 Defense Competition  
 Destination Imagination  
 Engineering Machine Design Contest  
 FIRST LEGO League Challenge  
 FIRST LEGO League Explore  
 FIRST Tech Challenge  
 Genes in Space  
 Girls Who Code Clubs  
 H2O for Life  
 JumpStart Bridge  
 Junior Achievement Experiential Learning  
 Programs  
 Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program  
 LifeSmarts  
 Math Masters  
 MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math  
 Enrichment  
 Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary  
 & Middle Schools  
 MathWorks Math Modeling Challenge  
 Minnesota 4-H Youth Development  
 Minnesota Academy of Science – Middle  
 School and High School Science Bowl  
 Minnesota Academy of Science – State  
 Science & Engineering Fair  
 Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom  
 Minnesota Envirothon  
 Minnesota Future City Competition  
 Minnesota Future Problem Solving  
 Program

Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth  
 (MITY)  
 Minnesota Junior High Math League  
 Minnesota MATHCOUNTS  
 Minnesota Mathematics League  
 Minnesota Regional High School Ethics  
 Bowl  
 Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division A)  
 Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division B)  
 Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division C)  
 Minnesota SkillsUSA  
 Minnesota State High School Mathematics  
 League  
 Minnesota Student Digital Mapping  
 Competition  
 Minnesota Youth Institute  
 MSHSL/FIRST Robotics  
 MTEEA Supermileage Challenge  
 National Science League  
 Nobel Conference at Gustavus Adolphus  
 College  
 Noetic Learning Math Contest  
 Perennial Math Online Math Competition  
 Real World Design Challenge  
 Scholars of Distinction  
 School Chess Association  
 Science and Nature Live Virtual Programs  
 Science from Scientists  
 Show Us Your Mussels  
 Sumdog  
 TEAMS  
 Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards  
 U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad  
 University of Minnesota Talented Youth  
 Math Program  
 YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)  
 Youth Environmental Activist Network  
 ZOOMS STEM Design Challenge

### **WORLD LANGUAGES & CULTURES**

Academic WorldQuest  
 Center for Talent Development at  
 Northwestern University  
 Classroom Connection  
 Concordia Language Villages  
 Minnesota Bilingual Seals Program  
 Minnesota Future Problem Solving  
 Program  
 Minnesota Youth Institute



# Listing of Programs by Category

## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

Academic WorldQuest  
ARTEFFECT  
Discovery Award Competition  
FIRST LEGO League Challenge  
FIRST LEGO League Explore  
FIRST Tech Challenge  
Gathering of Champions  
Jostens Renaissance Education  
Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program  
Minnesota Academy of Science – State Science & Engineering Fair  
Minnesota Bilingual Seals Program  
Minnesota PTA Reflections  
Minnesota Scholastic Art Awards  
Mondale-Quie Essay Contest  
NCTE Achievement Awards in Writing  
NCTE Promising Young Writers Program  
Real World Design Challenge  
Scholars of Distinction  
United States Senate Youth Program  
Unsung Hero Projects

## CHALLENGES & COMPETITIONS

Academic Decathlon  
Academic Pentathlon  
Academic WorldQuest  
AMC 8  
AMC 10 & 12  
ARTEFFECT  
BestPrep's Minnesota Business Venture  
BestPrep's Student Spotlight Competition  
BestPrep's The Stock Market Game  
Cancer Unwrapped Teen Writing Contest  
Code Savvy: Technovation Girls Minnesota  
Continental Mathematics League  
CyberPatriot National Youth Cyber Defense Competition  
Destination Imagination  
Discovery Award Competition  
Economics Challenge  
Engineering Machine Design Contest  
FIRST LEGO League Challenge  
FIRST LEGO League Explore  
FIRST Tech Challenge  
Genes in Space  
Junior Achievement Experiential Learning Programs

Knowledge Bowl Competitions – Jr. and Sr. High  
Laws of Life Essay Contest  
LifeSmarts  
MAAP STARS  
Math Masters  
Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools  
MathWorks Math Modeling Challenge  
Minnesota Academy of Science – Middle School and High School Science Bowl  
Minnesota Academy of Science – State Science & Engineering Fair  
Minnesota Business Professionals of America  
Minnesota DECA  
Minnesota Envirothon  
Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America  
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 Regional High School Ethics Bowl  
Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division A)  
Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division B)  
Minnesota Science Olympiad (Division C)  
Minnesota SkillsUSA  
Minnesota State High School Mathematics League  
Minnesota Student Digital Mapping Competition  
Minnesota Youth Institute  
MN Cup Competition – Youth Division  
Mock Trial Program  
Mondale-Quie Essay Contest  
MSHSL Debate, Speech  
MSHSL Music, One Act Play, Visual Arts  
MSHSL/FIRST Robotics  
MTEEA Supermileage Challenge  
National Geography Challenge  
National History Day in Minnesota  
National Language Arts League

National Science League  
National Social Studies League  
Noetic Learning Math Contest  
Perennial Math Online Math Competition  
Personal Finance Challenge  
Poetry Out Loud  
Poster Contest  
Real World Design Challenge  
School Chess Association  
Show Us Your Mussels  
Spelling Bee  
Student Television Network  
TEAMS  
The Liminal Essay Contest  
Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl  
Toshiba/NSTA ExploraVision Awards  
U.S. National Chemistry Olympiad  
WordMasters Challenge  
ZOOMS STEM Design Challenge

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITY

Above-Grade-Level Assessment  
Academic Decathlon  
Academic Pentathlon  
BestPrep's Classroom Plus  
BestPrep's eMentors  
BestPrep's Financial Matters  
BestPrep's The Stock Market Game  
Calendar in the Classroom  
Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration – Community of Learning  
Classroom Connection  
Close Up Washington D.C.  
Continental Mathematics League  
Engineering Machine Design Contest  
Girls Who Code Clubs  
H2O for Life  
JumpStart Bridge  
Junior Achievement Experiential Learning Programs  
Junior Duck Stamp Conservation Program  
Laws of Life Essay Contest  
LifeSmarts  
MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math Enrichment  
Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools  
Minnesota Agriculture in the Classroom

Minnesota High School Music Listening Contest  
 Minnesota MATHCOUNTS  
 Minnesota Student Digital Mapping Competition  
 Minnesota Youth Institute  
 Mock Trial Program  
 National History Day in Minnesota  
 Perennial Math Online Math Competition  
 Poetry Out Loud  
 Science and Nature Live Virtual Programs  
 Science from Scientists  
 Show Us Your Mussels  
 Spelling Bee  
 Student Television Network  
 Sumdog  
 TEAMS  
 Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl  
 University of Minnesota Talented Youth Math Program  
 Unsung Hero Projects  
 Walker Art Center Art Today Tours  
 World Savvy  
 YMCA Respectful Conversations in Schools  
 YMCA Students Voting  
 Youth for Human Rights  
 ZOOMS STEM Design Challenge

### CONFERENCES & INSTITUTES

American Legion Auxiliary Girls State  
 American Legion Boys State  
 HOBY Youth Leadership Seminar  
 Minnesota Business Professionals of America  
 Minnesota DECA  
 Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America  
 Nobel Conference at Gustavus Adolphus College  
 World Savvy  
 YMCA Model United Nations  
 YMCA Youth in Government

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

American Legion Auxiliary Girls State  
 American Legion Boys State  
 BestPrep's eMentors  
 BestPrep's Minnesota Business Venture  
 Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University  
 H2O for Life  
 HOBY Youth Leadership Seminar

Jostens Renaissance Education  
 MAAP STARS  
 Math Masters  
 Minnesota 4-H Youth Development  
 Minnesota Family, Career and Community Leaders of America  
 Minnesota FFA  
 Minnesota Future Problem Solving Program  
 Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)  
 Minnesota SkillsUSA  
 Scholars of Distinction  
 United States Senate Youth Program  
 YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)  
 YMCA Model United Nations  
 YMCA Student Election Judge Network  
 YMCA Youth in Government  
 Youth Environmental Activist Network  
 Youth for Human Rights

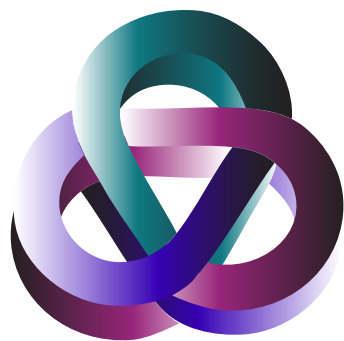
### OUT OF SCHOOL TIME ENRICHMENT

Above-Grade-Level Assessment  
 BestPrep's Classroom Plus  
 BestPrep's Financial Matters  
 Center for Talent Development at Northwestern University  
 Code Savvy: Technovation Girls Minnesota  
 Concordia Language Villages  
 Crazy 8s Math Club  
 Girls Who Code Clubs  
 JumpStart Bridge  
 MathCEP – Saturday Morning Math Enrichment  
 Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary & Middle Schools  
 Minnesota 4-H Youth Development  
 Minnesota Academy of Science – Middle School and High School Science Bowl  
 Minnesota Future City Competition  
 Minnesota Institute for Talented Youth (MITY)  
 Minnesota PTA Reflections  
 Minnesota Regional High School Ethics Bowl  
 MN Cup Competition – Youth Division  
 Science from Scientists  
 Sumdog  
 University of Minnesota Talented Youth Math Program  
 WordMasters Challenge  
 YES! (Youth Eco Solutions)

YMCA Student Election Judge Network  
 Youth Environmental Activist Network







# Synergy & Leadership Exchange

**Synergy & Leadership Exchange** is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization, a program of the South Central Service Cooperative.

**Helping Minnesotans be their best through collaboration, education and celebration!**



## **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 the Reach for the Stars catalogue. Applications are available on the Synergy & Leadership Exchange website. Questions? Email [reach@synergyexchange.org](mailto:reach@synergyexchange.org).

## **CHECK OUT THE DIGITAL VERSIONS OF THE CATALOGUE!**

Did you know Reach for the Stars is available both as a full-color PDF or a text-only Word document? To download, visit [www.synergyexchange.org/reach-for-the-stars](http://www.synergyexchange.org/reach-for-the-stars) or scan the QR code by opening the camera on your electronic device, pointing it at the QR code, tapping the banner that appears, and following it to the website.



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# THANK YOU

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Synergy & Leadership Exchange

2075 Lookout Drive

North Mankato, MN 56003

[reach@synergyexchange.org](mailto:reach@synergyexchange.org)

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