

# DISTRICTS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

## **DISTRICTS MAKE THE DIFFERENCE: STUDENT VIDEO CONTEST OFFICIAL RULES AND CRITERIA**

**NO PURCHASE OR PAYMENT OF ANY KIND IS NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN. THE CONTEST IS SUBJECT TO ALL RULES SET FORTH BELOW AND APPLICABLE FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LAWS. VOID WHERE PROHIBITED. BY SUBMITTING A STUDENT VIDEO CONTEST APPLICATION, YOU ACKNOWLEDGE AND AGREE TO THE FOLLOWING TERMS AND CONDITIONS. DMTD RESERVES THE RIGHT TO CHANGE THE TERMS, CONDITIONS, AND RULES OF THIS AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH THE CONTEST IS OFFERED.**

***Video contest submissions should focus on highlighting one or more of the following areas:***

- A unique program, service or infrastructure project that a special district is currently promoting.
- How an individual, a group of individuals, or a community is affected by special districts.
- How special districts are formed and how they can provide essential services to the community.

### **ELIGIBILITY**

The Districts Make the Difference (“DMTD”) Student Video Contest (“Contest”) is open to residents of the United States currently attending high school at the time of entry. This includes public, private, and charter schools as well as homeschooling. The following individuals are not eligible: employees, contractors, directors, and officers of DMTD or a National Special Districts Association (“NSDA”) member entity, and their relatives; employees (including part-time, seasonal, or internship), contractors, officers, directors, or trustees of any independent special district in a NSDA member state (i.e., California, Colorado, Florida, Oregon, Utah, South Carolina, Wyoming). Limit one (1) entry per applicant and only one (1) winner per submission.

To be eligible for the Contest, applicants must submit a video limited to no more than **sixty (60) seconds** in length and in compliance with the Contest requirements and criteria. By submitting a video to the Contest, you give DMTD, NSDA and its members permission to share, reproduce, or exhibit the video without restriction, and without notification or compensation. Uses include but are not limited to: Sharing with partner organizations, including in future projects and reports, sharing with federal, state, and local governments, promoting future contests, and media outreach.

Where available, a submission to the Contest may also be submitted to a state or county special districts association (“Local Chapter”) student video contest, subject to the rules and requirements of the Local Chapter. DMTD is not responsible for the administration or operation of any Local Chapter video contest.

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## CONTEST REQUIREMENTS

There is no fee to participate. Violation of any Contest terms will result in disqualification. By making a submission to the Contest you certify that you have full rights and authority to submit your video for consideration in the Contest. All entries must be an original work in compliance with copyright law to be eligible for the Contest. Videos may not have been previously submitted, distributed, aired or have won any other award in any other competition. **Please do not submit videos that contain depictions of other third-party artistic works, copyrights, trademarks/tradenames, logos, or similar brand identifying marks.**

You must obtain all the necessary rights, including music rights, consents, authorizations, and licenses for all copyright protected material included in your video. You must also obtain permission to use the image, likeness, or audio recording of any individual that has a speaking role or is otherwise distinctly featured in your video submission. **However, only one (1) individual is eligible to be selected as winner per video entry.**

All entries become the property of DMTD and will not be returned. Participation in the Contest by submitting a video shall grant to DMTD the worldwide rights, title, interest and claim to reproduction, copyright, exhibition, broadcast, and/or distribution of the video submitted, or any other photography, videotape footage, or likeness contained in the video without limitation.

**Website:** [www.DistrictsMaketheDifference.org/video-contest](http://www.DistrictsMaketheDifference.org/video-contest)

If a submission is not in English, then English captions must be provided. The video submitted must be the original work of the applicant(s), and may not contain the work, including the intellectual property, of others without express written consent. **Plagiarism is strictly prohibited and will result in disqualification.** Your video must not contain: (i) racist, sexist, or other offensive remarks, (ii) nudity or sexual content, (iii) promotion of drug use, underage drinking, or other illegal behavior, or (iv) hate speech, violence, slanderous or libelous claims, or any other actionable offenses. Your video must not (i) infringe any rights of publicity or privacy, or intellectual property rights, including any music-related rights, (ii) be defamatory or indecent, or (iii) violate any applicable laws.

No videos may be published prior to the conclusion of the Contest without prior consent from DMTD. If it is determined that your video was published without prior consent before the Contest has concluded, you may be disqualified. Participation is voluntary and participants are responsible for ensuring that the production of their video does not violate any local, state, or federal laws. DMTD is not responsible for any unlawful or negligent activity that participants undertake during video production. By entering the Contest, you agree to defend, release, and hold harmless DMTD and its agents from and against any claims, action or liability for injury, loss or damage of any kind resulting from your participation in the Contest or from the acceptance or use of any prize awarded.

DMTD is not responsible for lost, incomplete, stolen, damaged, garbled, corrupt, illegible, late, or unintelligible entries, or for printing or other errors appearing in these rules or other Contest materials, misprints or errors in other Contest related information, garbled communications, technical or mechanical malfunctions, or other malfunctions, problems or errors, whether caused by equipment,

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programming used in this Contest, processing errors, human errors or otherwise. DMTD reserves the right, at its sole discretion, to void any entries from Entrants whom DMTD believes have attempted to tamper or have tampered with the administration, security, or fairness of this Contest.

**Limitation of Liability and Remedies:** NEITHER DMTD NOR ANY OTHER ASSOCIATED PARTY SHALL HAVE ANY LIABILITY FOR ANY DIRECT, INCIDENTAL, INDIRECT, SPECIAL, OR CONSEQUENTIAL DAMAGES, OR EXEMPLARY OR PUNITIVE DAMAGES ARISING OUT OF OR RELATING TO THIS CONTEST, ANY SUBMISSION OR USE OF THE SUBMISSION, OR ANY CONTENT EMBODIED THEREIN, INCLUDING WITHOUT LIMITATION ANY LIABILITY, LOSS, INJURY OR DAMAGE TO ENTRANT OR ANY OTHER PERSON OR ENTITY, INCLUDING PERSONAL INJURY OR DEATH, OR DAMAGE TO PERSONAL OR REAL PROPERTY, DUE IN WHOLE OR IN PART, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, BY REASON OF ENTRANT'S ENTRY IN THIS CONTEST, THE USE OF ANY SUBMISSION, OR THE ACCEPTANCE, POSSESSION, USE, OR MISUSE OF ANY PRIZE.

## CONTEST SCHEDULE:

The contest will be open for submissions between January 2 and March 31, 2026 ("Contest Period").

## TO ENTER

To enter the Contest, visit <http://www.districtsmakethedifference.org> ("Website") during the Contest Period for directions.

Before uploading the video submission, you will be required to certify and affirm that you have read and complied with these Official Rules and agree to be bound by them. **If the student applicant is under 18 years of age, they must have a parent or legal guardian review the Official Rules.** Submissions that do not include all required information or do not adhere to the Official Rules shall not be valid and are subject to disqualification. DMTD may, at its sole discretion, remove, delete or forfeit submissions it deems inappropriate or otherwise non-compliant. Submitting a video to this Contest does not guarantee that the Submission will be displayed or used by DMTD.

## SELECTION OF WINNERS

Submissions for the Contest will be accepted on an ongoing basis until March 31, 2026. Up to ten (10) finalists will be selected based on judging criteria set out below at "SELECTION CRITERIA" and posted to [www.DistrictsMaketheDifference.org](http://www.DistrictsMaketheDifference.org) where public voting will determine the final winners. Public voting will take place between May 1 and May 15, 2026. The finalists will be posted to the Districts Make the Difference website and various social media outlets starting on or around May 1, 2026.

Following the close of the public voting period on May 15, 2026, the following will be chosen based on the voting results: one (1) first prize winner, one (1) second prize winner, and one (1) third prize winner.

All finalist submissions are subject to verification, including, without limitation, verification of eligibility, compliance with these Official Rules and all other applicable release forms. The decision of the judges

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will be final and binding in all matters, and all applicants agree to accept the final decision of the judges and results of the public vote. The finalists shall be selected without regard to race, age, gender, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, employment status or any other factor which could constitute unfair or illegal discrimination.

## **WINNER NOTIFICATION**

Winners will be notified on or after May 20, 2026, by telephone, mail, or email. If attempted notification is returned as undeliverable, if Finalist cannot be verified, or if Finalist is otherwise unable to accept prize, prize will be forfeited and may be awarded to an alternate Finalist, at DMTD's discretion.

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

### **Video Contest Preliminary Selection Criteria**

A video file must be submitted – the video file must not exceed sixty (60) seconds in length. The video file size should be kept at or under 200 MB for quicker upload/encoding time. No submission larger than 500MB will be accepted.

## **FINALIST PRIZES**

The prizes shall be listed on the Districts Make the Difference website and may be subject to alteration without notification.

1st Place- \$2,000 prize

2nd Place- \$1,000 prize

3rd Place- \$500 prize

All federal, state, and local taxes, and all other costs associated with acceptance or use of the prizes are the sole responsibility of the winners. Winners must execute final releases and information requests prior to payment of the awards. Failure to do so will void the award.

**Odds:** The odds of winning depend on the number of eligible entries received during the Entry Period and the quality of the entry.

**Applicable Law:** This Contest is governed by the laws of the state of California without regard to any choice of law provisions. By entering, entrants consent to the jurisdiction and venue of the federal and state courts located in Sacramento, California.

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## TEACHER RECOGNITION

In appreciation of teachers and the integral work they do to support students throughout the country, DMTD is awarding a prize to three teachers, instructors, professors, or advisors to support their classroom needs, or to be utilized in support of distance learning provided by the teacher to students.

Upon selection of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Place winners, DMTD will award a **\$500 prize** to the teacher or instructor nominated by each respective winner on their application submission. To be eligible, the individual nominated must be affiliated with an accredited high school in the state of entry. If no teacher is nominated or DMTD is unable to deliver the Teacher Recognition prize to the individual nominated by a student video contest winner, DMTD may instead award the prize to an alternative recipient. Homeschool students may designate the homeschool program (if any) they are enrolled in or a 501(c)(3) non-profit to receive this separate prize. All applicable taxes are the responsibility of the nominated teacher or other recipient. The nominated teacher or recipient must execute final releases and information requests at the request of DMTD prior to payment of the award. Failure to do so will void the award. This separate recognition is subject to alteration without notification.

Category	Description	MAX.
Accuracy & Effectiveness	The facts presented in the video are accurate and not misleading. The video increases understanding and awareness of special districts.	25
Creativity & Originality	The video incorporates concepts, style, or media that are original and creative. The video is engaging to the audience.	25
Production Quality	The video's editing and flow are of a high quality. The audio is clear and understandable.	25
Entertainment Value	The video's story or concepts are interesting and understandable.	25
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>