

Contest Advancement and Results Dispute Guidelines

These guidelines apply to National History Day in Minnesota Regional/District contests and the Minnesota State History Day contest.

Advancing from School-Level Contests

It is up to the school to determine which entries are eligible to advance to the next level of competition. Schools make these decisions in a variety of ways:

- A school-level contests can be held to determine which projects advance with judge feedback
- A school may hold a showcase event, which may or may not have judges present
- Teachers may decide which projects will advance to a Regional/District competition without a showcase or competition
- Students may decide they are interested in competing to fill the schools allotment of spots at the Regional contest

How many entries will advance? In January, each participating school is required to fill out a participation survey listing the total number of students completing projects in each of the five categories. Each school is assigned a certain number of projects it may bring to its particular Regional event. Assignments are made on a proportional allotment basis; schools with larger participation are allowed to enter more students into the Regional competitions. At minimum, each school will be allowed to register at least three projects per category and division, e.g. three Junior Individual Performance, three Junior Group Performance, etc.

Registration limits are divided by category and division. Schools may not exceed the number of entries they register or swap projects between categories without the prior consent of the event coordinator. We will do our best to accommodate requests, but capacity limits may make change impossible.

Please Note:

- A student who participated in History Day at their school but did not advance may **not** register on their own for a Regional/District contest under the auspices of a different school or organization.
- Students from schools that do not participate in History Day **are** allowed to compete at Regional contests. Please contact the State History Day office for more information

Regional/District-Level Contests

At each contest, Regional and District History Day judges will select students for two types of awards:

- **State Qualifier:** State Qualifiers will receive a medal and are eligible to advance to State History Day.
- **Honorable Mention:** Honorable Mentions will receive a ribbon. Honorable Mention recognize student achievement, but the entry is not eligible for State and are not considered a “runner-up.”

How many entries will advance? Each Regional/District contest is assigned a certain number of entries that may advance to State History Day. Numbers are determined based on a proportional allotment; Regional/District contests with larger school-level participation are allowed to advance more State Qualifiers. At minimum, each Regional/District contest will be allowed to advance at least three State Qualifier projects per category and division, e.g. three Junior Individual Performance, three Junior Group Performance, etc.

State History Day

Judges will rank the top five entries in each category/division. These entries will receive a medal. All other entries that advance to the Final-Round of competition will be awarded Honorable Mention and receive a medal, but will not be ranked.

How many entries will advance? The 1st and 2nd place projects are eligible to advance to the National Contest. If a 1st or 2nd place entry is unable to attend the national contest, the spot will be offered to the 3rd place, then 4th place, then 5th place.

Please Note: History Day encourages judges to advance as many projects as possible to the next level of competition. If there are not enough entries or enough entries of sufficient quality in a particular category, judges may choose to advance fewer than the minimum number of entries per category/division or to award fewer Honorable Mentions.

Disputing Contest Results

According to the *NHD Contest Rule Book*, Section V. "You, your parents, and your teachers should realize that inadvertent inequities may occur in judging and that contest officials do want to be informed of any problems. If you have a concern, ask your teacher about the correct process to follow in notifying officials. **The decision of the judges is final.**"

While the decision of judges is final, Minnesota History Day strives to find solutions to correct the inherent inequities of judging *when this is possible*. As you process the contest results, you must keep in mind that:

- **Viewing is Not Judging:** The experience of judging is different from viewing projects. Judges have received training and are looking for projects to meet specific History Day criteria. Judges also have access to the annotated bibliography and are evaluating the quality of research for each project they view. Viewers often do not have access to this material.
- **Subjectivity:** There is an inherently subjective element to History Day judging. Historians will often reach different opinions about the significance of the same data.
- **The Overall Quality of All Projects is High:** Judges are often making ranking decisions about projects that are very similar in quality. At State History Day, First-Round judges must rank the top three entries, 1st - 3rd, and Final-Round judges must rank the top five entries, 1st-5th, with no ties. A ranking between 2nd and 3rd place may not mean a significant quality difference in project. History Day judges are not permitted to rank two entries as a "tie" at State History Day.

During the Contest

Teachers, students, or spectators should alert History Day staff during the competition if they have a question or concern about judging. We are happy to explain the process that is going on behind the scenes. History Day staff have more options to address a problem during the contest, rather than after the awards ceremony has concluded. This may include, but is not limited to:

- Discussion between staff and judges or students
- Re-presentation of the project (especially in the case of technical difficulties)
- Assistance with locating materials (such as a missing bibliography during the event)



345 Kellogg Boulevard West
St. Paul, MN 55102-1906

After the Contest

Teachers and students should contact the event coordinator with any concerns via email. Please provide as much information as possible. Next steps may include, but are not limited to:

- Follow-up with additional information on the judging process
- A review of judge comment sheets or
- Staff review of the project to provide additional feedback

At no point in the dispute process will we remove another entry's status as a State Qualifier to "swap in" another entry. It is at the State Coordinator's sole discretion to allow an additional entry to advance from a Regional/District contest to State. Judge decisions at the State contest are final. No additional entries will be permitted to advance from State to the National Contest.

**Please contact Minnesota History Day staff with any questions
about these guidelines.**