



**10 March 2025**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**KENTUCKY HIGH SCHOOL SPEECH LEAGUE SENIOR STATE SPEECH TOURNAMENT  
RESULTS**

Tony Award-winning actor James Earl Jones, best known as the voices of Darth Vader and Mufasa the Lion, once stated -- "Speech is a very important aspect of being human. A whisper doesn't cut it."

At the 2025 Kentucky High School Speech League State Speech Tournament, hundreds of young Kentuckians found their humanity as they spoke, acted, wondered, questioned, and found their voices. They made friends from across the state and laughed and learned – no whispering involved!

104 years since its very first statewide speech contest, the Kentucky High School Speech League hosted its largest event of the year, Senior Speech State, on the campus of Western Kentucky University (sponsored by the WKU Forensics Team) March 7 and 8. Schools from Paintsville to Paducah competed at the annual State Senior Speech Championship after advancing from the seven Regional tournaments held around the state in February.

Sem = Semifinalists (top 12); Qua = Quarterfinalists (top 24)

The Senior State Speech Tournament (grades 9-12) began Friday, March 7, with two preliminary rounds for all competitors. After a third preliminary Saturday morning, students' three scores were totaled, and the top twelve scoring entries in eight speech events (Declamation, Dramatic Interpretation, Duo Interpretation, Humorous Interpretation, Informative Speaking, Oratory, Program Oral Interpretation, and Storytelling) plus the top twenty-four participants in the six largest speech events (Broadcasting, Extemporaneous Speaking, Impromptu Speaking, Improvisational Duo, Poetry, and Prose) were advanced into awards rounds. After more judging in the Quarterfinals (top 24) and Semifinals (top 12), six students in each of the fourteen events were announced as State Finalists and competed for panels of five judges Saturday afternoon.

Rowan County Senior High School (Morehead) won the Senior State Speech title with second place going to Knott County Senior High School and South Oldham High School in third. These three schools were followed by Paul Laurence Dunbar High, Beechwood High, Bardstown, Louisville Atherton, Highlands, Letcher County Central, and Murray. Lexington's Paul Laurence Dunbar High School won the Sustained Excellence Award given to teams for outstanding performances over time; their team total for this honor will reset to zero, and they will begin earning points toward this trophy again next year. Additionally, Bowling Green High, Daviess County High, Graves County High, Johnson Central High, and Paducah Tilghman High were honored as Schools of Distinction for outstanding performances in the state meet.

Highlands High School's coach Alyssa Davis was voted Coach of the Year by the coach collective, and Rowan County Senior High School's Ivy Litton received the Blyton Book Award, an annual honor given to an outstanding senior in honor of Gifford Blyton, longtime KHSSL Executive Director and debate coach at the University of Kentucky. Scholarships for \$1000 were awarded to Beechwood's Louis Schlosser and Corbin's Cassie Messer, and the Institute for Speech and Debate awarded honoraria to its summer camps to each state champion and finalist as well as sponsored one of the scholarships (the other paid by the endowed Bale Scholarship fund).

A full list of award winners in each of the fourteen categories follows this release. For any questions or to connect with local coaches and schools, please contact KHSSL Executive Director Steve Meadows at 859/927-1100 or [khssl@khssl.org](mailto:khssl@khssl.org). You can also visit our website at [www.khssl.org](http://www.khssl.org) for more information about the League.

The speech and debate season in Kentucky runs from November to January with 14 Regional Speech Tournaments held in February around the Commonwealth to qualify for State followed by State Junior Speech (grades 4-8), Senior Speech (grades 9-12), and Debate (grades 4-12) tournaments. Students compete in twenty speech, debate, and drama categories from Storytelling to Congressional Debate to Oratory.

KHSSL offers membership to all schools -- public, private, and homeschooled -- serving students in grades 4-12 in Kentucky. With member schools from Murray to Morehead, Kentucky's oldest student activity trains students how to conduct themselves in public settings, how to successfully communicate ideas,

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how to empathize with others via character analysis, how to read critically and how to research properly through contests and classroom support that encourage excellence and develop grit through mind over chatter.

### **Top Ten Teams at 2025 KHSSL State Senior Speech Tournament:**

1st	Rowan County Senior High School	Morehead	248 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Knott Central High School	Hindman	165 points
3 <sup>rd</sup>	South Oldham High School	Crestwood	157 points
4 <sup>th</sup>	Paul Laurence Dunbar High School	Lexington	153 points
5 <sup>th</sup>	Beechwood High School	Fort Mitchell	100 points
6 <sup>th</sup>	Bardstown High School	Bardstown	88 points
7 <sup>th</sup>	Atherton High School	Louisville	76 points
8 <sup>th</sup>	Highlands High School	Fort Thomas	73 points
9 <sup>th</sup>	Letcher County Central High School	Whitesburg	66 points
10 <sup>th</sup>	Murray High School	Murray	65 points

### **Schools of Distinction**

Bowling Green High School  
Daviess County High School  
Graves County High School  
Johnson Central High School  
Paducah Tilghman High School

### **Coach of the Year**

Alyssa Davis, Highlands High School

### **Blyton Book Award Winner**

Ivy Litton, Rowan County Senior High School

### **Scholarship Winners**

Cassie Messer, Corbin High School  
Louis Schlosser, Beechwood High School

### **Partners**

Western Kentucky University Forensics, The Bale Scholarship Fund, The Institute for Speech and Debate

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## BROADCASTING

PLACE	Name	School
1	Eden Potterton	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
2	Hannah Huntley	Graves County High School
3	Campbell Eck	Beechwood High School
4	Braden Smith	Knott County Central High School
5	Parker Roland	Larry A Ryle High School
6	CoryOn Brooks	Paducah Tilghman High School
Sem	Louis Schlosser	Beechwood High School
Sem	Hattie Litton	Rowan County Sr High School
Sem	Noah Ratliff	Johnson Central High School
Sem	Marli Mehta	Murray High School
Sem	Soham Patel	LaRue County High School
Sem	Owen Frakes	Daviess County High School
Qua	Michelle Hundley	Bardstown High School
Qua	Tara Rakesh	Randall K Cooper High School
Qua	William Dunnaway	Calloway County High School
Qua	Anna Watson	Danville High School
Qua	Caedmon Rossini	Highlands High School
Qua	Nicholas Walls	Dixie Heights High School
Qua	Slone Smith	Knott County Central High School
Qua	Ayamei Willett	Murray High School
Qua	Emily Utlej	Williamstown Senior High School
Qua	Kishan Amin	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Qua	Keile Allen	Graves County High School
Qua	Arlo Miller	Boone County High School

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## DECLAMATION

PLACE	Name	School
1	Julia Keeney	Atherton
2	Isabella Slone	Beechwood High School
3	Rylan Cole	Atherton
4	Amay Xu	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
5	Angie Chen	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
6	Brinklee Brennan	Letcher County Central High School
Sem	Mason Chandler	South Oldham High School
Sem	Soham Patel	LaRue County High School
Sem	Jackson Guthrie	Atherton
Sem	Morgan Hall	Knott County Central High School
Sem	Liesel Nader	Beechwood High School
Sem	Jaylah Lawhorn	Rowan County Sr High School

## DRAMATIC INTERPRETATION

PLACE	Name	School
1	Landon Flanagan	South Oldham High School
2	Allie Broering	Beechwood High School
3	Adrianna Allen	Rowan County Sr High School
4	Caroline Beavers	South Oldham High School
5	Molly Sandlin	Knott County Central High School
6	Sophie Uhl	Highlands High School
Sem	Benjamin Osborne	South Oldham High School
Sem	Caleb Torrey	Letcher County Central High School
Sem	Keile Allen	Graves County High School
Sem	Lorelei Williams	Graves County High School
Sem	Kruthi Mangamur thiyagarajan	DuPont Manual High School / Youth Performing Arts School
Sem	Sarah Ratner	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS

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## DUO INTERPRETATION

PLACE	Name	School
1	Gartner & Kolks	Boone County High School
2	Carver & Hamilton	Rowan County Sr High School
3	Gnadinger & Goins	South Oldham High School
4	Amburgey & Stone	Letcher County Central High School
5	Stewart & Torrey	Letcher County Central High School
6	Flanagan & Semrau	South Oldham High School
Sem	Frakes & Mills	Daviess County High School
Sem	Sheng & Tay	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Sem	Smallwood & Walker	Corbin High School
Sem	Nair & Boyer	Assumption High School
Sem	Fugate & Grigsby	Knott County Central High School
Sem	Roe & Sandlin	Knott County Central High School

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## EXTEMPORANEOUS SPEAKING

PLACE	Name	School
1	Ivy Litton	Rowan County Sr High School
2	Mia Carver	Rowan County Sr High School
3	Anthony Zhang	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
4	Aidan Wild	Murray High School
5	Ayamei Willett	Murray High School
6	Hattie Litton	Rowan County Sr High School
Sem	Avinash Koul	Lafayette High School
Sem	Molly Lusk	Calloway County High School
Sem	Braden Smith	Knott County Central High School
Sem	Evan Wheeler	North Oldham High School
Sem	Mahadev Tipirneni	DuPont Manual High School / Youth Performing Arts School
Sem	James Owen Taylor	Highlands High School
Qua	Elizabeth Lanier	Calloway County High School
Qua	Blue Snowden	Atherton
Qua	Cassidy Stocker	South Oldham High School
Qua	Ali Yarali	Murray High School
Qua	Matthew Hancock	Lafayette High School
Qua	Mitchell Smith	Atherton
Qua	Meredith Blair	Assumption High School
Qua	Charles Kinkade	Danville High School
Qua	Aubrey Cornett	Hazard High School
Qua	Zain Mardini	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Qua	Abigail Pennington	Danville High School
Qua	Ammon Robinson	South Oldham High School

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## HUMOROUS INTERPRETATION

PLACE	Name	School
1	Alexander Hamilton	Rowan County Sr High School
2	Kristen Lindon	Knott County Central High School
3	Aubriana Goins	South Oldham High School
4	Barrett Freidhof	Rowan County Sr High School
5	Owen Frakes	Daviess County High School
6	Gabe Grinsteinner	Beechwood High School
Sem	Esme Morris	Lafayette High School
Sem	Elena Gartner	Boone County High School
Sem	Sophia Flanagan	South Oldham High School
Sem	Owen Clagett	Rowan County Sr High School
Sem	Jordan Cox	Boone County High School
Sem	Cole Stidham	Letcher County Central High School

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## IMPROMPTU SPEAKING

PLACE	Name	School
1	Ivy Litton	Rowan County Sr High School
2	Liam Wahl	Trinity High School
3	Mitchell Smith	Atherton
4	Kelsie Huff	Knott County Central High School
5	Braden Smith	Knott County Central High School
6	Marli Mehta	Murray High School
Sem	Anthony Zhang	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Sem	Aubrey Cornett	Hazard High School
Sem	Matthew Hancock	Lafayette High School
Sem	Elizabeth Lanier	Calloway County High School
Sem	Sia Vaish	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Sem	Devynn Gardner	Bowling Green High School
Qua	Ammon Robinson	South Oldham High School
Qua	Ali Yarali	Murray High School
Qua	Tanvi Rakesh	Randall K Cooper High School
Qua	Trinity Parker	Knott County Central High School
Qua	James Owen Taylor	Highlands High School
Qua	Jessica Jones	Rowan County Sr High School
Qua	Blaine Kimery	South Oldham High School
Qua	Avinash Koul	Lafayette High School
Qua	Soham Patel	LaRue County High School
Qua	Anne Beck	Lafayette High School
Qua	Cayden Dunn	Bowling Green High School
Qua	Abigail Pennington	Danville High School
Qua	Kanaan Roetting	Dixie Heights High School

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## INFORMATIVE SPEAKING

PLACE	Name	School
1	Charlotte Weghorst	Highlands High School
2	Louis Schlosser	Beechwood High School
3	Willa Stivers	DuPont Manual High School / Youth Performing Arts School
4	Slone Smith	Knott County Central High School
5	Morgan Hall	Knott County Central High School
6	Arlo Miller	Boone County High School
Sem	Audrey Bryant	Rowan County Sr High School
Sem	Nicholas Walls	Dixie Heights High School
Sem	Sia Vaish	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Sem	Cindy Wang	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Sem	Ananya Kakarlapudi	DuPont Manual High School / Youth Performing Arts School
Sem	Parker Syme	Atherton

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## IMPROVISATIONAL DUO

PLACE	Name	School
1	Clagett & Freidhof	Rowan County Sr High School
1 (tie)	Coleman & Hamilton	Rowan County Sr High School
3	Tay & Sheng	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
4	Hall & Jones	Knott County Central High School
5	Grigsby & Lindon	Knott County Central High School
6	Edwards & Feezor	Graves County High School
Sem	Grinsteinner & Wainscott	Beechwood High School
Sem	Carrico & Smith	Atherton
Sem	Pitman & Stark	Murray High School
Sem	Carr & Likens	Daviess County High School
Sem	Dinh & Dinh	Lafayette High School
Sem	Littlepage & Dunn	Bowling Green High School
Qua	Flanagan & Goins	South Oldham High School
Qua	Boren & Semrau	South Oldham High School
Qua	Dunnaway & Garland	Calloway County High School
Qua	Pinkston & Sztanyo	Highlands High School
Qua	Morris & Duggal	Lafayette High School
Qua	Varland & Hagerty	Highlands High School
Qua	Ragland & Martin	Bowling Green High School
Qua	Kitchen & Ratliff	Johnson Central High School
Qua	Hall & Treas	Graves County High School
Qua	Schultz & Schulte	Highlands High School
Qua	Ballard & Scott	Bullitt East High School
Qua	Podrovitz & Ray	Murray High School

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## ORATORY

PLACE	Name	School
1	Cassidy Stocker	South Oldham High School
2	Cayden Dunn	Bowling Green High School
3	Kennedy Faulconer	Bardstown High School
4	Grace Sun	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
5	Victoria Kalahan	Knott County Central High School
6	Cassidy Blair	Letcher County Central High School
Sem	Morgan Davis	Highlands High School
Sem	Ivy Litton	Rowan County Sr High School
Sem	Niko Heidinger	Kentucky Country Day
Sem	Blaine Kimery	South Oldham High School
Sem	Mercedes Whitt	Rowan County High School
Sem	Vedanshi Das	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS

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## POETRY

PLACE	Name	School
1	Kaden Stone	Bardstown High School
2	Adrianna Allen	Rowan County Sr High School
3	CoryOn Brooks	Paducah Tilghman High School
4	Victoria Kalahan	Knott County Central High School
5	Addison Boren	South Oldham High School
6	Morgan Martin	Bowling Green High School
Sem	Emily Blackburn	Knott County Central High School
Sem	Layla Del Angel	Bardstown High School
Sem	Noah Ratliff	Johnson Central High School
Sem	Grace Sun	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Sem	Cassie Messer	Corbin High School
Sem	Sarah Gardner	Calloway County High School
Qua	Gracie Stewart	Letcher County Central High School
Qua	Brooklyn Gnadinger	South Oldham High School
Qua	Adara Campbell	Johnson Central High School
Qua	Samantha Kolks	Boone County High School
Qua	Liberty Whitehead	Johnson Central High School
Qua	Zaylie Barber	Atherton
Qua	Megan Daly	Highlands High School
Qua	Ainjini Patra	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Qua	Adeline Pitman	Murray High School
Qua	Victoria Sears	Dixie Heights High School
Qua	Caroline Segebarth	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Qua	Brilee Garland	Calloway County High School

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## PROGRAM ORAL INTERPRETATION

PLACE	Name	School
1	Kaden Stone	Bardstown High School
2	Mia Carver	Rowan County Sr High School
3	Brooklyn Gnadinger	South Oldham High School
4	Kennedy Faulconer	Bardstown High School
5	Anna Blake	Knott County Central High School
6	Anika Agrawal	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Sem	Georgie Farmer	Danville High School
Sem	Eden Potterton	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Sem	Allie Broering	Beechwood High School
Sem	Victoria Kalahan	Knott County Central High School
Sem	Barrett Freidhof	Rowan County Sr High School
Sem	Heather Crawford	Letcher County Central High School

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PROSE		
PLACE	Name	School
1	Kennedy Faulconer	Bardstown High School
2	Javontae Cranmo	Beechwood High School
3	Adrianna Allen	Rowan County Sr High School
4	Caroline Beavers	South Oldham High School
5	Maddie Bush	June Buchanan School
6	Sarah Ratner	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Sem	Owen Clagett	Rowan County Sr High School
Sem	Heather Crawford	Letcher County Central High School
Sem	Sophia Flanagan	South Oldham High School
Sem	McKenna Edmonston	South Oldham High School
Sem	Zelda DeYeso-Danz	Murray High School
Sem	Charlotte Weghorst	Highlands High School
Qua	Jessica Jones	Rowan County Sr High School
Qua	Georgie Farmer	Danville High School
Qua	Olivia Fugate	Knott County Central High School
Qua	Henry Weghorst	Highlands High School
Qua	Maren PLACEatt	Beechwood High School
Qua	Avis Guzman	Boone County High School
Qua	Savannah Ballard	Bullitt East High School
Qua	Paisley Fields	Letcher County Central High School
Qua	Alisyn Caldwell	Hazard High School
Qua	Lucas Melton	Lafayette High School
Qua	Krissy Scott	Bullitt East High School
Qua	Kylie Jones	Knott County Central High School

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## STORYTELLING

PLACE	Name	School
1	Lydia French	Atherton
2	Logan Roe	Knott County Central High School
3	Kaden Stone	Bardstown High School
4	Asa Stamper	Rowan County Sr High School
5	Sterling Coleman	Rowan County Sr High School
6	Katelyn Knox	Lafayette High School
Sem	Isabelle Dinh	Lafayette High School
Sem	Priya Chandrashekar	Paul Laurence Dunbar HS
Sem	Gracie Stewart	Letcher County Central High School
Sem	Agnes Boyer	Assumption High School
Sem	Caleb Torrey	Letcher County Central High School
Sem	LilaBeth Goodman	Daviess County High School

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Kentucky High School

**S P E E  H**

**L E A G  E**

Kentucky High School

**S P E E  H**

**L E A G  E**

Sem = Semifinalists (top 12); Qua = Quarterfinalists (top 24)

Kentucky High School

SPEECH

LEAGUE



Sem = Semifinalists (top 12); Qua = Quarterfinalists (top 24)