

+ 2026 Austin Regional Japanese Language Speech Contest (2/22/2026)

The Japanese Teachers Association of Texas, Austin Area teachers invite middle school, high school, and college students of the Japanese language in the Greater Austin area to challenge themselves and participate in the 2026 Austin Regional Japanese Language Speech Contest.

Eligibility:

- The contestants must be current residents of the Greater Austin area.
- The contestants must meet all eligibility requirements in the division of their entry for the Texas State Japanese Language Speech Contest, as stated in the [2026 Texas State Japanese Language Speech Contest Handbook](#) on pages 5, 10, and 11.
- The contestants should be available and willing to participate in the 2026 Texas State Japanese Language Speech Contest at Rice University on March 7, 2026.

Divisions:

Please see the [2026 Texas State Japanese Language Speech Contest Handbook](#) for the explanation and expectations for each division (pages 8~10)

- **Division I: Poetry Recitation** -the assigned poem on page 19.
- **Division II: Haiku** - the four choices of the master Haiku on page 20.
- **Division III: High School/Aurora Free Speech***
- **Division IV: College/University Presentation*** - presentation slides requirements on page 9.

*Please note that the time limit of free speech in Division III is 3-5 minutes, and Division IV is a 4- to 5-minute presentation, not a speech, utilizing audiovisual materials.

Austin residents wishing to compete in the “Open Division**” should enter the State contest directly. At the Austin Regional, limited exhibition spots are available to those who plan to participate in the State Open Division. Please email the Austin Regional organizers by February 11, 2026.

*** Contestants at the Austin Regional Contest will be evaluated by three judges according to the criteria set by the Japanese Teachers Association of Texas. It can be viewed [here](#).

Date, Time & Location:

Sunday, February 22, 2025, 1:00 PM @ [St. Edward's University](#) (Parking is \$6. **Online Parking permit pre-purchase required**, See Visitor Parking [vPermit section](#). No reimbursement.)

[Carter Auditorium](#) inside of JBW (Johnbrooks Williams Natural Science Center South), 1F. #180

Minor contestants and audience members should be accompanied by an adult at all times while on campus.

Registration:

Contestants must submit the appropriate online registration form **by Wednesday, February 11th, at 5PM** through the link below:

[MS/HS Entry Form](#)

[College/University Entry Form](#)

***Haiku and Speech division contestants must upload a file that contains the required information regarding their haiku or speech. College contestants must provide the link to their Google Slides.**

Only the following number of entries will be allowed to present:

- Poetry Recitation, Haiku: 3 entries per school or a maximum of 9 participants per category
- High School Free Speech: 3 entries per school, or a maximum of 6 participants
- College/University Presentation: **the first 6 entries***

*Entries on the waitlist will be upgraded if a contestant drops out. If you decide not to participate after registration, please notify the contest organizer as soon as possible.

Teachers must guide their students to register in the appropriate division based on their ability to compete in the contest.

The 1st- and 2nd-place winners must complete the registration at www.jas-hou.org no later than February 28, 2026, at 5:00 p.m. to compete at the Texas State Japanese Language Speech Contest on March 7, 2026, at Rice University. (The registration opens on Feb. 23, 2026.) Failure to complete registration on time will result in the 3rd-place winner obtaining the spot. 3rd-place winners should be prepared to register on short notice.

Teachers of the winners must guide them to register for the State contest on time. If the winner decides not to compete at the State Speech Contest, the teacher of the winner must notify the JASH and the Austin speech contest organizer promptly so that the third-place winner can register for the State Speech Contest before the deadline.

Awards Sponsored by:

Austin Japan Community (High School Free Speech & College Presentation Divisions)

Austin Oita Sister City Committee (MS/HS Haiku Division)

JASGA (MS/HS Poetry Recitation Division)



Hosted by:

Japanese Teachers Association of Texas Austin Area

Teachers

St. Edward's University



For questions, please contact:

<College/University> Risa Ginther

risa.ginther@gmail.com

<Middle/High School> Hiroko Karch

hiroko.fukuharakarch@austinisd.org

<All other matters> Yoshiko Fujii Gaines Yoshiko_Gaines@Baylor.edu

Special Thanks to Asahi Imports for Refreshments:

