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## ***REIMAGINING JUSTICE: Student Voices***

### **ORATORICAL CONTEST**

Thank you for your interest in the *Reimagining Justice: Student Voices* Oratorical Competition, hosted by the Maryland Office of the Public Defender (MOPD). This competition invites high school students to discuss issues centering around Maryland's juvenile justice reform and its impact on young people. Your voice matters and perspective is needed as changes are being made to the Juvenile Justice System. This contest serves to give space to creatively do so. Share your views, experiences; ideas in written and video form. Prizes will be awarded for the best submission in each grade.

**Submissions are due by 5pm on April 30, 2024.**

**Finalists will be notified by May 6, 2024.**

**Selected finalists will present live at the *Reimagining Justice: Student Voices* event on May 13th, 2024.**

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### **Submission Requirements**

**How to Apply:** To apply, create a video (a "Video") between two (2) minutes and five (5) minutes in length that answers one of the following questions:

#### **Prompts:**

Select one of the two questions from your grade level. Provide the answer to your chosen question in written form and as a video of minimum three minutes but not exceeding five (5) minutes in length. The written submission serves as the script for a 3 to 5 minute video submission.

#### **Freshman (Select one question)**

1. Explain effective ways students or young people, who are involved in the criminal legal system, can correct their behavior, develop skills and improve mental health to become better students, gain employment and grow into positive, productive adults?
2. How can teenagers effectively help push for a better approach to justice in Maryland's future?

#### **Sophomore (Select one question)**

1. What alternative methods to traditional punishment can effectively tackle the underlying causes of crime, and support rehabilitation for children in the criminal legal system?
2. How can young people advocate for reforms in the juvenile justice system to ensure equitable treatment for all, regardless of their background, income level or age?

3. How might restorative justice principles (identifying and repairing harm through active interaction between victim, offender and community partner) best be used to foster genuine accountability and positive outcomes for children involved in delinquent behavior?

**Junior (Select one question)**

1. What effect does trauma have on children or families within the juvenile justice system? Explain what effective strategies can be used to address the identified effects.
2. What consequences arise from the lack of diversity and representation in the criminal legal system and how can this be remedied to improve outcomes for Black and brown people who are disproportionately impacted?
3. How can communities empower teens to make constructive choices and prevent their involvement in criminal activity?

**Written Submission:**

- Your written piece should reflect your perspectives on the current state of crime and juvenile reform in Maryland. Your submission should have a social impact focus, reflect personality, express passion and fully answer the question selected.
- The submission should be **no less than 3 minutes and no more than 5 minutes in length** when presented aloud.
- Clarity, coherence, and originality are important in your writing.
- Written portion must be submitted in a digital format (.doc or .pdf)

**Video Submission:**

- Record a video of yourself performing your written piece.
- The video should be filmed in a clear and well-lit environment.
- Introduce yourself at the beginning of the video, stating your first and last name, grade, and school.
- The video should capture your performance of the piece clearly and effectively.
- Videos should be submitted in a common format (.mp4 or .mov) and **no more than 5 minutes**.

**Online Form Submission:**

- Both the written and video submissions must be submitted together using the provided [online form](#).
- The form will require you to fill out information such as:
  - First and last name
  - Grade
  - School email
  - Signed parent/guardian consent form

Submissions which do not have a signed parent/guardian consent form will not be deemed complete.

## Submission Process:

1. Complete your written document according to the guidelines provided.
2. Record a video of yourself performing your written piece.
3. Fill out the online form completely and accurately.
4. Submit both the written and video submissions through the [online form by April 30th, 2024](#).
5. All submissions that transgress listed guidelines will be removed from contention.  
Late submissions will not be considered.

## Selection Process:

- **Four finalists will be selected to present** their piece at the Reimagining Justice: Student Voices event on May 13th, 2024.
- Finalists will be selected based on how impactful, original, clear, and relevant their submissions are.
- **Finalists will be notified via email by May 6th, 2024.**

We encourage you to express your thoughts and perspectives sincerely and passionately. Your voice matters, and we look forward to hearing from you.

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## Do's and Don'ts

### Do:

- Be yourself and share your experience
- Introduce yourself (First and Last name and Grade)
- make sure your video is of high quality and in a well lit environment
- Stay passionate and have high energy throughout your video
- Answer the question in its entirety
- Research
- Submit a typed written script
- Appear alone in the video
- Speak clearly and effectively

### Don't

- Have music or background noise in your video
- Wear clothing such as a graphic tee or a shirt with logos of any sort
- Incorporate images or other methods of media in your video

## Check List

- Read the application instructions carefully: Before making a video, it's important to understand the submission requirements and instructions. Make sure to follow all guidelines to ensure your video and writing is considered.

- Create a script: Plan out what you want to say in your video. Organize your thoughts and make sure to answer the question that you select.
- Record your video: Using a laptop camera, digital camera or a smartphone, to record your video. Make sure the lighting and sound quality are good, and that you are in a quiet, well-lit area.
- Time Limit: Make sure the video is the appropriate length (3-5 minutes) and that it effectively communicates your message.
- Upload your video: to the [submission form](#)
- Upload your written submission: Ensure that it has a social impact, reflects personal presentation, is spoken with passion and fulfills the requirement of the question. Ensure that it is between 3 to 5 minutes in length when read aloud.
- Submit your application: Once you have uploaded your video and written portion, submit your form. Make sure to include all necessary documents and information.
- Be creative, authentic, and professional in your video. This is an opportunity to showcase your personality and impact your community, so make the most of it!

**Submission Deadline: Tuesday, April 30th, 2024**

**\*Submit all required documents using this form: <https://forms.gle/cWWaU9gKjKvFXRYV6>**