



2026 Poetry Ourselves New Mexico Guidelines

Poetry Ourselves New Mexico is a statewide original poetry competition for students in grades 9-12. This creative writing competition compliments the *NM Poetry Out Loud* recitation program rounding out a student's opportunity to study and recite masterworks in poetry alongside their own journey of self-expression. Find more information here: New Mexico Arts [Poetry Out Loud](#)

Eligibility

- Any student currently enrolled in grades 9-12 in the state of New Mexico is eligible.
- Submit **only (1) original poem**, typed and **no longer than 50 lines** via online entry form or email a MS word, Google Doc or PDF formatted submission that includes your name, grade, and title of poem. Students may be requested to resubmit poem via Word Document or PDF.
- Poem must be original and composed only by the student who is submitting it.
- Poem may focus on any topic, but students should remember that winning entries may be presented to the public. New Mexico Arts and the Poetry Out Loud New Mexico program reserve the right to disqualify poems deemed inappropriate in subject matter or language.
- Non-English poems are allowed but will need to be accompanied by an English translation/transcript for judging purposes.
- Students may participate in *Poetry Ourselves* written competition and/or the [Poetry Out Loud](#) recitation competition. Students can self-submit **one poem** to the *Poetry Ourselves* written competition. Participation in the Poetry Out Loud recitation program requires school registration.

Submission Procedure

1. Complete online entry form here: <https://forms.gle/4gHFq6xb6jVmdomd9>
2. Upload your typed poem via entry form as a MS Word, Google Doc or PDF document that includes your name, grade, school, and title of poem.
3. Students without a Google/Gmail account may need to email their poem to the coordinator. Use format listed above and email to: kevin.lenkner@dca.nm.gov
4. **No poems will be accepted without a completed online entry form.**

If you need assistance, <mailto:kevin.lenkner@dca.nm.gov> or call 505 412-5791

Submission Timeline

All poems must be submitted online by 5:00 pm (MST) on Monday January 26, 2026.

Review Process

The review process for *Poetry Ourselves* is anonymous. The identity of the student is not known to the guest poet when judging submissions. Poems will be judged solely on artistic excellence.

Awards

The following awards will be made at the Judge's discretion; (1) Award of Creative Excellence, (3-5) Awards of Creative Merit. Award recipients will receive Poetry Ourselves award certificates, recognition at Poetry Out Loud State Finals event in Albuquerque on Sunday, March 8, 2026.