LEVEL UP 2026 - 2027

NYS SkillsUSA



PURPOSE

The Banner Competition is designed to assess the ability of the competitors to create and design a Banner that clearly represents the state of New York and this year's SkillsUSA theme: Level Up. It also evaluates the ability of teams to prepare and give a presentation and to prepare supporting documentation regarding the creation of the Banner.

ELIGIBILITY

The Banner Competition is open to NYS SkillsUSA members enrolled in any career and technical program. The Banner will be presented by a team consisting of two members. No more than two teams per SkillsUSA Region can compete.

Note: We will cap this year's number of competing teams to no more than 20 teams.

CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS

All contestants must wear official SkillsUSA attire that consists of the following:

- Official red blazer, NYS Black Jacket, the older red national windbreaker or older red sweater and the Black or red Jacket from Nationals.
- Button up, collared, white dress shirt (accompanied by a plain, solid black tie),
- white blouse (collarless or small-collared) or white turtleneck, with any collar not to extend into the lapel of the outer layer coats
- Black dress slacks or black dress skirt (knee- length)
- Note: Wearing socks or hose is no longer required. If worn, socks must be black dress socks, and hose must be either black or skin-tone and seamless/nonpattern hose.
- Black shoes, that are not backless or open toe.

NOTE: Contestants must wear their contest clothing to both the contest orientation meeting as well as the day of the competition.

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

The following will be supplied by the technical committee:

- PVC pole to hang and display Banners.
- All information necessary for the contestants and evaluators.

Contestants are responsible for the following items:

- Your Banner, ready to hang.
- Items to hang your Banner, such as grommets, rod pocket and rod, zip ties, or other means, used or needed to hang the Banner on supplied PVC poles.
- Consider bringing other supplies, such as scissors or tape.
- Required Notebook and information.
- #2 pencil that will be needed at the orientation.

PROCEDURE FOR SETUP / TAKE DOWN

- Only competitors will be permitted into the competition area to display the Banner. The Chairperson will be available for set up on Wednesday between 3pm to 6pm.
- Advisors will not be allowed into the competition set up area and cannot help with the set up.
- Once the Banner is displayed, competitors must leave the competition area.
- **Banners must be picked up between 2pm and 4pm on Thursday. Note:** Banners cannot be removed from the display area until all judging is complete. Additional time may be needed to complete the judging. The Chairperson will keep you informed if the pickup time changes. We ask that you remain patient if the judging takes longer as week as respect those still competing.
- NYS SkillsUSA headquarters will not be responsible for Banners, Notebooks, or other items left by the competitors from the exhibit area after 4pm on the day of the competition.

ORIENTATION

All contestants must attend the orientation, which is being held on Wednesday at 7pm.

All competitors are required to take the SkillsUSA professional development test during the orientation meeting. There will be no skill-related written test.

What to expect at the orientation:

- Be prompt.
- Contestants must wear their contest clothing to the contest orientation meeting.
- All competitors are required to take the SkillsUSA professional development test at orientation.

What to bring:

- A #2 pencil
- Your safety assurance form
- A hard copy of your résumé (*Note:* Your resumes will be judged as part of your contest.)

CONTEST GUIDELINES

You will be judged on the following items:

- Banner
  - General and visual impact
  - Construction elements
  - Design elements
- Notebook
- Presentation
  - Dressed in SkillsUSA attire
  - Presenters introduced themselves and presentation has a clear intro, body, and conclusion
  - Presentation included the items noted below
  - Not going over time limit
- Other requirements
  - Materials submitted on time
  - Attendance during orientation meeting
  - On time to present on day of competition
  - Professional development test given at orientation

Note: Please familiarize yourself with guidelines provided below pertaining to the use of electronic devices and AI. If not followed, possible deductions to your score may occur.

BANNER

- The Banner and Notebook must be brought between **3pm and 6pm** on the day of the orientation meeting. Come prepared to hang your Banner during this time.
- Banner size can be one of the following standard sizes:
  - 36-inches x 60-inches
  - 24-inches x 48-inches
  - 60-inches x 24-inches
- The Banner may be constructed of any material. Three-dimensional items should **not** be added to the surface of the Banner.
- The SkillsUSA logo must be incorporated in the design according to logo branding requirements. Proper guidelines for the logo can be found on the national website.
  - https://www.skillsusa.org/resources/brand-resources/
  - Brand Resources | SkillsUSA
- The words New York must be on the Banner and clearly visible from **20 feet**.
- The Banner should include the SkillsUSA theme "Level Up".
- Trademark or copyrighted material, logos, materials copied directly from the internet, and/or photographs that include faces of people may only be used if written consent or permission has been obtained. These documents/forms ***must*** be included in your Notebook.
- Banners must be constructed by current chapter members with guidance from instructors and advisors. This may be a group effort, but only two members of the team will present the Banner during the competition.

- Offensive images or text will **not** be accepted, and if used the team will be disqualified from the competition.
- Graphics and photographs must be clear from 10 feet.
- A maximum of $250 in purchased, donated, or borrowed materials may be spent on the Banner. Documentation, such as receipts or letters from donations, must be included within the Notebook.

NOTEBOOK

The Notebook is judged separately from the Banner and Presentation. The Notebook should tell the story of the design process: How the idea was selected and developed to achieve the final design.

- The Notebook must be a 1-inch SkillsUSA three-ring binder. If a SkillsUSA binder is not available, then the use of a red notebook is acceptable.
- Your Notebook must accompany the Banner and be handed to the Chairperson prior to the orientation, preferably at the time you are hanging your Banner.
- The Notebook must not exceed **10 pages** (20 surfaces).

The Notebook must include the following information and **be presented in this order**:

- A 5x7 inch image of final Banner on an 8.5 x11 inch letter size paper.
- Information about the team that created the Banner.
- How the idea was selected and developed to achieve the final design.
- Details of construction and printing (such as printed by students, taken to a professional printer, done by a graphics company, etc.).
- Equipment, tools, and computer programs used to achieve the final product.
- Cost verification letter. This must be in the form of a letter from instructor or administrator – *presented on school letterhead* – stating team member names and verifying the cost of materials used, donated, or receipts for outside printing.
- One-page resume for *each* of the two presenters must be included. Your resume will be reviewed and judged on the following:
    - Overall appearance and professionalism,
    - Accuracy in spelling, punctuation, capitalization. Tip: Have a peer review your resume after you complete a draft.
    - Complete contact information: name, address, phone, email.
    - Career objectives
    - Education
    - Technical skills
    - Employment history
    - Honors/awards/memberships: Note: Your participation in SkillsUSA can be listed under this header!!

PRESENTATION

- Notecards may **not** be used.
- The Presentation must be between **3 to 5 minutes** in length. Judges may then ask presenters questions.
- Both members of the team must speak during the Presentation.
- Presenters should introduce themselves to the judges before beginning.

- The Presentation must have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.
- The Presentation should include the following information:
    - The team that designed the Banner, including the presenters.
    - How the idea was created, developed, and constructed.
    - Computer programs, equipment, and tools used.
    - Details of actual printing of final Banner.
- Both presenters should display the following:
    - Correct grammar and word usage must be professional.
    - Members must speak clearly and project loud enough to be heard.
    - Show poise, eye contact, and confidence.
    - Verbally participate in presentation and Q&A

Use of Electronic Devices:
Cell phones or other electronic devices not approved by the NYS Chairperson will be collected by the contest chair during the competition. Chairpersons will announce their acceptance by listing it on their standard or at the orientation meeting. In case of emergencies, advisors should allow the competitors to take their phones to the contest areas.

If the competitor uses their device in a manner which compromises device in a manner which compromises the integrity of the competition, the competitor's score may be penalized.

Ethical Use of AI as per National Guidelines:
Integrity is a core value at SkillsUSA, and all student members must uphold this principle, whether using AI-based tools or otherwise. Learning to use AI is an emerging skill, and competitors should be aware of the limits of AI tools. You may use AI programs, e.g. ChatGPT, to help generate ideas and brainstorm only.

However, you should note that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic. You will be responsible for any errors or omissions provided by the tool. Beware that use may also stifle your independent thinking and creativity.

You may not submit any work generated by an AI program as your own. If you include material generated by an AI program, it should be cited like any other reference material. It works best for topics you understand. AI is a tool, but one that you need to acknowledge using. Please include a paragraph at the end of any assignment that uses AI explaining what you used the AI for and what prompts you used to get the results. Failure to do so violates the integrity policy. Don't use it if it isn't appropriate for the case or circumstance.

For competitions, responsible use of AI-based tools in completing tasks or assessments must be done in accordance with the following:

- You must clearly identify the use of AI-based tools in your work. Any work that utilizes AI-based tools must be clearly marked and cited as such, including the specific tool(s) used.
- You must be transparent in how you used the AI-based tool, including what work is your original contribution. An AI detector may be used to detect AI-driven work.
- You must ensure your use of AI-based tools does not violate any copyright or intellectual property laws.
- You must not use AI-based tools to cheat on assessments.
- You must not use AI-based tools to plagiarize without citation.