LEVEL UP 2026 - 2027

NYS SkillsUSA

CAKE DECORATING

PURPOSE

To evaluate each contestant's preparation for employment and to recognize outstanding students for excellence and professionalism in the advanced art of Cake Decorating, special occasion cakes.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to active NYS SkillsUSA members enrolled in programs with culinary arts, commercial baking/ pastry arts as the occupational objective. Schools may send one contestant.

CLOTHING REQUIREMENTS

NYS Kitchen Area Attire

- White chef's jacket (All identifying markings or names must be covered on chef's uniform)
- Black work pants or black-and-white checkered chef's pants
- Black non-slip, non-porous shoes
- White apron
- Hair Restraint
- Chef's hat (toque, bakers cap or skull cap) or plain black baseball cap

Note: No facial jewelry is allowed. Earrings are not permitted even if covered by a bandage.
Beards must be covered by a snood during all periods of food handling.
A single watch is the only jewelry that will be allowed during the orientation and contest period. Watches should be kept on your worktable or in your pocket. (Smart watches (i.e., apple watches) will not be allowed during competition)

Note: Competitors must wear their official competition clothing to the competition orientation meeting. (No identification of the school or state should be on the clothing.) Also bring #2 pencil, resume, and safety assurance form.

EQUIPMENT AND MATERIALS

I. Supplied by the NYS chair/committee:

1) All information and supplies for judges
2) Table workspace, electrical outlet, display table space, access to a microwave, and walk in cooler

II. **Supplied by the contestant (Bring all materials and equipment needed to decorate a celebration cake**
at least one of each, but more per item than specified is acceptable):

1. All food items needed to complete their cake. Note: No food items will be supplied by the NYS chair/committee.
   Already baked cake layers to complete their 3-tier cake. (NO CAKE DUMMY'S RUBBER OR STYROFOAM) ****NO EXCEPTIONS ALLOWED****
2. (2) #2 Pencil
3. Measuring cups
4. Measuring spoons
5. Cake turntable or decorating stand
6. Pastry Bags couplers and tips as needed for cake decorating - scissors
7. Rose nail
8. Cake and Cutting Boards
9. Rolling pin
10. Cake decorating Spatula or palette
11. Prepared fondant and/or colored frosting
12. Icing colors
13. Tabletop mixer with paddle and whisk
14. Kitchen Spoons
15. Knives - Serrated,
16. Rubber Spatula
17. Mixing bowls
18. Kitchen towels as needed
19. Cake comb
20. Fondant tools
21. Prepared colored fondant unrolled and unshaped.
22. Cake Circles
23. Parchment Paper
24. Cake filling
25. 1/2 sheet pans as needed
26. Extension cord
27. Anything else you need to complete the cake you have designed

Cake outline/sketch: A formal TYPED explanation of the cake the student plans to make to be presented. Please clearly indicate the three decorating techniques you will be displaying. Include a sketch of the final product (ONLY sketch may be hand drawn) like the sketch a professional cake decorator would show their clients when explaining the cake, they will be making for them. Must be handed in during orientation meeting the day before competition. *(example outline on last page of standard)

Each contestant is responsible for bringing the necessary equipment and supplies listed.

Suggestions- please include an inventory list of equipment – students will be able to make sure they pack everything when they leave.

Garbage bags for dirty items are helpful. Students will **NOT** be allowed to wash any equipment on site (they will have to wipe them clean with paper towels) so it is recommended to bring garbage bags for dirty bowls at the end of the contest or plastic disposable bags that can be discarded.

Cake boxes for goods students wish to take with them at the end of the competition are also helpful-we do not have boxes or bags.

All competitors must create a one-page résumé and submit a hard copy at orientation. Failure to do so will result in a 10-point penalty.
"Note: Your resume may be judged as part of your contest" Check the Contest Guidelines and/or the updates page on the NYS SkillsUSA Web site: http://www.nysskillsusa.org

SCOPE OF THE COMPETITION

The contest will be geared toward the commercial special occasion cake design.

Knowledge Performance

All competitors are required to take the NYS SkillsUSA professional development at orientation.
The state competition does not require a written cake decorating knowledge exam

Skill Performance

The skill performance of the contest will be the actual preparation of goods and presentation of finished products ready for sale to customers.

Contest Guidelines

1. Contestants will decorate a 2-tier celebration cake consisting of 8" and 6" tiers with their choice of filling and edible decorations. A minimum of three decorating techniques must be used.
2. The product specifications and other instructions needed for NY product preparation will be posted on the SkillsUSA Website at: http://www.nysskillsusa.org/
3. Products will be prepared during the performance portion of the contest. The products will be selected by the NYS chair/committee. The finished products will be visually evaluated and **tasted** per the rubric criteria.

Standards and Competencies

CB 1.0 — Demonstrate knowledge of basic baking fundamentals

1.1 The exam consists of 50 multiple-choice questions. Topics of the exam include weights, measures, and general baking math; proper temperatures of batter, cake handling and baking, classifications, and properties of ingredients; handling and storage of ingredients; safety and handling; cake decorating; cakes; production, scheduling, planning, and customer service and merchandising of products.

CB 2.0 — Prepare a decorated cake in a bakery setting.

The contestant will:

2.1Read and understand standard bakery formulas

2.2 Select correct ingredients given the provided formula

2.3 Weigh and measure ingredients accurately given the provided formula

2.4 Assemble ingredients in the correct sequence given the provided formula

2.5 Apply appropriate preparation procedure given the provided formula

2.6 Apply (i.e., blend, fold, mix) the appropriate mixing procedure given the provided formula.

2.7 Prepare one iced and decorated cake to the specifications of contestant's theme.

2.8Describe the theme you intend to create with the cake in one to two written paragraphs (grammar, creativity and language will be evaluated) Along with a photo. **Note: Turned in at Orientation Meeting**

CB 3.0 — Demonstrate knowledge of commonly accepted OSHA safety standards in a bakery, including lifting techniques and safety management

3.1 Use appropriate lifting techniques

3.2 Keep work area well organized and free of hazards

3.3 Follow safety requirements for operating equipment

3.4 Work with a regard for safety of self and others

CB 4.0 — Demonstrate appropriate, commonly accepted OSHA sanitation practices in a bakery

4.1 Wash hands sufficiently and at appropriate times during baking process 4.2 Inspect tools and equipment before using and correctly clean items

4.3 Use a clean side towel and replace as needed during the day

4.4 Avoid actions that can potentially contaminate food

4.5 Wear gloves when working with RTEs

CB 5.0 — Demonstrate production efficiency practices in a bakery

5.1 Use procedures to accurately measure ingredients

5.2 Use most or all raw ingredients where little or no wasted ingredients remain

5.3 Use most of all mixed ingredients where little or no wasted raw dough remains

5.4 Bake and finish product to produce the maximum salable product

5.5 Model time-management

CB 6.0 — Utilize commonly used equipment in a bakery according to manufacturer's specifications

6.1 Use equipment according to manufacturer's specifications

6.2 Select appropriate tools and equipment for baking function or product

6.3 Use mixer according to manufacturer's specifications

6.4 Use small wares and tools (thermometer, spoons, measures, etc.) appropriately

CB 7.0 — Demonstrate appropriate, commonly accepted OSHA personal hygiene and grooming practices in a bakery

7.1 Dress in a commonly accepted professional manner

7.2 Maintain a clean uniform (shirt, pants, skirts, shoes, hat, towel, etc.)

7.3 Wear head gear or other covering always

7.4 Always maintain clean hands



CAKE DECORATING COMPETITION 2026-2027

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Cluster Manager: Shannon Speranza

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CAKE DECORATING COMPETITION NEW YORK STATE 2027

Purpose

To recognize those students with professional proficiency in the advanced art of cake decorating Special Occasion cakes per specific customer requests.

PLEASE NOTE:

This is a **STATE ONLY COMPETITION,** there currently is no national competition.

Eligibility

Open to all active SkillsUSA NY high school members enrolled in programs with Culinary Arts, Commercial Baking/Pastry Arts as an occupational objective. Schools may send **ONE STUDENT.**

CONTESTANT CRITERIA:

Decorate a two-tiered cake per the attached "cake order request form" with choice of cake and filling where each tier is composed of four layers of cake and three layers of filling/frosting.

Cake to be baked **prior to the competition**.

Cake to be cut, filled and decorated on site.

Competitors may use any of the following materials:

- gum paste
- rolled fondant
- royal icing
- chocolate
- marzipan
- buttercream frosting
- Any other edible items

Minimum requirements:

- Two tiers consisting of 8" and 6" rounds
- Each tier must be composed of 4 layers of cake and 3 layers of filling.
- Cake filling is to be determined by competitors and should be appropriate to the requests of the cake order form and taste good.
- Everything in and on the cake must be edible except for a support system for the cake. (It is **HIGHLY** recommended to include a support system in your cake. If not your cake has a high chance of falling)
- A minimum of **THREE** decorating techniques used (gum paste flowers, rosettes, buttercream roses, fondant rope, marzipan fruits, buttercream script etc.)
- All decorating to be done on site
- Fondant can be made and colored in advance but **NOT** pre shaped or rolled
-

Competitors will supply:

- Cakes to create a two-tiered cake with layers consisting of 4 layers of cake and 3 layers of filling
- Prepared cake fillings and frostings
- All the necessary equipment to complete the decorated cake; no equipment other than worktable space, electricity and judges will be provided.
- Any edible decorating products like fondant, modeling chocolate, gum paste etc.
- Fondant may be pre-colored but must be rolled out and shaped during competition. No decorations made before the start of the competition may be used.
- Resume
- **Cake outline/sketch:** A formal TYPED explanation of the cake the student plans to make to be presented. Please clearly indicate the three decorating techniques you will be displaying. With a sketch of the final product (ONLY sketch may be hand drawn). Similar to the sketch a professional cake decorator would show their clients when explaining the cake, they will be making for them. **Must be handed in during orientation meeting the day before competition.**
  Example outline on last page of packet

Possible List of necessary equipment but not limited to*

Cake circles	**Rolling pin**	**Tabletop mixer**
Parchment paper	**Decorating bags**	**Extension cord**
Frosting colors	**Decorating couples, tips, rose nails**	**Cake decorating stand**
Frosting		
Prepared fondant: unrolled	**Cake comb**	***Anything else needed to complete your cake**
½ sheet pans	**Rubber**	
Mixing bowls	**spatula**	

*Competition site will not provide any food items or tools/equipment

EACH CONTESTANT WILL BE EVALUATED ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING:

Safety	50
Sanitation	100
Appearance of Cake Layers (four layers of cake and three layers of filling per tier)	50
Frosting/Fondant Finish	50
Decoration/Creativity	100
Adhesion to “cake order form” requests	100
Writing/Script Skills	50
Taste	100
Decorating Techniques	75
Theory Assessment	25

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	700

Possible deductions:

No Resume OR Late Resume	-50
Improper Uniform	- 50
No Cake Outline OR Late Outline	-50

Competition Time Frames:

Wednesday night: 8 PM:

- Orientation
- Competition Review
- SkillsUSA Knowledge Test & Professional Development Written Exam
- Hand in Resume and Cake Theme

Formal Competition Thursday:

1. Competition runs from 8 AM-1:00 PM with a mandatory 30-minute lunch break
2. Competitors will be provided with half of an 8' table for workspace
3. Competitors are provided 1 slot to plug in mixer/necessary items
4. Competitors will have 30" to display completed cake

Cake Consultation Form

***Susan met with the client on 11/27 and dictated the following notes for the cake decorator to use in preparation of their cake.**

Event Date _4/22/27_ **Delivery Time** _1:00pm_

Client Name Eden Endfield (mother of the groom)_

Size Specifications _Would like a two-tier cake, they are imaging a 8" and 6" round stacked cake__

Flavor Something light and refreshing. Nothing heavy or overwhelming__

Any Allergens? _None___

Theme (if any) _Vintage Piped

Color Scheme? _Something monochromatic, a lighter shade nothing too dark

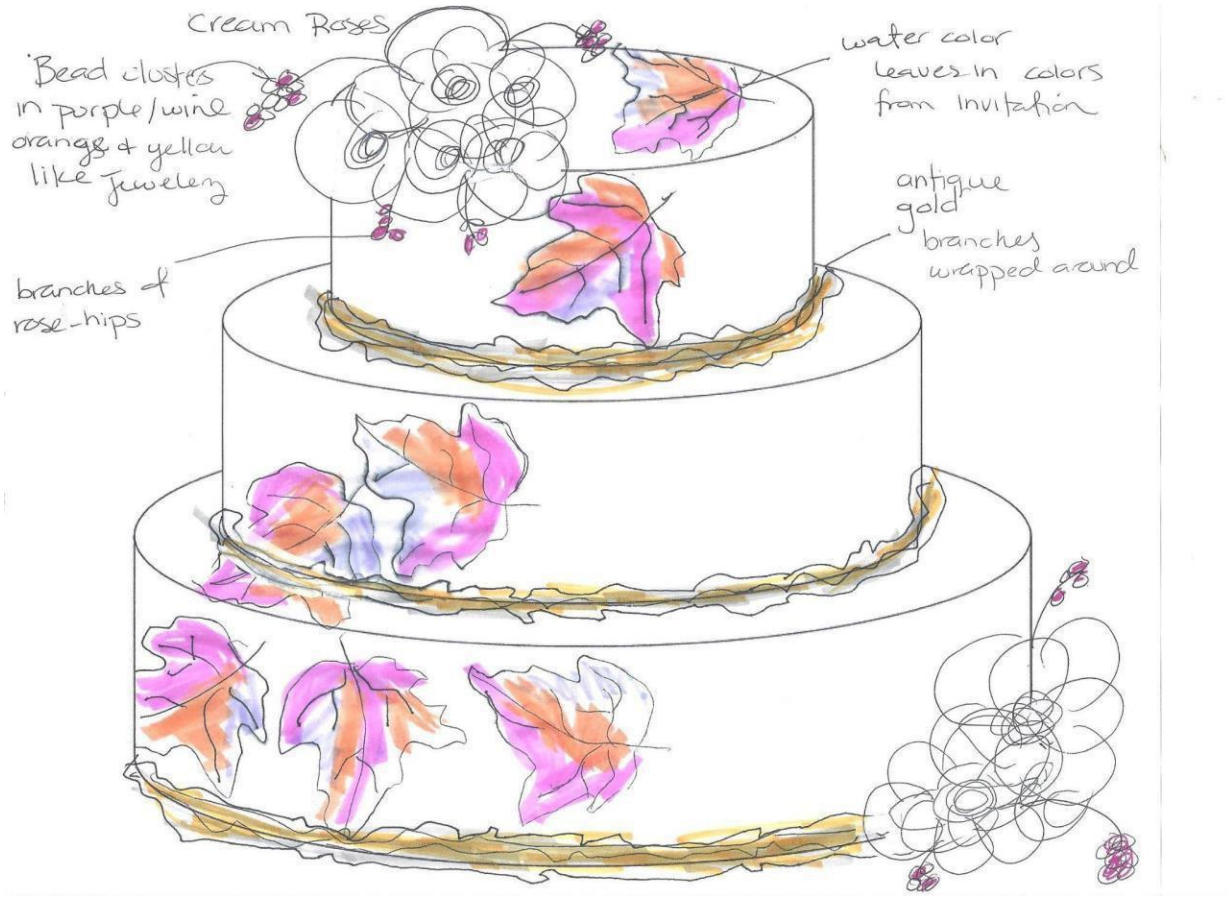
Any text on the cake? "The future Endfields" in a script font__

Any specific florals? _any flowers that adhere to the monochromatic element of the cake. My future daughter in law loves roses, peonies, violets and lavender .

Other elements to include? I would like to have some greenery added in a tasteful way to the flowers_

Anything to avoid in the design? I do not wish to have dark colors or anything to bright or neon. Also stay away from anything to sweet or artificial.

Example of cake outline



This cake is for a fall themed wedding.

It will be layers of chocolate cake, cherry compote, and vanilla buttercream. It will be flat iced on the outside then covered in white fondant. I will use thinned food coloring to hand paint fall leaves on the exterior. I will pipe buttercream roses to adorn the cake. For my border I will color fondant and intertwined ropes to look like branches with the addition of small berry-like clusters.

The three decorating techniques I will use are hand painted leaves, ropes of fondant, and buttercream piped roses.