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## ***HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO PERFORM AT POETRY CONTEST***

PIERRE, S.D. – Eight South Dakota high school students from across the state will share their talents and the works of great poets while competing for the state title at the Poetry Out Loud recitation contest Monday, March 21, in Sioux Falls.

Poetry Out Loud, a national arts education program, starts in the classroom and encourages the study of poetry by offering educational materials and a dynamic recitation competition to high schools across the country. South Dakota’s program is administered by the South Dakota Arts Council with help from Arts South Dakota and South Dakota Public Broadcasting.

The state finalists were selected from a preliminary, video round. The finalists selected include: Marie McLaughlin, Greater Sioux Falls Homeschool Association; Gabe Pulliam-Sanchez, Little Wound High School; Brianna Anderson, Rosholt High School; Maddie Lukomski, Sioux Falls Lincoln; Miliyna Megosha, Sioux Falls Washington; Mary Albright, Sisseton High School; Natalie Swanson, Vermillion High School; and Brett Ries, Watertown High School.

Three students will also share their original poetry as part of a separate competition held in conjunction with Poetry Out Loud. Anna Koeppe, Rosholt; Libby Murphy, Sioux Falls Lincoln, and Meredith Erickson, Watertown, were awarded for their poetry.

The contest will begin at 1 p.m., CDT, March 21, in the auditorium at Edison Middle School, 2101 S. West Ave., Sioux Falls. It is free to attend and open to the public. A live-stream of the event can be viewed at <http://www.sdpb.org/poetryoutloud/> and at [www.artscouncil.sd.gov](http://www.artscouncil.sd.gov).

Poetry Out Loud was created in partnership by the National Endowment for the Arts and the Poetry Foundation with the collaboration of state arts agencies. It is intended to foster the next generation of literary readers by building on the resurgence of poetry as an oral art form. Through Poetry Out Loud, students master public speaking skills, build self-confidence and learn about their literary heritage.

The South Dakota Arts Council, an office of the South Dakota Department of Tourism, is a state agency serving South Dakotans and their communities through the arts with funding from the National Endowment for the Arts and the State of South Dakota.

The South Dakota Department of Tourism is comprised of the Office of Tourism and the South Dakota Arts Council. The Department is led by Secretary James D. Hagen.