



NHD in Iowa 2025

State Contest Qualifier Guide

**STATE HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF IOWA**



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Preparing for the State Contest

Congratulations!

As a finalist at the regional level, you are now qualified to attend the NHD in Iowa State Contest!

State Contest Monday, April 28, 2025 7:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.	Scheman Building Iowa State University 1805 Center Dr. Ames, IA 50011
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Entry Fees

Please check with your teacher or adult sponsor to determine how your entry fee will be paid.

Entry fees:

- \$20.00 per student.
- Group projects must include payment for each student in the group.
 - Each member of the group must be registered in zFairs.
- Entry fees must be received by April 28.

Payment Types

Credit card online - Follow [this link](#).

Check – If paying by check, you must include the names of the students that are covered by the payment.

Do not mail cash.

Send checks to:

National History Day in Iowa
State Historical Society of Iowa
600 E. Locust St.
Des Moines, IA 50319

If you need an invoice, contact NHD.iowa@iowa.gov and provide the names of the students that need to be covered by the invoice.

zFairs Registration and Due Dates

zFairs Registration

If you advanced from a Regional Contest, you have already been promoted to the State Contest.

It's your responsibility to accurately enter project titles and participant names. Check your spelling and use appropriate capitalization and punctuation. The information you submit for the State Contest will appear exactly as you entered it on all contest materials and judging forms.

State Contest Registration Instructions - Students

- Login to the [National History Day in Iowa state contest zFairs site](#) using the same username and password that you created for your regional contest registration. **Do not create a new account.**
- Follow the prompts to complete registration.
- Complete the Student Permissions and Waivers section with a parent or guardian.
- After completing the Student Permissions and Waivers section, you will see a confirmation screen. You can now access your profile.
- After completing registration, make sure that all information is correct by accessing your profile. To do so, click on your name in the top right corner of the screen, and choose My Profile. Confirm that your name, mailing address, phone number, and email address are complete and accurate.
- Under My Profile, upload an updated version of your project before the deadline (see table on pages 4 and 5 for project submission requirements).
- You can also self-nominate your project for special awards and submit a teacher's name for teacher of the year (see page 5 for more information).

State Contest Registration Instructions - Teachers

- Login to the [National History Day in Iowa state contest zFairs site](#) using the same username and password that you created for your regional contest registration. **Do not create a new account.**
- Follow the prompts to complete registration.
- Agree to NHD permissions and waivers and click the Save button. This will confirm your information and bring you to the main page.
- After completing registration, make sure that all information is correct by accessing your profile. Click on your name in the top right corner of the screen, and choose My Profile. Confirm that your name, mailing address, phone number, and email address are complete and accurate.
- You can monitor your students' registration progress from your account. Select My Students from the toolbar at the top of your contest homepage, then click on the person icon next to the student's name to activate a pop-up menu. From the pop-up menu, click on Edit/View Participant profile to view the student's account and project information.

zFairs Registration Requirements	Due Dates
<p>Documentary Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Submit to zFairs: Written Materials (Title Page, Process Paper, Annotated Bibliography) and Link to Finalized Documentary Saved on Public Drive <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Written materials submission order: Title Page, Process Paper, and Annotated Bibliography in one PDF file <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ilovepdf.com is a free resource that combines separate documents into one PDF file ◆ Link: Copy link to documentary in “Link” field → At State Contest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Documentary students will show their documentary and have an interview with judges in the preliminary round ◆ Documentary students do not need to be present for the final round ◆ Documentary students do not need to bring copies of written materials 	<p>April 14, 2025 11:59 p.m. CT</p>
<p>Exhibit Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Submit to zFairs: Written Materials (Title Page, Process Paper, Annotated Bibliography) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Written materials submission order: Title Page, Process Paper, and Annotated Bibliography in one PDF file <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ilovepdf.com is a free resource that combines separate documents into one PDF file ◆ Leave “Link” field blank → At State Contest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Exhibit students will bring their physical exhibit and have an interview with judges in the preliminary round ◆ Exhibit students do not need to be present for the final round ◆ Exhibit students do not need to bring copies of written materials 	<p>April 14, 2025 11:59 p.m. CT</p>
<p>Paper Projects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Submit to zFairs: Written Materials (Title Page, Process Paper, Annotated Bibliography) and Finalized Paper <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Written materials submission order: Title Page, Process Paper, Paper, and Annotated Bibliography in one PDF file <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ilovepdf.com is a free resource that combines separate documents into one PDF file ◆ Leave “Link” field blank → At State Contest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Paper students will have an interview with judges in the preliminary round 	<p>April 14, 2025 11:59 p.m. CT</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Paper students do not need to be present for the final round ◆ Paper students do not need to bring copies of written materials or paper 	
<p>Performance Projects</p> <p>→ Submit to zFairs: Written Materials (Title Page, Process Paper, Annotated Bibliography)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Written materials submission order: Title Page, Process Paper, and Annotated Bibliography in one PDF file <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ilovepdf.com is a free resource that combines separate documents into one PDF file ◆ Leave "Link" field blank <p>→ At State Contest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Performance students will perform and have an interview with judges in the preliminary round ◆ Performance students will perform in the final round without an interview ◆ Performance students do not need to bring copies of written materials 	<p>April 14, 2025 11:59 p.m. CT</p>
<p>Website Projects</p> <p>→ Submit to zFairs: NHDWebCentral Site Key</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Written materials (Title Page, Process Paper, Annotated Bibliography) are included in website ◆ Leave "Link" field blank <p>→ At State Contest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Website students will have an interview with judges in the preliminary round ◆ Website students do not need to be present for the final round ◆ Website students do not need to bring copies of written materials 	<p>April 14, 2025 11:59 p.m. CT</p>

Special Awards, NHD Iowa Teacher of the Year & Research Matters

Students can self-nominate their projects for special awards and submit a teacher's name for teacher of the year. Log into your account and click on Nominations.

- Special Awards: You may nominate your project for up to two special awards
- Teacher of the Year: Add a teacher's name in the "Reason for Nomination" field
- Research Matters Award: Add the name of a library, museum, historic site, or other institution that provided outstanding service or help in your research

Release Forms

If students attended a regional contest, their release forms from the regional contest apply to the state contest.

If students in group projects were unable to attend a regional contest but can attend the state contest, they need to complete a release form. Teachers need to work with these students and their guardians to fill out the forms. Teachers need to either scan and email the completed release forms to NHD.Iowa@iowa.gov or print and bring them to the State Contest. All release forms are due on or before April 28.

State Contest

Schedule at a Glance

Time	Event	Location
7:00 - 9:00 a.m.	Check-in	Ground Floor, North
7:00 - 9:00 a.m.	Exhibit Set-up	Rooms 220, 230, 240 (2nd Floor)
9:00 a.m.	Preliminary Round Judging Begins	1st and 2nd Floors
12:00 p.m.	Youth Awards Ceremony	Thomas H. Benton Auditorium (1st Floor)
12:00 p.m.	Preliminary Round Judging Concludes	
1:00 - 1:30 p.m.	Preliminary Round Results Posted for Performance Preliminary Round Results Posted for Documentary, Exhibit, Paper and Website	Thomas H. Benton Auditorium (1st Floor)
1:15 p.m.	Final Round Judging Begins	1st and 2nd Floors
2:30 p.m.	Public Exhibit Viewing and Exhibit Take-down	Rooms 220, 230, 240 (2nd Floor)
4:00 - 4:45 p.m.	Iowa History Trivia Challenge	Thomas H. Benton Auditorium (1st Floor)
5:00 p.m.	Awards Ceremony	Thomas H. Benton Auditorium (1st Floor)
6:00 p.m.	National Contest Qualifier Meeting	Thomas H. Benton Auditorium (1st Floor)

***This is a tentative schedule and is subject to change.**

State Contest

Check-In

On Monday, April 28, all student participants are required to check in by 9:00 a.m. The check-in table is located at the north entrance of the Scheman Building on the Ground Floor. Students must check in prior to setting up exhibit boards or props, or testing equipment. Please do not bring your exhibit board or props to the check-in table. **Teachers and parents may not check in for the student participants.**

Judging

National History Day judges are historians, educators, and others interested in history and education. The National History Day in Iowa team works hard to ensure a quality judging experience. If you have questions or concerns about the judging process on contest day, please speak to a National History Day team member prior to the end of the contest so we may work to resolve the issue.

Judging Schedule

A tentative judging schedule will be emailed to teachers on April 21. This schedule will include the judging locations and times for each entry.

Interview

Each judge team will have time to interview you about your project in the preliminary round. For most projects this is an opportunity for judges to ask clarifying questions, ask about the process you went through to create your projects, or ask you to expand on your work. However, the interview portion does not factor into the final decision. National History Day entries are expected to stand on their own, without further explanation from you. There is no interview during final round judging.

Evaluation Forms

Each judge receives an evaluation form for each project they will view during the preliminary round. The evaluation forms used are the same at Regional, State and National Contests. Judges use established criteria to evaluate projects and provide positive and constructive feedback.

Entries that advance to the final round receive one additional set of written comments PER PROJECT without a rubric.

State Contest

Rankings

All rankings are made by a consensus reached by the judge team using the scale:

Historical Quality - 80%

- Exemplary - Proficient - Developing - Novice - Not Evident

Clarity of Presentation - 20%

- Exemplary - Proficient - Developing - Novice - Not Evident

There is no point system. Rankings may fluctuate from team to team, and each judge team establishes its own standards for rankings. Rankings cannot be compared across teams.

Selecting Finalists

After viewing all assigned projects, the judge team will work together to select the top projects to advance to the final round of judging. During the final round a different judge team will evaluate all semi-finalist projects and select two to qualify for the national contest, plus one alternate. If one of the two national qualifiers cannot participate at the national contest, the alternate will become eligible to compete.

Judge Evaluations

All comment forms will be available in student zFairs accounts on April 30.

State Contest

Awards Ceremony

The Awards Ceremony will begin at 5:00 p.m., or as soon as results from the final round are completed. The National History Day team will do everything possible to start and finish the awards ceremony on time.

The following awards will be presented at the awards ceremony:

- Special awards
- National History Day Teacher of the Year
- Junior division national qualifiers and alternates
- Senior division national qualifiers and alternates

Final results will be posted by April 30 on National History Day in Iowa's website.

Participation Certificates

- Youth Division students will receive participation certificates at the awards ceremony.
- Junior and Senior Division students will receive their participation certificates in the mail after the state contest. Certificates will be mailed to teachers for distribution.

Medals

- Youth Division students will receive medals at the awards ceremony.
- Junior and Senior Division national qualifiers and alternates will receive medals at the awards ceremony.
 - Any national qualifiers and alternates that cannot attend the awards ceremony will receive their medals in the mail after the state contest. Unclaimed medals will be mailed to teachers for distribution.

National Contest Eligibility

The top two projects in each category will be eligible to advance to the national contest, June 8-12, 2025 at the University of Maryland in College Park. Alternates will be promoted if a national qualifier cannot participate.

National qualifiers, alternates, teachers and guardians must attend an informational meeting immediately following the awards ceremony.

Merchandise

Rights and Responsibilities in History t-shirts and buttons as well as NHD in Iowa and past theme merchandise will be available for purchase, ranging from \$1-\$20. Credit/debit cards, cash or check will be accepted at the merchandise booth.

Documentary Information and Checklist

Location

2nd Floor (Rooms 204, 208, 250-275)

Arrival

- Check in on the Ground Floor (you must check in prior to finding your assigned judging room).

What to Bring

- Login information for the Public Drive on which your documentary is saved (projectors and laptops will be provided).

Documentary Testing

- Test your documentary prior to the State Contest.
- Test your documentary/sound on the State Contest equipment between 7:00–9:00 a.m. in your assigned judging room.

Set-Up

- Use your 5-minute set-up time to log into your documentary, test the equipment and adjust sound levels.
 - Note: All equipment must be run by students.

Preliminary Round Documentary Judging

- Documentaries are open to the public. Entering and exiting the judging room is restricted to the 5-minute window between documentaries. Cell phones and mobile devices must be silenced.
- Judges will conduct the interview in the 5-minute window after the documentary concludes.

Final Round Judging

- In the documentary category there are no interviews, and students do not participate during the final judging round.

Exhibit Information and Checklist

Location

Rooms 220, 230, 240 (2nd Floor)

Arrival

- Check in on the Ground Floor (you must check in prior to setting up your exhibit. Do not bring your props to the check-in table).
- Unload your exhibit/props at the Event entrance (see page 21).
- Note: Exhibits can be taken from the loading zone to Rooms 220, 230, 240 (2nd Floor).
- Locate your entry number in Rooms 220, 230, 240 (2nd Floor) and proceed with set-up.

What to Bring

- Your exhibit and tools or materials for set-up.

Set-Up

- If your exhibit requires walk-around space, please note that in your zFairs registration prior to the State Contest.
- Bring a 50-foot (or longer) extension cord and power strip if your exhibit requires electricity.
- Have your exhibit judge-ready by 9:00 a.m.
 - Note: Students may have help carrying exhibits to the tables and lifting exhibits onto the table. However, students are required to do all the set-up themselves.
- Do not leave valuables unattended in the exhibit hall at any time.

Preliminary Round Exhibit Judging

- Report to the 2nd Floor Lobby 15 minutes prior to your scheduled judge time.
- When your entry is called, report to the judging queue at the entrance to Room 0240 for further instruction.
- Judges will conduct the interview during your judge time.
- Note: Exhibit judging is a closed process. Rooms 220, 230, 240 (2nd Floor) will be open from 7:00 - 9:00 a.m. and after 2:30 p.m. for setup, take-down and public viewing.

Final Round Judging

- In the exhibit category there are no interviews, and students do not participate during the final judging round.

Exhibit Information and Checklist

Exhibit Take-Down

- Remove your exhibit from Rooms 220, 230, 240 (2nd Floor) between 2:30 - 6:00 p.m.
 - Note: Exhibits may not be removed prior to 2:30 p.m. If you are unavailable during 2:30 - 6:00 p.m., you must make arrangements with your teacher or a friend to remove your exhibit. National History Day in Iowa is not responsible for any exhibits left behind.

Paper Information and Checklist

Location

Paper interviews will take place in 190 (First Floor).

Arrival

- Check in on the Ground Floor.

What to Bring

- You may bring a copy of your research paper to the State Contest for your own reference; however, copies are not needed for judges.

Preliminary Round Paper Judging

- National History Day judges will view paper entries prior to the State Contest. During the State Contest, you will meet with the judges for an interview about your paper.
- Report to the First Floor Lobby 15 minutes prior to your scheduled judge time.
- When your entry is called, report to the judging queue at the entrance to Room 0190 for further instruction.
- Note: Paper judging is a closed process.

Final Round Judging

- In the paper category there are no interviews, and students do not participate during the final judging round.

Performance Information and Checklist

Location

Rooms 150-179 (First Floor)

Arrival

- Check in on the Ground Floor (you must check in prior to setting up or bringing in your props. Do not bring your props to the check-in table).
- Unload your exhibit/props at the Event entrance (see page 21).
- Note: Props can be stored in Lounges 166 or 182 (First Floor) until five minutes prior to your assigned judging time and you can return your props to the storage room after your performance.

What to Bring

- Any costumes, props or backgrounds needed for your performance.
- Note: National History Day in Iowa and the Scheman Building are not able to provide props for you. If you need a projector for your performance, you are responsible for providing it.

Set-Up

- If you have a 9:00 a.m. judge time, set up your props in your assigned room by 8:50 a.m. and store your props in Lounges 166 or 182 after your performance.
- For later judge time, store your props in Lounges 166 or 182 until five minutes prior to your assigned judging time and you can return your props to the storage room after your performance.
 - Note: Students may have help carrying props to the judging room; however, students are required to complete all set-up without help from parents or teachers. If you have concerns or accessibility requests please contact NHD.Iowa@iowa.gov prior to the contest.

Preliminary Round Performance Judging

- Performances are open to the public. Entering and exiting the judging room is restricted to the 5-minute window between performances. Cell phones and mobile devices must be silenced.
- Judges will conduct the interview in the 5-minute window after the documentary concludes.

Final Round Judging

- At 1:00 p.m., check the preliminary round judging results Room 0195 to see if you advanced to the final judging round.
- If you advance to the final round, note the time and location of your final judging session.
- If your entry advances to the final round of judging, you will perform again; however, there is not an interview during the final round.

Website Information and Checklist

Location

Room 190 (First Floor)

Arrival

- Check in on the Ground Floor.

What to Bring

- Judges will view websites prior to the contest so you do not need to bring a laptop with you.

Preliminary Round Website Judging

- National History Day judges will view website entries prior to the State Contest. During the State Contest, you will meet with the judges for an interview about your website.
- Report to the First Floor Lobby 15 minutes prior to your scheduled judge time.
- When your entry is called, report to the judging queue at the entrance to Room 190 for further instruction.
- Note: Website judging is a closed process.

Final Round Judging

- In the website category there are no interviews, and students do not participate during the final judging round.

Scheman Building

Directions

Scheman Building
Iowa State University
1805 Center Dr.
Ames, IA 50011

From I-35 from the North

Take exit 111B to get on US-30 W. Then take exit 146 to S University Blvd exit and go north. You will follow S University Blvd and the Scheman Building will be on your left.

From I-35 from the South

Take Exit 111A to get on US-30 W. Then take exit 146 to S University Blvd exit and go north. You will follow S University Blvd and the Scheman Building will be on your left.

Parking

Parking is available on-site for free. See page 20 for a map.

Scheman Building

Food

There are multiple food options nearby Scheman.

- ISU Memorial Union has a food court, market and cafe. It is a ~15 minute walk or ~5 minute drive.
- Lincoln Way features many quick food options, like Blaze Pizza, Freedy's Frozen Custard & Steakburgers, and Potbelly Sandwich Shop. They are ~15 minutes walking or ~5 minutes driving.
- Main Street features local restaurants, like pizza, burgers, and subs. It is ~6 minutes driving.
- Ames has other restaurants and food options throughout the city.

Hotel Blocks

Radisson Hotel Ames Conference Center at ISU
2609 University Blvd.
Ames, IA 50010

Call 515-259-1973 and refer to the "State National History Day" block for rooms

- \$105/+12% tax/night for room with two queen beds
- Grab and go breakfast, fitness center, Wi-Fi, indoor pool
- 6 minute drive to Scheman Building

County Inn & Suites by Radisson
2605 SE 16th St.
Ames, IA 50010

Call 515-233-3935 and refer to the "State National History Day" block for rooms

- \$89/+12% tax/night for room with two queen beds
- Grab and go breakfast, fitness center, Wi-Fi, indoor pool
- 10 minute drive to Scheman Building

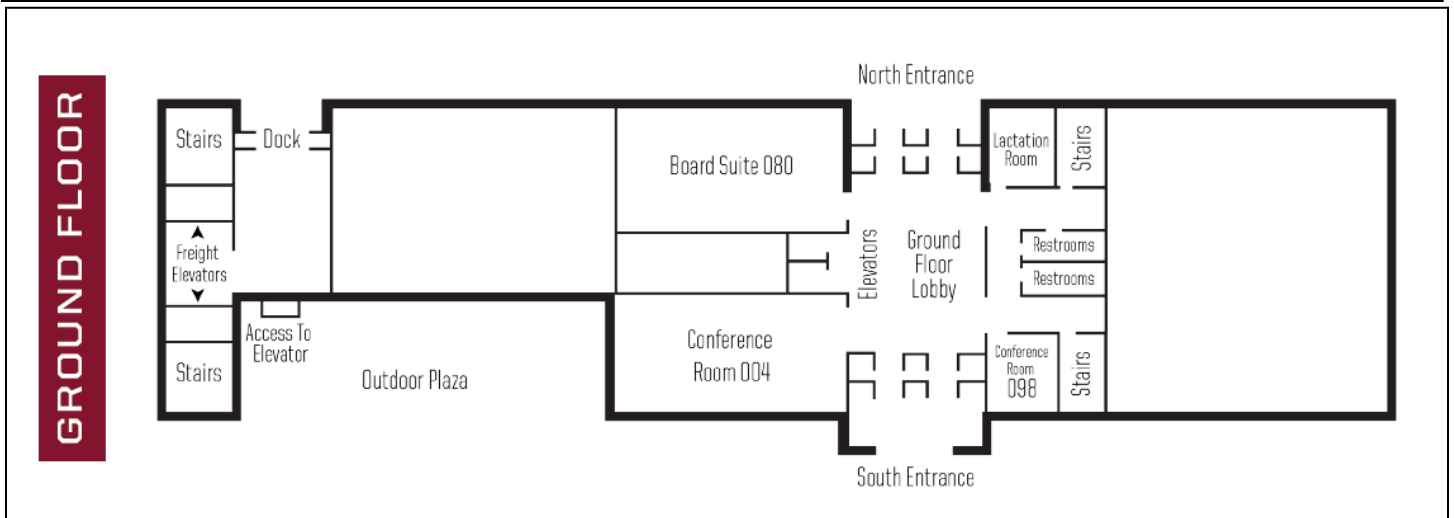
All rooms must be booked BEFORE April 13 to receive the above rate.

Other hotel information can be found [here](#).

Scheman Building



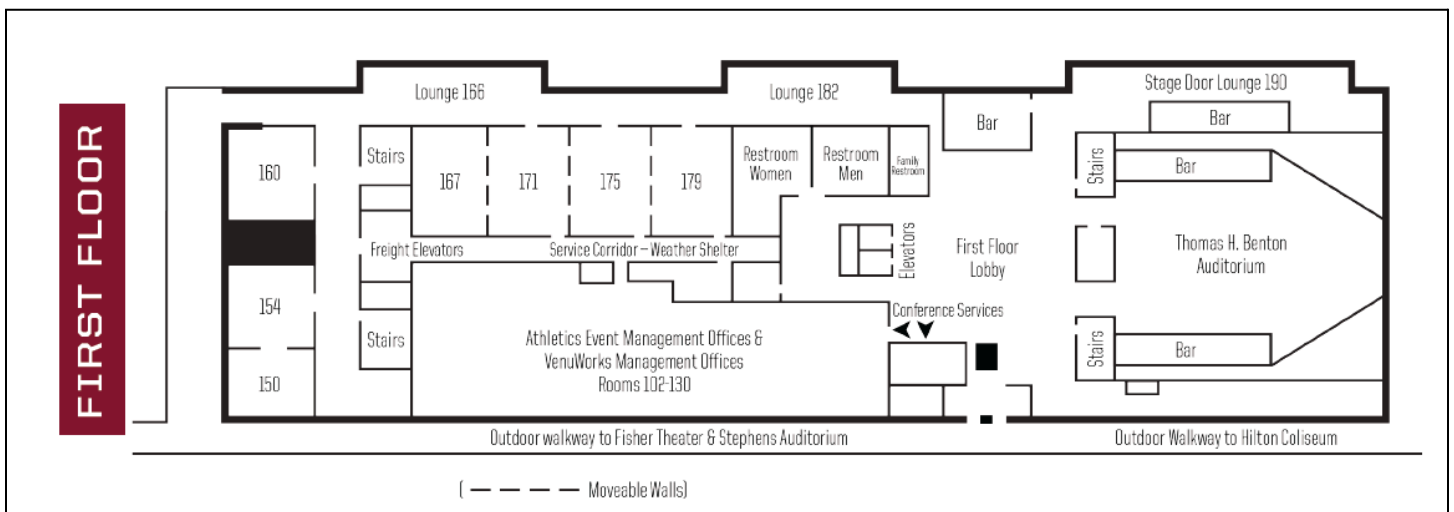
Scheman Building



Ground Floor

North Entrance

- Registration & Student Check In



First Floor

Merchandise

Thomas H. Benton Auditorium

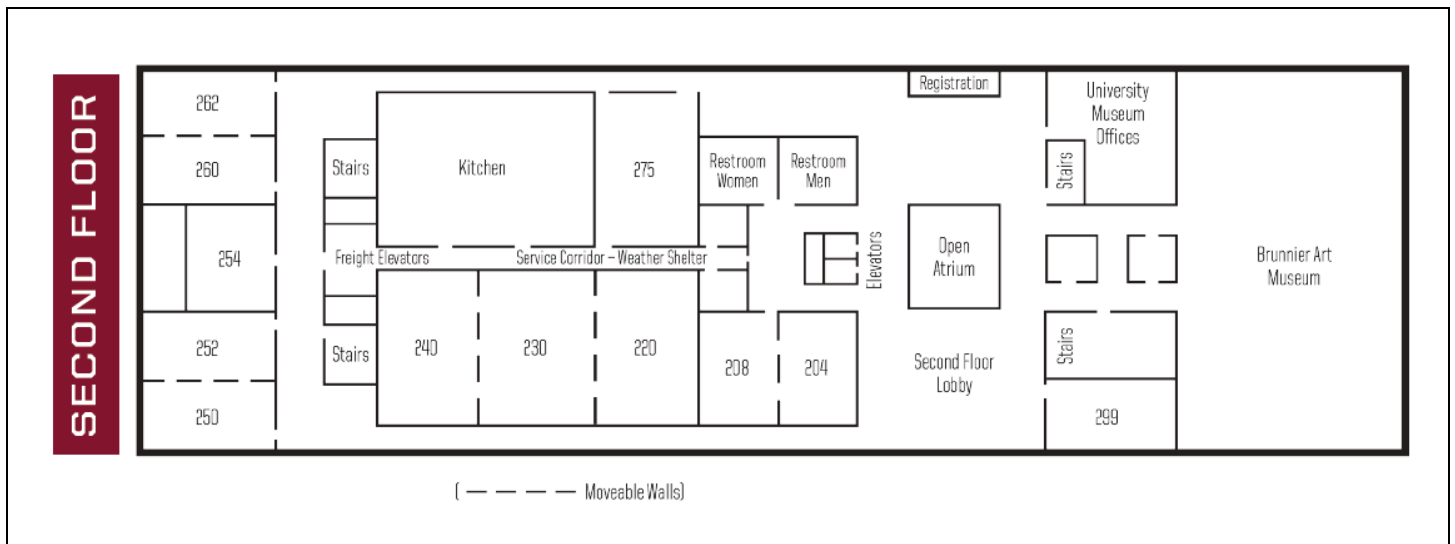
- Youth Awards Ceremony
- Preliminary Round Results Posted
- Iowa History Trivia Challenge
- Awards Ceremony & National Contest Qualifier Meeting

Rooms 150-179

- Performance Judging

Room 190

- Paper and Website Judging



Second Floor

Rooms 220, 230, 240

- Exhibit Judging

Rooms 204, 208, 250-275

- Documentary Judging