

# DIGITAL CINEMA COMPETITION GUIDELINES (MARYLAND) 3/31/26

**WHAT TO EXPECT:** Thank you for participating in this year's SkillsUSA State Digital Cinema competition. The prompt is released several days prior to the state competition and students work on completing their films back at their home schools. Completed films are then uploaded to the contest chair 1 or 2 days before the state contest to be pre-screened by industry professionals. Here is an outline of the requirements:

- 1. DEADLINE & UPLOAD:** Films **MUST** be completed and received by:  
**Monday April 16, 2026 by 3pm**
- The Submissions Folder containing ALL required documentation (see **#VI SUBMISSIONS FOLDER** below) **MUST** be uploaded to [WeTransfer.com](https://www.wetransfer.com) and sent to [bjc@amp-school.com](mailto:bjc@amp-school.com) by the deadline above.
- FILMS RECEIVED AFTER THE DEADLINE WILL RECEIVE A 100 POINT PENALTY.**
- NO VIDEO EQUIPMENT OR COMPUTERS ARE REQUIRED AT THE STATE CONTEST.** Students must bring a backup of their Submissions Folder on an SD card to the contest in the event there are technical difficulties during the contest day.
- Saturday April 18, 2026 @ 8:00am:** A 50 question Knowledge Test will be administered to all contestants. Then, all films will be publicly viewed by all judges, contestants and instructors in a film festival format.
- Immediately after the viewing, students will complete a 5-10 minute **presentation** of their films. (See **IV PRESENTATION** below).
- Honor System: Film/Video instructors/advisors are prohibited from acting in or assisting the student's production in **ANY** way.

## I. GENRE & DIALOGUE: (200 points - 100 points each)

**Genre:** Sci-Fi  
**Dialogue:** "Signal is breaking up - but if you can still hear me, don't trust the version of me standing behind you."

**II. FILM SPECS: (100 points)** The film must be PG Rated. No showing physical violence (implied violence ok), No sexual content, No foul language, No use of illegal drugs or alcohol. Ultimately follow your school's policy and do NOT get your instructor in trouble!!!

ITEM	SPECIFICATIONS
1. PG Rated (10 points)	See "Film Specs" above.
2. Format (10 points)	H.264 (.mp4)
3. 24 FPS (10 points)	24fps
4. Aspect Ratio (10 points)	16x9 or 2.39
5. Resolution (10 points)	1920 horizontal resolution
6. 2 second leader (10 points)	Start with 2 seconds of black video
7. Team # Title (10 points)	5 seconds using Team # (i.e. Team 102)
8. Movie Title (10 points)	5 seconds of the movie Title
9. Film Length (10 points)	3 to 5 minutes (not including <b>Leader, Team # or Title</b> )
10. End Credits (10 points)	<b>None!</b>

**III. WRITTEN TEST: (100 points)** The test will ask questions on the following subjects:

- Basic camera settings (i.e. White Balance, ISO, Shutter speeds, Apertures, etc...)
- Frame Rates, Resolution & Compression
- Audio settings & equipment
- Stabilizers and camera movements
- Types of Shots
- Basic editing techniques (i.e. cuts, color grading, output)
- Story & character development techniques

**IV. PRESENTATION: (50 points)**

- State the film's Logline. Students should memorize the one sentence plot summary.
- What directors producers or movies inspired the film?
- Describe the gear used for the film (cameras & settings, lighting, audio, etc...)
- Explain any visual or sound effects used in the film.

**V. FILM SCORING: (400 points)**

- Story Development & Acting (quality of)
- Cinematography & Camera operations
- Audio capture & Mixing
- Editing (overall quality)

**VI. SUBMISSIONS FOLDER: (150 points)**

ITEM	NAME
1. Folder Name format	DigitalCinema-team# (i.e. DigitalCinema-103)
2. Team's final film. (.mp4)	DigitalCinema-team#
3. Storyboard (.pdf)	Storyboard-team#
4. Script (.pdf)	Script-team#
5. Permissions folder (multiple pdfs)	ALL films must contain a "Permissions" folder that contains screen shots of licenses or proof of royalty free status (.pdf format) for any content used in the film such as music, sound effects, visual effects, etc... Even if the music or effect was created by a student, that student must give permission to the team to use their work in the film.
6. Resumes of both contestants	<b>MUST HAVE STUDENT'S PERSONAL CONTACT INFO (NOT THE SCHOOL'S) OR POINTS WILL BE DEDUCTED!</b>

All questions regarding this state test can be sent to:

Bill Chenaille  
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SkillsUSA Chair - Photography (Nationals)  
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Director of Film & Video  
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