

Announcing the 2012 National Spanish Exam and The 2012 Chicago Area Chapter NSE Contest

What is the difference between the two?

Your students take one online exam but are competing both nationally and locally. The National Exam recognizes all students who score in the 50th percentile and above as Oro, Plata, Bronce or *Mención Honorífica* and provides certificates online for teachers to print out and give to their students recognizing their achievement. Teachers receive this information directly from the National Office. The Chicago Area Chapter looks at the scores for the National Winners in the Chicago Area and awards monetary awards at an awards ceremony in May. As soon as we have calculated the Chicago Area winners, they are posted on our website www.chicagoaatsp.org. Schools are also sent the list of winners via email to one teacher at the school to share with colleagues. The Chicago Area Winners receive an invitation to the awards ceremony to claim their award. In recent years the Chicago Area has been able to award monetary prizes ranging from \$100 to \$25 to the top ten scorers in each category. The number and amount of the awards are determined by the amount of money the chapter receives in registration money.

How are the National and Local Awards determined?

When your students complete the exam online they receive a score out of 100 on each of the four sections; a perfect score being 400 total points. When you receive your students' scores from National you receive very detailed information. You see their raw scores in each category, a total score and a **percentile**. The percentile compares your student's score to all students who took the exam at the same level nationally. You will note that students may have different total scores but be in the same percentile. The Chicago Area Contest uses the **total score** to determine the top scorers in the Chicago Area and not the percentile. In many cases the Local Chapter winners were also recognized as Oro in the National contest. Not all students that receive "Oro" nationally however are Chicago Area Winners. Chicago Area winners are sometimes Plata or Bronce winners Nationally. More information on prizes and scholarships at: <http://www.nationalspanishexam.org/index.php/results/prizes>.

How do I know how to place my students correctly?

For the 2011 exam, close to two hundred students were disqualified for either declaring the wrong level or category or not declaring a level or category. Generally, the level of the NSE should match the course title. If a course is designated as AP or IB, then the student should take the next higher level from the one they took the previous year. Example, if a student took Spanish 4 as a Junior and then AP as a Senior, then the Level of the NSE should be 5. The issue of Outside Experience and Bilingual also causes problems. It is recommended that you print out the explanations from <http://www.nationalspanishexam.org/index.php/exam-administration/exam-categories> and discuss the categories with your students prior to the exam.

Are there any other reasons my students should take the exam?

Yes! 017 Chicago had one national 2nd place winner @ \$1,000 - Dominic Gattone from Marist High School, teacher Erica Nathan-Gamauf. The two Chicago chapter senior scholarships @ \$1000 each went to Jonathan Roth from New Trier High School, teacher Lori Willer and Sarah Libowsky from Highland Park High School, teacher Jose Acosta

How can I be sure I receive the local contest results?

The Coordinator of the Chicago Area NSE sends out the list of Chicago Area Winners only to one teacher at each school via email, We ask that one teacher take on the responsibility to keep his or her colleagues informed. The results are also posted on the chapter website as soon as possible www.chicagoaatsp.org. Providing an alternate email when registering for the test also helps because sometimes school's email filters reject the group email Please be sure one teacher has contacted the Chicago Area coordinator, Mary Jo Aronica at mjateacher@aol.com to be on the email list. Deciding with your colleagues how you will identify your school and all using that name will keep your scores together and help avoid errors in reporting results. Please be clear as well if there is more than one campus. For more information about administering the NSE go to www.nationalspanishexam.org.