

# Broadcasting "I Heart Speech" Tournament

## **News Program: Rounds 1 & 4**

Students will select at least three (3) news stories (international, national, local) with music selection and commercial prompt to create a 5 minute News Program. Weather is optional. You may cut portions, or even all, of a story, but you may not update or paraphrase the news copy. Your edited newscast should consume about 3 to 3.5 minutes of your 5-minute News Program. The material below is the only allowable subject matter for the tournament.

## **Breaking News!: Round 2**

Students will have 2 minutes to sight-read a news story that they will be "breaking news live." Students are encouraged to have an intro/outro that results in no more than 30 seconds. The total performance target time is 2 minutes. Students will prep on the day of the tournament.

## **Editorial: Round 3**

2-minute opinion piece with 30 minute on-site prep. Topic released on the day of the tournament.

## **Commercial for News Program: [Shari's Berries](http://berries.com) berries.com**

- Fruit bouquets
- Chocolate covered strawberries
- Gift bundles
- Flowers
- Baked Goods
- Multiple occasions
- Same day delivery

## **Music Genres & Artists:**

Choose one of the music genres below and use the artists listed to write your original music lead-in and lead-out segments. Your original music lead-in and lead-out should consume about 30 seconds-1 minute (total) of your 5-minute News Program. The options below are the only allowable subject matter for the invitational.

Pop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Olivia Dean</li><li>● Addison Rae</li></ul>	Country: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Morgan Wallen</li><li>● Jelly Roll</li></ul>
Classic Rock: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● The Beatles</li><li>● Queen</li></ul>	Rap: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Kendrick Lamar</li><li>● Megan Thee Stallion</li></ul>

News Copy:

## **International News**

**Hong Kong, China (BBC)** Jimmy Lai, Hong Kong's pro-democracy media tycoon, has been jailed for 20 years for colluding with foreign forces under the city's controversial national security law.

Rights groups called it a death sentence for the 78-year-old, whose family has raised concerns about his health, but Hong Kong's leader said it was "deeply gratifying".

This is the harshest punishment to be handed down under the law, which China imposed after huge protests in 2019 demanding more freedom, and defends as essential for the city's stability.

Lai, a British citizen, is the most prominent of the hundreds arrested under the law. A fierce critic of China, he often wielded his paper, Apple Daily, as a tool of protest.

"It is incredibly heartbreaking," Lai's son, Sebastien, told the BBC's Today programme, adding that he had repeatedly raised Lai's imprisonment with the UK government but "obviously my father is still in prison".

Sebastien Lai and others have criticised Prime Minister Keir Starmer's recent visit to China as a wasted opportunity.

The sentence "signifies the total destruction of the Hong Kong legal system and the end of justice", Sebastien said.

Hong Kong authorities and China's foreign ministry, however, insist the Lai's sentencing demonstrates the city's rule of law. In sentencing Lai, the judges condemned his "serious and grave criminal conduct" and said he was involved in conspiracies that were of the "most serious" category.

On Monday morning, ahead of sentencing, there was a heavy police presence around the court.

But there were also throngs of Lai's supporters, some of them having camped out for days hoping to get inside for his sentencing.

"I just wish to greet Mr Lai in person in court... That's all I ask for, because I think it will be the last time I see him," said one supporter, who said he'd stood in line since Thursday night.

**Seoul, Japan (NPR)** Japan's first female Prime Minister, Sanae Takaichi, brought the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) its biggest electoral victory in its 71-year history, fueling her ambitions to pursue to a political agenda which she herself says could "split public [opinion](#)."

The snap elections for the lower house of parliament were held despite the shortest campaign period in post-war history, and massive [snowstorms](#) across much of Japan.

Benefitting from Takaichi's popularity, the LDP won a two-thirds majority in the lower house, enough to override vetoes by the opposition-controlled upper house.

It would also allow the LDP to initiate amendments to Japan's pacifist constitution, which the party has sought to revise since its founding in 1955, and Takaichi said she would pave the way for an eventual referendum on the issue.

It's the first time in the post-war era that any single Japanese party has won a supermajority in the lower house. An unprecedented 90% of [candidates](#) fielded by the LDP won.

Charismatic Japanese leaders, including Takaichi's mentor former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, have helped the LDP stage comebacks before.

It's a feature of Japan's politics, which RAND Corporation Japan expert [Jeffrey Hornung](#) says "are always very personalistic. People always look to the leader, not so much the party."

Japan's Nikkei stock index [jumped](#) to a record high, bond yields went up, and Japan's currency the Yen went down, in anticipation of Takaichi's stimulus spending and tax cuts.

Questions and criticisms remain about how Takaichi will pay for these priorities, given that Japan's government debt is more than 200% of GDP.

But Takaichi apparently feels her mandate will empower her to sweep aside obstacles.

"We have advocated policies facing significant opposition," Takaichi [said](#) at LDP headquarters, "including a major shift in economic and fiscal policy, strengthening our security policy, and enhancing intelligence capabilities."

**Sydney, AUS (Reuters)** Thousands gathered across Australia on Monday to protest over the arrival of Israeli President Isaac Herzog, who is on a multi-city trip aimed at expressing solidarity with Australia's Jewish community following a deadly mass shooting last year.

Herzog is visiting Australia this week following an invitation from Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in the aftermath of the December 14 shooting at a Hanukkah event at Sydney's Bondi Beach that killed 15.

The visit has attracted the ire of some people in Australia, who accuse Herzog of being complicit in civilian deaths in Gaza. Pro-Palestine groups have organised protests in cities and towns across the country on Monday evening.

In Sydney, thousands gathered in a square in the city's central business district, listening to speeches and shouting pro-Palestine slogans.

"The Bondi massacre was terrible but from our Australian leadership there's been no acknowledgment of the Palestinian people and the Gazans," said Jackson Elliott, a 30-year-old protestor from Sydney.

"Herzog has dodged all the questions about the occupation and says this visit is about Australia and Israeli relations but he is complicit."

There was a heavy police presence with a helicopter circling overhead and officers patrolling on horseback.

Police used pepper spray and tear gas to push back groups of people who were trying to breach the line and march ahead. Several protesters were arrested as they clashed with police.

Authorities in Sydney declared Herzog's visit a major event and were authorised to use rarely invoked powers during the visit, including the ability to separate and move crowds, restrict their entry to certain areas, direct people to leave and search vehicles.

## **National News:**

**Washington D. C. - CNN** President Donald Trump has vowed to tackle the housing affordability crisis, but the White House has offered few details about its plans.

Now, a bipartisan group in Congress is moving forward with its own solution.

Members of both the Senate and the House of Representatives have introduced a package of bills to address high housing costs and the shortage of affordable housing by reforming zoning and reducing federal barriers to construction. The House's bill is expected to receive a floor vote this week.

Washington is under pressure to address the high cost of living, and housing has emerged as a pain point. In recent years, surging home prices and persistently elevated mortgage rates have put homeownership out of reach for millions of Americans.

A New York Times/Siena University poll last month [showed](#) that more than half of registered voters surveyed said the cost of housing has gotten so high that it has become unaffordable.

### **What is Congress's plan?**

In the years since the 2008 financial crisis, homebuilding has lagged, creating a housing shortage that has pushed prices higher as demand far outstrips supply across much of the country. An additional three to four million homes need to be built to close the gap, according to an October estimate from Goldman Sachs.

Congress's package aims to tackle the housing shortage directly, and the legislation is nearing the finish line.

The Senate's ROAD to Housing Act — led by South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott, a Republican, and Massachusetts Sen. Elizabeth Warren, a Democrat — had passed late last year as part of a broader package but was ultimately stripped from the final bill negotiated with the House. The Senate is expected to vote on a standalone version of its bill in the coming weeks.

The House's companion bill, introduced by Arkansas Rep. French Hill, a Republican, is called the Housing for the 21st Century Act.

The House measure is narrower than the Senate's version, containing 25 provisions compared with the Senate's 40.

The White House did not respond to a request for comment on whether Trump would sign a version of the bills into law if they reached his desk, but his administration has previously signaled support for the Senate's bill.

**Washington D.C. (NPR)** - The Pentagon said Friday it is cutting ties with Harvard University, ending all military training, fellowships and certificate programs with the Ivy League institution. The announcement marks the latest development in the Trump administration's [prolonged standoff with Harvard](#) over the White House's demands for reforms at the Ivy League school.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth said in a statement Friday that Harvard "no longer meets the needs of the War Department or the military services."

"For too long, this department has sent our best and brightest officers to Harvard, hoping the university would better understand and appreciate our warrior class," Hegseth said. "Instead, too many of our officers came back looking too much like Harvard — heads full of globalist and radical ideologies that do not improve our fighting ranks."

Starting with the 2026-27 academic year, the Pentagon will discontinue graduate-level professional military education, fellowships and certificate programs, the statement said. Personnel currently attending classes at Harvard will be able to finish those courses.

Similar programs at other Ivy League universities will be evaluated in coming weeks, Hegseth said.

Hegseth earned a master's degree from Harvard but symbolically returned his diploma in a 2022 Fox News segment. A Pentagon social media account run by Hegseth's office resurfaced the clip in which Hegseth, then a Fox News commentator, returned the diploma and wrote "Return to Sender" on it with a marker.

The military offers its officers a variety of opportunities to get graduate-level education both at war colleges run by the military as well as civilian institutions like Harvard.

**CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy (NPR)** — Lindsey Vonn's comeback had been years in the making, and the goal had always been the 2026 Olympic Games in Cortina. This is the site of so many cherished memories for the superstar skier in her decorated career, from her first-ever World Cup podium finish in 2004, to the Super-G race 11 years [later](#) that made her the sport's then-winningest female skier of all time.

But the slope at Cortina — the famed Olimpia delle Tofane downhill course — can be cruel, and the memory made Sunday will be devastating, as Vonn's hopes of capping her comeback with an Olympic medal ended instead with a medical evacuation by helicopter off the slope.

Just 13 seconds into her downhill run, as she skied through the fourth gate of the course, Vonn hooked her right arm and shoulder around the gate, which swung her whole body to the right as she skied off a jump. Her body spun in the air then landed — hard — on the snow and tumbled end-over-end down the slope.

That Vonn competed in Sunday's race at all made her performance a comeback-within-a-comeback— first from retirement, and then from an eleventh-hour tear of her left anterior cruciate ligament, or ACL, in a race just nine days ago. Her sheer determination and

audacity to compete despite the ACL tear had turned Sunday's race into perhaps the most anticipated event of the Olympic Games.

Her crash was all the more devastating because of it. At the finish line in Cortina, at least a thousand faces in the grandstand turned in unison from anticipation to anguish, their cheers silenced, as the big screen broadcast her tumble. On television, announcers in every language cried out upon watching it unfold.

The extent of her injuries was not immediately clear. In a brief statement, U.S. Ski & Snowboard said she had "sustained an injury, but is in stable condition." According to reports by the Associated Press and Reuters, Vonn was transported to a hospital in Treviso, a city two hours south of Cortina, where she underwent an operation on a fracture in her left leg.

In **Portland, Ore.**, Brittany Trahan started buying DVDs rather than paying for Netflix and Apple TV, while Lisa Shannon has been relying on public transit instead of taking an Uber. And in McDonough, Ga., Brian Seymour II has been embracing the cold to shop locally instead of buying through Amazon.

They're among a growing number of Americans participating in a boycott this month, targeting tech companies who, they believe, are not doing enough to stand up against President Trump's aggressive immigration crackdown.

"I have not gotten the impression that outrage among the citizenry is a problem for this administration," Shannon said. "I think money is a problem for this administration, so I'm leaning in on that front."

The campaign, "Resist and Unsubscribe," was started by influential podcaster and business commentator Scott Galloway, who said he was increasingly frustrated by what he sees as the Trump administration's indifference to protests and public outrage over immigration enforcement, especially in Minneapolis, where federal immigration officers shot and killed two U.S. citizens last month.

In recent weeks, there have been renewed calls to boycott Target, demanding that the Minneapolis-based retail giant publicly [show solidarity with immigrants](#) and oppose ICE. Last month, hundreds of businesses in Minneapolis [shuttered their doors](#) for a day as a form of protest against ICE operations in the city.

Galloway, who also teaches marketing at New York University, believes the president mainly changes course on policy when financial markets are under pressure, pointing to how Trump [dropped his plan to impose tariffs](#) on eight European nations after it rattled Wall Street. So, Galloway created a [website](#) listing over a dozen companies that have either worked directly with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement or play such an outsized role in the economy that a slowdown in their growth would send shockwaves to the markets.

"I think this is a weapon that is hiding in plain sight," Galloway told NPR. "The most radical act you can perform in a capitalist society is non-participation."

## **Local News**

**PLAINFIELD, Ind. (WTHR)** — [Plainfield](#) firefighters responded to a fire at an Amazon distribution facility Saturday evening.

[According to a Facebook post from the Plainfield Fire Territory](#), around 6:45 p.m. Feb. 7, firefighters were called to the Amazon distribution facility located at [1750 Smith Road](#), near Bradford Road, on a report of a building fire.

When firefighters arrived, they found heavy smoke coming from the building, and the sprinkler system had been activated. That's when firefighters upgraded the incident to a second alarm fire.

Firefighters say the fire was contained to a conveyor belt and mechanical system and that they were able to bring the fire under control in "about 20 minutes."

Photos posted on the fire territory's Facebook page show the interior of the building remained smoke-filled after the fire was extinguished. All employees were accounted for, and no injuries were reported, officials said.

**INDIANAPOLIS (WTHR)** — Nick McKinley has been [elected to the Indiana State Senate](#).

McKinley was selected by Republican precinct committeemen to serve as [state senator for Indiana Senate District 17](#), which includes all of Grant, Huntington and Wabash counties.

He was chosen at a caucus to fill Senator Andy Zay's term, officials said, which expires in November.

McKinley will be sworn in on Monday, Feb. 9. He will serve during the remainder of the current legislative session.

McKinley will also appear on the Republican primary ballot in May.

"I am grateful for the confidence Republican precinct committeemen have placed in me to represent our district in the State Senate," McKinley said. "I am ready to get to work and to serve our communities with integrity, ensuring our district has strong, conservative representation at the Statehouse."

"Indiana families deserve leaders who put public safety first, respect taxpayers, and understand how government decisions affect everyday life," McKinley added. "My focus will be on steady leadership that protects our communities, defends Hoosier values, and keeps government accountable."

McKinley is a former police officer, small business owner and Marion City councilman.

**WEST LAFAYETTE, Ind. (AP)** — Fletcher Loyer scored 18 points and [made a go-ahead 3-pointer](#) with 51 seconds left Saturday to lead [No. 12](#) Purdue past pesky Oregon 68-64. He closed it out by making three of four free throws in the waning seconds.

Braden Smith finished with 13 points, four rebounds and four assists as the Boilermakers (19-4, 9-3 Big Ten) won their second straight since breaking a three-game losing streak. Purdue has played only two home games since Jan. 14 and in this one, Smith reached yet another milestone by becoming the first Big Ten player with 1,000 points and 500 assists in conference games only.

Trey Kaufman-Renn added 12 points for the Boilermakers.

Nate Bittle had 23 points to lead the Ducks (8-15, 1-11), who took a 59-56 lead with 5:15 to go. Takai Simpkins added 14, but Oregon came up just short of snapping a losing streak that has now reached nine. The Ducks also have lost four straight road games and are just 1-9 since Jan. 2.

Purdue looked like it would roll when it scored five consecutive points to take an early 21-14 lead and then extended the margin to 36-28 late in the first half.

But Oregon closed out the half with eight straight points to tie the score at 36, setting up a back-and-forth second half that was decided in the final minute.

Loyer's 3 with 50.3 seconds left gave Purdue a 65-63 lead and after he made one of two free throws with 19.4 seconds to go, the Ducks still had a chance. But Wei Lin missed a potentially tying 3 from the outside the top of the key and Kwame Evans Jr. missed the second of two free throws after grabbing the rebound.

Loyer made the last two free throws to seal it.

**INDIANAPOLIS (WRTV)** — Tax season is officially underway, and experts say the biggest mistakes happen long before taxpayers ever hit submit.

From missing paperwork to rushing to file, tax professionals say preparing early can save time, money, and stress. For some taxpayers this year, it could even mean a larger refund.

Tax offices across Central Indiana are already busy as millions of Americans begin gathering paperwork, crunching numbers, and hoping for a refund.

“It’s certainly better to get in earlier than later,” said Judd Lawrie, a certified public accountant. “The closer to the deadline, everybody’s trying to get in and get those things done.”

Lawrie recommends gathering documents early and being organized before filing.

“The more organized you are, the sooner that you get it in for people to work on, the better the results will be for you,” Lawrie said.

This tax season also comes with several changes that could impact how much taxpayers owe or how much they get back.

“This year, overtime is not taxable. Tips are not taxable. There’s an extra deduction for seniors over 65. Auto loan interest is a new deduction, and there’s some limitations. It has to be a new car assembled in the US, and there’s some income limitations,” Lawrie said.

Lawrie says he has already seen the new tax breaks result in larger refunds for some taxpayers, making it important to be strategic when filing.

“It’s not illegal to avoid paying taxes, it’s just illegal to evade paying taxes,” he said.

Tax professionals are also warning taxpayers to stay alert for scams during filing season. Lawrie says sensitive information should never be sent through unsecured methods.

“Don’t email sensitive information. Don’t email your W-2s and your Social Security cards for you or your dependents. Either use a secure portal or take those paper copies in person,” he said.

The IRS has repeatedly warned that it will not call taxpayers about tax issues or demand immediate payment over the phone.

The federal tax filing deadline is in mid-April, but Laurie says waiting until the last minute can create unnecessary delays, especially for those expecting refunds.

“With larger refunds, you don’t want the government holding on to your money longer than they have to. So get in early, get filed early, get your refunds back,” Lawrie said.

### **Weather:**

Today — Overcast. High 48F. Winds ESE at 5 to 10 mph.

Tonight — Rain showers in the evening will evolve into a more steady rain overnight. Low 34F. Winds E at 5 to 10 mph. Chance of rain 70%. Rainfall around a quarter of an inch.

Tomorrow — A steady rain in the morning. Showers continuing in the afternoon. High 41F. Winds NE at 10 to 15 mph. Chance of rain 70%.

Tomorrow Night — A few showers early with mostly cloudy conditions late. Low 28F. Winds NW at 5 to 10 mph. Chance of rain 30%.

Monday — Partly cloudy. High 47F. Winds WSW at 5 to 10 mph.

Tuesday — Considerable cloudiness. High 57F. Winds SSW at 10 to 15 mph.