



Oakland Youth Poet Laureate 2026

<http://oaklandlibrary.org/youthpoets>



APPLICATION FORM

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION ONLINE: <http://oaklandlibrary.org/youthpoets>

If you have no means to apply online, you may mail in this form; see the address at the bottom of the page.

Applications must be received by Sunday, February 1, 2026

Questions? Email oypl@oaklandlibrary.org or call (510) 205-2738.

Eligibility

Applicants must:

- be an Oakland resident
- be between the ages of 13 and 18 as of February 1, 2026
- be available to serve as Laureate for the program year, June 2026 - June 2027:
 - be living locally through the program year
 - not be enrolled in college full-time during the program year

(Unfortunately, this means many senior high school students are not eligible to apply.)

Poems will be judged based on *Content*, *Craft*, and *Voice*. If you are entered into the final round, applications will be additionally judged on *Leadership* and *Performance*.

APPLICATION

Part A. Your Information (required)

Name: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small; margin-top: -10px;"> Last First MI </div>	Pronouns: _____	Birthdate: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small; margin-top: -10px;"> Month/ Day/ Year </div>
Address: _____ <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small; margin-top: -10px;"> Street Address Apartment/Unit # </div>		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> Oakland CA </div>		
<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; font-size: small;"> City State ZIP Code </div>		
Phone: () _____	E-mail: _____	
School: _____ Grade: _____		

How did you hear about the Oakland Youth Poet Laureate program? _____

Are you planning to be in Oakland for the full Poet Laureate program year (June 2026– June 2027)?
(Required to advance to final round)

YES ☐ NO ☐

Artist Statement/Bio: *Introduce yourself. Tell us who you are and what poetry means to you. (250 words maximum. Use the back if needed)* Required. *Note: This will be used as your bio if you advance to the final round.*



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Part B. Awards and Service

1. List any awards or honors you have received (including anywhere your work has been published).
2. List any community service or activism you have done.
3. List all previous participation with the Oakland Youth Poet Laureate program's events, bookings, etc.

Part C. Your Writing (required)

Please attach printed copies of your *three poems* totaling no more than 10 pages.

Part D. Name of Adult Sponsor (required)

Please provide the name of an Adult Sponsor who you can ask to write you a letter of recommendation IF you advance to the final round. Tips: Choose someone who knows your writing, school performance or community involvement. Ask someone for this well in advance! Letters of recommendation will be due March 22, 2026.

Sponsor Name: _____

Phone Number or Email Address: _____

Signature & Guardian Information

Name of Parent/Guardian
(Not required if you are 18 on February 1, 2026) _____

Phone Number or Email for Parent/Guardian: _____

By submitting this application, I agree that the poetry I submitted is my original work and I meet the Youth Poet Laureate eligibility requirements. I understand that if I advance to the final round, my writing may be published as part of the program, but I still retain the full rights to publish or perform my work anywhere else I choose.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

THANK YOU!

– Page 2 of 2 pages –

If you have no means to apply online, MAIL COMPLETE APPLICATION TO:
Oakland Public Library, Youth Poet Laureate Application, Teen Services, 125 14th Street, Oakland, CA 94612