



6th, 7th, AND 8th GRADERS: How can you make a difference in your community?

Start with an essay to the
2026 National Civics Bee®
at nationalcivicsbee.org

How It Works

If selected, you will be invited to participate in a live competition near you. Finalists at regional competitions advance to the Montana State Bee, and finalist of the State Bee advances to the National Championship in Washington, D.C.!

Prizes include cash awards, trophies, recognition, and a \$100,000 contribution to a 529 plan for the National Champion.

In 2026, if you win your state competition, your school could receive a \$5,000 donation.

Students who participate in the National Civics Bee strengthen their civics, writing, and public speaking skills, and form friendships with other young leaders along the way.



Daisy Doolittle
2025 Montana State
Civics Bee Champion



Write an essay proposing your ideas
for improving your community.

- Use the 2026 Essay Application Guide to find this year's official prompt, judging rubric, writing tips, and submission instructions.
- Read the Contest Rules. Public, private, charter, and homeschool students in grades 6–8 who reside in Montana are eligible.



Submit your essay by **February 3, 2026**.

- You'll need permission from a parent or guardian to apply.
- Create an account for the online application portal: <https://my.reviewr.com/NationalCivicsBee/site/NationalCivicsBee2026>
- Submit your essay application by 11:59 p.m. on Tuesday, February 3, 2026 (Hawaii Standard Time).



What if you're chosen to advance?

You'll be invited to compete at the Montana State Civics Bee. The winners of each round advance to the next, and the winner from each state competition receives a paid trip to Washington, D.C., to compete in the National Championship in Fall 2026.



To help prepare, finalists receive a special study guide and complimentary access to Khanmigo®, Khan Academy's AI-powered online tutor.

PRIZES

REGIONAL BEES

1st Place	\$500
2nd Place	\$250
3rd Place	\$125

STATE FINALS

1st Place	\$1,000
Plus a potential \$5,000* donation to your school!	
2nd Place	\$500
3rd Place	\$250

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

1st Place	\$100,000
529 plan contribution	
2nd Place	\$25,000
3rd Place	\$15,000

Essay Prompt

Students must submit a **4-paragraph essay** in response to the following prompt:

PARAGRAPH

1

IDENTIFY a specific opportunity, problem, or challenge in your community. What is something in your school, neighborhood, or town that could be improved? This could be anything, from making your school more welcoming, improving local parks, supporting small businesses, or helping neighbors in need.

100–150 words

PARAGRAPH

2

DESCRIBE the steps you would take to make this change. What will you do to make a positive impact, and why does it matter? Think about realistic actions—something you or a small group could actually do.

150–200 words

PARAGRAPH

3

FIND support to help you bring your idea to life. Who could help you, and how would they contribute? Think about student groups, teachers, local businesses, community organizations, city leaders, or others.

100–150 words

PARAGRAPH

4

CONNECT your idea to the values that shaped our country. How does your idea reflect the Founding Principles and Civic Virtues of our country? Use examples from the Founding Principles and Civic Virtues to show how your idea reflects the responsibilities of citizenship.

150–250 words



About the Bee

The National Civics Bee® is an annual nonpartisan civics competition for middle schoolers that increases civics knowledge, skills, and disposition among young Americans, their families, and communities. The competition is organized by The Civic Trust® of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation, in partnership with local and state chambers of commerce across the country.

The Montana Regional and State Civics Bees are organized by the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Center in partnership with the Kalispell, Helena, and Miles City Chambers of Commerce and the Montana 250 Commission.

Have questions? Contact Kate Koenig at kate.koenig@mso.umt.edu

For essay questions, contact civictrust@uschamber.com