



6TH, 7TH, AND 8TH GRADERS:

How can you make a difference in your community?

Start with an essay to enter the 2026 National Civics Bee® 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 state competitions, and finalists at state competitions advance 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.



Emily Brubaker
2024 National
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 participating states 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?utm_source=ymca&utm_medium=promos&utm_campaign=partners
- 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 nearest live 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*

NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

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

STATE FINALS

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

REGIONAL BEES

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

Essay Prompt

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

PARAGRAPH

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

1

PARAGRAPH

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

2

PARAGRAPH

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

3

PARAGRAPH

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

4

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Download the
2026 Essay Application Guide
for full instructions

This flyer is informational only, intended to provide general information about the 2026 National Civics Bee® competitions. All aspects of the National Civics Bee are governed by applicable contest rules (“Rules”), which may vary based on the location of local, statewide, and state competitions. In the event of any conflict between this flyer and the Rules, the applicable Rules shall govern. Information in this flyer is subject to change without notice.