



SPENCER J. COX
GOVERNOR

Sept. 9, 2026

Dear Educator,

The Office of the Governor and the Utah State Board of Education invite your students to participate in Utah's 26th annual "Do the Write Thing" (DtWT) Challenge.

The challenge offers seventh- and eighth-grade students across the state an opportunity to examine the impact of youth violence on their lives and then write what they think should be done to change the culture of violence. Personal responsibility is emphasized by encouraging students to commit to doing something about the problem. The DtWT Challenge ultimately strives to help them break the cycle of violence in their homes, schools, and neighborhoods. In today's social media climate, the DtWT Challenge offers the opportunity for students to express their view in a non-threatening manner. Teachers should encourage students to participate.

Two submissions per participating school will be selected as state finalists and will be invited to attend a recognition luncheon in April 2027 during which the top author will be announced. State finalists will receive a scholarship deposit to Utah's my529 Education Savings Account. The top submission will be published and placed in the Library of Congress, and the student will represent Utah as an ambassador for peace.

Teachers are encouraged to incorporate the challenge into their regular classroom curriculum. Lesson plans can be found on the website at <https://www.schools.utah.gov/prevention/dothewritethingchallenge>. Rules, entry forms and additional information are also available on this website. The following is a list of ideas for the classroom:

- English: Use as an essay or poetry-writing assignment.
- Health: Discuss personal safety and well-being of others.
- Civics: Conduct an exercise on personal and civic responsibility.
- History: Use a historical perspective to examine youth violence.

The deadline for entries is **January 8, 2027**. The 2026 challenge involved more than 2,000 students participating in classroom discussions about youth violence with over 1,200 students submitting written work from 33 teachers and 13 schools across the state. We look forward to increasing these numbers in the 2027 challenge.

If you have any questions, please contact Cuong Nguyen at cuong.nguyen@schools.utah.gov or call (801) 538-7790.

We encourage your students' participation and look forward to this year's challenge.

Sincerely,

Spencer J. Cox
Governor