



State of Utah

SPENCER J. COX
Governor

DEIDRE M. HENDERSON
Lieutenant Governor

Office of the Governor

Sept. 30, 2024

Dear Educator:

The Office of the Governor and the Utah State Board of Education invite you and your students to participate in Utah's 25th Annual *Do the Write Thing 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 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 program 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 views in a non-threatening manner. Teachers should encourage students to participate.

Two submissions per participating school will be selected as the state's finalists and will be invited to attend a recognition luncheon in April 2025 during which the top author will be announced. State finalists will receive a scholarship deposit to Utah's my529 Education Saving Account. The top submission will be published and placed in the Library of Congress, and the student will represent Utah as an "Ambassador of Peace."

Teachers are encouraged to incorporate the challenge into their regular classroom curriculum. Lesson plans can be found on the website at www.schools.utah.gov/prevention/dtwf. Rules, entry forms and additional information are also available on the 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 Jan. 10, 2025. During the 2024 challenge, more than 1,540 students participated in classroom discussions about youth violence, and more than 1,050 students

submitted writings with 19 teachers and from 13 schools across the state. We look forward to increasing these numbers in the 2025 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,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Spencer J. Cox". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being the most prominent.

Spencer J. Cox
Governor