



STATE OF UTAH

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
84114-2220

SPENCER J. COX
GOVERNOR

DEIDRE M. HENDERSON
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

August 17, 2022

Dear Educator:

The Office of the Governor and the Utah State Board of Education invites you and your students to participate in Utah's 23rd Annual *Do the Write Thing Challenge*.

The *Challenge* offers 7th and 8th 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 do something about the problem. The program ultimately strives to help them break the cycle of violence in their homes, schools, and neighborhoods.

Two writings per participating school will be selected as state finalists and will be invited to attend a recognition luncheon where the top two authors will be announced in April 2023. State finalists will receive a scholarship deposit to Utah's my529 Education Saving Account. The top two writings will represent Utah where their essays will be published and placed in the Library of Congress.

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 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 an historical perspective to examine youth violence.

The deadline for entries is **January 13th, 2023**. The 2022 challenge involved more than 2,000 students participating in classroom discussions about youth violence with over 500 submitting essays from 37 different teachers. We look forward to increasing these numbers in the 2023 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".

Spencer J. Cox
Governor