



# STATE OF UTAH

GARY R. HERBERT  
GOVERNOR

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

SPENCER J. COX  
LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR

October 9, 2020

Dear Educator,

The Office of the Governor and the Utah State Board of Education invite you and your students to participate in Utah's 21<sup>st</sup> Annual *Do the Write Thing Challenge*.

The Challenge offers 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> 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 make a commitment 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 schools 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 2021. State finalists will receive a scholarship deposit to their My529 Education Savings Account. The top two essays will be published and placed in the Library of Congress as Utah's national finalists.

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/dtwt](http://www.schools.utah.gov/prevention/dtwt). 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 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021**. The 2020 challenge involved more than 2,400 students participating in classroom discussions about youth violence with more than 1,100 submitting essays from 24 different teachers. We look forward to increasing these numbers in the 2021 Challenge.

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

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

Sincerely,

Gary R. Herbert  
Governor