

★★★ **AMERICA'S 250TH BIRTHDAY** ★★★
ESSAY CONTEST

On July 4th, 2026, the United States will celebrate the 250th anniversary of the Founding Fathers' adoption of the Declaration of Independence. In advance of July parades, fireworks, and barbecues to celebrate this historic moment **WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

The Federal Practice Committee for the United States District Court for the District of North Dakota, coordinated through the Civic Engagement Subcommittee, invites all North Dakota students, in grades 6 through 12, to participate in an essay contest about America's 250th Birthday and the importance of our nation's federal court system. This contest is an excellent opportunity for students to learn more about our country's history, gain interest in the federal court system, voice their opinions, and have an opportunity to win a \$250 prize and receive recognition within their communities.

Topic Choices:

- 1) North Dakota Specific: What Federal Court Decision(s) have had the greatest impact on ND?
- 2) National Topic: How has the Federal Judiciary shaped American government, society, or culture?

GRADES

6-8

250

WORDS

GRADES

9-12

500

WORDS

PRIZES:

- 1) **\$250 PRIZE**
- 2) **INVITE TO ND FEDERAL COURTHOUSE IN BISMARCK OR FARGO**
- 3) **ESSAY PUBLISHED IN THE GAVEL, ND STATE BAR MAGAZINE**

GUIDELINES FOR SUBMISSION:

- 1) All submissions must be submitted in PDF format to email below.
- 2) One essay per student
- 3) Must be written exclusively by student. Students can ask for feedback, but parents/teachers may not edit or write any portion.
- 4) Must comply with word limit.
- 5) Essays crafted using AI or that cut/paste information from other sources will not be considered.
- 6) Essays submitted after 5/21/26 @ 11:59 pm (CST) will not be considered.

HOW SUBMISSIONS WILL BE JUDGED:

- 1) Followed guidelines
- 2) Organization
- 3) Interesting viewpoint/idea

DEADLINE:

**MAY 21,
2026**

\$250 PRIZE

SUBMIT VIA EMAIL TO NDD_PUBLIC@NDD.USCOURTS.GOV