



Sixth Circuit 2020 Student Essay Contest

The Role of Civics Education in Protecting the Rule of Law

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Over the past few decades, our nation has undergone a significant decline in the provision of civics education, and the effects are troubling. Keeping in mind the state of civics education in our country today:

Is the teaching of civics valuable to maintaining American democracy?

Why is the rule of law important to American democracy, and what role does the teaching of civics have in protecting the rule of law?

How can civics education be improved to better "enlighten our citizenry"?

For the full prompt, please consult the contest website at <https://connections.ca6.uscourts.gov/civics-contest>.

Who May Enter: The contest is open to junior and senior high school students in Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio, and Tennessee. Students in the 11th and 12th grades attending public, private, parochial and charter schools, and home-schooled students of equivalent grade status are invited to participate. **Note:** Children of federal judges or federal judiciary employees are not eligible to participate. Submissions will be accepted beginning March 24, 2020.

Length and Format: Essays must be between 500 and 1,000 words. Please double space and use an easily read 12pt or 14pt font. While not required, proper use of citations and bibliographies will be credited during judging. Citations and bibliographies will not be included in the word count. Essays must be submitted electronically as an Adobe Acrobat document (PDF) attachment along with a completed contest entry form sent via email to civics_contest@ca6.uscourts.gov. The contest entry form should be sent as a separate PDF in the same email. **Please do not include your name on your essay.**

Submission Deadline: Your essay and entry form must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. (EDT) on May 31, 2020. Go to <http://connections.ca6.uscourts.gov/civics-contest> for the complete contest rules and to complete the contest entry form.

Judging: Judging will be based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrates an understanding of the role of the judiciary and why the rule of law is important (40 points)
- Clarity and effectiveness in expressing the theme (30 points)
- Grammar, spelling, and composition (25 points)
- Use of citations and bibliographies (5 points)

Awards: Cash prizes will be awarded to the top three finishers, and winners will be announced this summer (2020). In addition, the first place winner, along with a parent or guardian, will receive travel and accommodations to attend the 2020 Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference in Cleveland.

First \$2,000
Second \$1,500
Third \$1,000

Update: Travel and accommodations to attend the 2020 Sixth Circuit Judicial Conference is no longer possible due to COVID-19.

Questions? Contact the Office of the Circuit Executive at (513) 564-7200 or civics_contest@ca6.uscourts.gov.

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