

National Civics Bee in Michigan buzzes back in big way for 2025–26

Middle school students from across the state encouraged to apply

- The National Civics Bee® returns across Michigan for the 2025–26 cycle
- Essay portal now open! Submit entries through Feb. 3, 2026
- Open to all Michigan 6th–8th graders in public, private, charter, or being home schooled
- Michigan Chamber Foundation and local chambers will host local and statewide competitions next year
 - Local competitions spring 2026 | State Finals July 2026 | National Finals fall 2026
- Michigan’s 2025 State Champion Ashley T. from Clague Middle School in Ann Arbor to represent the state at nationals in Washington, D.C. this November for chance at \$100,000 grand prize
- Comes at a pivotal moment as America prepares to celebrate its 250th birthday in 2026

[Lansing, MICH] — The Michigan Chamber of Commerce Foundation today announced the official launch of the 2025–26 National Civics Bee® cycle in Michigan, inviting middle school students from across Great Lakes State to apply now.

Hosted in partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and local chambers statewide, Michigan’s National Civics Bee® provides middle school students with an opportunity to showcase their civics knowledge, compete for recognition and prizes, and share their ideas on strengthening our communities. Local winners advance to the Michigan State Finals at the Capitol in Lansing, and the state champion earns a spot at the national competition in Washington, D.C.

Michigan enters this cycle with momentum: Michigan was the #1 state for essay submissions nationwide. Twenty-one finalists competed at the Capitol this summer, where Ashley T. from Clague Middle School in Ann Arbor earned the state title and will represent Michigan at nationals in November.

“These remarkable students remind us that strong communities and strong economies go hand in hand with engaged citizens,” said **Jim Holcomb, president & CEO of the Michigan Chamber**. “The National Civics Bee is one essential way to spark civic interest and knowledge – and help combat the political division and apathy too prevalent today. As America approaches its 250th birthday in 2026, we encourage every parent, teacher, and business and community leader who knows a middle schooler to spread the word and get them involved.”

Why it matters

- Civic knowledge remains alarmingly low: only 22% of U.S. eighth graders score “proficient” in civics, and fewer than half of adults can name all three branches of government.
- The National Civics Bee builds knowledge, confidence and problem-solving skills while preparing the next generation to lead and help strengthen our democracy.

How it works

- Step 1 – Essay round: Michigan middle school students (grades 6–8) submit a 500-750-word essay online or by mail-in application by Feb. 3, 2026, proposing an idea to improve their community.
- Step 2 – Local competitions: After a panel of judges review the essays, top finalists are invited to compete in a live quiz event hosted by local chambers across the state in spring 2026.
 - 8 participating local chambers: [Battle Creek Area Chamber of Commerce](#); [Bay Area Chamber of Commerce](#); [Canton Chamber of Commerce](#); [Chaldean American Chamber of Commerce](#); [Cheboygan Area Chamber of Commerce](#); [Howell Area Chamber of Commerce](#); [Grand Rapids Chamber](#); and [Jackson County Chamber of Commerce](#)
- Step 3 – State & National Finals: Local top three winners advance to the Michigan State Finals at the Capitol in July. The state champion earns \$1,000 (and \$5,000 for their school) + moves on to the National Civics Bee® in Washington, D.C., to compete for cash prizes – including a \$100,000 grand prize contribution to a 529 plan.
- *All students are invited to participate and will compete at the nearest local competition to their school or hometown.*

Get details and get involved at michamber.com/micivicsbee.

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