

**MMA 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest  
RULES & INFORMATION**

Thank you for your participation in the Massachusetts Municipal Association's 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Essay Contest! The purpose of this contest is to raise awareness and interest among 8<sup>th</sup> grade students about local government issues and to encourage participation in local government and Massachusetts communities.

Local government affects every resident in every state, region, city and town. Schools, housing, waste collection and recycling, roads, parks and recreation, the library, police and fire stations are all run by local government. As a resident in your city or town you have a voice and an opportunity to affect change on a local level.

In Massachusetts, cities are governed by mayors and city councils. Towns are governed by select boards whose members are elected to one or two-year terms. For your essay, select one political or community issue that impacts people in your city or town. If you were the Mayor or a member of the Select Board in your city or town, how would you bring positive change to this issue? You may consider financial limitations, the size of your city or town and available resources. Include examples of the changes that you would make as the Mayor or a member of the Select Board and how those changes would impact your chosen issue.

**Essay Contest Rules:**

- Only current 8<sup>th</sup> graders in Massachusetts are eligible to participate.
- Word limit: 750 words or less, excluding the title.
- Well-organized, with an introduction, a body and a conclusion.
- Typed and double-spaced in size 12 Times New Roman font.
- Printed on one side of paper only.
- Include two (2) copies. (No submissions will be returned.)
- The student's name, school, and city or town must be at the top of the page.
- If students are participating as part of a class or school project, each student must submit an individual essay. Only one essay per student.
- Mail your essay to: MMA Essay Contest, One Winthrop Square, Boston, MA 02110.
- Essays will be judged on originality, content, grammar and spelling, and understanding of local government. All decisions of the judges are final.
- Cash prizes will be awarded to the first (\$500), second (\$250) and third (\$150) place winners, and the first-place essay writer will be invited to attend the Municipal Month celebration at the State House in May.
- Winners will be notified in April.
- All contestants agree to publication on the Massachusetts Municipal Association's website. Winners may be asked to provide a photo to appear with their published essay.
- Please direct any questions to Alandra Champion: [achampion@mma.org](mailto:achampion@mma.org).

Deadline: Essays must be postmarked by March 22, 2019.



Massachusetts  
Municipal  
Association

One Winthrop Square, Boston, MA 02110  
617-426-7272 • 800-882-1498 • fax 617-695-1314  
www.mma.org

Town Manager's Office

FEB - 8 2019

Danvers, MA

February 5, 2019

Dear Chief Municipal Official,

The Massachusetts Municipal Association is pleased to announce the return of the annual **MMA Statewide Essay Contest for 8th Graders**. This contest was created to raise awareness among students about local government, and to encourage students to take an active interest in their hometown government.

**What:**

The MMA invites 8th grade students in your community to participate in this year's essay contest. We are sending this letter to the chief municipal official (CMO) in each community and asking that the CMO complete the attached commitment form, giving the MMA permission to contact the schools in your community to invite them to participate. Participation by your schools is optional.

**Who:**

All 8th graders in your public schools will be invited to participate. Prizes will be awarded to winning entries, and the first-place essay writer will be invited to attend the Municipal Month Celebration at the State House in Boston in May.

**When:**

Please complete the enclosed commitment form and return it to the MMA by **Monday, February 25, 2019**. The MMA will send you, your superintendent, and the building principals the contest rules and information. Students will be able to access contest materials via our website, [www.mma.org](http://www.mma.org). The contest deadline for students is **Friday, March 22, 2019**.

**Why:**

The essay contest is fun for students, demands little time or preparation from the teacher, and invites students to think critically about local government issues. It is viewed as an independent student project but can be incorporated into a teacher's lesson plan. The MMA is available as a resource to any teacher, school or municipal official.

If you have any questions, please contact our Contest Coordinators, **Alandra Champion or Lisa Adams**, at (617) 426-7272. We are excited to engage and encourage students to think creatively about local government. We hope that you will join our effort by signing up your community today! Thank you for your time, interest, and leadership.

Sincerely,

Geoff Beckwith  
Executive Director & CEO  
Massachusetts Municipal Association



## I Commit My Community Today!

As the chief municipal official (CMO), our community will support the participation of our eighth-grade students in the MMA's 2019 Statewide Essay contest.

Name:

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Municipal Position:

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Municipality:

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Phone Number:

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Email:

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My community is in a regional school district for 8<sup>th</sup> grade: YES or NO

The other communities in our regional district for 8<sup>th</sup> grade are:

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*Please complete this form and send it to: Alandra Champion, Massachusetts Municipal Association, One Winthrop Square, Boston, MA 02110; by fax to 617-695-1314; or by email to [achampion@mma.org](mailto:achampion@mma.org).  
Deadline is Monday, February 25, 2019.*