

STARK COUNTY BAR ASSOCIATION
2026 LAW WEEK



ESSAY CONTEST

GRADES 7 - 12

The Declaration of Independence at 250

2026 Entry Form

"There Ought To Be A Law" Essay Contest

The entry form and release forms must be fully completed and submitted for an entry to be considered.

PLEASE TYPE OR PRINT LEGIBLY:

Name: _____ Age: _____

Street Address: _____ City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____ County: _____ Phone: _____

E-Mail Address _____

Local Bar Association: Stark County Bar Association

Please check the boxes that apply:

☐ **Division I**
(Grades 7 & 8)

☐ **Division II**
(Grades 9 & 10)

☐ **Division III**
(Grades 11 & 12)

☐ I am entering the contest as a representative of my participating school.

Participating School: _____

School Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

Teacher: _____ Principal: _____

Teacher's E-Mail Address _____

District Superintendent: _____ District Phone: _____

☐ I am entering the contest as an individual because my school is not participating.

Non-participating School: _____

School Street Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____ Phone: _____

☐ I am entering the contest as an individual because I am not affiliated with a public or private school.

(CONTINUED)

I state as follows:

1. I have read, understand, complied with and accept the terms of the contest objectives and guidelines for the Law Day *"There Ought To Be A Law"* Essay Contest (hereinafter the "Competition").
2. I warrant and represent that I personally wrote the essay submitted by me to the Competition. I further warrant and represent that the essay submitted by me has not been published prior to its submission to this competition.
3. I am a Stark County student, age 12 to 18, who has not graduated from High School, and I am a citizen and/or resident of the United States. I am not an employee of the Stark County Bar Association or its affiliates or an immediate family member or member of the household of an employee of the Stark County Bar Association or its affiliates.
4. I hereby release, discharge and hold harmless the Stark County Bar Association and its successors, assigns, officers, employees, and agents associated with the Competition from and against any and all liability, loss, damage, expense, claims, settlements or judgments of any kind whatsoever, including attorneys' fees, whether in contract or in tort, arising directly or indirectly as a result of my participation in the Competition, and my acceptance and use of a prize awarded to me, if any.
5. I consent to the use of my name, biographical data, pictures, portraits, photographs, voice or likeness, and the essay entered by me in the Competition in any form for editorial, advertising, promotional and trade purposes in connection with the promotion by the Stark County Bar Association of this competition and succeeding Law Day programs sponsored by the Stark County Bar Association. I release the Stark County Bar Association from all liabilities arising out of distortion, optical illusions or faulty mechanical reproductions of my likeness. I acknowledge that I have no right to approve the advertising or promotional materials that include my likeness or the essay submitted by me to the Competition.
6. The Parental Release Form has been signed by my parent or legal guardian (if applicable), stating that my parent or legal guardian has read and also accepts the same legal obligations outlined above.
7. I am 18 years of age, or if I am not 18 years of age, I have obtained the signature of my parent or legal guardian as described below.

Entrant's Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Entrant's Parent's or Legal Guardian's Signature: _____
(If entrant is under 18 years of age)

Entrant's Parent's or Legal Guardian's Printed Name: _____

Home Phone: _____ **Work Phone:** _____

Parent or Guardian Release Form

(To be completed by parent or guardian of entrant - for applicants under age 18.)

I, _____, hereby represent and warrant that I am the parent or legal guardian of the identified entrant and that I accept the same legal obligations stated on the front in connection with this Competition, including but not limited to the use of the minor's name, likeness and essay as stated on the front, and consent to the minor named herein accepting and receiving a prize, if any. I also hereby release, discharge and hold harmless the Stark County Bar Association and its successors, assigns, officers, employees and agents associated with the Competition from and against any and all liability, loss, damage, expense, claims, settlements or judgments of any kind whatsoever, including attorneys' fees, whether in contract or in tort, which I or my heirs, executors or administrators may have arising directly or indirectly as a result of the minor's participation in the Competition and acceptance and receipt of a prize, if any.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Home Phone: _____ **Work Phone:** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____



“There Ought To Be A Law”

2026 Essay Contest - Guidelines & Rules

The Stark County Bar Association is once again sponsoring the annual Law Day Essay Contest project. Focusing on how laws are developed, the project asks 7th through 12th grade students to write about what they believe ***“There Ought to be a Law”***. Each student is asked to generate an idea for a new law and provide reasons why that particular law should be enacted, taking into account its impact on the community.

Guidelines:

Each student who wishes to participate must write an essay of 1,000 words or less proposing a new rule or law to be enacted in Ohio at the school, community, county, or state level. Proposed, pending, or current legislation may be used for topic ideas, but the student-generated laws should be original. Because this contest is designed to foster creative thinking, each essayist is asked to adhere to the following guidelines:

- Propose an original law that to the student’s knowledge is not currently in effect in Ohio.
- Use for topic ideas, but do not copy, any proposed or pending legislation.
- Fully explain the proposed law by:
 - clarifying what the law would create or change;
 - exploring the benefits and consequences of the proposed law;
 - anticipating the proposed law’s impact on existing rules or laws as well as the law’s impact on those who would be affected;
 - explaining why the law needs to be created and how it would be enforced;
 - telling when and where the law would be effective.
- The use of AI is not permitted.

To locate information about the lawmaking process as well as a complete listing of past, current and pending legislation, students are invited to use links through the OSBA web site at <http://www.ohiobar.org>.

Rules:

All essays should be typewritten in a 12-point font and include:

- The student's name, address, phone number, age, and grade level;
- Completed parental release form (if under 18 years of age);
- School name, address, phone number, and teacher's name.
- Student's E-mail address.
- The use of AI is not permitted.

All entries must be submitted **no later than Friday, March 27, 2026** to:

**Stark County Bar Association
400 Courtyard Centre Building
116 Cleveland Avenue, NW
Canton, Ohio 44702-1728**

Prizes:

Prizes will be awarded for each division, as follows:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. The William A. Summit and
Dorothy J. Summit Memorial Award
for the Outstanding Essay | \$ 250.00 check |
| 2. First Prize for each division | \$ 50.00 check |
| 3. Second Prize for each division | \$ Displayed & Shared |
| 4. Third Prize for each division | \$ Displayed & Shared |

Any questions may be directed to the Stark County Bar Association at 330-453-0685.