

FROM THE DESK OF

Lieutenant Governor David Wasinger

Dear Missouri Teachers and Students,

On July 4, 1776, the Declaration of Independence was signed, marking the birth of the United States of America. As we approach our nation's 250th anniversary on July 4, 2026, I invite Missouri students to reflect on this historic milestone by submitting a letter explaining why they are proud to be an American.

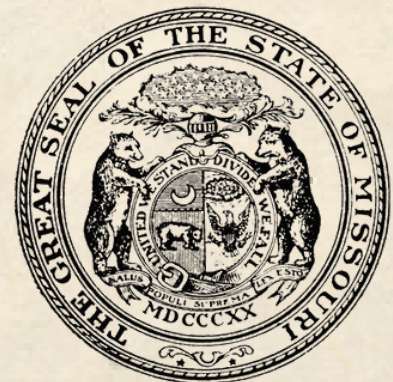
A panel will review all submissions and select ten letters to receive the Lieutenant Governor's Award for American Patriotism. From those ten, I will personally choose one letter to receive the highest honor; that letter will be framed and displayed in my office.

Enclosed, please find the submission guidelines and requirements. I look forward to reading the thoughtful reflections of Missouri's students as we prepare to celebrate this remarkable chapter in our nation's history.

Sincerely,

David Wasinger

Lieutenant Governor of Missouri



Submission Requirements:

-Please choose **one** of the following prompts:

- *“I am proud to be an American because...”*
- *“I love America because...”*

-Letters must meet the following **minimum word count**:

- **Grades K-3:** 50 words
- **Grades 4-6:** 100 words
- **Grade 7-12:** 200 words

-Letters may not contain any profanity or inappropriate language.

-Student letters should include **only the student's name** and no other identifying information (such as birthdate, address, or school).

-A **parent or guardian must sign the release form** on the following page and submit it with the letter.

-All letters must be **postmarked no later than March 1, 2026**, to be considered.

RELEASE AND PERMISSION TO PUBLISH

I hereby grant The Lt. Governor's Office permission to publish the letter written by _____, a minor, detailing why they are proud to be an American. This includes publishing the minor's name and the school they attend; along with any other pertinent information the Lt. Governor's Office deems relevant.

I hereby release and discharge the Lt. Governor's Office, his staff, and the state of Missouri, from any claims and demands arising out of or in connection with the use of the letter described above, including claims of libel or invasion of privacy.

I _____ (print full name) am the parent/legal guardian of the individual named above. I have read this release and approve its terms.

Signature _____

Date _____

Teacher Submission Instructions:

- We ask that teachers select one letter per grade level to forward to our office. Please include the student's name, grade level, school, and teacher's name with the submission, but not written directly on the letter.
- We ask that teachers also include their name and contact information along with their student's submission.
- Schools are welcome to submit letters in a batch envelope, but please ensure that student information is included for each letter.
- We request that all letters are mailed by March 1, 2026.
- Envelopes should be addressed as follows:
ATTN: Lt. Governor's Student Letter Submission Panel
Office of Lt. Governor
201 W. Capitol Ave Room 224
Jefferson City, MO 65101
- If you have any questions, you can reach us by email at info@ltgov.mo.gov.

Submission Selection and Ceremony Details:

- A panel will review all letters received and will select the top ten letters to receive the Lt. Governor's Award for American Patriotism.
- The Lt. Governor will select one of these top ten submissions to be the "Lt. Governor's Choice." This submission will be printed and framed in the Lt. Governor's office.
- Teachers will be notified by April 24, 2026** if their student was selected for recognition.
- A recognition ceremony will be held for the awardees on June 26, 2026.** Students, families, and teachers will be invited to attend the ceremony where each student will be able to read their letter. Students will be presented with their awards, and will be welcomed for a lunch to follow.
- Student letters may be displayed in the Capitol and on other platforms.