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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce Announces
2026 National Civics Bee Regional Competition**

ELLENSBURG, WA – December 10, 2025 - The Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation and local sponsors U.S Bank and City of Ellensburg Hal Holmes Community Center, is proud to announce the launch of the 2025–2026 National Civics Bee Regional Competition, inviting all 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students across Central Washington to showcase their civics knowledge, community insight, and leadership potential.

This first-of-its-kind civics competition encourages young Americans to actively engage in their communities and deepen their understanding of the civic process. The top 20 students from the essay round will be invited to compete at Hal Holmes Community Center in Ellensburg on April 25, 2026 for the National Civics Bee Regional Bee for 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place moving forward to the state competition.

Students are invited to submit a 750-word (maximum) essay proposing an idea to improve their community.

Application Window:

September 8, 2025 – February 3, 2026 at 11:59 p.m. Hawaii Standard Time

Submit essays at: <https://www.kittitascountychamber.com/national-civics-bee/>

Participants competing in the 2026 Regional Bee will have the opportunity to win:

- 1st Place: \$500
- 2nd Place: \$250
- 3rd Place: \$125



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Top-scoring regional finalists will advance to the Washington State Finals in Summer 2026, with state winners earning a trip to Washington, D.C., to compete in the National Civics Bee Championship in Fall 2026.

Eligible students must:

- Be enrolled in grades 6–8 at a public, private, charter, or homeschool program in Washington State.
- Submit an original essay via the portal by February 3, 2026.
- Obtain parent/guardian consent to apply.

Full contest details—including the 2026 Essay Guide, Contest Rules, and educator resources—are available at the link above. For additional information or to answer questions please email the Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce, Katie Schepker at katie@kittitascountychamber.com or call (509) 925-2002.

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About the Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce: The Kittitas County Chamber of Commerce is the largest business support and development organization in Kittitas County, and one of the largest in Central Washington. With over 500 members representing every business sector, the Chamber and its committees oversee county-wide tourism promotion and economic development initiatives and a range of business support tools including publications, web services, seminars and even leadership development for a new generation.