




ALISON LUNDERGAN GRIMES  
SECRETARY OF STATE

COMMONWEALTH OF KENTUCKY  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

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MEMORANDUM

TO: Kentucky Educators  
FROM:   
SUBJECT: 2013-2014 25th Annual Essay and Slogan Contest  
DATE: September 24, 2013

For the past 25 years, the Office of the Secretary of State has held a statewide Essay and Slogan Contest for Kentucky students. The discourse this contest stimulates among students is all the more important in light of waning voter trends in the youngest demographics. The contest is an excellent way to garner recognition for your students, and it helps them tangibly interact with the concepts associated with government and democracy.

Students in grades 6-8 are invited to participate in the voter slogan contest, and students in grades 9-12 are encouraged to take part in the essay portion of the contest. I encourage you to distribute the web address listed below and use this project in your classes or with individual students to generate cross-curriculum writing ideas.

Prizes will be awarded for first, second, and third places in the slogan contest, which is open to all 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> graders. In the essay contest, a first-place prize will be awarded for each high school grade level. The monetary awards for contest winners are made possible by contributions from KEA and KEA Retired, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, the University of Kentucky Scripps Howards First Amendment Center, the Kentucky Department of Education, and ECU Center for Appalachian Regional Engagement and Stewardship (CARES). The University of Kentucky also will assist in judging the essay portion of the contest. I am grateful to our partners for their generous sponsorships of this program.

			
SLOGAN CONTEST (Grades 6-8)		ESSAY CONTEST (Grades 9-12)	
1 <sup>st</sup> Prize: \$1000 Cash		9 <sup>th</sup> Grade: \$1000 Cash	
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize: \$600 Cash		10 <sup>th</sup> Grade: \$1000 Cash	
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize: \$400 Cash		11 <sup>th</sup> Grade: \$1000 Cash	
		12 <sup>th</sup> Grade: \$1000 Cash	

The Essay Contest prompt, rules, rubric, and entry form are attached to this Memorandum. Please visit <http://www.sos.ky.gov/secdesk/initiatives/civics/contests/> for further information and guidelines for the 2013-2014 Essay and Slogan Contest. All guidelines must be met for any entry to be considered by contest judges, and all entries must be electronically submitted by 5 p.m. (EST) December 2, 2013, or postmarked by that date. I hope you will share this information with any faculty you feel may benefit from it.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please contact Matt Daley in my office at [matthew.daley@ky.gov](mailto:matthew.daley@ky.gov) or 502-782-7403. Thank you, and good luck to all of your students!



**Essay Contest Rules and Prompt**  
**25<sup>th</sup> Annual Essay and Slogan Contest**  
**Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes**

1. The Essay Contest is open to all Kentucky high school students in grades 9-12.
2. Essay entry is limited to one per student. Previous contest entries will not be accepted.
3. Essay entry may be no longer than 600 words. All entries must be typed and double-spaced.
4. Student and school names shall not appear anywhere in the body of the essay.
5. Essays will be judged on research and understanding of voting and the First Amendment, idea development, organization, language, and correctness (see attached rubric).
6. Students must submit their essays with the enclosed entry form. All sections of the entry form must be completed.
7. Essays may be submitted either online at [www.sos.ky.gov/contests](http://www.sos.ky.gov/contests) or by mail to the address below. Essays submitted online must be in Microsoft Word format.
8. All entries must be submitted electronically by 5 p.m. (EST) December 2, 2013, or postmarked by that date, to be eligible for consideration.
9. Entries become the property of the Kentucky Secretary of State's Office and will not be returned.
10. All guidelines must be met for any entry to be considered by contest judges.

**Essay Prompt:**

*Our Founding Fathers established a government that operates under the theory that its citizens will participate in the democratic electoral process. That participation is enabled by the First Amendment, which protects freedom of speech and freedom of press from interference by the government. If the media was suddenly banned in this country, or stopped functioning as it currently does because of economic losses in the media industry, would the democratic electoral process suffer?*

Mail entries to: ATTN: Slogan and Essay Contest  
Office of the Secretary of State  
Suite 152, State Capitol  
700 Capital Avenue  
Frankfort, KY 40601

You may also submit entries online at [www.sos.ky.gov/contests](http://www.sos.ky.gov/contests).

Note: Family members of employees of the Office of the Secretary of State or the State Board of Elections are not eligible to enter the Essay Contest.



**Essay Rubric**  
**25<sup>th</sup> Annual Essay and Slogan Contest**  
**Secretary of State Alison Lundergan Grimes**

(33.3%) Research and understanding the First Amendment

- Limited or no understanding 3
- Basic understanding of subject with minimal confusion 6
- Thorough understanding of the concepts presented in the prompt 9
- Mastery of the concepts with application of the importance of voting and the protection guaranteed by freedom of speech and of the press 12

(33.3%) Idea development/support

- Minimal idea development; limited and/or related details 3
- Unelaborated idea development; unelaborated and/or repetitious ideas 6
- Depth of idea development supported by elaborated, relevant details 9
- Depth and complexity of ideas supported by rich, engaging, and pertinent details; evidence of analysis, reflection, insight 12

(11.1%) Organization

- Random and/or weak organization 1
- Lapses in organization, focus and/or coherence 2
- Logical, coherent, focused organization 3
- Subtle and sophisticated organization 4

(11.1%) Sentence structure

- Weak structure, weak verbs, incomplete sentences or run-on sentences, dangling participles 1
- Some structural weaknesses with weak verbs 2
- Minimal use of weak verbs, no incomplete sentences or run-on sentences 3
- Strong sentences, varied in length, sound verbs, minimal use of “there are” 4

(11.1%) Grammar/Correctness

- Excessive errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar 1
- Some errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization and grammar that do not interfere with communication 2
- Minimal errors in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar relative to length and complexity 3
- Control of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization 4



**25<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL ESSAY AND SLOGAN CONTEST  
SECRETARY OF STATE ALISON LUNDERGAN GRIMES**

**ESSAY CONTEST ENTRY FORM**

All sections must be completed. If you choose to submit your essay online at [www.sos.ky.gov/contest](http://www.sos.ky.gov/contest), you do not need to mail in your entry form.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
School

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State & Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State & Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
School Phone Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade

\_\_\_\_\_  
Principal

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sponsoring School Official Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**All entries must be electronically submitted by 5 p.m. (EST) December 2, 2013, or postmarked by that date.**

A special thanks to KEA and KEA Retired, Kentucky Council on Postsecondary Education, the University of Kentucky Scripps Howards First Amendment Center, the Kentucky Department of Education, and ECU Center for Appalachian Regional Engagement and Stewardship (CARES) for sponsoring this program.