

**NO PURCHASE NECESSARY TO ENTER OR WIN.** A purchase will not improve your chances of winning.

**INTRODUCTION:** Essay contest ("**Contest**") is offered by the Washington Capitals ("**Capitals**" or "**Sponsor**"). Each entry must be submitted by a parent/legal guardian of the relevant student and in one of the two following grade categories ("**Categories**"): (a) grades one (1) through five (5); and (b) grades six (6) through eight (8). Entrants agree that the Sponsor's decisions related to this Contest are final and binding in all respects.

**ELIGIBILITY.** Contest to open to students, Grades 1 through 8, attending public, private, parochial, home school and virtual or remote learning institutions, who reside within 75 miles of Capital One Arena located at 601 F Street, NW Washington, D.C. 20004. Not eligible to enter or win are employees of Sponsor, Monumental Sports and Entertainment ("**MSE**") (together with Sponsor, the "**Contest Entities**"), the National Hockey League ("**NHL**") and its member teams, and the immediate family members (spouse, parents, siblings, and children) of any of them.

**ENTRY.** Essays will be accepted from Monday, February 2, 2026 at 12:01 am until February 28, 2026 at 11:59 pm (the "**Entry Period**"). To enter, follow each of the steps below:

First, write an essay (your "**Essay**") no longer than 500 words about the importance of working towards your goals and the power of encouragement. All Essays must comply with the **CONTENT REQUIREMENTS** below. To view application and admission guidelines, please visit <https://www.nhl.com/capitals/caps-in-school/writing-program> ; and

Second, your parent or legal guardian must visit [https://washcaps.formstack.com/forms/2026\\_cis\\_writing\\_program](https://washcaps.formstack.com/forms/2026_cis_writing_program) (the "**Contest Page**"), review and accept the Official Rules on your behalf, then submit the Essay by February 28, 2026 at 11:59 pm. Limit one (1) entry per student.

**JUDGING.** Following the Entry Period and ending by March 13, 2026 (the "**Judging Period**"), a panel of qualified judges consisting of members of Sponsor's office will review the entries and score them based on the following equally weighted judging criteria: relevance to theme, creativeness and style, and overall excellence. Subject to verification of eligibility, the student with the highest score in each grade category will be declared a winner. The decision of the judges will be final and binding on all matters related to the Contest.

**NOTIFICATION.** Contest Entities will notify the parents/guardians of the winning students using the information provided at the time of entry, on or about March 27, 2026. Each potential winner's parent/guardian must respond to the initial notification within seventy-two (72) hours and provide any requested verification materials within five (5) business days after the initial notification as a condition of receiving a prize. If a potential winner's parent/legal guardian fails to comply with the above deadlines, cannot be contacted within seventy-two (72) hours using the information provided at the time of entry, declines the prize or potential winner is otherwise ineligible, Contest Entities in their discretion may disqualify that winner and select an alternate winner based on the next highest score in the relevant Grade Category.

**CONTENT REQUIREMENTS.** All Essays must satisfy the following requirements:

- a. Essays must be original to entrants (not copied, adapted, or reproduced from any other source and not collaboration with any other person). In other words, only the person who wrote or created the Essay is permitted to submit it in this Contest.
- b. Essays must not have been previously published or the recipients of any awards in previous contests.
- c. Each Essay must be written in English and must not exceed five hundred (500) words.
- d. No watermarks, signatures, or copyright notices may be added to any Essay.
- e. Any person who is identifiable in your Essay must have given you permission to be so identified and you must be able to provide the Contest Entities with written confirmation of permission if requested.
- f. Essays must not refer to or depict any identifiable trademark, trade name, logo, or brand names other than those belonging to the Contest Entities.
- g. Essays must be appropriate for publication to a general audience.
- h. Essays must not describe or depict any content or statements that are inappropriate, lewd, pornographic, obscene, indecent, hateful, tortious, illegal, defamatory, slanderous, libelous, false, or disparaging, or that invade any person's privacy or other rights, or that promote or advocate drug use, bigotry, racism, hatred, or harm against any group or individual, or that promote discrimination based on race, gender, religion, nationality, disability, sexual origin or age.
- i. Essays must comply with all terms of use or other conditions that apply to the [Contest Page](#).

**PRIZES (2).** Recognition by the Washington Capitals organization, a Washington Capitals swag bag with assorted merchandise selected by Sponsor in its discretion, and two (2) general reservation tickets to a 2026-2027 Washington Capitals regular season home game. ARV: \$250. Likelihood of winning will depend on the number of entries and skill of each entrant.

**PRIZE RESTRICTIONS.** All prize details shall be at Sponsor's sole discretion. Nature and details of recognition element of prize are TBD by Sponsor in its sole discretion. Recognition element has no cash value and If recognition element is not or cannot be fulfilled for any reason, winner will not be entitled to any reimbursement or substitute prize element.

Guest of winner must be winner's parent/legal guardian. Each winner assumes (or, if a minor, his or her parent or guardian assumes) sole responsibility for all expenses and incidental costs associated with the prize. Any winner who wins prizes through any [MSE](#) or [Capitals](#)-sponsored promotions with cumulative value equal to or greater than \$600 in a calendar year will receive an IRS 1099 Form. No substitution, cash equivalent or transfer of prize shall be permitted except at the Sponsor's option for a prize of comparable or greater value.

**PUBLICITY RELEASE:** By accepting a prize, each winner agrees (through his/her/their parent/legal guardian) to award the Contest Entities the right to publicize his/her/their name, photographs (including the use and appearance of winner's photograph on the Sponsor's websites), likeness, biographical information, e-mail address, voice and details of winning, without further compensation, for purposes of this and future promotions and in any and all advertising promotions, and other publicity conducted by the Capitals, MSE, the NHL and its member teams, except where prohibited by law.

**CONDITIONS.** By entering, entrant agrees to follow the Official Rules of the [Contest](#) and to indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Contest Entities from and against any and all liability, damages or causes of action (however named or described), with respect to or arising out of either entrant's or parent/legal guardian's (a) participation; (b) attendance at any promotion-related events, or (c) the receipt or use of the prizes awarded in the promotion.

**WARRANTY.** By submitting an Essay, you warrant on behalf your child that (a) the Essay is original to and created solely by your Child and was not copied, in whole or in part, from any work belonging to anyone else, (b) the Essay does not violate any copyright laws, and does not plagiarize, libel, slander, defame, disparage, or otherwise infringe on or violate the rights of any third parties, (c) any and all persons identified in the Essay have agreed to be so identified in this Contest; (d) you are legally entitled to submit the Essay in the Contest; (e) the distribution, reproduction, display and any other uses of the Essay by the Capitals as permitted herein will not infringe any third-party rights, including those of any person who is identifiable in the Essay; and (f) the entry complies with these Official Rules. Each entrant agrees to indemnify and hold harmless Contest Entities, their parent companies and subsidiaries, and their respective officers, directors, employees and affiliated organizations, from and against any and all claims, demands, damages, costs, liabilities and causes of action of whatsoever nature that are based upon or arise out of any breach by the entrant of these Official Rules or the warranties and/or representations made by entrant pursuant to these Official Rules. By submitting an Essay, you expressly grant to the Capitals (and to those acting on their behalf) a non-exclusive, perpetual, world-wide royalty-free license (and waive all moral rights in and to the Essay) to display or otherwise use the Essay on the Contest Page and any related sites in connection with this Contest.

**9. DISQUALIFICATION.** The Capitals reserve the right in their sole discretion to disqualify any individual who tampers with the entry process, require the return of any prize or its value, and to cancel, terminate, modify or suspend the Promotion, in which case, winners will be determined from the entries received prior to cancellation, termination, modification or suspension in accordance with the above-referenced criteria.

**10. DISCLAIMER.** The Contest Entities are not responsible for lost, late, illegible, damaged, incomplete, stolen or misdirected entries, typographical or other human or technical errors in the offer or administration of this Contest, including but not limited to errors in advertising, these Official Rules, the selection and announcement of the winners or the distribution of the prizes. The Contest Entities reserve the right to modify these rules for clarification purposes without materially affecting the terms and conditions of the Contest. By participating or accepting any prize, each winner and their respective agents/legal guardians agree that the Capitals, the NHL (and its member teams), MSE and their respective parents, subsidiaries, affiliates, sponsors, directors, officers, governors, employees and agents will have no liability and will be held harmless by winners for any liability, loss, injury or damage to property or to person, including death, due in whole or in part, directly or indirectly, by reason of participation in this promotion, attendance at any Contest-related events, or the acceptance, possession, use or misuse of the prizes or participation in this Contest, even if caused or contributed to by the negligence of the Capitals, MSE, or the NHL or any member teams.

**11. SPONSORS.** This Contest is administered and sponsored by the Washington Capitals, 627 North Glebe Rd. Suite 850, Arlington, VA 22203.