

MEMO

TO: Superintendent Gina Butters, Board President Paul Widdison, WSD Board Members

FROM: Sheri Heiter

DATE: January 20, 2023

SUBJECT: Do the Write Thing Contest - Board Presentation

The Do the Write Thing (DtWT) contest stemmed from the Kuwait-America Foundation’s mission to reduce youth violence in communities throughout the United States and to limit its impact on the lives of our students. This contest is further sponsored by the Utah State Board of Education Prevention and Student Services and the National Campaign to Stop Violence. DtWT offers students in seventh and eighth grades the chance to reflect on the impact of youth violence, bullying, cyberbullying, etc. on their lives and to express in their writing ideas to prevent such violence in the future. The challenge set forth through this competition encourages students to commit to take action to prevent youth violence and to break the cycle of violence in their homes, schools and communities.

The annual competition begins each September and students have until January to submit an essay or poem. Teachers are provided with lesson plans and instructional materials in English Language Arts, Health, Civics and History that can be used to support regular classroom instruction. Once entries have been submitted, they are reviewed by college students and a panel of VIP judges to select the two “National Finalists” for the state of Utah. One male student and one female student are selected from the entries.

Two students at South Ogden Junior High were chosen as the DtWT “National Finalists” for the 2022 contest. Parker Johnson and Peter Thompson, along with their teacher, Kim Irvine, were honored during the June 2, 2022 Utah State Board of Education meeting and then participated with winners from across the country at the National Recognition Week in Washington D.C. in July, 2022. They were also recognized at the state awards luncheon in April, 2022.

Both students will share their experiences with the DtWT challenge and will reflect on how they will take positive action to stop youth violence. Kim Irvine, the Curriculum Teacher Leader over secondary English Language Arts and Fine Arts, will lead the presentation.