

February 4, 2026

Dear District Superintendents and Trustees,

As we welcome the new year and the 250th anniversary of our great country, I want to thank you for your service to our students, parents, educators, and communities and remind you of our priority for Montana students to recognize and celebrate our nation's founding.

Thanks to joint efforts by Governor Greg Gianforte, the Office of Public Instruction (OPI), and the Board of Public Education (BPE), Montana high school students are taking civics courses to fulfill the requirements for high school graduation and ensuring they graduate with a demonstrated understanding of the U.S. system of government and the rights and responsibilities of being a citizen in our constitutional republic. In 2023, we also established the Montana 250th Commission to plan and implement a state program to celebrate the anniversary of the United States and work with education leaders to promote civics education in Montana schools. I hope your schools are engaging with all the exciting events in store for this year, including the administration of the United States Citizenship Exam being offered by the OPI this semester. This is one component necessary for graduating seniors to achieve the Seal of Civics Literacy established by the OPI and BPE this year.

Continuing this progress, and joining Gov. Gianforte, my office is encouraging educators and administrators to support students interested in engaging with and starting registered student organizations that promote constitutional values and civic engagement. Alongside Turning Point USA (TPUSA), we offer our support for TPUSA Club America high school chapters and the opportunities they provide to students to learn, promote peer-to-peer engagement, lead, and advocate for American values in their schools. Whether enrolled in a public school, private school, or homeschool, students have the tools to start a chapter on their campus and make their voices heard.

A Club America chapter is a civic engagement student club of young people who work together to educate their peers about the importance of our nation's founding principles. Starting a chapter is simple:

Step 1: Gather at least three students from the same school.

Step 2: Complete the official Chapter Charter Agreement.

Step 3: Once submitted, the group will be officially recognized as a Club America chapter.

Currently, over 20 Montana high schools have active Club America chapters, and we are encouraged at the possibility of more. If your administrators, educators, or students have any questions, please reach out to our office or visit <https://www.clubamerica.com/>. I encourage you to share this letter with your high school students, teachers, and families.

Sincerely,

*Susie Hedalen*

Susie Hedalen  
Superintendent of Public Instruction

Cc: Governor Greg Gianforte