



Americans Against Gun Violence
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Our 2026 High School Essay Contest, with at least \$15,000 in total scholarship awards, is now open to all U.S. high school students.

To enter the contest, students must submit an essay of 500 words or fewer describing their thoughts about the following statement by Dr. Michael North, who lost his daughter, Sophie, in the 1996 Dunblane Primary School mass shooting, and who subsequently helped lead the successful campaign to ban handguns in Great Britain:

“The thought of having armed guards and ‘lockdown drills’ never crossed our minds.”



Dunblane Primary School class photo provided by Dr. Michael North. Sophie North (the second child from the left in the second row from the bottom), the teacher, and 15 other children in the photo were killed in the 1996 mass shooting.

The deadline for students to enter the contest is April 18, 2026. For full contest details and the online entry form, go to the High School Essay Contest page of the Americans Against Gun Violence website.