



TEACHER TOOLKIT

Low-cost, high-impact ways to celebrate America's 250th Anniversary in K-12 Schools



ALL GRADES (K-12)

- ▶ Say the **Pledge of Allegiance** every day.
- ▶ Hold a “Freedom Minute”. Highlight one fact for each day from American and/or North Dakota history over the last 250 years. See the 25 North Dakota Freedom Minute Facts.
- ▶ Commemorate Veterans Week. Invite veterans to school to talk to classes and/or the whole school about their experiences serving our nation.
- ▶ Designate certain days as “Red, White, and Blue Day”, encouraging students to wear these colors on those days (for example, every Friday or the first Friday of the month).
- ▶ Host a grade-appropriate American art competition or display, such as flag artwork for elementary students, paintings of American landscapes for middle school students, or copies of iconic American art pieces for high school students. This artwork could be displayed in school hallways.
- ▶ Hold 250th- themed science fairs/innovation competitions, appropriate for each grade level, with a focus on the theme of building the next 250 years.
- ▶ Fly the 1776 flag.

Elementary

- ▶ Memorize the **Declaration of Independence**, either the opening or the full document. Schools could host a recitation event for parents to attend.
- ▶ Memorize Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s poem “**Paul Revere’s Ride**”.
- ▶ Memorize key excerpts of the **Patrick Henry speech**.
- ▶ Perform patriotic songs.
- ▶ Highlight a different American hero each day. These could be figures from government, military, business, leaders of major national movements such as the Civil Rights Movement, innovators, cultural and sports icons, etc.
- ▶ Designate a Living History Day, where students dress up as a historical figure from American history.
- ▶ Host a colonial meal.
- ▶ Take a field trip to the “ND 250 Road Trip: Our American Story” exhibit at the North Dakota Heritage Center & State Museum in Bismarck, opening at the end of June.



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Middle School

- ▶ Memorize the **Declaration of Independence**, either the opening or the full document. Schools could host a recitation event for parents to attend.
- ▶ Organize a dramatic reading of the **Declaration of Independence**.
- ▶ Show the White House's "**The Story of America**" video series (10 minutes each).
- ▶ Designate a Living History Day, where students dress as historical figures from American history.
- ▶ Perform scenes from the musical "**1776**".
- ▶ Take a field trip to the "ND 250 Road Trip: Our American Story" exhibit at the North Dakota Heritage Center & State Museum in Bismarck, opening at the end of June.
- ▶ Write an essay about why you love America.

High School

- ▶ Convene a mock Continental Congress to debate the Declaration of Independence.
- ▶ Perform the musical "**1776**".
- ▶ Perform "**Cato**", George Washington's favorite play. He had it performed for the troops.
- ▶ Host orchestra concerts focused on American music. These might be works by **Irving Berlin**, show tunes, or masterpieces by Aaron Copland, etc.
- ▶ Show the White House's "**The Story of America**" video series (10 minutes each).

* These ideas are intended to provide a springboard for your own initiatives that would best serve your students. Teachers are among the most creative people, and we know you will have many additional ideas.