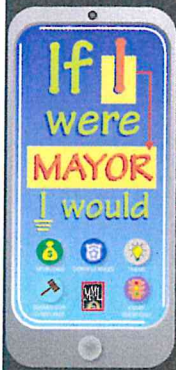


# If I Were Mayor, I Would..." Digital Essay Contest



Dear Mayor and Council,

The best way to ensure students understand how municipal government works is to hear it directly from an official. Please consider conducting a school visit before the essay contest deadline of **March 8\***. We've found that, often, the strongest essays come from schools that have had the opportunity to hear from and ask questions of a municipal official about municipal government, its role in the community and what a Mayor does.

This year's essay theme is **Inspiring Leadership in your City/Town/Community**. To help strengthen the students' understanding, feel free to give real-world examples revolved around the essay contest questions, which can be found on the enclosed essay contest materials.

The contest information can be found on MML's website: **[mdmunicipal.org/2024-Essay](http://mdmunicipal.org/2024-Essay)**

## Key information

- The 4th grade classrooms of all public and private schools will be mailed the contest rules in **January**. Teachers are encouraged to reach out to local officials and request a school visit. Please try to accommodate them if you are contacted.
- We know municipalities like to have their own essay contest, but to avoid confusion, please do not start your municipal essay contest until our contest deadline is over.
- The essay contest is open to all Maryland 4th grade students enrolled during the 2023-2024 school year. One winner from each participating MML district will be invited to participate in a ceremony. Winners will also receive a cash prize and a Governor's citation.
- Please note new and earlier dates for essay contest deadlines (**March 8**). Please share this with your local schools.
- Please review the submission guidelines to familiarize yourself with the digital process.

## **Important Digital Essay Contest Information**

***Please note early deadline of March 8, 2024.\****

***No entry form mail-in option available.***

**Digital entry form available only at [mdmunicipal.org/2024-Essay](http://mdmunicipal.org/2024-Essay)**

***Essays must be received by MML by March 8, 2024.***

**Essays must be teacher-sponsored with a completed *digital* entry form.**

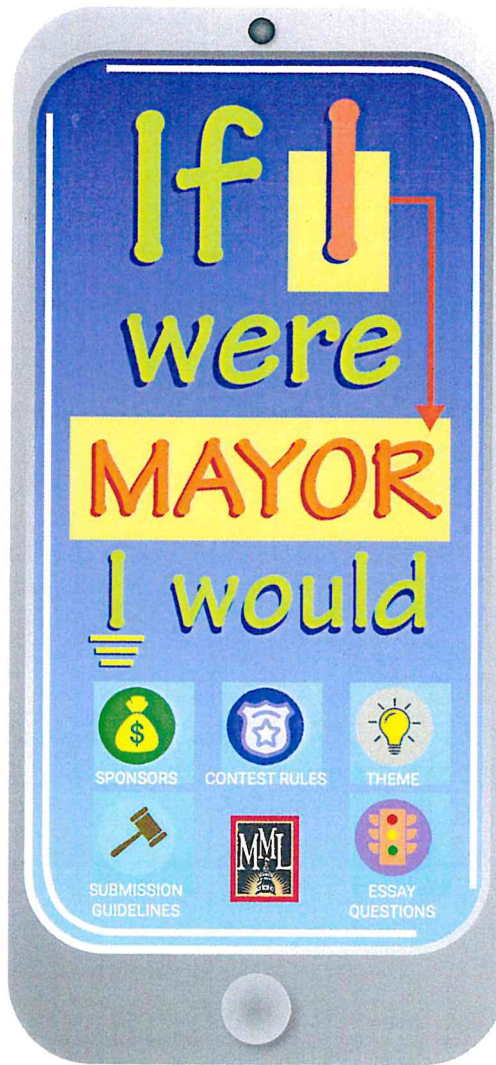
**Winners will be notified by early April 2024.**



If you were mayor,  
what would you do?

Encourage more  
recycling ♻️👤

Make our playgrounds  
safe for everyone



#NoMorePotholes

Build more parks  
and playgrounds

Make summer  
breaks longer!!!!



## Inspiring Leadership in your City/Town/Community

Imagine your town is like a big team and the mayor is the captain. It takes an entire team to be successful. The mayor's job is not only to make important decisions, but also to inspire other people in the town to be leaders too. There are a few ways that elected officials inspire leadership in others:

- They listen to the people in the town. This shows that they care about what everyone has to say.
- Sometimes they plan projects that everyone can participate in, like cleaning up a park or helping people who need it. When the mayor rolls up their sleeves and works hard, it shows that leaders are willing to do the work, and it makes others want to help too.
- Elected officials also celebrate the cool things that make a town/community special. Whether it's a fun festival or a parade to honor the community, the mayor helps keep these things alive. This reminds everyone of the great things about your town and why they want to be leaders in it.
- Finally, good officials make choices that are good for the whole town, not just a few people.

So, a mayor inspires leadership by listening, encouraging, working together, celebrating, and being honest and fair. Think about your city/town/community and the leaders you see.



## If you were Mayor...

1. What would you do to inspire leadership in your city/town/community?
2. Describe a project you would undertake to make others want to help make the city/town/community better





## Submission Guidelines

We are pleased that you and your students remain interested in participating in MML's essay contest. It's an easy and fun activity to help students understand the government closest to the people. Each year we receive thousands of entries. Unfortunately, some essays are disqualified because instructions and rules were not followed. Full submission guidelines, FAQ and digital entry form are found at [mdmunicipal.org/2024-Essay](http://mdmunicipal.org/2024-Essay).

- Complete the digital essay form entirely
- Each teacher must submit a digital entry form. No group forms or multiple teachers per form.
- You will receive access to a shareable Dropbox folder specific to your school's Maryland Municipal League District
- All essays must be combined into a single file
- Number each essay at top of page
- Word documents or PDF files only
- Handwritten essays may be scanned or sent via jpeg, as long as the scan/photo are combined into a single PDF file
- Name the combined essay file in the following manner
  - o School Name(dot)Teacher's Last Name(dot)Number of Essays within file
  - o EXAMPLE: FarmElementary.Mason.25
- Upload file into Dropbox Folder
- **NEW INFORMATION:** In late April, eleven regional winners along with their parents and teacher will be recognized during an awards ceremony.
- Only regional winners are notified directly.



## Contest Rules

The contest is open to all Maryland students enrolled in the 4th grade during the 2023-24 school year.

- **All essays must be returned via digital method. Mailed entries will not be accepted.**
- All essays must begin with the opening line: **"If I Were Mayor, I Would..."**
- Essays may not exceed 275 words.
- Only one essay may be submitted per student.
- Essays will be judged by contest sponsors in the following areas: essay relation to contest topic; displayed knowledge about municipal government and the role of a mayor; creativity; and proper use of grammar.
- Students must include their first and last names, school and teacher's name at the top of their essays.

**• NEW DEADLINE: Essays must be received no later than March 8, 2024**

- Winners will be notified by early April. Runners up will be notified by mid-May.
- Check [mdmunicipal.org/mayors-essay-contest](http://mdmunicipal.org/mayors-essay-contest) for a full list of finalists (winning student) and semi-finalists anytime late April.



**This year's winners will receive:**

- Cash Prize
- Governor's Citation

**All entry forms must be submitted online at [mdmunicipal.org/2024-Essay](http://mdmunicipal.org/2024-Essay)**



## Maryland Municipal League

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) founded in 1936, represents 160 of Maryland's local governments. A voluntary, nonprofit, nonpartisan association controlled and maintained by city and town governments, MML works to strengthen the role and capacity of municipal government through research, legislation, technical assistance, training, and the dissemination of information to its members.



## Sponsors

