

**'VOLD' CON'T FROM PAGE 1**

communicator, television presenter, and former mechanical engineer. He is best known as the host of the science education television show Bill Nye the Science Guy and as a science educator in pop culture. Nye began his career as a mechanical engineer for Boeing in Seattle, where he invented a hydraulic resonance suppressor tube used on 747 airplanes. He pitched his children's television program, which ran from 1993 to 1998 in national television syndication. He was nominated for 23 Emmy Awards, winning 19, including Outstanding Performer in Children's Programming."

The competition is through an organization called Colossal, a registered public charity, with all the donations going to the Planetary Society. According to their website, "Colossal creates life-changing opportunities through online competitions that give people the platform to win big while making a global impact. Each competition raises vital funds and awareness for important causes, empowering

participants to be part of something greater and fueling meaningful change around the world."

Vold said that in total, there are nine rounds in the competition. Some days there are double votes available and people can also donate extra for Vold to receive more votes.

The top 20 began March 16 and ended March 26. The competition went on with the top 16 which ended on April 2. The top 10 ended April 9 and the top 5 competitors were chosen by April 16. Group finals began on April 16 and will end on April 23. It will reduce the total competitors to one preliminary winner in each group finals. Those competitors will go on to the Quarterfinals. The Wildcard Round will begin on April 24 and will end on April 26. Competitors who took second place in their respective group finals will compete in a shortened round for a chance to advance to the Quarterfinals. Votes will be reset, and public voting will determine the top one from each

group. Quarterfinals will begin April 27 and end May 7. Semifinals will begin May 8 and end May 14 and Finals will begin May 15 and end May 21. Votes will be reset, and public voting will determine which one of the finalists will be the winner of the 2026 America's Favorite Teacher Competition and win the grand prize. Grand Prize winner will be announced on or around June 5, 2026.

Currently in first place on the fourth round, Vold said each round is extended for a certain number of days with the first round running longer. Those who would like to vote for Vold can do so through Facebook or online at americasfavteacher.org/2026/maggie-vold.

This is Vold's fifth year teaching at Drayton Public School, however she has worked at the school for the past 12 years, serving as a para professional prior to her employment as the preschool teacher.

She said what she loves most about teaching is working with the students and preparing for each day, which always merits new and exciting moments.

"I love working with this age," Vold said. "Their enthusiasm when they learn new things is so fun to see."

Along with her husband Matt and their children, Vold moved to the Drayton area in 2011. They have three children: Grant, 20, Jocelyn, 17, and Mac, 6. Having originally been raised in Grand Forks, Vold said everything seems slower in a small town and she likes that pace of life.

"Everyone knows everybody, and people look out for each other," Vold said. "Everyone is so community-minded."

Although she said her preschool students don't say much about the competition, she gets many comments from the older students. She said she has students say to her often, "You are still number one, Mrs. Vold."

Vold also leads Wednesday Worship at Drayton Lutheran Church, a Christian program for area youth. She

is a member of the Parent Teacher Association (PTO) at Drayton Public School. She also helps organize and take part in Rib Fest during Drayton's Riverfest Celebration each summer.

According to Vold, she enjoys doing things for the students to enhance their learning and bring new and exciting things to the school.

"This would be something for the entire school to enjoy," Vold said. "I think they would all enjoy it and would get to meet a famous scientist in the process who they can learn from. The whole community would maybe come as well."

Although Vold said she could never come up with anything to truly show how grateful she is to the community for their encouragement and support, she wanted to give a special thank you to those who have consistently voted for her on a daily basis.

"I am truly overwhelmed with gratitude for the incredible support I've received so far in the America's Favorite Teacher contest," Vold said. "Every single vote means more than I can put into words. To know that people are taking time out of their busy days to support me, and in turn, support our students means everything!"

Vold said she is also thankful for everyone who has shared her page on Facebook and encouraged others to vote.

**"That kind of support spreads so far and truly makes a difference. This journey isn't really about me. It's about the school and the students I care so deeply about. The possibility of bringing Bill Nye to our school is so exciting, and the impact it could have on our kids would be unforgettable. The additional funding would also go such a long way in creating meaningful learning experiences for them. Thank you all for believing in this dream with me. I am beyond thankful, and I truly appreciate each and every one of you."**

**Competition Timeline**

- March 16-26  
Top 20 round
- March 26-April 2  
Top 16 round
- April 2-9  
Top 10 round
- By April 16  
Top 5 competitors selected
- April 16-23  
Group Finals
- One preliminary winner advances from each group
- April 24-26  
Wildcard Round
- Second-place finishers compete for remaining Quarterfinal spots  
Votes reset; public voting determines winners
- April 27-May 7  
Quarterfinals
- May 8-14  
Semifinals
- May 15-21  
Finals
- Votes reset; public voting determines overall winner
- On or around June 5, 2026  
Grand Prize Winner Announced



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**ND250 Commission Awards Nearly \$30K in Community Grants**

The ND250 Commission has awarded five community grants totaling \$27,442 to support projects across North Dakota that celebrate and promote the upcoming 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence. The ND250 Community Initiatives Grant Program helps organizations and local governments develop engaging projects that honor North Dakota's influential role in America's story.

Grant recipients include:

- 31:8 Project- \$10,000 for a 250th USA Anniversary Car Show on the North Dakota Capitol grounds on July 3, 2026
- Alexander Public School- \$1,000 for a field trip to the North Dakota Heritage Center & State Museum
- Bonanzaville- \$3,892 to print replicas of the Declaration of Independence using an 1890 newspaper printing press
- ND Strong- \$6,275 to produce a documentary on North Dakota beekeepers, pollinators, and prairie ecosystems supporting American agriculture and food security
- Nome Eweniversity- \$6,275 for a 15-minute documentary celebrating America's founding and Nome's 125th anniversary
- The ND250 Commission received 25 applications, which were reviewed and scored by a select committee.

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