



STUDENT GOVERNMENT DAY PROGRAM

In 1947, the Massachusetts Legislature enacted a program called Student Government Day (originally Good Government Day) which is traditionally held in early April. This is an informative program about state government that includes students participating in the role of elected or appointed officials to “observe the processes of government.”

The program provides educators and students from Massachusetts’s public and private high schools with many opportunities to learn first hand about state government. It enables government officials to have contact with students. It allows students to voice their positions on important current issues through prepared debates. It enables students to participate in the legislative process through simulated committee hearings and House and Senate formal sessions. It provides the opportunity for students to exchange views with their peers throughout the state on statewide issues.

How does this program work?

1. The process is similar to that followed by locally elected officials. Elections are held in high schools throughout the Commonwealth to elect the student representatives and alternates. Students may take out nomination papers, run campaigns, and participate in debates and other such activities when running for “office.”
2. Students will be assigned by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to fill the roles of senators, representatives, constitutional officers, and justices of the Supreme Court.
3. A packet of information will be sent from the Department to student representatives and adults in early February informing them of their roles on Student Government Day. Additional information will be provided regarding the program, the roles of various positions, bills that will be debated, and the state governmental system.
4. Student Government Day will be held on **Friday, April 9, 2010**. On this day, students are able to experience the roles of members of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of state government. All students will participate in the simulated committee hearing. Others will meet various elected and appointed office holders and staff as they carry out their daily activities.