

2025-2026 United States Senate Youth Program

Information Session for Massachusetts' Selection Process



Agenda

- Background
- Key Information
- Key Dates
- Eligibility Requirements
- Application Materials
- Links for Additional Information
- QA

United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) - Background

- Created by Senate Resolution 324 in 1962 to nurture high school students' interests in pursuing careers in public service.
- Mission is to provide student leaders with an in-depth view of the Senate and federal government and a deeper understanding of the interrelationship of the legislative, judicial, and executive branches.

...increase young Americans' understanding of the interrelationship of the three branches of government, the caliber and responsibilities of federally elected and appointed officials, and the vital importance of democratic decision making not only for America but for people around the world.

(United States Senate Youth Program)

Key Information

- Two (2) Massachusetts delegates will be selected to:
 - Receive a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship
 - Represent Massachusetts (MA) at Washington Week (March 7-14, 2026)
 - Transportation, hotel, and meal expenses will be provided by The Hearst Foundations
 - Meet with U.S. senators and other Senate leaders, a Supreme Court justice, officials from the Departments of Defense and State and other federal agencies, and senior members of the national media
- Delegates must participate in Washington Week in accordance with all rules in order to receive the undergraduate college scholarship
 - Parents/guardians cannot chaperone
 - Roommates will be determined by USSYP
 - No arrangements for religious practices or services other than dietary guidelines will be provided

Key Dates

- **October 3, 2025, 9:00 PM: Applications Due**
 - Completed materials must be emailed to Achievment@mass.gov by the deadline
 - Incomplete applications will not be considered
 - Please use the *2025-2026 USSYP Application Checklist*
- **By October 22:** Finalists will be notified of advancement to the final round
- **October 23-November 10:** Reference checks and interviews with finalists
- **By end of January 2026:** Two (2) primary delegates and two (2) alternate delegates will be notified and announced

Eligibility Requirements

Student applicant must:

- Be a high school junior or senior in a MA high school for the entire 2025-2026 school year.
- Not have been a delegate to Washington Week or received a USSYP scholarship.
- Be a legal permanent resident or citizen of the United States at the time of application. Students who are not United States Citizens must be in possession of their I-551 / “green card” at the time of application.
- Live in MA for the entire academic year (2025-2026); at least one of the parents/legal guardians must currently reside in MA. Home-schooled students must be approved by DESE to apply. Please email DESE with questions about unaccompanied or emancipated youth.
- Show demonstrated leadership by serving in elected or appointed qualified leadership position(s) in which they are ***actively representing a constituency*** in organizations related to student government, education, public affairs, and/or community service.
- Be able to attend the entire Washington Week program (March 7 – 14, 2026).

Eligible Leadership Positions

- Student body president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer
- Class president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer
- Student Council representative
- A National Honor Society officer (including discipline-based Honor Societies such as the National English and Social Studies Honor Societies that include service components)
- Commander or Squadron Leader of a JROTC
- Student representative elected or appointed (by a panel, commission or board) to a local, state, regional or national-level civic or educational organization, where the student holds a high-level, year-round leadership position representing a constituency and/or providing service to others (to be approved by DESE)

Positions Not Eligible

Positions listed below are NOT considered “qualifying leadership posts:”

- Attendance or officer position at Boys/Girls Nation or State, or Junior State conferences
- Member of a National Honor Society
- Member or leader of the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, or a sports team
- An internship or job, or a founder or chairperson of a self-created group
- A participant, captain or officer in Mock Trial, Debate Team, Model UN or other academic club, mock legislature, conference or competition where the primary engagement is for individual educational benefit

Application Materials

Available on [MA U.S. Senate Youth Program](#)

- 2025-2026 USSYP Application Checklist
- 2025-2026 USSYP Student Application Form - Massachusetts
 - Student signature attesting to the acceptable uses of artificial intelligence
 - Parent/guardian signature(s)
 - Two (2) essays (attached separately)
- 2025-2026 USSYP School Administrator Form
 - School principal signature
 - Organization advisor or counselor signature
- 2025-2026 USSYP Statement Confirming Truth and Accuracy of Application Materials
- At least one (1) letter of support with contact information

Submission Protocol

Student applicant:

- Saves each application document with the name of the document and the student's first initial/last name (e.g., *2025-2026 USSYP Student Application Form – Y.Liu*)
 - Completed and signed student application and two (2) essays
 - Completed and signed administrator form(s)
 - At least one (1) letter of support with contact information
 - Signed statement confirming truth and accuracy of application materials
- Emails the documents to: Achievement@mass.gov by **9:00 PM October 3, 2025**
 - Copies (Cc) the school administrator on the email
 - Adds to the subject line of the email as: 2025-2026 USSYP Application for [Student's First Initial and Last Name; name of school/district] (e.g., *2025-2026 USSYP Application for Y.Liu; Lewis HS/Lewisville PS*)

Links for Additional Information

- Massachusetts-specific information: [Massachusetts U.S. Senate Youth Program](#)
- The Hearst Foundations: [United States Senate Youth Program](#)
- Other Questions: Juin Liu (Yi-Juin.Liu@Mass.Gov)

Questions?