**Frequently Asked Questions Regarding Student Government Day (SGD)**

**1. What is Student Government Day?**

The goal of this event is to provide an immersive experience in the state legislative process by allowing students to engage with representatives and empowering them to voice their own informed views on current legislation. Students will assemble at the State House to replicate activities of the General Court (Massachusetts State Legislature) by debating and voting on legislation. The **elected** student from each school will be assigned a role as a senator, representative, or justice prior to the event. All students will hear from legislative leaders and have the opportunity to give testimony on two current bills before the General Court. Depending on their assigned role, students will then continue debating legislation or observe state government from the perspective of a Supreme Court justice.

**2. How are students elected?**
Schools should elect **one** student representative and **one** alternate in case the elected student is not able to attend that day. While the method of electing a student representative may vary from school to school, the following standard procedures are recommended:

1. Elections should be school-wide, with candidates limited to juniors and seniors.
2. Elections should be open to *all juniors and seniors*, regardless of academic performance or placement in advanced government classes
3. To allow more students the opportunity to participate, no student who has been the school’s elected student designee or student alternate should run for re-election.
4. Elections should be conducted in the spirit of [M.G.L. Chapter 6, Section 12M](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleII/Chapter6/Section12M), which states, "Such elections shall be conducted under the supervision of the principals…and insofar as possible, shall be conducted as are elections of members of the General Court."

**4. Who attends Student Government Day?**

**One elected student** and **one student alternate** can attend per school. **One** faculty advisor or other approved adult per school can attend with the elected student. While we welcome both students' attendance, we cannot guarantee that alternates will have role assignments that involve active participation in debate unless they are filling in for the elected student.

**5. What does the day look like?**

This year, Student Government Day will run from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., which will include lunch and extended time for students to enact their assigned roles. Students and chaperones should plan to arrive at 9:00 a.m. to pass through security. Students then will begin the day’s activities at 10:00 a.m.; from that point on the chaperones/and or faculty advisors attending are welcome to watch from the House chamber or participate in separate programming specifically for them. Students will be released at 2:00 p.m., and we ask that all students are able to commit to staying for the duration of the program.

**6.** **What do students need to do/know to be prepared for Student Government Day?**

Students should read the Student Government Day Handbook (available on website) *prior* to attendance in order to learn the expectations for the day and any background knowledge necessary. Advisors should inform students of their role as soon as they receive that information, which will be posted on the website in early March. Once the bills are selected and posted, students can complete the brief pre-work posted on the website.

**7**. **How can I involve other students in the day?**

While only ***two*** students, one elected and one alternate, in the 11th-12th grade can attend the actual event, Student Government Day is a great opportunity to develop knowledge of the state legislative process. The National Conference of State Legislatures offers [contextual materials;](http://www.ncsl.org/documents/public/trust/lessonplans_hs.pdf) there are complete lesson plans with student handouts embedded.

The bills being debated during SGD will be posted on the website along with accompanying questions related to the topics of the bills. We encourage the elected students to gather a range of opinions on these bills before they attend, including from their peers. Faculty advisors and other teachers in the 11/12th grade may consider possible forums for other students in the school to learn about the bills and share their opinions with the elected students who will attend the event. Just as the state representatives seek out the voices of their constituents when considering new legislation, elected students should hear and weigh the opinions of their peers as their own ‘constituents’.

**8. Is transportation provided for SGD?**
Transportation is not provided. However, we recognize this may pose a unique challenge this year if the event is hosted in person given the busing shortages many districts are currently facing. We do not want your school's participation to be limited by this factor, and are committed to working with your school if this is an issue. The State House is located at 24 Beacon Street, Boston, MA, 02133. [State House Directions](http://www.malegislature.gov/Engage/Directions).

**9. Is there parking at the State House?**
The Massachusetts State House does not have public parking facilities. We recommend using public transportation, as it is more convenient and less expensive. The nearest parking facility to the State House is the Boston Common Garage, operated by the Massachusetts Convention Center Authority. Information can be obtained at (617) 954-2096 or at [MCCA Boston Common Garage page](http://massconvention.com/about-us/boston-common-garage).

**10.** **Is public transportation to the State House available?**
The State House is a short walk from the Park Street stop on the MBTA's Red and Green Lines and from Government Center on the Green and Blue Lines. Information on bus and train schedules, rates, and routes can be obtained from the [Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA)](http://www.mbta.com/), (617) 222-3200, or toll free at 1-800-392-6100.

Information on Commuter Rail options to North and South Stations can be obtained from the MBTA at (617) 222-3200. For schedule and rate information about Commuter Boats, please contact Boston Harbor Cruises in (617) 227-4321 (Charlestown) or (781) 749-8009 (Hingham).

**11. Is lunch provided?**
Yes, students will receive lunch as part of the programming this year.

**12. What should students wear?**
Appropriate dress for the day consists of business attire, including proper footwear. Attire such as jeans, T shirts, sneakers, sandals, and flip flops are not considered appropriate.

**13. What should students bring?**
All other materials will be provided in the packets students will receive at registration. Please note that **we discourage students from bringing backpacks, purses, or other such items to the State House,** as these must be searched, which may delay timely registration. Food and beverages are not allowed in the auditorium or chambers where the day's activities will take place. Also note that students are not permitted to bring any type of campaign materials to the event.