**STUDENT GOVERNMENT DAY 2025 SPEECH COMPETITION**

Congratulations on being your school's **elected** representative for Student Government Day 2025! This honor includes the opportunity to participate in a speech competition that will be used to select a student to act as governor at Student Government Day on Friday, April 4, 2025.

***This competition is open ONLY to the elected student representative; submissions from alternates will NOT be accepted. Only ONE (1) student will be selected to serve as student governor.***

**Overview**

The Student Government Day (SGD) Team is inviting all **elected** student representatives to participate in a speech competition from which they will select ONE (1) student to act as governor and ONE (1) student to act as lieutenant governor. The governor and lieutenant governor will give their speeches on Student Government Day to a joint convening of the Senate and House. The purpose of this competition is to give students an opportunity to share and showcase their voice, passion, and civic knowledge, skills, and mindsets.

**Submission Deadline**

All speech competition submissions are due on or before **Sunday, February 23, 2024**.Submissions should be emailed to studentgovday@doe.mass.edu, and must include both a written script and audio or audio/visual file.

**Speech Criteria**

* Submissions will be reviewed based on *originality of ideas*, *organization of ideas*, and *overall understanding* of the topic.
* Speeches should be **non-partisan.** This means they cannot support or endorse a particular candidate; however, they can support or endorse a particular bill or idea.
	+ Speeches CANNOT support or endorse a particular candidate.
* Speeches should be no more than two minutes in length.
* Submissions must include BOTH (1) a written speech (doc, docx, or PDF) and (2) an audio or video recording of the student delivering the speech (mp3, mp4, mov). *The video recording*

**Speeches should respond to one of the two topics on the following page.**

**Topic Option 1:** In November 2018, [Chapter 296 of the Acts of 2018](https://malegislature.gov/Laws/SessionLaws/Acts/2018/Chapter296), *An Act to Promote and Enhance Civic Engagement*, was signed into law, which includes provisions related to civics education, including student-led civics projects in both Grade 8 and high school. The Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education published a [Civics Projects Guidebook](https://www.doe.mass.edu/instruction/hss/civics-project-guidebook/index.html#/lessons/Io2YzQhuch-KQI-T0ZQBGGxxnDJr66f2) to support project implementation. The Guidebook frames access to civics education as an equity issue:

***Every student regardless of race, class, ethnicity, religion, education, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation****, or disability has the right to civics education, including…applied learning.*

Write and record a speech discussing the way(s) that you and your fellow students from across the Commonwealth can strengthen youth civic engagement and ensure that every student in Massachusetts has access to high-quality civics learning opportunities. We encourage you to draw from your lived experiences, in addition to your vision for the future, and to consider what civic engagement means, looks, and feels like to you.

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**Topic Option 2:** In June 2018, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to adopt an updated version of the [History/Social Science Framework.](https://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/hss/2018-12.pdf) Guiding Principle 2 of the updated Framework emphasizes that history and social science instruction should be inclusive of diverse perspectives; challenge students to think critically about power, prejudice, and oppression; and be responsive to students' multiple identities. Guiding Principle 2 reads:

***An effective history and social science education incorporates diverse perspectives and acknowledges that perceptions of events are affected by race, ethnicity, culture, religion, education, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and personal experience.***

*The traditional motto of the United States is “E pluribus unum” – out of many, one. A history and social science education that does justice to the remarkable diversity of our country must tell the histories of individuals and groups, and honor a plurality of life stories while acknowledging our ongoing struggle to achieve a more perfect union. Teaching how the concepts of freedom, equality, the rule of law, and human rights have influenced United States and world history necessarily involves discussions of race, ethnicity, culture, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and other characteristics. Effective instruction challenges students to value their own heritage while embracing our common ideals and shared experiences as they develop their own rigorous thinking about accounts of events. Effective instruction celebrates the progress the United States has made in embracing diversity, while at the same time encouraging honest and informed academic discussions about prejudice, racism, and bigotry in the past and present.*

Write and record a speech discussing the way(s) that you and your fellow students from across the Commonwealth can help ensure that every student in Massachusetts has access to inclusive and affirming history and social science instruction. We encourage you to draw from your lived experiences, in addition to your vision for the future, and to consider what an inclusive classroom and curriculum mean, look, and feel like to you.