



Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools

TO: Local Education Agency Superintendents
Heads of Nonpublic Schools

FROM: Mohammed Choudhury
State Superintendent of Schools

DATE: August 25, 2023

SUBJECT: 2024 United States Senate Youth Program

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) is pleased to announce an opportunity for two Maryland students to participate in the 2024 United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP). Each year, two students from every state and the District of Columbia are selected to attend a week-long government and leadership program in the nation's capital, Washington, D.C. This program, now in its 62nd year, is fully funded by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation. The USSYP has an excellent reputation for providing outstanding student leaders with a unique experience in understanding our nation's political process. The one-week program allows students the opportunity to meet with legislative, executive, and judicial leaders to discuss political issues that affect our nation. Each participant also receives a one-time \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship and is encouraged to pursue coursework in history and political science.

The attached guidelines outline the process that will be used to nominate two students to represent Maryland. Please disseminate this guidance to all high school principals to ensure eligible students have an opportunity to participate.

Nomination forms may be scanned and emailed to ussyp.msde@maryland.gov. If you need additional information, please contact Reginald Burke, Director, Youth Development Branch, Division of Student Support, Academic Enrichment, and Educational Policy by email at reginald.burke@maryland.gov or by phone at (410) 767-0358.

Enclosures

Cc: Senior High School Principals/Counselors
Local Education Agency Points of Contact

OBJECTIVES

The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP), funded by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, is sanctioned by the United States Senate under the authority of Senate Resolution 324, passed by unanimous vote on April 16, 1962. The program was developed for outstanding high school student leaders interested in political science. The objective of the program is to provide these students with opportunities to observe and converse with elected and appointed government officials at the national level.

PROGRAM FORMAT

The State Superintendent of Schools, in accordance with the rules outlined below, selects two elected high school students. The selected students will receive an all-expense-paid one-week trip to Washington, D.C. Two alternates will also be selected to replace primary delegates in the event that they are unable to participate in the program. The program will be held March 2 – 9, 2024. Plans are being made to have students meet with their State senators, members of the cabinet, and other government leaders. Students will also tour many of Washington’s historic landmarks.

SCHOLARSHIP

A \$10,000 scholarship, subject to the conditions and requirements established by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, will be awarded to each student participating in the program. Additional information concerning the scholarship will be provided to each delegate upon their arrival in Washington.

ELIGIBILITY RULES

1. High school juniors or seniors currently serving in any of the following elected or appointed positions during school year 2023-2024 are eligible for nomination:
 - a) Student Body president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer;
 - b) Class president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer;
 - c) Student council representative;
 - d) A National Honor Society officer (including discipline-based Honor Societies such as the National English and Social Studies Honor Societies that include service components);
 - e) Student representative elected or appointed to a local, district, regional or state-level civic, service and/or educational organization approved by the state selection administrator; or
 - f) Junior Reserve Officers Training Corps (JROTC) commander or leader.

Note: Students serving in elected or appointed positions not mentioned above are not eligible to participate. If the student council or class organization of a school has an elected or appointed position that is not listed in 'a' or 'b' above, an explanation of the position must be attached. Any high school junior or senior student who has been a delegate to Washington Week and received an USSYP scholarship is not eligible to participate.

2. Participation in academic clubs and/or educational competition programs or conferences does not qualify a student for the USSYP, although many students who qualify participate in programs of this nature. The positions listed below do NOT qualify the student for the program:

Attendance or officer position at Boys/Girls Nation/State summer conference;

- a) Member of the National Honor Society (serving as an elected officer for the organization for the entire school year is acceptable);
 - b) A founder or chair of a self-created group; and
 - c) A participant or officer in Mock Trial, Model U.N., or other academic club, conference, or competition.
3. Students must be a United States citizen or legal permanent resident, at the time of application, and currently enrolled in a public or nonpublic secondary school in the state in which at least one of their parents/guardians legally resides. A student attending a school in a state other than the student's state of legal residence of either of the student's parents/guardians is also not eligible. (For exemptions refer to the USSYP brochure under How to Qualify #2)
 4. All students, regardless of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation are eligible for selection as long as they are currently serving in an elected position as outlined in #1 above.

NOMINATIONS

Each principal may nominate one eligible student. The following suggestions may be helpful in conducting the process at the school level:

1. Assign one person to coordinate the initiative and serve as a contact person;
2. Disseminate information about the program by using all channels of communication;
3. Ask teachers to encourage eligible students to participate;
4. Use a screening process to select a nominee. The Hearst Foundation advises that the selection be based on a demonstration of leadership ability, high scholastic standing, demonstrated ability to achieve, clear speech, logical thought processes, and community involvement with participation in a wide selection of activities on and off campus. Nominees should also have a strong knowledge of, and interest in, government studies and public service; and
5. Ensure that the nominee meets the eligibility requirements. Schools who nominate ineligible students will forfeit their eligibility to participate in the program.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

1. Using the attached nomination form, email the school's nomination to:
ussyp.msde@maryland.gov
2. If you have any questions regarding the nomination form, please contact Michele Moore by email at michele.moore@maryland.gov or by phone at (410) 767-0358.
3. **Deadline Date and Time: Nomination form and a one-minute video in MP4 format by email must be received at the Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) by Monday, October 9, 2023, no later than 1:00 p.m.**
4. The students will be notified by email for the exam date(s) and location(s) on or before Monday, October 23, 2023.
5. The top ten scoring students will be notified by email to the students' email address on or before Thursday, November 9, 2023, of their selection to participate in the interview process at MSDE.
6. The top ten scoring students will be interviewed by a panel of MSDE staff on Tuesday, November 14, 2023. The interview panel will select two delegates and two alternates to represent Maryland in the program.
7. The State Superintendent of Schools will provide the names of the two selected students and two alternates to the Hearst Foundation. The Hearst Foundation will notify the student delegates and the two alternate delegates of their selection by the end of February 2024. MSDE cannot release the names of selected students until after the students are notified by the Hearst Foundation.

***The exam questions will reflect many of the current political issues and significant individuals in state and federal government. Students should also have knowledge about the Constitution, government structure, and congressional, presidential, and judicial responsibilities. Students will be expected to apply their knowledge of government and analyze government issues. It may be helpful to review weekly news publications and government/civics textbooks.**



2024 United States Senate Youth Program

Mohammed Choudhury, State Superintendent of Schools

SCHOOL NOMINATION FORM

Name of Nominee (include middle name): _____

Male/Female: _____ Students' Cell Phone: _____

Students' Email: _____

Are you a permanent resident of the United States? _____ Yes _____ No

Parents' Name(s): _____

Parent's Cell Phone: _____ Parents' Email: _____

Parent's Home Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Local Education Agency/County Name: _____

School Name: _____ Grade: _____

School Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

School Contact Person: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

School Contact Person Email: _____

Check One: _____ Class of 2024 or _____ Class of 2025

Nominee's highest-level elected or appointed position (Please check one of the boxes below.)

Check One: Student Body / Student Council Class Officer

President

Treasurer

Vice President

Representative

Secretary

JROTC Commander/Leader

Print Name of Principal: _____ Signature of Principal: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____ Date: _____

To apply for consideration in Maryland, a student **must be selected by his/her principal as the school nominee**. The student must be a junior or senior and must hold an **elected or appointed** position in student council or class government. The student must complete the nomination form, the activities form, submit a letter of recommendation from his/her activity advisor, and a copy of his/her official academic transcript.

2023-2024 SENATE YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP ACTIVITIES FORM

GRADE LEVEL					
ACTIVITY OR ORGANIZATION	9	10	11	12	POSITION OR OFFICE

COMMUNITY SERVICE	9	10	11	12	DUTIES OR OFFICE

RECOGNITION OR AWARDS	9	10	11	12	DESCRIPTION

**NOMINATION FORM MUST BE EMAILED TO ussyp.msde@maryland.gov
BY MONDAY, OCTOBER 9, 2023, NO LATER THAN 1:00 P.M.**

