Joy Hofmeister
State Superintendent of Public Instruction
Oklahoma State Department of Education

UNITED STATES SENATE ★ YOUTH PROGRAM ★

EDUCATION · LEADERSHIP · PUBLIC SERVICE

The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP), established in 1962 by U.S. Senate Resolution, is a unique educational experience for outstanding high school students interested in pursuing careers in public service. The 54th annual program will be held in Washington, D.C., from March 5 – 12, 2016. Two student leaders from each state, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Education Activity will spend a week in Washington experiencing their national government in action. Student delegates will hear major policy addresses by Senators, cabinet members, officials from the Departments of State and Defense and directors of other federal agencies, as well as participate in a meeting with a Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. All transportation, hotel and meal expenses will be provided by The Hearst Foundations. In addition, each delegate will also be awarded a $5,000 College Scholarship for undergraduate studies, with encouragement to pursue coursework in history and political science.

Information about the national program can be found at http://www.ussenateyouth.org/.

The Oklahoma Program

The Oklahoma State Department of Education coordinates and implements the USSYP on a yearly basis. It is overseen by the Director of Social Studies Education in the Office of Instruction on behalf of State Superintendent Joy Hofmeister. The USSYP is a competition scholarship program in which two Oklahoma high school students will win a one-week, all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., and a $5,000 college scholarship from the Hearst Foundations.

Eligibility

To be eligible a student must be a junior or senior in an Oklahoma high school during the current year of the competition and be a permanent resident of the United States and be enrolled in a public or private secondary school in Oklahoma.

Selection will be based solely on the students' outstanding abilities and demonstrated qualities of leadership in an elected or appointed high school student office for the 2015-2016 school year. A student who graduates high school at the close of the fall 2015 semester/quarter is not eligible to apply for the program.

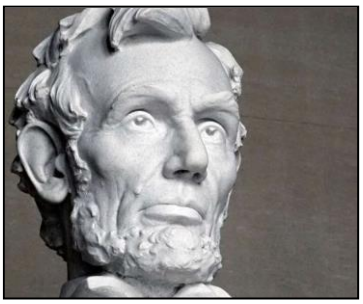
Any high school junior or senior student is eligible for the program provided he or she has not previously been a delegate to Washington Week and has not received a USSYP scholarship. The student is required to be currently serving in an elected or appointed capacity in any one of the following student government, civic or educational organizations:

a. Student Body President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer
b. Class President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer
c. Student Council Representative
d. Student representative elected or appointed (appointed by a panel, commission or board) to a district, regional or state-level civic and/or educational organization approved by the state selection administrator.

If you are not sure if a student is eligible, please contact the Program Director using the contact information below.

Application and program information concerning the United States Senate Youth Program are mailed to every high school principal and counseling office during early to mid August. **See the specific timeline below.** The high school principals have until mid-September to nominate student(s) for the program. The nominated student(s) take a qualifying examination in mid-October at one of eight selected regional sites around the state. The top 10 highest scoring students statewide come to the State Department of Education in Oklahoma City for interviews in November. Two winners and two alternates are selected from the interview process. This portion of the competition includes a short essay that is scored and a short interview by a panel of social studies professionals. State Superintendent Joy Hofmeister will inform the two scholarship winners and the two alternates in mid-December of their status.

Program Participation



Participation in the U.S. Senate Youth Program is by principal nomination only. The high school principal may nominate more than one eligible student for the USSYP competition. Students do not apply directly and the decision as to whom the principal nominates is strictly the principal's. Any high school student interested in the program should contact his/her principal directly to indicate his/her interest in being nominated to participate in the scholarship competition and to determine possible eligibility. If you are not sure if a student is eligible, please contact the Program Director using the contact information below.

> "I am a firm believer in the people. If given the truth, they can be depended upon to meet any national crisis. The great point is to bring them the real facts."
>
> — ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Program Timeline and Significant Dates for 2015–2016*

August 10-28, 2015	Program information will be emailed to high school principals and counselors.
September 18, 2015	**Principal Nominations** due to Oklahoma State Department of Education.
October 03, 2015	**Program examination** administered at regional examination sites.
October 16, 2015	Top 10 finalists notified.
November 06, 2015	Top 10 finalists' essays and student information due to the Oklahoma State Department of Education, Office of Curriculum and Instruction.
November 20, 2015	**Student interviews** at the Oklahoma State Department of Education.
December 06, 2015	Winners/alternates will be notified by letter.
March 05 – 12, 2016	Washington Week held in Washington, D.C.

*Dates are subject to change at the discretion of the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Contact Information

For further United States Senate Youth Program information contact:

Social Studies Education and Personal Financial Literacy
Office of Curriculum and Instruction, Suite 315
Oklahoma State Department of Education
2500 North Lincoln Boulevard
Oklahoma City, OK 73105-4599

Telephone: (405) 522-3523 ₽₦ óплрú рнмпнут
Fax: (405) 521-2971

Website: http://www.ok.gov/sde/social-studies

The National Association of Secondary School Principals has placed this program on the NASSP National Advisory List of Student Contests and Activities for 2015- 2016.
http://www.principals.org/

"There is a debt of service due from every man to his country, proportioned to the bounties which nature and fortune have measured to him."

~Thomas Jefferson