



Dear parents, teachers, principals, and superintendents:

The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) has begun its statewide selection process. In March, two Alaskan students will join 104 other delegates for the program's 61st annual Washington Week—an intensive week-long educational program about the workings of the Senate and the federal government overall. USSYP is sponsored by the US Senate and privately funded by The Hearst Foundation.

The 61st annual United States Senate Youth Program Washington Week is being planned for **March 4–11, 2023**. The entire week will be planned and coordinated by the Hearst Foundation. It will include many specific functions and events at national landmarks; however, personal free time will be extremely limited. Applicants should take this under consideration when applying.

State delegates will have outstanding leadership abilities and a strong commitment to public service. They generally rank in the top one percent of their states academically. After Washington Week, delegates continue to excel and develop impressive qualities that are often directed toward public service. **Each state delegate will receive a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship.** Students must attend the entire program to receive the scholarship.

The program may be held online pending public health guidance and status of large group access to the government venues traditionally visited. **If held in person, all delegates will be required to be fully vaccinated and boosted to attend. A final decision regarding the in-person program will be determined in the fall of 2022**, with adequate time for students to complete the full vaccination series prior to travel. If held online, vaccination status will not be required. Regardless of platform, all student delegates will partake in a comprehensive, interactive leadership program in the stated timeframe.

Student delegates will visit Capitol Hill, the White House, the Pentagon, the State Department, the Supreme Court, and other historic sites in Washington. The agenda routinely includes meetings with Senators, the President, Cabinet Secretaries, a Justice of the Supreme Court, senior members of the national media, and other policy makers.

The delegate selection is administered by each state's chief school officer in cooperation with high school principals. Eligible delegates must be:

1. Current high school *juniors or seniors*

2. An *elected* student officer for the *entire* 2022-2023 academic years (*Please reference the 2023 brochure for a complete list of eligible positions.*)
3. Residents of Alaska

Each student must be a resident of the United States and currently enrolled in a public or private secondary school located in the state (including for these purposes the District of Columbia) in which either one of his or her parents or guardians legally resides. Exceptions to the residency rule are made for the Department of Defense Education Activity and for states with schools operating under interstate education compacts.

Following this announcement are the 2023 brochure, student application, and an essay on the experience by one of last year's delegates. Page 1 of the application includes a detailed checklist of required submission items. Please use this checklist to ensure your application is complete. Incomplete applications will **not** be considered.

The Alaska application deadline is **November 1, 2022, at 4pm.**

The candidate selection process is three part:

1. Students who submit complete applications will be initially ranked based on a rubric provided by the Hearst Foundation.
2. The top ten applicants will be invited to take the 2023 United State Senate Youth Program Public Affairs and History Exam. This is a proctored exam that will affect an applicant's total score and potential selection as a USSYP candidate.
3. After performance on the USSYP exam is factored in, the top five applicants may also be asked to sit for a Zoom interview with the selection committee. Performance during this interview will affect the applicant's total score and potential selection as a USSYP candidate.

The names of students selected will be formally announced mid-December. For more information, interested students in Alaska should contact either their high school principal or myself via the contact information below. They may also access information via the DEED Scholarships & Recognition webpage at <https://education.alaska.gov/recognitionprograms/>

Sincerely,

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State of Alaska
United States Senate Youth Program
Information and Application Form for School Year 2022-2023

Information

Completed application packages will include all application materials, and must be received by the Alaska Department of Education & Early Development before **5:00 p.m., Monday, November 1, 2022**. Each set of application materials must include:

1. One official application form with the principal's **original signature in blue ink**;
2. One copy of a current, official academic transcript;
3. Two essays;
4. Responses to the two short-answer questions noted below; and
5. Two letters of support.

More detailed information about each of these requirements can be found in the Application Requirements Checklist section below.

Application Requirements Checklist

1. Official application form:
 - a. Completed form must be signed by your school principal in blue ink;
 - b. The **elected school leadership position** you are applying under must be clearly identified. You must serve in this position for the **entire 2022-2023 academic year**. List **only** this position on the form.
 - c. **Each school may recommend only one candidate.**
2. Transcript:
 - a. Your current, **official** academic transcript and class rank **sent directly from your school registrar or principal to DEED**;
 - b. Transcripts must include the student's **non-weighted GPA**. This is non-negotiable. Transcripts that do not include a non-weighted GPA will be deemed ineligible. *DEED will not calculate non-weighted GPAs for students.*
3. Two essays:
 - a. A personal essay describing each of the following elements as they pertain to you:
 - i. Current elected student position held and all past involvement in student government;
 - ii. Activities and achievements that demonstrate leadership in school and community—specifically that supports your desire to serve as your USSYP State delegate;
 - iii. Involvement in community service initiatives or programs outside of school;
 - iv. How your participation in USSYP will enhance your understanding and interest in the political and governmental process of the United States;
 - v. Share ways in which or selection as one of the USSYP delegates will benefit your future goals.
 - b. A persuasive essay researched and written by the applicant on a topic of social significance related to a contemporary state, national, or world event. Select a topic important to you, take a stand, relate its import to you, and defend your position. The essay will be judged on organization, ideas and content, evidence of personalization, and writing conventions ***including citation of sources.***

- c. Each essay must be titled, typed in 10-12 point font, **double-spaced**, and not to exceed two pages with one-inch margins all around. Your works cited page for the persuasive essay is not included in the maximum page length.
4. Short-answer question responses.
 - a. Answer **both** of the following questions:
 - i. *Define political activism for yourself personally. How do rules/laws/morals and values affect your own political activism? How do you judge whether your activism has been successful or not?*
 - ii. *Describe a turning point event in U.S. history before 1950 and offer your thoughts on the impact of that event on today's political climate.*
 - b. **Each question response should be no more than a single page, typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins all around.**
5. Two Letters of Support:
 - a. One from the school principal or school counselor;
 - b. One from an adult advisor to the organization or student body entity that you represent as an elected official;
 - c. Send only the two requested letters.

All above items must be submitted with the application package. **Do not send extra materials. They will not be considered.**

United States Senate Youth Program Descriptions

USSYP Washington Week Program

The USSYP will hold Washington Week from March 4-11, 2023. The determination of whether this will be in-person or virtual will be decided in autumn 2022 based on public health guidance. One hundred and four student delegates will follow an intensive schedule of meetings and briefings with senators, cabinet members, officials of the Departments of State and Defense, and representatives of the U.S. Supreme Court. Delegates will visit the White House and tour historic sites, monuments, and museums in our nation's capital. The Hearst Foundation will pay all expenses for the program, including transportation, hotel, and meals.

USSYP College Scholarship

Each delegate who participates in the USSYP Washington Week will receive a \$10,000 college scholarship from The William Randolph Hearst Foundation, subject to the conditions and requirements specified in the program regulations. Additional information concerning the scholarship will be given to delegates by the Hearst Foundations after Washington Week. *Attendance during the full Washington Week program is required to receive the college scholarship.*

Application Qualification Rules

A currently enrolled high school junior or senior student living in Alaska (irrespective of race, national origin, gender or financial need) is eligible for the program provided he or she has not previously been a program recipient, is now a permanent resident of the United States and has a parent or guardian legally residing in Alaska, will not graduate prior to the spring of 2023, and has been elected as a year-long representative to serve in any of the following **during the entire 2022-2023 academic year**:

- Student body president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer

- Class president, vice president, secretary, or treasurer
- Student council representative
- Club elected position (e.g. National Honor Society)
- Student representative to a district, regional or state-level civic or education organization
- Student representative to a tribal government

For more information on qualifying positions, please refer to pages 2 and 3 of the 2023 USSYP brochure. Exceptions to the residency rule are made for Department of Defense Education Activity.

Selection Process

The selection panel will assess indicators of leadership ability, high scholastic achievement, ability to think logically and communicate clearly, and community and school involvement. The top ten finalists may be asked to complete a civics examination and/or participate in a Zoom interview during the selection process.

Important Reminders

- Submit all complete application as a single Adobe Acrobat (.PDF) file. If you do not know how to do this, ask for help from a local source.
- Make sure any scanned pages are completely legible.
- Your principal's signature must be in blue ink on the application form.
- Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.
- The letters of support **must accompany** the application.
- Have your registrar submit your official transcript as an encrypted .PDF file directly to the DEED program officer.
- Do not send photos or certificates or awards. No materials will be returned.

Application Submission Address

Email your complete application to the DEED program officer: Bjørn Wolter (bjorn.wolter@alaska.gov). Make sure to put your name and program in the subject line. Have your registrar or principle send your official transcripts directly to the program officer in a separate email.

Official Alaska USSYP Student Application Form

Student Data

Name: _____ **Preferred Name:** _____ **Pronouns:** _____
Street: _____ **City:** _____ **Zip:** _____
Email Address: _____ **Preferred Phone:** _____

What is your highest-level ELECTED qualifying leadership position that you will hold for the entire school year?

Which of the following are you? (Check all that apply.)

- I am a legal permanent resident or citizen of the United States of America.
- I am not a U.S. citizen, but I do possess an I-551 / “green card”.
- I am NOT a legal permanent resident or citizen of the United States of America.

Student Signature:

*I affirm that I wish to apply for the 2023 US Senate Youth Program. **I understand that should I be selected as a delegate or alternate I may be required to be fully vaccinated.***

Parent/Guardian(s) Data

Name: _____
Email Address: _____
Preferred Phone: _____
Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

I affirm that I am the parent or legal guardian of the student completing this application, and I am a resident of Alaska. My child/guardian has permission to apply for the USSYP program.

High School Data

School Name: _____ **District:** _____
Principal: _____
Address: _____ **City:** _____ **Zip:** _____
Email Address: _____ **Phone:** _____
School Type (public, private, charter, or homeschool): _____
Applicant Graduation Year (circle one): **2023** **2024**
Student is enrolled for the entire academic year (circle one): **YES** **NO**

Principal’s signature:

As principal, I recommend this student as our school’s nominee for the 2022-2023 United States Senate Youth Scholarship Program.