



#173-22

**Commonwealth of Virginia
Virginia Department of Education
Superintendent's Memo #173-22**

DATE: August 12, 2022
TO: Division Superintendents
FROM: Jillian Balow, Superintendent of Public Instruction
SUBJECT: **2023 United States Senate Youth Program (Scholarship Opportunities for High School Juniors and Seniors)**

The Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) will select two student delegates to represent Virginia in the [United States Senate Youth Program \(USSYP\) sponsored by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation](#). Each delegate will receive a \$10,000 scholarship and an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., for the week of March 4-11, 2023. The 61st Annual Washington Week is currently planning for a timely national selection process and an in-person program in Washington, D.C., pending public health and safety guidelines for travel and indoor gatherings.

Each public and private high school may submit up to three applications. Students interested in applying will complete an application and submit an essay response. Building administrators will be asked at a later time to certify the student's application. The top candidates will be invited to interview with a panel of judges appointed by the Virginia Department of Education and also take the Public Affairs examination. The exam, prepared by the Hearst Foundation, is designed to test knowledge of the United States government, the United States Constitution, American History, and knowledge of public affairs and current events. Final selection will be based upon the student's application, essay response, the examination results, outstanding academic performance, and demonstrated qualities of leadership and community service.

Selected delegates must hold a leadership position in any one of the following student government, civic, or educational organizations 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
- A National Honor Society officer (including discipline-based Honor Societies such as the National English and Social Studies Honor Societies that include service components)
- Student representative elected or appointed (appointed by a panel, commission, or board) to a local, district, regional, or state-level civic service and/or educational organization approved by the state selection administrator

Participation or holding an officer position in academic clubs and/or educational competition programs/conferences do not qualify a student for USSYP, although many students who qualify participate in these activities.

Please use the [Google form](#) to complete the application. Completed applications must be submitted and timestamped by **5 p.m. on Friday, September 30, 2022.**

Students selected should have access to a computer or laptop, a functioning camera, and a stable internet connection. Applications and essays are due **5 p.m. on Friday, September 30, 2022.** Students will be notified by Friday, October 28, 2022 as to their status. If selected to move forward, interviews and examinations will be scheduled the week of November 7, 2022. Notification of final selection of the 2023 Delegates will occur by the week of December 26, 2022.

For more information

For questions or further information regarding the United States Senate Youth Program, please contact Christonya Brown, Coordinator of History and Social Science, by email at vdoe.hss@doe.virginia.gov, or by telephone at (804) 225-2063. Detailed information about the United States Senate Youth Program may be found at [United States Senate Youth: This link takes you out of the Virginia Department of Education website.](#)

JB/CBB/pk