Senate Youth Program Overview

In 1962 the United States Senate voted unanimously to endorse a nationwide youth program that would bring high school students to Washington, D.C. for a brief on-site introduction to the functions of the federal government and, in particular, the United States Senate.

The program was created and originally authorized by Senate Resolution 324 and continued in succeeding years by unanimous action of the Senate. The resolution specified that the program should be “supported by private funds with no expense to the federal government.” The William Randolph Hearst Foundation made available the necessary funds and, each year, two high school juniors or seniors from each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia have participated in this unique experience.

In early 1981, the U.S. Senate amended Resolution 324 to provide for the participation of the Department of Defense Education Activity in the United States Senate Youth Program.

Wyoming State Rules and Regulations

Two students from Wyoming, as well as a first and second alternate, will be selected through a process directed by the Wyoming Superintendent of Public Instruction. Selection will be based on outstanding ability and demonstrated qualities of leadership as elected or appointed high school officers during the school year. A student who graduates high school at the close of the fall semester/quarter is not eligible to apply for the program.

Any Wyoming high school junior or senior is eligible to apply (provided he or she has not previously received a USSYP scholarship) who is currently serving in an elected or appointed capacity in any 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. 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 (i.e. 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.

Please note, the following positions do NOT qualify a student for the program: attendance or officer position at Boys/Girls Nation or State Summer Conference, member of a National Honor Society (although serving as an elected officer for an entire school year is acceptable), a founder or chairperson of a self-created group, a participant, captain, or officer in Mock Trial, Debate Team, Model UN, or other academic club, conference, or competition where the primary engagement is for individual educational enrichment.
Each student must be a CITIZEN or a PERMANENT RESIDENT of the United States and currently enrolled in a public or private secondary school in Wyoming where either one of his or her parents or guardians legally resides. See the National Rules at www.ussenateyouth.org for further information.

Specific Wyoming State Procedures

Students must apply to the Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) following the below steps:

1. Complete the application available on the WDE website.
2. Parent/guardian, principal, and student will attest and verify the application and information via electronic signature.
3. Students with the highest scores and most active school/community/leadership experience will be selected for an interview during the week of November 11, 2019. Any tie in scores may be resolved via the USSYP official test.

Deadline for submittal of student applications:

Official applications must be submitted via the online portal by 5:00 PM Monday, October 14, 2019.

- Any questions may be directed to Bradley Barker at bradley.barker@wyo.gov or 307.777.6226 or Jennifer LaHiff at jennifer.lahiff@wyo.gov or 307.777.6840.