



The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) Washington Week: March 7–14, 2026

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

★ How it Works:

- **Two students from each state** will be selected to attend the in-person program.
- Each student selected will receive a **\$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship**.
- Students **may qualify** to apply through leadership positions they currently hold per the USSYP official criteria for the current 2025–26 academic year.
- All student leadership **qualifying positions** are subject to the judgement of the state selection administrator.
- Elected school leadership positions must be held for the **entire** 2025–26 school year.

★ Regulations for Eligibility and Selection:

1. The student must be a secondary school **junior or senior** who has not previously been a delegate to this program and meets **one or more** of the criteria listed below for the 2025–26 year:
 - a. **Elected school organization officer** (schoolwide organizations preferred);
 - b. **Student representative** (selected by a panel, commission, or board to a district, regional, or state-level civic or educational organization); or
 - c. **Elected student officer** of a statewide organization.
2. The student must be a permanent resident of the United States and currently enrolled in a public or private secondary school located in Connecticut, where either one of the student's parents or guardians legally reside.
3. The student must be interested in entering a **public service** profession or seeking **public office** in the future.
4. Only **two candidates from each school** may be nominated.
5. Each candidate must be **endorsed** by the high school principal.
6. Each student nominated must complete the **Student Application** (see page 3).
7. Each student nominated must provide an up-to-date **resume** (not to exceed 2 pages) that includes courses taken and grades from the last two school years, achievements, extra/co-curricular activities, offices held, and community, church, or service organizations/activities.
8. Each nominated student must submit **two one-page essays**:
 - a. **Essay 1:** (Note: the USSYP is designed for students who aspire to enter careers in public service.) Describe the area of public service profession you wish to enter and provide specific reasons why you are committed to this area of public service.
 - b. **Essay 2:** Describe a specific activity or event where you have provided “difference-making” measurable leadership.

★ Selection Process and Checklist

- Once selected and endorsed by the secondary school principal, the student will complete:
 1. The Student Application;
 2. Two one-page essays; and
 3. A resume (see #7 on page 1).
- **Applications must be received by no later than Tuesday, October 21, 2025.**
- Return the completed Youth Senate application, essay, and resume package to:
Paul Castiglione, Curriculum Coordinator
Connecticut State Department of Education
paul.castiglione@ct.gov
- After the review of all submitted applications, 10–15 finalists will be selected for the **Finalist Interview Session**, which will be held **in person**.
- The **school principal will be contacted by telephone and email** if a student from their school is selected as a finalist. No communication relative to finalist selection will be sent to a student. All communication will be sent to the school principal or a designee.
- The **Final Interview Session** for the USSYP will be conducted in-person during the week of November 10, 2025.
- The names of the **two nominated students** and **two alternatives** (if either of the top two nominees is unable to comply with regulations) will be announced within two weeks of the interview session.
- No student will be considered unless **all** information has been submitted by **October 21, 2025**.

★ Application Dates and Deadlines

Each school may submit only **two** candidates who meet the following criteria:

- Must be a current grade 11 or 12 student.
- Must be a Connecticut resident.
- Must be a permanent resident of the United States.
- Must be currently serving (2025–26) in a leadership role (elected/appointed) in a school, community, or statewide organization.
- Has an expressed desire to enter a public service profession or seek elective public office in the future.
- **Has submitted a completed application no later than Tuesday, October 21, 2025.**
- If chosen as a finalist, candidates must participate in the mandatory Finalist Interviews the week of **November 10, 2025**, which will be held in person.
- If selected, the student **MUST** attend the entire Youth Senate Program Week, **March 7–14, 2026**.

★ Questions?

For more information, contact Paul Castiglione, Associate Consultant and Curriculum Coordinator, at paul.castiglione@ct.gov.



2025–26 Student Application United States Senate Youth Program and Hearst Foundation Scholarship

Completed applications must be received no later than Tuesday, October 21, 2025.

Print or type all information

Student Name (first, middle, last): _____

Home Address: _____

Phone: _____ Age: _____ Grade level in 2025–26: 11 (Junior) 12 (Senior)

Name of High School: _____

High School Address: _____

Name of Principal: _____

Principal's Email: _____ Principal's Signature:* _____

Names of Parents/Guardians: _____

Student Attestation:

I understand the requirements of the United States Senate Youth Program and Hearst Foundation Scholarship. If selected as a finalist, I will attend the in-person Finalist Interview Session the week of November 10, 2025.

Signature of Student:* _____

** I intend that my typed name to be an electronic signature as defined in the Connecticut Uniform Electronic Transactions Act and that it be accepted as the legal equivalent of my handwritten signature on this document.*

Submit with this application:

- **Student Resume** – Provide an up-to-date resume (not to exceed two pages) that includes courses taken and grades from the last two school years, achievements, extra/co-curricular activities, officers held, and community, church, or service organizations/activities.
- **Two one-page essays** (see #8 on page 1)

Note: After the review of all applications, 15–20 finalists will be selected for interviews. The high school principal will be contacted by telephone and email if a student from a school has been selected as a finalist.