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wvde.us

TO: West Virginia Public and Non-Public School Superintendents, Administrators, and Counselors

FROM: Dustin Lambert, Coordinator of Middle and Secondary Social Studies

SUBJECT: 59th United States Senate Youth Program

DATE: September 28, 2020

The West Virginia Department of Education is pleased to announce The United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) has officially begun the annual selection processes for the upcoming **Washington Week ONLINE** which will be held in a fully virtual format for the 2021 program year. Student delegates will be chosen to meet their U.S. senators and other government leaders during the comprehensive online experience to be held March 14-18, 2021.

Each year, this extremely competitive merit-based program brings two high school juniors and seniors from every state, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity, to Washington, D.C. for an intensive week-long study of the federal government and its leaders. The state departments of education throughout the country select the students through a rigorous nomination and selection process. Each student will also receive a \$10,000 undergraduate college scholarship, with encouragement to continue coursework in history, government and public affairs. The Hearst Foundations have fully funded and administered the program since inception; no government funds are utilized.

The Office of Middle and Secondary Learning oversees the selection process for the state of West Virginia. We strongly encourage county and school administrators to make this program known to every junior and senior. The application process is very time sensitive and requires a significant amount of documentation from principals, counselors, and the students. We have moved our student application to an online form and will share the link to the application once the pre-qualifying questionnaires have been completed by interested students.

To access all the information and the link to the pre-qualifying questionnaire, please open the following URL: <https://wvde.us/middle-secondary-learning/social-studies/student-programs/>

Please refer to the USSYP Program Overview and Requirements Documents for detailed qualifications.

A copy of the 59th Annual U.S. Senate Youth Program brochure can be found on the U.S. Senate Youth Program website: https://ussenateyouth.org/selection_process_brochure/.

Program Timeline

September 2020	WVDE updates website and electronically sends program brochure, deadlines, and link to pre-qualifying questionnaire to public and non-public high schools.
October 16	Last day to submit a pre-qualifying questionnaire .
October 19-23	Student applications emailed to school counselors
November 13	DEADLINE for completed student application (online)
November 16, 17, or 18	Online Exam; all candidates within a school must take the exam on the same day at the same time being proctored by the school counselor.
December 7-11	Semifinalists will be notified of advancement to the final round. Those who did not advance will receive an email by December 18 th .
January 15, 2021	The semi-finalists will interview with a selection committee via Microsoft TEAMS.
January 29	The two state delegates and alternates will be announced.
February 5	Selection confirmations submitted to the Hearst Foundation.
March 14-18	59 th Annual Washington Week Online

If you have questions, please reach out anytime!

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