



STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: August 19, 2026

To: Local Educational Agency Leads

Route To: Public and Nonpublic High School Principals, School Counselors, Social Studies Supervisors

From: Jorden Schiff, Ed.D., Assistant Commissioner
Division of Teaching and Learning Services

Deadline: September 30, 2026 (Nominations)
October 13, 2026 (Applications)

65th Annual United States Senate Youth Program

The New Jersey Department of Education invites high school principals of public or nonpublic schools to nominate one outstanding junior or senior to apply for the 65th Annual [United States Senate Youth Program \(USSYP\)](#). This highly competitive, merit-based program is sponsored by the United States Senate and the Hearst Foundations. The program seeks students with demonstrated leadership abilities, strong communication skills, and a strong commitment to public service and political science.

Each year, two high school juniors or seniors from each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense schools are selected to participate in Washington Week and receive a one-time \$12,500 undergraduate college scholarship. Washington Week, an intensive educational program, will be held in person from March 6-13, 2027. During Washington Week, delegates will hear major policy addresses by senators, cabinet members, officials of the Departments of State and Defense, and directors of federal agencies and will participate in question-and-answer sessions. Additional information about USSYP and its scholarship rules may be found in the [2027 USSYP brochure](#).

Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible, students must be residents of New Jersey and currently serving in an elected or appointed capacity in an approved student government, civic, or educational organization (see [Application Requirements](#)). Students must confirm proof of citizenship or legal permanent resident status to participate in USSYP and must sign a Code of Conduct.

Application Process

- 1) Principal selects the nominee and directs the nominee to review the [Application Process](#) to confirm eligibility.
- 2) Principal provides the completed and signed [Statement of Assurance](#) form to the nominee.

- 3) Student nominee submits the completed Principal's Statement of Assurance via email to USSYP@doe.nj.gov and completes the [USSYP Principal's Statement of Assurance Submission Form](#). **Both must be received by September 30, 2026.**
- 4) Once reviewed, nominees will be emailed the USSYP Student Application link, no later than October 2, 2026. Nominees should have all application materials ready before beginning the application because once the application is started, it must be submitted.
- 5) **The application must be submitted online no later than 11:59 p.m. on October 13, 2026.**

Two delegates and two alternates will be selected by a panel of educators. Winners will be notified in January 2027. If you have questions, please contact the program administrator at USSYP@doe.nj.gov.