



UNITED STATES SENATE  
★ YOUTH PROGRAM ★

EDUCATION · LEADERSHIP · PUBLIC SERVICE

## Application Process and Requirements for the State of Oregon: 2020-21

### What is the United States Senate Youth Program?

The Oregon Department of Education (ODE) administers the [United States Senate Youth Program \(USSYP\)](#) for the State of Oregon. The U.S. Senate Youth Program is an annual scholarship competition funded by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation and endorsed by the U.S. Senate. Each of the 50 states, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense Education Activity select two high school juniors or seniors to participate in the program. **This year, two Oregon delegates will receive a \$10,000 scholarship and participate in Washington Week, which will be held virtually the week of March 14-18, 2021. Two alternates and up to two additional finalists will also receive a \$200 cash award.**

### What are the eligibility requirements?

High school juniors or seniors must be nominated by their high school principal or designated school official in order to be considered for the USSYP. Principals and designated school officials may nominate:

- One student for 1A, 2A, 3A and 4A schools; or
- Two students for 5A and 6A schools.

Nominated high school juniors or seniors must show demonstrated leadership through public service in elected or appointed positions in student government, civic or educational organizations. Students must be actively serving in qualified leadership positions for the entire 2020-21 academic year ([see brochure for eligible organizations](#)). **Student leadership positions held during the 2019 – 2020 academic year will be allowed to qualify students for 2021 if they are unable to hold the usual USSYP qualifying positions for the current academic year due to disruption caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Additionally, nominated students must be permanent residents of the United States and currently enrolled in an Oregon public or private secondary school. Attendance during the Washington Week program is required to receive the financial scholarship. For additional information regarding the program rules, please review the [William Randolph Hearst Foundation](#) website.

### **How does the principal select the school's nominee(s)?**

Principals take sole responsibility for the selection of the student nominee(s). Some principals delegate that authority to a head counselor or other appropriate staff member. Others conduct a selection process which includes a small committee.

### **What are the responsibilities of a principal or designated school official?**

The responsibilities of a principal or designated school official are:

1. To review the rules for student participation listed in the [U.S. Senate Youth Brochure](#);
2. Develop a process for selection of a nominee(s) from the school;
3. Publicize the process within the school; and
4. Through the selection process, determine the candidate(s) to apply.

### **What are the required materials nominated students must submit in the application packet?**

1. The online application form will be available on [Oregon's USSYP website](#) in October 2020.
2. Attached in the online application:
  - **A resume** including any received awards, recognition and leadership activities in student government/politics, community, music, sports and other extracurricular activities.
  - **A cover letter** describing the following:
    - How they further equity in their community through their leadership position(s).
    - Why they should be selected to participate in the U.S. Senate Youth Program.
    - What they hope to gain from the U.S. Senate Youth Program.
  - **An essay of three pages or less** responding to one of the essay topics provided on [Oregon's USSYP website](#) (to be posted October 2020). The essays should be formatted with 12-point font, one-inch margins and double spacing. A works cited page can be included and will not count as part of the three-page maximum.
  - **A letter of recommendation** specific to this program, not to exceed one page in length. The letter may be written by anyone the student selects.
  - **A statement of the specific process used to determine the school's nominee**, as publicized within the school. This statement must be written on official school stationery.

Incomplete applications will not be considered.

### **How do students apply for the USSYP and what is the application deadline?**

Nominated students can apply via an online form which will be available on [Oregon's USSYP website](#) in October 2020. Completed applications must be submitted online no later than **5 pm on Friday, January 8, 2021**.

### **How are Oregon's student delegates and alternates selected?**

A selection committee from the Department will review all of the qualifying applications. The selection committee will invite four to six candidates for an interview (likely virtual) in January 2021. After the

interviews are conducted, the committee will select two delegates and a first and second alternate to represent Oregon. The delegates and alternates will be announced in late February.

Selection is based on the following criteria:

- Demonstrated leadership qualities through public service in elected or appointed positions in organizations that relate to student government, civics or education;
- Involvement in school and community activities;
- Commitment to furthering equity in their community;
- High academic achievement;
- Knowledge of U.S. government and history;
- The quality of the application, including the ability to write with clarity and express ideas in an organized and original fashion; and
- Excellent interpersonal and speaking skills.

**Who do I contact if I have additional questions?**

If you have any questions regarding the United States Senate Youth Program for Oregon, please contact Jenni Knaus at 503-947-5860 or by e-mail at [Jenni.Knaus@state.or.us](mailto:Jenni.Knaus@state.or.us).