

What Is Boys State?

Boys State is a participatory program in which high school juniors become an operational part of local, county, and state-level government. Though Boys State was initially founded in 1935 as a response to the apparent spread of Communist teachings, today the primary focus of the program is to provide experiential education that builds civic literacy and promotes American democracy. More than anything, the American Legion seeks to teach all young men the responsibility of citizenship.



Lucas Acevedo, 2019 Boys Nation President & Massachusetts Boys State Senator taking oath of office at Boys Nation

Because each program is held independently in every state but Hawaii, there is a natural tendency to approach the week in a way that is representative of the size and spirit of each constituency. In “The Cradle of Democracy,” the Massachusetts program feels a unique call to be a beacon of civic education. As such, there is a welcomed blend of conservative and progressive viewpoints which run the gamut across our over 200 participants. We are one of the only simultaneously co-located Boys State/Girls State program, mirroring our democracy as authentically as possible. Regardless of the historical setting, over the past 85 years the American Legion has succeeded in teaching all participants that, however voluntary participation in a democratic system may be, its success begins with the citizen.



As a break from the academic programming, the program offers numbers of organized athletic tournaments on most afternoons during the recreation period.

Program Objectives

- Understand basic operation of local municipal governments, including city ordinances/town by-laws, budgeting, zoning, and elections.
- Attend general lectures by speakers with subject matter expertise relevant to municipal governments, public policies, and college admissions.
- Partake in Government, Law, or Economic Electives taught by collegiate level educators, as well as mini courses on various interesting topics.
- Ability to run in local and statewide elections, including U.S. Senator which will represent Massachusetts at Boys Nation in Washington D.C.
- Attend a college fair organized just for Boys State and Girls State.
- Participate in daily organized activities during recreational period, including softball, flag football, basketball, band, and chorus.
- Opportunity to meet and socialize with students from different backgrounds across the Commonwealth.
- Experience first-hand college campus living.



Visit maboysstate.org to learn more about the program

Where Is Boys State?

Our host campus for the week of Boys State is Stonehill College, located in North Easton, Massachusetts. Recognizing that this may be the first glimpse of college campus life afforded to students, Boys State has chosen Stonehill College for its first-class campus and facilities, which provide a fine example for students and parents as they begin the college selection process.



When:

Saturday June 15, 2024 to Friday June 21, 2024

Where:

Stonehill College, North Easton, Massachusetts

How do I attend:

Students may apply online on our website maboysstate.org.

For schools who wish to nominate a qualified student, please contact info@maboysstate.org

Why Attend Boys State?

The Massachusetts Boys State Program is a way to supplement a high school education and expand a student's resume heading into the college application process. In addition to academic achievement and extracurricular activities, Boys State has proven time and again to be a desirable component for a college applicant.



The Boys & Girls State Band performs at major assemblies. Despite having very little time to assemble and practice, the band never fails to impress throughout the week. Rehearsals occur during the open recreation period.

A Typical Day

6:30 am • REVEILLE

7:00 – 7:50 am • BREAKFAST

8:00 – 9:00 am • MUNICIPAL MEETINGS

9:15 – 10:15 am • ELECTIVES (LAW, GOV, ECON)

10:30 – 11:15 am • GENERAL EDUCATION

11:30 am – 1:20 pm • LUNCH & MINI COURSE

1:30 – 4:00 pm • RECREATION PERIOD

5:00 – 5:50 pm • DINNER

6:00 – 7:45 pm • PARTY CONVENTIONS

8:00 – 9:15 pm • GENERAL ASSEMBLY

9:30 – 10:00 pm • MUNICIPAL MEETINGS

10:30 pm • LIGHTS OUT

Did you know?

- Over 200 students coming from 140 municipalities across the state attend Boys State annually.
- Our lectures, electives, and mini-courses are co-ed with Massachusetts Girls State.
- The elected Boys State Senators will attend Boys Nation in Washington D.C. in July.



Boys State offers the choice of Government, Law or Economic electives taught by professionals from the industry.



"The high caliber students at Boys State impressed me when I attended and continue to impress me as a counselor. This was my first time working to solve challenging problems with intelligent and interested students of different opinions and backgrounds, and I still rely on these experiences in my life and work today."

James Myatt Ph.D, Boys State 2007
Economist, Cornerstone Research

"The experience of meeting and engaging in a series of common projects with high achieving peers was a better introduction to the reality of my working life than any other single high school experience."

Michael Millette, Boys State 1983
Managing Partner, Hudson Structured

"Attending Boys State was a singular event that helped shape my view of the world and my place in it. I am forever grateful for the lessons I learned and for the confidence it gave me to apply those lessons as a student, an attorney, and a citizen."

Eric Christofferson, Boys State 1993
Partner, DLA Piper

Learn By Doing

Boys State is conducted in 49 states. Boys States may vary in content and method of procedure, but each and every Boys State adheres to the basic concept of the program; that of teaching government from the township to the state level and supplemental hands-on learning with classroom instruction. Citizens of Boys State are grouped into "cities" and "towns" and also assigned a political party affiliation, the platform of which they will build over the course of the week. Each city or town is provided with a basic working knowledge of municipal government and, from there, each will build a working government structure, establishing budgets and enacting local legislation. In addition to city and town assignments, political parties convene. Party delegates caucus, build a platform, and elect a slate of statewide candidates, all to the final goal of establishing a Massachusetts Boys State government. Two United States Senators are also elected as Massachusetts' representatives to Boys Nation, held in Washington D.C. each year.

Supplemented In The Classroom

In addition to their participation in municipal and state government, citizens of Boys State are provided classroom instruction in a wide variety of subjects, integrated with the other elements of the program. Major courses such as law, government and economics are off-set with more specialized mini-courses, such as American Foreign Policy and Politics and the Media. The concept is to provide Boys State citizens with college-like seminar courses as a primer for the next stage of their education.

Who Are The People Of Boys State?

The American Legion produces Boys State each year, along with the assistance of dozens of volunteers, most of them former Boys State citizens. This staff oversees the curriculum, presides over debates, umpire sports, monitors elections, and maintains the daily order of the program. They are college and graduate students, public servants, soldiers, lawyers, economists, educators, engineers, and business professionals of many disciplines, all volunteering their time to give back what Boys State provided them.