

THE AMERICAN LEGION

BOYS STATE PROGRAM

OUR WATCHWORD

DEMOCRACY DEPENDS ON ME

OUR INTERPRETATION OF THE WATCHWORD:

“THE SECURITY OF MY RIGHTS, PRIVILEGES
AND RESPONSIBILITIES AS AN AMERICAN
CITIZEN DEPENDS ON ME”!

WHAT IS BOYS STATE

Boys state is a program of the American Legion developed from the concept that youth should be offered a better perspective of the practical operation of government: that the individual is an integral part and commensurately responsible for the character and success of his government. as such, it is an activity of high educational value, born of a need for youth training in practical citizenship.

To elaborate – boys state is easily classified as a leadership **action program** where qualified male high school juniors take part in a practical government course designed to develop in the young citizens a working knowledge of the structure of government and to impress upon them the fact that their government is just what they make it.

To summarize – boys state is an objective citizenship training program which inculcates individual responsibility to the community, state and nation. it is operated on the basis of the political government organization existing in Massachusetts, including all levels from the municipality to the state.

THE OBJECTIVES OF BOYS STATE

Quite naturally a program of this scope encompasses many objectives, all of which are important, but we outline those of which we, of the American legion, feel are the most important and for which we strive the hardest:

- A. To develop civic leadership and pride in American citizenship; all of which are earnest hope that each young man attending a boys state will return to his community a better citizen than when came to boys state and that we will have aroused in him a desire to demonstrate this fact by his willingness to make civic contributions which will help to make his community a better place in which to live.
- B. To arouse a keen interest in the detailed study of our government; here we desire to create more than just a passive interest in the

actual study of government – we strive to create that interest which will be born of the desire for knowledge.

- C. To arouse in the young citizens a determination to maintain our form of government; this we attempt to accomplish in many ways, but primarily by bringing them into the full realization of how really wonderful it is to be an American!!
- D. To develop in the young citizens of boys state a full understanding of our American traditions and belief in the united states of America. here we desire to impress upon the young mind in the strongest manner possible, the glorious traditions which have made this country what it is today.
- E. To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation.
- F. To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy.

THE AMERICAN LEGION

MASSACHUSETTS BOYS' STATE PROGRAM

AN OVERVIEW

OUR HOST, STONEHILL COLLEGE IN NORTH EASTON, MA

THIS BEAUTIFUL AND EASY TO REACH CAMPUS IS AN IDEAL SETTING FOR THE VARIOUS BOYS' STATE ACTIVITIES

Super academic, living and dining facilities, as well as state of the art research and athletic facilities allow boys state participants to enjoy a wonderfully enriching week.

THE PARTICIPANTS

400+ of the best and brightest juniors from high schools all around the commonwealth.

Each student is randomly placed into a “municipality” (either a city or a town), where he learns the fundamentals of local government,

Each group of 25 – 30 boys starter’s will live and work together as a municipality, with the guidance and support of our dedicated staff of counselors.

THE STAFF

Our volunteer staff is made up of 50+ dedicated individuals who are committed to the continued excellence of the boys’ state program.

They range from college students to decorated war heroes, and are members of the American Legion, American Legion Auxiliary and boys’ state alumni.

They are leaders in the worlds of business, law, government, education, the military, and law enforcement.

MASSACHUSETTS BOYS STATE PROGRAM AN OVERVIEW

THE PROGRAM

The program supplements the classroom experience by allowing students to learn about and run their own model state and local government.

There are three major components to the program: the political, the educational and the social.

POLITICAL

Students learn the fundamentals of politics and how government runs
They begin to explore the intricacies of the two party system,
including party caucuses and conventions.

They are allowed to participate in an electoral process, in local
elections, state- wide pre-primary, primary elections and final elections.

EDUCATIONAL

Students attend several “general education” sessions, where topics
range from the bill of rights to a discussion of the college admissions
process and educational funding.

They are given the choice of three elective courses. the students
attend a series of lectures given by expert staff members in either
government, law and economics.

Seminars, or mini courses are given by staff members on a variety of
issues, including “how to survive your first year of college”, and “public
speaking 101: how to express yourself clearly.”

SOCIAL

Students are given a taste of college life on a real college campus.

They interact with counselors who serve as mentors for college and
career planning.

They are exposed to students from a variety of backgrounds and
experiences.

They are given ample time to participate in various activities
including:

Organized and informal sports

The boys state band

High school bowl

BOYS STATE TIMELINE

SATURDAY, REGISTRATION DAY

Students register, and are assigned a room, municipality and political
party (the fictional nationalists parties; students create the ideologies of each
party as the week progresses).

Students settle in their rooms and meet their roommate, counselors, and the other members of their municipality.

First general education session is held.

Students attend their first municipal meeting begin setting up their municipal government and are presented with a scenario to solve.

SUNDAY

First party caucus is held and students are introduced to the two party system. Each caucus nominates candidates for statewide office.

Effective courses (law, government or economics) begin and meet each day for the rest of the week.

Recreation period (held everyday for the rest of the week).

First party convention is held

American Legion night

MONDAY

Municipal elections for legislature (house of representatives and senate) are held

Mini-courses begin (example: “how to survive your first year at college).

Alumni night

TUESDAY

Primary elections for state-wide offices (governor, Lt governor, attorney general, secretary of state, treasurer and auditor).

State legislature (house of representatives and senate) sessions begins.

Flag day ceremony

WEDNESDAY

Statewide elections/final elections

Party platforms are finalized at conventions.

municipal budgets are voted on and adopted, Ensuring that Scenarios presented to the group are addressed.

Candidates forum is held for respective party nominees for state-wide office.

Pr inauguration

JOINT INAUGURATION (BOYS STATE/ GIRLS STATE)

THURSDAY

Championship games all sports
Counselors vs championship softball team

FRIDAY

College fair – over forty colleges and universities from throughout New England, as well as representatives from ROTC programs and military branches.

Governor signs bills passed by the legislature into law.
Closing ceremony and awards.

TYPICAL DAY AT BOYS STATE

TUESDAY

6:30 AM – Wake up

7:00 – 7:50 AM – Breakfast

8:00 AM – Pr-primary elections

8:30 – 9:15 AM – General education: today topic: the bill of rights

9:30 – 10:15 AM – Municipal meetings: municipal officers begin preparing budgets for the upcoming fiscal year. budgets will be submitted at Wednesday evening's municipal meeting.

10:30 – 11:15 AM – Elective courses: economics, government or law

11:30AM – 12:20PM - LUNCH

12:30 – 1:30 PM – Mini-courses: students who are elected to the house of representatives or the senate at the municipal level will attend the legislative session at this time.

1;30 – 5:00 pm – Recreation period

5:30 – 6:20 PM – Dinner

6:30 – 7:45 PM – Party conventions: platforms and resolutions will be represented and discussed. candidates for state wide office are given a chance to speak to the convention.

8:00 – 9:15 PM – General assembly: evening general assemblies are often used to give the boys state participants a chance to hear a speech by guest speakers. past speakers have included Gov Duval Patrick, former Gov Paul Cellucci, former Gov Michael Dukakis (alum), Sen Edward Kennedy and others.

9:30 – 10:00 PM – Municipal meeting: evening municipal meetings are often used for roundtable discussions on a variety of pertinent issues. reports of the discussions are often given at general education meetings the next day.

EXPANDING THE BOUNDRIES

The American Legion Massachusetts boys state program and the American Legion Auxiliary girls state have forged a partnership in sharing educational value.

We are slowly integrating the programs together to share our educational classes, and in the future hopefully to expand the girls state into areas the boys states are.

First and foremost the programs will remain separate in selecting/electing all officials. so that each program will continue with their own identities.