



What is Texas Boys State?

American Legion Boys State is among the most respected and selective educational programs of government instruction for high school students. It is a participatory program where each student becomes a part of the operation of his local, county, and state government.

Boys State has been a program of The American Legion since 1935, when it organized to counter the fascist-inspired Young Pioneer Camps. The program was the idea of two Illinois Legionnaires, Hayes Kennedy and Harold Card, who organized the first Boys State at the Illinois State Fairgrounds in Springfield.

The American Legion Auxiliary sponsors a similar program for young women called Girls State.

At American Legion Boys State, participants are exposed to the rights and privileges, the duties and the responsibilities, of a franchised citizen. The training is objective and practical, with city, county, and state governments operated by the students elected to the various offices.

Objectives

A program of this scope encompasses many important objectives. The American Legion feels the following are the most important:

- To develop civic leadership and pride in American citizenship. The American Legion hopes that each young man attending Boys State will return to his community a better citizen and display his willingness to make greater civic contributions.
- To develop a keen interest in government.
- To develop in the young citizens of Boys State a full understanding of our American traditions and belief in the United States of America. The American Legion Boys State teaches citizens the glorious traditions of this country
- To develop in the young citizens a determination to maintain our form of government

The final two objectives come from the Preamble to the Constitution of The American Legion:

- "To inculcate a sense of individual obligation to the community, state and nation . . ."

- "To safeguard and transmit to posterity the principles of justice, freedom and democracy . . ."

Boys State Criteria

In the actual selection of Boys State citizens, merit and ability alone are the basis for selection. Boys State is not a program for underprivileged boys nor is it a summer camp for recreation. American Legion Posts or other community-minded organizations often pay fees, or "tuition," with little to no expense to the young men.

We wish to secure equal delegate representation from all areas of the State of Texas; therefore, the Department Boys State Committee asks for one or more boy(s) from each accredited high school (public or private) to be nominated by the school to attend.

Characteristics of the "ideal" Boys Stater

To be selected for nomination or appointment as a Texas Boys State delegate, the candidate must demonstrate:

- Strong academic performance (e.g., a quick study) to thrive in this fast moving program
- Excellent Interpersonal skills (e.g., gets along very well with others from all backgrounds)
- Exhibited leadership (e.g., a leader of leaders)
- Solid Oratorical skills (e.g., a persuasive speaker and confidence shown in group settings)

In addition, the candidate must:

- be a male high school student
- have successfully completed his junior year
- have at least one semester remaining
- have not previously attended Boys State
- be recommended by his school officials
- have parents'/guardians' permission to attend
- be certified by the sponsoring American Legion post, and
- sign the Boys State Pledge

Pledge

American Legion Boys State is designed to bring out the best in America's future leaders. Attendees are selected because they are the best representatives of both their schools and their communities.

This pledge reminds all potential delegates of the honor and value that the American Legion has for and requires of each young man.

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands.

I have never attended The American Legion Boys State.

I sincerely want to attend Texas Boys State, and if accepted, will, to the best of my ability:

- Take a serious and conscientious interest in discharging my duties as a citizen
- Obey the rules of Boys State
- Respect the judgment of the Boys State Director, Counselors and Staff
- Participate in all activities
- Seek election or appointment to office, and if elected or appointed, serve that office
- Keep myself neat and well-groomed at all times
- Avoid the use of profane language and actions
- Refrain from injurious habits such as the use of tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs, and
- Upon my return home from Boys State, I will make a formal oral or written report to my sponsor(s) and brief next year's Boys State nominee(s)

Please contact Jason Dennis, American Legion Post 224 Commander at emtjad@gmail.com (806) 421-1577 or follow the link <http://www.texasboysstate.com/apply.php>