WHAT IS BOYS' STATE?

Boys' State is a scholarship program of The American Legion developed with the idea that youth should be offered an in-depth perspective of the practical operation of government and civic leadership; that the individual is an integral part of for the character and success of their government. It is an activity of high educational value, born from a need for youth training in practical citizenship.

To elaborate, Boys' State is easily classified as a Leadership Action Program for qualified male high school students who have completed their junior year of high school where they will participate in a practical government course designed to develop a working knowledge of how a government is structured. The ultimate goal is to impress upon them that their government is what they make it.

To summarize, Boys' State is an objective citizenship training program which develops individual responsibility to their local community, state, and nation. It is operated on a two-party system on the basis of the political government organization as it exists in New York State at all levels of government from local municipalities to the State level.

BOYS' STATE IS NOT A SUMMER CAMP. Although there will be designated recreation times, Boys' State is NOT a sports camp nor is it a special interests camp. Sponsoring groups are asked to also note that Boys' State is in no way a rehabilitation, disciplinary, or recreational camp. **Only young me with outstanding qualifications in leadership, character, scholarship, service, and citizenship who have a serious attitude toward an intensive citizenship training program should be selected. Appearance, neatness, and good organization are expected of Boys' State participants. Attitude and the ability to follow directions is a must. The image projected by candidates to Boys' State reflects upon the youth of America.**

Physical fitness is an integral part of Boys' State. There will be time set aside for a physical program to include calisthenics and marching to meals and assemblies to prepare the boys for the parade, which is a highlight of the program.

WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF BOYS' STATE?

Naturally, a program of this scope and magnitude encompass many objectives, all of which are important. However, the objectives we feel are the most important and those for which we strive to attain are as follows:

I. To develop civic leadership and pride in American citizenship. It is our hope that each young man who attends Boys' State will return to his community with a better outlook than when he left and that he will demonstrate this fact by his willingness to make civic contributions which will help his community be a better place to live.
II. To create a keen interest in the detailed study of our government.

III. To incite in these young citizens a determination to maintain our form of government.
IV. To develop in these young men a full understanding of our American traditions and a belief in the United States of America.

The American Legion aims to instill a sense of individual obligation to their communities, states, and nation as well as to charge these young men with safeguarding the principals of America – Democracy, Justice, and Freedom – the legacy of their forefathers.

WHERE AND WHEN WILL BOYS' STATE BE HELD?

Boys' State is scheduled to be held from June 26th through July 1st, 2027 at SUNY Morrisville in Morrisville, NY. The boys may check in between 11:00a.m. and 1:00p.m. on Saturday June 26th, and may leave on Thursday, July 1st, after attending the Final Assembly. Lunch will not be provided on Saturday, June 26th. Attendees should eat prior to their arrival.

Morrisville State College is located in the Cherry Valley area of New York on Route 20, thirty miles east of Syracuse. The dining hall will serve breakfast, lunch, and dinner during the course of the week. Special diets can be accommodated with ample notice. The boys must notify staff prior to arrival so arrangements can be made. A gymnasium, tennis court, and athletic fields are available to participants.

Each registered student will receive two (2) Boys' State shirts and a badge upon reporting to registration. Additional shirts may be purchased at Morrisville Boys' State Headquarters on Saturday at a cost of $5.00.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND BOYS' STATE?

Leadership, character, scholarship, and service are the necessary qualifications a young man must posses in order to be admitted to Boys' State. Participants should be able to tolerate the physical aspects of this program (long days, physical/mental activity). Physical incapacity can be a deterrent to participation in this program. A physical will be necessary along with doctor approval for the safety of the students.

Candidates for Boys' State must meet the following requirements:

I. Be at least fifteen (15) years of age at the time of application.
II. Have completed their junior year with at least an 80% or B average.
III. Have at least one semester of high school remaining.
IV. Be a resident of New York State or reside in another state but attend school in New York.

Candidates should possess the following qualifications:

I. Leadership

II. Ability to get along with others
III. Mental alertness
IV. Physical cleanliness and neatness
V. Honesty
VI. Positive attitude
VII. Enthusiasm
VIII. Citizenship-Minded

Applications for the selected candidates/alternates will be available online starting in October/November 2027.

The Board of Directors of Boys' State reserves the right to accept or reject any application for admittance. If deadlines are not met for the application process, a student's application will be denied.

HOW DO WE SELECT QUALIFIED CANDIDATES?

I. Local American Legion posts consult with area high school principals or guidance counselors and ask for their recommendations.
II. American Legion Post Committees interview each candidate and select those best qualified.
III. Candidates should be chosen with regard to the following:
    a. Seriousness of purpose
    b. Initiative
    c. Influence among their peers
    d. Concern for others
    e. Responsibility
    f. Emotional stability
    g. Interest in government

The American Legion Department of New York Boys' State Program does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, ethnicity, nationality, disability, gender identity/expression, religious creed, individual political opinions, or sexuality.

WHO ARE BOYS' STATE COUNSELORS?

The Boys' State Counseling staff is comprised of American Legion members, Sons of the American Legion, government officials, college professors, high school teachers, and former Boys' State students, many of whom have been with the program for a number of years. Their services have contributed much to the success of this program. ***All counselors and staff are thoroughly vetted through multiple background checks and sex offender registry lists. All counselors are subject to child protection training and prevention.***

Ten (10) counties will be formed at Boys' State. Each county will contain two (2) cities and each city will consist of approximately thirty-six (36) boys. A counselor is assigned to each city. It will be his duty to assist the young men and guide them to and from their daily

activities. There will also be a United States Marine assigned to each county. Their job is to teach the citizens of Boys' State how to keep their rooms in order and how to march in formation to get to and from events. All counselors and Marines are there to promote teamwork, morning PT, etc. ROTC and US Miliary Academy cadets may also be present to assist with daily duties.

WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES WILL BE PROVIDED?

In addition to their government work, participants will attend informational assemblies with guest speakers such as elected officials and public speaking experts. Softball, basketball, and tennis tournaments will be held as announced during assemblies. Students who play instruments are encouraged to bring their instruments and a lyre to join the band. A few of the larger wind instruments will be supplied (tubas, Bari-sax, bass clarinets, etc.). Participants must bring their own mouthpiece, and drummers must bring their own sticks. Past Boys' State bands have consisted of approximately sixty to seventy pieces. A daily newspaper is published. A state police force is organized, and court trials are held. Examinations will be given to those who wish to be admitted to the Bar of Boys' State. A program on Sustainability and Economic Development will help create awareness of alternative energy sources and recycling opportunities in communities. Boys' State Chaplains will participate in daily assemblies and programs. A yearbook, website, and video production will be developed and staffed by Boys' Staters.

WHAT ARE THE HEALTH AND MEDICAL REQUIREMENTS?

The Board of Directors of Boys' State requires each participant to undergo a physical exam by their primary physician. The signature of the participant's parent/guardian giving consent for emergency treatment is required. There will be a paramedic, nurse, or doctor on duty twenty-four (24) hours per day to care for all emergencies. General sick calls will be held daily at 8:00a.m. Local physicians, hospital staff, and emergency care facilities stand ready and willing to cooperate in critical health matters.

THE AMERICAN LEGION BOYS' STATE OF NEW YORK, INC. IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY INJURIES, ACCIDENTS, OR ILLNESSES INCURRED BY THE PARTICIPANTS DURING THIS PROGRAM.

WHAT YOU AS A PARENT SHOULD KNOW?

Participants will not be permitted to drive any vehicles while at Boys' State. Those who chose to drive to registration must surrender their keys at Boys' State Headquarters during registration. Keys will need to be picked up and signed for when they leave on the following Thursday.

Parking on the campus is at the driver's own risk. New York State Boys' State Program and SUNY Morrisville are not responsible for any damage or wear to vehicles.

WARNINGS:

I. Any delegates found off campus will be sent home. There will be no exceptions to this rule.
II. Any participant found in possession of liquor, cigarettes, illegal or legal drugs, or any weapon of any kind, will be immediately dismissed and barred from Boys' State.
III. Bullying, harassment, or any other unacceptable behavior will result in dismissal.
IV. Boys' State of New York, Inc. is a non-smoking program. There will be no exceptions to this rule.

NOTE:
The parents of any boy dismissed for any of the above reasons will be required to pick up their child and transport them home. In addition, violators will be immediately reported to their sponsoring organization and/or American Legion Post.

Cell phones are permitted; however, they must be turned off during the day except for breaks and down times. If you choose to bring any other electronic devices, Boys' State of New York, Inc. and SUNY Morrisville are not liable for lost or stolen items. The student will be responsible for their own belongings.

Thank you and we look forward to answering any questions you may have that were not addressed in this information packet.