



STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Molly M. Spearman
State Superintendent of Education

1429 Senate Street
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

MEMORANDUM

TO: District Superintendents
High School Principals
U.S. Senate Youth Scholarship Coordinators

FROM: Wanda A. Davis
SCDE Office of Public Information

DATE: August 31, 2015

RE: 2015-16 United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) Scholarship Competition

The USSYP, funded by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation, is celebrating 54 years of offering scholarships and recognition to South Carolina's juniors and seniors. USSYP provides opportunities for students with a demonstrated interest in public service to deepen their interest and understanding of America's political processes and to encourage their commitment to political leadership. Information about the selection process is available online, and all applicants must be provided a copy of the 2015 [brochure](#).

Registration and selection procedures and deadlines for the 2015-16 competition are attached. As your high school's designated USSYP scholarship coordinator, you must ensure that interested and eligible students are informed and registered for the competition and that all deadlines are met. All registration will occur at the school/association level and will be **submitted by online applications only**. Access to the online application process will be available beginning September 1, 2015. The deadline to submit online applications is September 30, 2015. **ONLY THE DESIGNATED HIGH SCHOOL USSYP COORDINATOR CAN ENTER THE DATA IN THE ONLINE APPLICATION FOR THEIR QUALIFYING STUDENTS. EACH HIGH SCHOOL IS ONLY PERMITTED 1 USSYP COORDINATOR.**

NOTE: Home-schooled students' exam and essay administration will occur at the nearest public school designated as a USSYP test/essay site. Therefore, home-schooled students' exams and score sheets/essay information will be mailed directly to the public school scholarship coordinator when applicable. Home school coordinators will contact the South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE) to obtain the name of the nearest school by September 30. Home school and public school coordinators will coordinate test/essay administration.

The qualifying examination and answer sheets will be mailed to public and private school scholarship coordinators on October 8. This exam is to be administered under secure conditions between October 13 and October 17. Student answer sheets for all students **must be received in our office by October 22, 2015**. The top 25 scorers will write an essay at their individual schools/test sites between November 4 and November 11 (again under secure conditions). The first-round winners and essay forms will be emailed to each scholarship coordinator on October 30, 2015. Essays are **due at the SCDE on or before November 16** and must be faxed to (803) 734-3389. **The student's original handwritten essay must also be mailed to my attention for the judges' review. No exceptions!**

A state committee will grade the original handwritten student essays only—no copies. Combined scores from both the multiple-choice exam and the essay will determine the winners. Two delegates and two alternates will be selected and notified by the Hearst Foundation in early December 2015.

I invite you to encourage the participation of interested and eligible students in this year's USSYP competition. For additional information, you may contact me at (803) 734-8485, wdavis@ed.sc.gov, or visit the USSYP [website](#).