

OUR LEARN-BY-DOING APPROACH - WHAT TO EXPECT?

The mission of Mississippi American Legion Boys State is to introduce the young men selected as delegates to the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship and to the election process of democratic government. Each Boys Stater will actively participate in the election, formation, and implementation of the government of Boys State in the fictitious state of Magnolia. This learn-by-doing approach is utilized to teach Boys State delegates about the election process in Mississippi, focusing on state, county, and municipal levels of government. In addition to participants' engagement in the electoral process and in government operations, real-world elected officials from both the state and the federal levels address the delegation. These sessions are designed to acquaint and teach the delegates the various aspects and complexities of government and to prepare them for the responsibilities of citizenship.

A. DELEGATE ASSIGNMENTS

City Assignments. Each delegate is placed randomly into 1 of roughly 12 cities that are named for various statewide elected officials. **Assignments to cities correlate with housing assignments and are final. No changes will be made.**

County Assignments. Two cities make up a county. Counties are named after current and former Chairmen and Commanders of the American Legion, Department of Mississippi.

Party Assignments. There are two political parties at Boys State, The **Federalist** Party and The **Nationalist** Party of Magnolia. The distinctions are purely fictional and are in no way connected to existing political parties in Mississippi. Parties will adopt a platform based on the decisions made at their party conventions. Approximately 1/3 of the delegates will be designated as **Independents**, meaning they are not affiliated with an organized political party upon arrival at Boys State. They can choose to join one of the two political parties or remain Independent.

B. ELECTIONS AND CAMPAIGNING

Citizenship. Delegates at Boys State are assumed, for purposes of elections, to be qualified voters and eligible to hold any office within the state of Magnolia. After registration, each delegate is deemed to be a citizen of the State of Magnolia as well as a citizen of the city and county to which they have been assigned.

Citizens are not required to hold any office, but as is the case in our democratic society, participation in the election process is essential for its success as well as the success of Boys State.

Campaigning. Delegates wishing to run for office often campaign with homemade stickers, buttons, and signage. However, nothing replaces handshaking and meeting your fellow delegates. You may also choose to attend one of the three campaign seminars after you check-In.

Candidate Speeches. The candidates for the top eight offices will give a short speech on their candidacy at one of the party conventions.

Debates. Debates will be held on the night before the General Election between the candidates for the "Big Eight" statewide offices. In order for an Independent candidate to join the statewide candidate debate stage, he must have polled at a certain rate in the statewide election poll.

Municipal Elections. The offices of the Mayor and Board of Alderman are elected during city meetings on the first full day and are conducted by our staff.

Party Primary. To win a county or statewide election, you must first win your party's nomination. This will be the first major election to take place at Boys State.

Run-off Election. If no candidate for a county or state office wins a majority of the vote of that county or the state, a run-off between the two candidates receiving the most votes will be held as soon as possible to determine the winner.

General Election. The top two candidates in the party primary elections plus any potential Independent candidate will face each other in the General Election. The general election is a winner-take-all.

C. AVAILABLE STATEWIDE OFFICES

Governor. The Governor, who serves a four (4) year term and may be reelected to an additional term, is charged with executive direction and supervision of the general administration of the State. He sees that the laws are faithfully executed, supervises the official conduct of executive offices, acts as commander-in-chief of the state militia, and appoints officials as prescribed by law. He is responsible for the presentation of a balanced budget to the Legislature and approval or veto of legislation passed by the legislature. He may call extraordinary sessions of the Legislature when he deems it necessary and may issue pardons and executive orders.

Lieutenant Governor. The Lieutenant Governor, whose qualifications are the same as the Governor, presides over the Senate, rules on points of order, appoints standing committees of the Senate, appoints all select and conference committees as ordered by the Senate, and refers all bills. He serves as a member of the Senate Rules and Joint Legislative Budget Committees; votes only in cases of ties and speaks from the floor while the Senate is in Committee of the Whole, and signs all finally approved bills and resolutions.

Secretary of State. The Secretary of State's Office is a service and information agency with six major statutory functions: administration of Mississippi Corporation Law, The Uniform Commercial Code, the Uniform Securities Law, and the Elections Code; administration and supervision of 16th section school trust lands, coastal tidelands, and tax-forfeited property; and issuing documents and publications of the state, including those for the executive and legislative branches. Investigating charity and securities fraud, enforcing campaign finance and lobbyist reporting requirements, issuing notary commissions, registering correspondence schools, administering the state's trademark and service mark laws, service of process, and administering the Administrative Procedures Act are also functions of the Secretary of State's Office. The Constitution designates the Secretary of State as the "keeper of the capitol."

Attorney General. The Attorney General is the chief legal officer and advisor for the State. His responsibility is to serve as a lawyer for the State, its public officials, and governmental agencies. The Attorney General has the sole power under Mississippi law to bring or defend a lawsuit on behalf of the State. He is also empowered to act as counsel to state agencies and to defend them or bring suit on their behalf, either in person or by his assistants. Just as every attorney who represents a client, he has a duty to protect your interests. To help him fulfill this trust, he has a staff of attorneys, investigators, and office personnel, chosen because of legal talents or other skills, which enable them to serve the needs of the State.

State Auditor. The Mississippi State Constitution and state statutes give the State Auditor major responsibilities in the areas of maintaining the State's Accounting System; auditing all state agencies, county governments, county school districts, junior colleges, and universities; conducting investigations into abuse of public funds and violations of law; prescribing systems of accounting and financial reporting for local governments; conducting inventory audits of state property and maintaining the inventory of all state property.

State Treasurer. The Treasury Department keeps fiscal records concerning receipts, deposits, and disbursements of all public funds of the State, including federal funds that are deposited into the State Treasury. This office maintains official and current records of the Mississippi bonded indebtedness and is responsible for making all payments of principal and interest due on said books. This office also invests state funds that are in excess of operating requirements and maintains accounts adequate to pay for State warrants and serves as custodian for

securities that are held by the State for other state agencies.

Commissioner of Insurance. The Insurance Department is charged with the execution of all laws relative to all insurance companies, corporations, associations, and their agents and adjusters. The Insurance Commissioner has also been charged with licensing and regulation of manufacturers and dealers of mobile homes and regulating practices of the same, including inspection of their manufacturing techniques and standards; and enforcing the liquefied compressed gas inspection program. They also administer the standard fire code through the Department's State Fire Marshal Division. He also serves as the State Fire Marshall and Chairman of the State Fire Academy.

Commissioner of Agriculture and Commerce. The Mississippi Department of Agriculture and Commerce was created in 1906 by the Mississippi Legislature to foster and promote the business of agriculture. This department performs regulatory functions in the following areas: sanitary inspection in grocery stores; aquaculture inspection for all non-native species of fish; agricultural theft; meat inspection; fruit and vegetable inspection; swine health protection; feed, seed, fertilizer, and soil and plant amendment inspection; weights and measures; inspection of exotic birds; public grain warehouse inspection; grain inspection and weighing; pulpwood measurement; insect and plant disease inspection and quarantine; pesticide inspection; inspection of manufacturing grade dairy farms and manufacturing milk plants; egg inspection; rendering plant inspection; syrup labeling inspection; honey and honey product labeling inspection; and catfish and catfish product labeling inspection.

D. AVAILABLE COUNTY OFFICES

County Court Judge: The county court judge will have jurisdiction over any and all civil or criminal trials within his county.

District Attorney: Prosecutes all criminal cases within the county.

Sheriff: Responsible for all law enforcement within the county.

Supervisor: Maintains routine county services including road, water, waste disposal, sewage.

County Clerk: Has the duty of impaneling a jury for the County Court

State Representative (6 per county): This officer must represent the County's interests during all legislative sessions.

State Senator (3 per county): This officer must represent the County's interests during all legislative sessions.

State Supreme Court Justice: Hears appeals for all cases from the circuit and chancery courts; has the responsibility for supervising admissions to the BAR.

State Appeals Court Judge: An intermediary appeals court. Hears cases assigned to it by the State Supreme Court.

E. AVAILABLE MUNICIPAL (CITY) OFFICES

Mayor: Presides over all meetings of the city; oversees the city project and assists the City Advisor in running the city.

Aldermen (3): Act as the city's legislative body; one alderman helps determine and works on the city project along with the mayor, one manages the sports program of their city, and the other "spirit" alderman helps keep the city's morale high.

F. BOYS NATION

Boys Nation. Stands as the most coveted position available. At the conclusion of the week, two delegates will be chosen by their peers to represent Mississippi in Washington D.C. at the prestigious American Legion Boys Nation program.

G. SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

City Projects. The city project assignments will be handed out at the beginning of the program. The success of city projects will depend largely on the ability of a city to obtain funding for it from the legislature. It is very important that the Mayor and Aldermen work well with the Legislative delegation from their city and county in order to secure the funding.

Legal Program. The legal program will consist of a moot court competition, which is an oral argument. All County elected officials related to legal processes will participate in the Legal Program. This includes all judges and prosecutors.

Newspaper. The name of the Boys State newspaper is the “Boys Stater”. It will be published at least three times during the week. Reporters cover current events, party news, and election news. The Reporters are given leeway in the formation and implementation of the newspaper. The newspaper is funny and satirical and at times even pokes lighthearted fun at the staff.

Guyton News Network (GNN). GNN is our statewide news network. Delegates who are interested in media or video collaboration and editing are encouraged to join. GNN produces fun daily new clips that will be played each morning. They also have the special privilege of interviewing our special guest speakers.

Talent Show. All delegates who are interested in participating in the talent show must attend its organizational meeting on Saturday night. The location of this meeting will be announced on Saturday afternoon. The talent show will be on Thursday night and all acts will be in good taste.

Sports. Our sports program is very competitive as each city will compete against another for a coveted title. We offer football, basketball, and dodgeball, as well as various field day style events.