

THE  
AMERICAN  
LEGION

**BOYS STATE  
OF KANSAS**

**Delegate Handbook  
2021 Session**



## **Program Introduction**

Congratulations on your selection to attend the American Legion Boys State of Kansas Leadership Academy. In the following pages we will do our best to acquaint you with a program that many past delegates have called one of the best experiences of their lives. You may have never heard about Boys State until now, unless your father, an older friend or your brother attended 'State.' The American Legion Boys State of Kansas is one of the best kept secrets around. Since 1937, approximately 60,000 young men like you have spent a week at Kansas Boys State learning about leadership in American government by creating their own virtual society.

Our mission during the week is to help you begin the development of individual political beliefs and to further the growth of leadership, responsibility and self-esteem in all participants of the program. Above all, the program offers different things to different people and your efforts are crucial to the kind of experience you will have. If you get involved, work hard and treat others as you would like to be treated, Boys State can show you a glimpse of your capacity to achieve greatness. It can be one of the best experiences of your life if you accept the challenges and opportunities the program has to offer.

In writing this booklet, we have made the assumption that you are the type of person who plans to make the most out of the honor of being selected for Boys State. This booklet will answer most of the questions that you and your parents may have about the program, so read it thoroughly.

We have two websites. You may be familiar with [www.kansasboysstate.org](http://www.kansasboysstate.org), our pre-session site. Our program site is [www.ksbstate.org](http://www.ksbstate.org). You may want to visit that site to review several past sessions. You will want to tell others of our program site so they can follow your session on-line during this year's session.

Should you have other questions please contact us at the following:

The American Legion Boys State of Kansas

PO BOX 8176

Wichita KS 67208-8176

1.866.241.9920 – Wichita office

316.858.3680 - fax

[troy.fowler@ksbstate.org](mailto:troy.fowler@ksbstate.org)

[www.ksbstate.org](http://www.ksbstate.org)

## **Very Important**

If you find you cannot attend Boys State, please notify your sponsor IMMEDIATELY so that an alternate delegate can attend. If you have any problems or questions, please contact us at the toll-free number or email immediately. ***No refunds will be made after July 16, 2021.***

## **The American Legion**

Founded in 1919, the American Legion has been a moving force for the fair treatment of our country's veterans, their families, and disabled veterans. With over three million members in the United States and seven foreign countries, The American Legion is the largest organization for veterans in the world. Members of the Legion are honorably discharged men and women who served their country on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States.

The Legion was the author of the GI Bill of Rights, which has benefited millions of service personnel since its passage in 1944. They also conduct programs designed to benefit the youth of America. Notable among these programs are American Legion Baseball, American Legion

Boys State and Boys Nation, American Legion High School Oratorical Contest, and the American Legion Americanism and Government contests.

Boys State was founded by the American Legion in 1935 and remains a premier youth program. The program in Kansas, which is conducted by the American Legion Department of Kansas, was founded in 1937.

### **The History of Boys State**

Legionnaires Hayes Kennedy and Harrold L. Card, both educators and members of the American Legion Department of Illinois, formulated the American Legion Boys State program in 1935. They wanted American youth to develop a better understanding of our governmental system and instill a sense of ownership that would make them better people, better citizens, and create a better America.

The format of Boys State was laid out by Card and fashioned from a method he successfully employed in earlier years to properly organize and conduct a Boy Scout Camp. Shorthanded on staff, he permitted the boys to govern themselves by holding elections for mayor and city council—which in turn appointed other city officials. Card quickly found that the boys were so enthused in carrying out their city duties that they almost neglected their scouting assignments. This first Boys State was conducted on the Illinois State Fairgrounds in June 1935.

Two years later, 200 boys assembled at Wichita University (now Wichita State University) for the inauguration of the American Legion Boys State of Kansas. The program moved to Wichita North High School in 1939. The program was also held in Wichita at West High School until 1963 when Boys State moved to the University of Kansas in Lawrence, and in 1991 moved to its present location at Kansas State University in Manhattan.

There have been many landmark events in the evolution of the Kansas Boys State program. Perhaps the strongest evidence of this heritage is the good reputation built by the delegates who participate each year.

Today's Boys State program is a streamlined version of over 80 years of successful sessions. The program has adapted to changing times, but many aspects of the program have been retained for their ceremonial and historical significance.

### **What is Boys State to You?**

Boys State is a political exercise. It simulates elections, political parties, and state and local governments.

Boys State is an exercise in leading, as well as, following others. Elections at Boys State are more than just choosing government officials. Elections are an opportunity to show your ability to lead under pressure, and to show your character in the face of victory and/or defeat. Boys State will test your skills in solving problems and working effectively within a team.

Boys State is an opportunity to gain pride and respect for our form of government and the price paid by people to preserve democracy. Marcus McNeal a 2008 delegate from Wichita, Boys Nation Senator, and former staff member writes:

“My experience at Boys State of Kansas was nothing short of phenomenal. I started the week out nervous because I didn't know what really to expect, and it went beyond what I expected. The beginning of the week was the campaigning for State positions, that really gave me an insight on the actual campaign process itself and showed me that just because I didn't raise much money in the primaries that I could still come out on top beating people who raised a ton

of money from the different special interest groups and individuals. The second half of the week was an eye-opening experience for me, about how quickly people can get mad at their elected officials. As Secretary of State, I had to reform the voting in the counties. I was able to effectively get my message across to hundreds of people. I got an insight on the workings of the actual state government and election process. Finally, I was elected to be one of the Boys State of Kansas Senators to go to Boys Nation.”

Boys State is an opportunity to express artistic and athletic talents. Delegates are encouraged to take part in the Boys State band, chorus, and talent show. The band and the chorus rehearse each day, coming together for an evening of entertainment on Thursday night. Actors, singers, musicians, and comedians perform at the annual talent show on Wednesday night. Athletics are encouraged during organized daily recreation. Delegates are invited to participate in several team sports as well as individual sports.

Boys State is a chance to meet new people. With over 500 delegates and staff in attendance, Boys State offers an opportunity to meet people who represent Kansas’ diversity in heritage and culture. Moreover, many delegates develop friendships that last a lifetime. After Boys State, you will recognize many of your fellow delegates who go on to become successful in college, politics, business, and other areas of life.

So, what have you gotten yourself into? We hope that you can now see that the answer to that question depends upon your interests. Boys State has meant something different to each of the 60,000 delegates who have preceded you.

Boys State offers opportunities to understand government, to exercise leadership, to understand patriotism, to express oneself artistically, and to meet new people. Boys State cannot be all things to all people. However, over 80 years of history and success have led the American Legion, and all of those who help make this program possible, to believe that Boys State offers something meaningful and important to the future of Kansas and to the future of America.

### **Program Check-in and Attendance**

Check-in for all delegates is on Sunday, August 1<sup>st</sup> from 11:00 am – 12:30 pm at your assigned residence hall (either Goodnow Hall or Marlatt Hall). More information on this assignment will come later.

**MAKE SURE THAT YOU EAT LUNCH BEFORE ARRIVING AT STATE.** The first meal will be at 5:30 p.m.

When you arrive at Boys State, please **wait** to unload your luggage until after you have checked in. Make sure you bring only your completed Medical/Physical Form into the check-in area.

You are welcome to drive your own car to Boys State. It will be parked in a campus parking lot that is patrolled by campus police and is under video surveillance. You will **not** have access to your car during the week of State. **If you plan on driving a car and leaving it, please email our office at [troy.fowler@ksbstate.org](mailto:troy.fowler@ksbstate.org) so that we can reserve a parking pass for you.** There is no cost to you for this service.

If you are arriving by bus, Boys State personnel can meet you at the bus station. Please call us at 1.866.241.9920 or email [troy.fowler@ksbstate.org](mailto:troy.fowler@ksbstate.org) by July 16, 2021 to make arrangements to be picked up.

If special circumstances arise that cause you to miss a portion of State, arrive late or need to leave early, this must be arranged through the Boys State office, in writing, by July 16, 2021.

## **Talent Show**

**TALENT SHOW**—the talent show is scheduled for Wednesday evening, and is one of the highlights of the week. A piano will be furnished. If you need any other particulars for your act, bring them along. In the past we have had solos, ensembles, magicians, dramatic interpretations, comic acts, and many surprises. Sign-up for the talent show takes place during the registration process. Tryouts for the Talent Show take place on Sunday and Monday and rehearsal schedules will be distributed at that time.

## **Competitive Athletics**

We offer five organized team sports: Ultimate Frisbee, soccer, basketball, volleyball, and softball. You will play against other Boys State counties. The competition is fierce, but fun. We supply all basketball, volleyball, and softball equipment—except that you will need to bring your own softball mitt. The sign-up for teams takes place on your residence hall floor with your counselors.

We also have a cross-country (5K) run, tennis, and arm wrestling. If you want to participate, bring the appropriate equipment. We **DO NOT** have access to the weightlifting or swimming facilities due to insurance restrictions.

## **Color Guard and Flag Detail**

Two delegates from each county at Boys State will be selected by their county counselor to represent their county in the color guard and flag detail. This team will care for the colors at all official Boys State functions. Those interested should contact their county counselor at the first county meeting on Sunday afternoon.

## **What You SHOULD Bring...**

We encourage you to bring enough clean clothes to last one week without laundry. Bring a light jacket in case of rain or cool weather. For the day's activities you will want to wear comfortable clothes—shorts, t-shirts, jeans, etc. You will be given two Boys State t-shirts at check-in, which are already paid for. These are to be worn for all events at McCain Auditorium.

Remember to bring athletic wear for softball, soccer, basketball, and other physical activities. Any group equipment, such as a volleyball, is provided. Personal equipment, like softball gloves, or a tennis racket, is not provided and should be brought with you.

Boys State provides towels and bedding. You will need to bring your own personal items: shaving kit, soap, shampoo, etc.

Bring several pencils and pens, a highlighter, and a notepad.

We use smartphones for voting & text-polling. You are asked to bring your smartphone (those that are text enabled with unlimited texting). You will be instructed when you should and should NOT use your phone. If you do not have a smartphone, you will be provided an alternative method for those voting situations. **Not having a smartphone will not diminish your experience in any way.**

At Boys State, you may incur some expenses, but you should not bring more than \$50. Delegates have access to soda and vending machines and souvenirs at our Quick Kats convenience store. And if you are driving, you will need enough money for gas to get you home. You will not need to buy any campaign materials with your own money. You can only use Boys State dollars to buy these items. Please ask a counselor or visit the office in the Kramer Conference Center for assistance if you have a money problem or other special circumstances.

Boys State has a talent show, which includes a variety of musical and theatrical performances. If you wish to participate and need a special instrument or props, these items should be brought with you. Common materials and props may be purchased or provided after you arrive at Boys State.

Large band instruments (tubas, percussion equipment, pianos) will be provided by K-State.

### **What NOT to Bring...**

You should not bring extremely valuable items with you to Boys State. You will not be supplied with a key to your room. The room remains unlocked throughout the week. ***Boys State is not responsible for missing, lost, or stolen items.***

Inexpensive watches are encouraged to help you stay on schedule. You will not need an alarm clock because a counselor will wake you up.

We do not allow illegal drug or alcohol use during State. If you are caught using or in possession of any of these, we have the option of calling your parents and sending you home immediately. If this happens, we will inform your sponsor and high school why you were sent home and why their fees will **NOT** be refunded.

### **The Layout of Boys State**

At State you will be assigned to a city made up of all the delegates on the same residence hall wing. Together, the two wings on your floor create a county. There are ten counties that make up the State. Most activities will revolve around your city and county.

You will also be assigned to a fictional political party (Nationalist or Federalist) in which you will help develop a party platform and nominate candidates for state elected offices. You will also be assigned a fictitious occupation for the purposes of our simulation.

You will be housed in an air-conditioned room in a K-State residence hall: Goodnow Hall or Marlatt Hall. As part of K-State's COVID protocol, a Synexis Biodefense System will be in each residence hall room. There are three meals per day, and you will eat them with your county in the Kramer Dining Center. As a part of COVID protocol, our goal will be to have individual rooms for each delegate. However, if that were to change, your roommate will be assigned based on several factors, so you will not be able request a specific roommate.

We do march at the American Legion Boys State of Kansas; it is a part of our daily routine. It is an efficient and timely way to move hundreds of people from point A to point B. It is closer to walking together and stepping in time rather than strict, always-cut-a-square-corner marching. Please keep an open mind—many really enjoy it.

## Overview of Offices

*(Note: some of these numbers may fluctuate once our session begins based on the total enrollment)*

### Political Parties

Party Leaders 1 per party / per county

### Media Staff

*The Staters' Union*, KSB WebTV,  
Radio/Podcast, Debate Committee 3 per county

### City Council

City Council Members 8 per city

### County Commission

County Commissioners 6 per county

### County District Court

Court Officials 6 per county

### Highway Patrol

Special Prosecutor 1 per county

### State Government – Elected Positions

Governor Open to all applicants

Lieutenant Governor LG will run with Governor Candidate after party nomination  
The two nominees compete in the general election as a team

Secretary of State Elected within each party,  
competes in general election

Attorney General Elected within each party,  
competes in general election

State Treasurer Elected within each party,  
competes in general election

Commissioner of Insurance Elected within each party,  
competes in general election

State Senators 4 elected per county (2 per city)

State Representatives 6 elected per county

### State Government – Appointed Positions

Supreme Court Justices 7 appointed by the Governor

**Per Kansas Boys State Statute, all persons appointed to the Supreme Court must be a District Court Judge, District Attorney, or the opposing Governor Candidate.**

### Office of the Governor and Lieutenant Governor

Legislative Liaison 1 each, appointed by Governor and Lt. Governor

### Office of the Secretary of State

Assistant Secretary of State 1 appointed by the Secretary of State

**Office of the Attorney General**

Assistant Attorney General

1 appointed by Attorney General

**Office of the State Treasurer**

Assistant State Treasurer

1 appointed by State Treasurer

**Office of the Commissioner of Insurance**

Assistant Commissioner of Insurance

1 appointed by Commissioner of Insurance

**State Departments*****Each Department is headed by a Secretary/Chairman/Superintendent***

Department of Natural Resources

2 per county per Department

Department of Humanities

Department of Economy

**Boys State Positions**

Delegates can participate in the political parties, *The Stater's Union* (the newspaper), KSB-TV (Boys State web tv), KSB-Radio (Boys State podcast), or city, county, and state governments. Each citizen will either be elected to or appointed to participate in one of these organizations. Below are brief descriptions of the positions available and how each position is filled.

**POLITICAL PARTIES**—the two parties are run by Party Leaders. Fellow party members elect one Party Leader from each party on Sunday. The Leaders write the party platform, solicit election contributions, promote party candidates, and organize the political fair and caucus on Monday.

**MEDIA STAFF** – the Boys State newspaper, *The Staters' Union*, is published daily. The Boys State web-tv service, KSB-TV, is produced and uploaded four times during the week. The Boys State web-radio service KSB-Radio is produced and uploaded daily. Three media staff members are elected from each county on Sunday. They perform all management duties including reporting, editing, layout and advertising sales for all three services; plus they host the State Candidates' Debate.

**CITY COUNCIL**— each city government is composed of elected officials. These officials form a governing council, which may include a mayor, a city manager, a city clerk, and a city treasurer depending on how the members of the council choose to assign duties and titles.

They are elected at the first city meeting on Sunday. The city officials function as a team and their duties include preparing the city budget, passing ordinances, zoning property, hiring teachers, hiring policemen, promoting the local economy, testifying before state departments, solving city government projects, and suing state departments.

**COUNTY COMMISSION**— similar to cities, county governments are composed of elected county officials. These officials form a county commission which may include county commissioners, a county clerk, a county treasurer, and a county administrator depending on how the members of the commission choose to assign duties and titles. They are elected at the first county meeting on Sunday. Their duties include promoting city cooperation, preparing a county budget, promoting the county economy, solving county government projects, and representing the interests of the county to state departments, the governor, and the legislature.

**COUNTY DISTRICT COURT**— additionally, each county has a district court that reviews cases, holds trials, makes decisions and issues orders. District court officials are elected on Sunday.



**STATE**— the state government has three branches: executive, legislative, and judicial. It is composed of elected officials and appointed officials.

**STATE EXECUTIVE BRANCH**— this branch is composed of five chief executive officers: the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Attorney General, State Treasurer, and the Commissioner of Insurance. Delegates running for state offices first seek the nomination of their party in the primary election on Monday. Gubernatorial (that is the adjective form of 'governor') candidates are nominated by their respective party. The Gubernatorial Debate is hosted and live streamed by the media on Tuesday afternoon. The general election follows this debate. State officers perform a wide variety of activities which include meeting with constituents, meeting with department members, issuing executive policies, preparing the state budget, testifying before the legislature, and other items of interest to the officeholder.

Appointed officials (those not elected during Tuesday's General Election) are announced on Tuesday evening and help the executive officials perform their duties. They also hold hearings before cities and counties, work with the legislature, and make policy recommendations.

**STATE LEGISLATURE**—Representatives and Senators from each county make up the Boys State legislature. Each is elected within their county on Sunday evening. They work on a budget, hold hearings, write legislation, and pass state laws.

**STATE JUDICIAL BRANCH**—Seven Justices, appointed on Wednesday by the new Governor, make up the Boys State Supreme Court. They review district court decisions, hear oral arguments, interpret the law, and issue written rulings.

### **Daily Government Projects**

Projects guide the various levels of government and the special interest groups through many of the problems faced by their counterparts in the real Kansas government. They often require multiple governments at various levels to work together to solve a problem devised by Boys State Executive Staff.

The purpose of government projects is to demonstrate:

- the complexity of modern political problems.
- that government actions may have unplanned and unexpected economic and social consequences.
- how easy it is for opposing interests to produce gridlock.
- that government action may be the only solution to a specific program.
- the impact that state, county, and city governments can have on each other.
- that there is usually no completely right or wrong answer to many problems.

Most importantly, government projects are designed to show each citizen in Boys State that he has the ability to solve problems and help improve society. Typical government project topics include cultural diversity, the relationship between mankind and the environment, the problems facing rural communities, economic development, government funding of the arts, crime, freedom of speech, health care, university admissions, water conservation, etc.

Government projects may require delegates to lobby legislators, to testify before department hearings, to meet with the Governor, or to sue a branch of the government.

Government projects require actions that affect the lives of the delegates. For example, if a department builds a toxic waste site in your city, everyone's property values will fall. Sometimes government officials act before they know the full effects they may have on the

private sector. Our computer-simulated society at Boys State helps you quickly learn the impact of your decisions.

### **Common Questions**

*What will I do if I don't get elected to an office?*

If you are not elected to an office, you will be appointed to one. It is in your interest to pursue an office you would like because it will occupy most of your time during the session.

*If I am one of the Party Leaders, can I run for another office?*

No. Leaders of the party work full-time, and they may **NOT** seek another office.

*If I am a newspaper staff member or broadcast (TV or Radio) media staff, can I run for another office?*

No, newspaper and broadcast staff members are full-time positions, and they may **NOT** seek another office.

*If I am elected to an office, may I resign it to take another office?*

On Sunday, all delegates will be elected to a position. Anyone who is interested in running for a state office will have the chance to declare their interest on Monday. If you are elected to a state office, you will then have to resign your original elected position.

*How do I finance my campaign?*

Obtaining contributions from other delegates is one way to finance your campaign. You should not bring any campaign material with you. It can all be bought with Boys State dollars once you arrive. (See section on Elections and Financing).

### **Elections and Financing**

While at Boys State, you will campaign for one of several elected offices. Before you get to Boys State, you should give some thought as to how you wish to compete for these offices. Most candidates use fliers, posters, and ads in the newspaper for campaign material. Boys State has an independent monetary system that uses Boys State dollars. There is no exchange rate between real currency and Boys State dollars. Boys State dollars are accumulated through fundraising campaigns and from contributions by special interest groups. You may **NOT** bring your own campaign materials from home. Our goal is to keep everything on a level playing field.

The following campaign rules are provided to make the elections as fair as possible, prevent damage to university property, and protect moral standards:

Candidates may not prepare campaign literature before their arrival to Boys State. Come with ideas, not finished products.

Before any campaign material may be posted, displayed, or otherwise used, the candidate must pay for the material in Boys State dollars. An official seal placed on the front of all campaign material acknowledges payment has been made. Payment is made and seals obtained from the main Banking Center located in the Kramer Conference Center.

No candidate or other person acting on his behalf may remove, destroy, or otherwise damage another candidate's campaign materials.

No candidate or other person acting on his behalf shall use any campaign material that harms or damages any building, surface, sidewalk, or other property.

No candidate or other person acting on his behalf shall use chalk or other semi-permanent materials to write directly on any surface, building, or sidewalk.

Posters and other campaign materials may only be posted by using either masking tape or non-adhesive methods.

No campaign materials may contain offensive or obscene images, words, or phrases. The American Legion Boys State of Kansas reserves the right to judge material based on its own criteria. In other words: if you have a doubt, leave it out.

### **Samsung College Scholarship**

One delegate from The American Legion Boys State of Kansas will receive a \$1,000 college scholarship. Due to the timing of our event in 2021, Kansas delegates will only be eligible for a state award. To compete, just complete the application form online at <http://www.legion.org/samsung-scholarship-application> by Midnight on August 1, 2021. The entire application process will be completed online.

### **Mail**

Friends and family members who want to mail letters/cards to delegates should address the envelope using the following format:

<Your Name>  
c/o American Legion Boys State of Kansas  
Kramer Dining Center  
Kansas State University  
Manhattan, KS 66506

Our office phone number the week of state is: 1.866.241.9920. We will take a message and get that message to you. Our fax number is 316.858.3680.

### **Delegates with Special Needs**

Any delegate with special needs, such as hearing impairment or physical disability, should note these needs on the medical authorization form included in this package. Boys State will provide use of elevators and special room accommodations, if necessary. If a delegate needs assistance to participate, including sign-language translation, the sponsoring organization must furnish a full-time aide to assist that student. All expenses for the aide, including transportation, meals and lodging, must be assumed by the sponsoring organization. The American Legion Boys State of Kansas Executive Director may choose to waive or lessen the cost of meals and lodging for the aide. The American Legion Boys State of Kansas must be assured that proper insurance is provided for the handicapped student and aide. Any additional premiums will be assumed by the sponsoring organization.