

**“THE SELECTION OF BOYS STATE DELEGATES:
by
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In your job as Post Commander, you have as one of your responsibilities, the supervision of the selection of delegates from your community to Palmetto Boys State. It is a great responsibility because Boys State can be one of the CHANGE experiences in the life of the young men you select. Believing that Boys State influences the lives of its participants and thus the lives of the citizens of South Carolina, it has for forty years been the announced goal of the Boys State Committee and the Department of South Carolina to secure delegates from every high school in the state, both public and private. In order to achieve this goal, an attempt is made to secure sponsors and select delegates through the officers of the Department and the local American Legion posts.

Following are excerpts from The American Legion National Headquarters, publication number 20-004-2001 relating to its Boys State policies.

“The American Legion has established certain qualifications for prospective Boys State citizens. Recommended guidelines are:

Only males who have successfully completed their junior year of high school and have at least one semester of high school remaining are to be considered.

Any boy who has previously attended a Boys State is not eligible to attend a second session.

Only boys with outstanding qualities of leadership, character, scholarship, loyalty, and service to their schools are to be considered.

In the actual selection process, merit and ability are the two most important factors considered. No boys are permitted to attend because of either poverty or wealth. It is not a program for underprivileged boys nor is it a summer camp for recreation. Fees or “tuition” are paid by American Legion Posts or community-minded organizations, with little or no expense to a young man and his family.

The selection process varies in the state-level organizations of The American Legion, but is generally conducted with the school recommending several more boys than a sponsor has quotas for and the sponsor (either a Legion Post or other organization) then selects representatives from this list.

Please note this word of caution: Do not let the schools make the final selection. The schools are to recommend boys as delegates to Boys State. To involve the schools in the selection process itself sends a message to the Courts that Boys State is a “school activity”. When this occurs, Title IX exemptions for Boys State could be eliminated and our programs thrown open to anyone wishing to attend who are willing to pay the delegate fee.

In South Carolina, each post determines the number it will sponsor and then an individual or committee selects their delegates. If citizens are selected by other organizations, an officer of The American Legion, Department of South Carolina must then approve them. The names and other pertinent information and sponsor’s fees are then forwarded to the Secretary-Treasurer.

The Legion is vitally interested in training young men who can appreciate our form of government, and who have the potential ability that can be developed to insure that the youth of this state are grounded in the fundamental concepts of American democracy, its functions and its heritage. We who serve the Department of South Carolina in this phase of its Americanism program are willing to take the young men that you send us and to train them to the best of our ability. We ask only that you be interested enough in this program to choose outstanding young men and send them to American Legion Palmetto Boys State.