Dear Utah Boys State Citizen,

The purpose of this document is to give you a heads up about **some** of the graduation requirements for Utah Boys State. Over the years, several thousand young men have come before you and everyone that wanted to complete the course did so without too much stress or difficulty.

The Utah Boys State program is very much an honor system. While civics and government are our bread and butter, character building, leadership and integrity are at the core of everything we do. We view citizens without character and having questionable integrity as being at the root of many problems in our society. Leadership is taking initiative and getting engaged in your community. When you do, you are leading and others will follow.

All the topics below will be discussed after your arrival (and early in the program) so if you don't completely understand something, it will be made clear.

Your personal conduct is front and center. You will be expected to conform to our general rules, and act with proper decorum throughout the program, e.g. demonstrate acceptable behavior. **You must:**

- Accept personal accountability, recognizing Utah Boys State has insurance responsibilities to Weber State University, and to our staff, counselors and citizens.
- Understand and adhere to acceptable uses of social media.
- Participate in all activities and periods of instruction.
- Vote in all elections.
- Make a minimum of one (1) public speech or presentation.
- Develop an idea and draft/write a bill. We will provide a suggested list of topics, or you can pick your own.
- Write an essay on one of these four topics:
  1. Obligations of citizenship.
  2. Power of the vote.
  3. What does democracy mean to me.
  4. The two-party system.

***You may**, but do not have to, prepare your essay before coming to Utah Boys State. Your essay should be 500-750 words, typed and double-spaced. The goal is to think critically and show your writing skills. You may use AI for spelling, grammar, and research but not to write any part of your essay using it. If you decide to write your essay ahead of time, please bring your printed essay with you.*

Guidelines for Structuring Your Essay

- When writing your essay, it is important to develop a clear overarching point or argument. Once you have established your main argument, support it by providing specific evidence or examples that reinforce your position.
- Remember that clarity is key—sometimes, less is more. Organize your essay with a clear beginning, middle, and end to ensure your ideas flow logically. Use good transitions between

paragraphs to create a cohesive narrative and separate your ideas into distinct paragraphs rather than presenting them as one long block of text.

- Your work should reflect originality and showcase your own personal and critical thinking. Aim for a well-structured argument and strong communication skills throughout your essay. Finally, remember to properly cite or credit any references you use to support your claims.

- Constitutional challenge:

*Please prepare **before** you arrive at Boys State. You will be required to present a 3–5-minute oration on any section(s) of an article or amendment contained in the U.S. Constitution. This challenge progresses throughout the week so the best presenters will advance to tougher competition.* The purpose of the topic discourse is to test the speaker's knowledge of the subject, the extent of his research, and the ability to discuss the topic as related to the basic principles of government under the Constitution. More importantly, citizens will learn and teach each other about our Constitution through the process of engagement.

- Take both civics exams. (Beginning of program and end of the program). Not used as a pass or fail of the course, just a measurement of beginning knowledge and end-of-course knowledge.
- Write brief evaluations. What staff, counselor or speaker impressed you the most and why? What staff, counselor or speaker impressed you the least and why?