



State of Maine
Office of the Secretary of State
2025/26 Student Programs

SHENNA BELLOWS
SECRETARY OF STATE

The Department of the Secretary of State is excited to offer a variety of free, educational programs designed to promote civic participation and awareness of Maine's history. To learn more, visit our website: www.maine.gov/sos/kids/ or contact our office at (207) 626-8400 or vanessa.diaz.gaumond@maine.gov.

To receive more information about any of these programs, please use the QR code or visit <https://forms.office.com/g/ST9VLB2RGt>



John Lewis Youth Leadership Award - maine.gov/sos/kids/programs/award

The Secretary of State's Office will be accepting nominations for the **John Lewis Youth Leadership Award** recognizing one Maine resident, age 25 or younger, who demonstrates leadership abilities, has a passion for social justice, and is improving the quality of life in their community. Visit the [John Lewis Youth Leadership Award webpage](#) for more information. **Nominations are due October 31, 2025.**

Maine Student Mock Referendum Election - www.maine.gov/sos/kids/mockelection/

The Secretary of State's Office will sponsor the Maine Student Mock Referendum Election on **October 28, 2025**. More than 21,443 students from over 140 schools participated for the 2024 mock general election. Voting can be done any day up to and including October 28 to accommodate student cohort groups. Students' votes will be combined with those of their peers across the country via the National Student Mock Election program.

Learn more about incorporating the Student Mock Election into your curriculum with this webinar from Secretary of State Shenna Bellows and 2023-2024 Maine DOE Civics Teacher Leader Fellow and Waterville Senior High School Teacher Jessica Graham. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nidz-n5AQwU>

Maine Symbols and History Poster Contests - maine.gov/sos/kids/programs/constitution-essay

One of our most popular programs, this contest gives students in grades K-5 an opportunity to show what they know about Maine through poster art. Each student will receive a participation certificate. Students submitting winning entries receive an award certificate. **Submissions are due March 7, 2025.**

Maine Constitution and Democracy Essay Contests - maine.gov/sos/kids/programs/constitution-essay

One of our most popular programs for middle and high school students, this contest gives students in grades 6-12 an opportunity to show what they know about Maine. Each student will receive a participation certificate. Students submitting winning entries receive an award certificate. **Submissions are due March 7, 2025.**
Prompts for 2026 announced this fall!

Donate Life Maine High School Poster Contest

This contest, sponsored by New England Donor Services, asks students to create a poster that brings awareness to organ and tissue donation. Prizes are awarded to the top three entries and teachers may earn a prize for the most student submissions. Watch for a posting of contest rules and an application at neds.org. **Entries due in March.**

Eighth-Grade Citizenship Awards - maine.gov/sos/kids/programs/eighth-grade-citizenship-award

This program recognizes students for their civic awareness, scholastic achievements, and community service. In 2024, over 115 schools honored a graduating eighth grader with the Secretary of State's Citizenship Award. Only one student will receive an award per school. Nominations for next year's program are **due by May 15, 2026**.

Congressional Medal of Honor Project - maine.gov/sos/kids/programs/cmoh

A great idea for a service-learning project: Students study a local Congressional Medal of Honor recipient and then work with the community to bring attention to an existing memorial or establish a memorial for the recipient. Students engage in research, design, presentations, fundraising and planning for an enduring memorial.

Maine State Archives Educational Programs

The Maine State Archives offers a variety of **online educational programs** that can be tailored to your specific interest or research focus. Each presentation begins with a discussion of the necessity of a state archive and the different types of records in our holdings. The archivists will display and explain primary source documents and tailor the discussion to your region of the state. If you have a particular topic that you are interested in exploring with your class, just let us know! **To schedule a program, contact the Maine State Archives at maine.archives@maine.gov**. For **NEW** online tools and resources visit mainesharedhistory.org.

Statehood for Maine

The effort to separate the District of Maine from the State of Massachusetts took many years and much negotiation, including at the federal level. This program looks at the reasons behind Maine's separation from Massachusetts and the process in which we formed our own state. Recommended for grade 4 and above.

Maine in the Civil War

This program explores the impact that Maine had on the Civil War and the impact the Civil War had on Maine. The presentation brings the topic to a local level, with accounts of people in your town or neighboring towns who contributed to or participated in the war effort. Recommended for grade 5 and above.

Topic of your choice

What is your group or class studying about Maine's history and the role of our state government? How can we help? Maine State Archives staff are available to discuss and explore additional program topics, based on your need and our documents. Give Archives a call at (207) 287-5790.

Ask the Archivist

Learners of all ages need help with research from time to time. If a student or teacher is stuck in their research or needs suggestions on where to start, our archivists are here to help! This can be especially helpful for school projects, including National History Day, or genealogy research. Contact maine.archives@maine.gov or call (207) 287-5790 to schedule a one-hour work session.