TO: Chief School Administrators
Charter School Lead Persons
Public and Nonpublic High School Principals
Guidance Counselors

FROM: David C. Hespe
Acting Commissioner

SUBJECT: 53rd Annual United States Senate Youth Program
Application Deadline: October 10, 2014

The New Jersey Department of Education is pleased to announce its participation in the 53rd Annual United States Senate Youth Program (USSYP) sponsored by the William Randolph Hearst Foundation and the United States Senate. **Principals of public or nonpublic schools in New Jersey may nominate one outstanding junior or senior** to be considered for this highly competitive, merit-based program.

Each year, two high school juniors and seniors from each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia and the Department of Defense schools are selected to participate in an intensive week-long educational program held in Washington, D.C. and receive a one-time $5,000 undergraduate college scholarship. The Hearst Foundation will pay all expenses for Washington Week (March 7-14, 2015), including transportation, hotel, and meals.

During Washington Week, delegates will hear major policy addresses by Senators, cabinet members, officials of the Departments of State and Defense, and directors of federal agencies, as well as participate in a meeting with a Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. Each session with elected officials includes an in-depth question and answer period. The military services will provide specially selected men and women officers to serve as mentors for the student delegates while in Washington, D.C.

The United States Senate Youth Program is designed for students who have demonstrated outstanding leadership abilities in their school and community and a strong commitment to public service. The type of student who thrives during Washington Week is one who is truly interested in government, history, politics, and leadership. The Hearst Foundation seeks students who are confident and excel at public speaking since Washington Week provides
the opportunity to speak directly with the highest-level elected and appointed officials in the country, including the President of the United States.

To be eligible, students must be serving in an elected or appointed capacity in an approved student government, civic or educational organization and a New Jersey resident during the application period through Washington Week. Students who attend this program are encouraged to pursue coursework in history and political science as well as careers in public service. For more information about the program and the selection criteria, please see attached application documents or go to http://www.state.nj.us/education/aps/cccs/ss/syp/.

Please note that in order to ensure consideration of your nominee, the attached application form and associated materials must be **completed and received by mail no later than October 10, 2014**. At that time, a Blue Ribbon panel will be convened to select two delegates and two alternates. Announcement of the two delegates that will represent New Jersey will be made by mid-December.

Thank you for your assistance with the USSYP nomination process. In the past, the delegates from New Jersey have been extraordinary and we expect, with your help, to receive many exceptional applications again this year. If you have any questions, please contact the program administrator, Beverly Plein, at beverly.plein@doe.state.nj.us.