

GSA Leadership Summit 2021 Student Application

The Massachusetts GSA Student Leadership Summit will take place August 13th-16th, 2021 at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. The Summit is a multi-day conference for high school students who are selected for seats on the coming school year's Massachusetts GSA Leadership Council. Complete this application to be considered for both the Summit and a full year's participation in the State Council.

The [GSA Leadership Council](#) is a project of the [Safe Schools Program for LGBTQ Students](#), a joint initiative of the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Massachusetts Commission on LGBTQ Youth. The Massachusetts GSA Leadership Council creates and informs policy, promotes inclusive learning environments for all students, supports the development of leadership skills, and fosters statewide collaboration among LGBTQ students and allies. Council members develop and implement projects designed to make changes in local schools, districts and regions. Council members are expected to participate in monthly meetings (5 State Meetings & 5 Regional Meetings), as well as planning meetings and policy team meetings, throughout the school year.

Applications are being accepted from students who will be in grades 9-12 during the 2021-22 school year. The Massachusetts GSA Student Leadership Summit is free to attend. All individuals who are accepted will be provided with overnight accommodations at UMass Amherst, meals, and limited transportation (from select pick-up/drop-off locations throughout the state). All individuals who participate in the Massachusetts GSA Student Leadership Summit commit to being a part of the 2021-22 Massachusetts GSA Leadership Council.

*The status of the GSA Leadership Summit as in person or virtual depends on Massachusetts COVID-19 guidelines and is subject to change. At this time, we are planning for an in-person event, so we expect students to be able to participate in the Summer Summit and monthly meetings in an in-person capacity.

The official application must be completed in one session. The application contains both demographic information and short-answer questions. We have provided all of the application questions below. We highly recommend that you familiarize yourself with the questions and prepare your answers in advance. To officially apply to the GSA Leadership Summit and to the 2021-22 MA GSA Leadership Council, complete [this application form](#).

Applications must be submitted by 5:00 PM on May 14th, 2021. Applicants will be notified regarding their status by May 26th, 2021. Please contact the Safe Schools Program by email with any questions at commission@ma-lgbtq.org.

Application Questions

Demographic questions:

1. First name (preferred)
2. Last name (preferred)
3. Pronouns (optional)
4. Please type the name of your high school
5. Year of high school graduation
6. What is your date of birth? (MM/DD/YY)
7. What is your gender identity?
8. What is your sexual orientation?
9. What is your race/ethnicity?
10. Do your parents/guardians support your attending the Summit?
11. Have you attended a GSA Student Leadership Summit in the past?
 - a. If yes, describe your involvement in the State and Regional GSA Leadership Council meetings and events following the Summit. Please provide specific details on how you have contributed.
12. Do you have any accessibility needs? If so, what are they and what accommodations do you require?
13. Which Policy Team(s) would you like to join? You will officially be assigned one team.
 - a. Education
 - b. Advocacy & Outreach
 - c. Research
 - d. Health
 - e. Legislative
14. Please provide us with contact information for your GSA advisor (if applicable):
 - a. First name
 - b. Last name
 - c. Phone number
 - d. Email

Contact information:

1. What is your street address?
2. What city/town do you live in?
3. What state do you live in?
4. What is your zipcode?
5. What country do you live in?
6. What is your email address? (not parent/guardian)
7. What is your phone number? (not parent/guardian)

Short answer questions:

1. Why do you want to attend the GSA Student Leadership Summit? What would you like to gain from this experience?
2. Describe any social justice leadership or organizing experience you've had - and what you've learned from the experience.
3. Describe any experience you have with racial justice, if any, either through school or other groups, or through your own lived experience?
4. Please describe your ability to participate and your commitment to being a part of the State GSA Leadership Council and your Regional GSA Leadership Council throughout the 2021-2022 school year.

*All short answer questions must be answered. However, we understand that everyone has different strengths, so we have provided various options through which you may answer these questions. You may submit your answers as: a) written short essays, b) audio and/or video recordings, or c) a virtual interview. You may also submit a piece of art to be considered as part of your application if you wish. Participating in an interview or submitting artwork will not affect your chances of being accepted.