

NAIS STUDENT CIVIC LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE CLOSE UP FOUNDATION



The [NAIS Student Civic Leadership Summit](#), a partnership between **Close Up** and the **National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS)**, brings together high school students from across the U.S. to build knowledge, strategies, and leadership skills to make a positive impact on the issues they care about. Through engagement with experts and collaborative inquiry into pressing national issues, students consider their individual and collective responsibilities and agency, identify best practices in community engagement, and explore how the voices of other community members might shape their work toward a better future. As they become **empowered, effective changemakers**, students develop vision statements and strategies to make a difference in their own communities, and present those plans to teachers, administrators, and other participants in the concurrent [2026 NNSP Annual Conference](#).



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PROGRAM DETAILS

Dates: Tuesday, January 27, to Friday, January 30, 2026

Location: The Student Civic Leadership Summit will take place at a hotel in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area.

Summit Highlights: During this summit, students will:

- Explore the ways in which national—and even global—issues impact local communities.
- Deliberate the structures and barriers that can make change difficult.
- Work in groups to create vision statements that incorporate tangible action steps.
- Present their plans to educators and experts at the NNSP Annual Conference.

PRE-PROGRAM WORKSHOP

In November, we will host a program orientation via Zoom for registered students and advisors to hear more about the programming and identify what issue area they would like to focus on during the summit. (Sample issue areas include climate, poverty, civic engagement, and mental health.)

ELIGIBILITY

The Student Civic Leadership Summit is open to high school students in grades 9-12 who have an interest in civic action and community engagement and are traveling with an educator from their school attending the concurrent NNSP Annual Conference. We ask that schools bring a cohort of 4-8 students.

TUITION

The all-inclusive fee is \$1,495 per student. This covers all summit sessions, evening activities, meals, hotel accommodations, and daytime and nighttime supervision and security.

REGISTRATION PROCESS

Please visit our [website](#) for more information and registration details. Be sure to check out the [NNSP Annual Conference](#) for educators as well!

KEY PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Homeroom Groups: Students take part in daily discussions, debriefs, and feedback sessions with their homeroom, a core group of students led by the same instructor throughout the summit.

Youth Civic Leaders Panel: Students hear from peers and organizations across the country dedicated to the field of youth civic action and engagement.

Current Issue Deliberation: Students develop a deeper understanding of their chosen issue area and discuss policies and solutions that have been proposed to address it.

Planning for Community Engagement and Leadership by School: Students build on their experiences in the summit to develop vision statements and strategies to make a difference in their own communities. These plans of action are distinct from calls to action; instead of saying “you should,” students pledge “we will.”

CALL: 703-706-3300

EMAIL: programsupport@CloseUp.org

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SAMPLE SUMMIT SCHEDULE

TUESDAY

Arrival and Registration

WEDNESDAY

9:00 Welcome Breakfast and Orientation
10:30 Community-Building Activity
12:00 Lunch
1:30 Opening Workshop
2:45 Issue Area Exploration
4:00 Youth Civic Leaders Panel
6:00 Dinner
7:30 Night Monument Tour
9:30 Student Lounge
11:00 Room Check

THURSDAY

8:00 Breakfast
9:00 Current Issue Deliberation
10:45 School Group Reflection
12:00 Lunch & Neighborhood Exploration
2:00 Community Engagement Seminar (By Issue Group)
3:15 Break
3:30 Community Action Deliberation
4:45 Action Planning Session #1 (By School Group)
6:00 Dinner & Social Activity
9:30 Student Lounge
11:00 Room Check

FRIDAY

8:00 Breakfast
9:00 Finalize Action Planning & Presentations
10:00 Presentations & Panel
11:30 Closing Workshop
12:30 Lunch
1:30 Depart for Home

FAQS

Do I need to arrange hotel rooms for my students? No. Hotel rooms are included in the cost of the program and students will be grouped with peers from their school.

Do I need to provide meals for my students? No. All meals are included in the price of the program. We will be sure to be aware of any food allergies and make the necessary accommodations.

Do I have to check my students in at night and monitor them overnight? No. There will be a night monitor in each hotel hallway who will check the students into their rooms each night. Night monitors are available should students need anything overnight.

Can I check in on my students during the program? Yes. You can observe students in action at any point. Everyone will be able to hear student presentations at the end of the summit when they present to the NNSP Annual Conference.

What will students do at night? Close Up will provide excursions for students to keep them entertained. We will be sure to have them see a bit of D.C. but also allow them time to socialize and have fun.

ABOUT CLOSE UP

Close Up is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, civic education organization that informs, inspires, and empowers young people to become active citizens. Since 1971, we have partnered with school districts nationwide to serve more than one million students and educators through experiential learning programs in our nation's capital and in local communities, professional development, and curriculum design and consulting. Our goal is to connect what students learn in class to the real world around them and help them articulate their own views, listen to those of others, and engage with people of different backgrounds with tolerance and understanding. To learn more, visit CloseUp.org.

ABOUT NAIS

The National Association of Independent Schools is a nonprofit membership association dedicated to unlocking the extraordinary potential in students, independent schools, and their communities. We provide services to more than 2,000 schools and associations of schools in the United States and internationally. To learn more, visit NAIS.org.