



SkillsUSA Washington
Student Leadership Handbook

2023 - 2024

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Introduction

Welcome Message

Greetings SkillsUSA Washington Members,

We would like to extend our warmest welcome to the SkillsUSA Washington State Student Leadership Handbook! This handbook serves as your guide to assist you as you embark on a journey of self-discovery and professional growth. It is filled with insightful information, guidelines, and tools that will aid you in navigating your leadership journey within the SkillsUSA Washington community.

SkillsUSA Washington provides a unique platform where students, advisors, and industry representatives come together to create a collaborative learning environment. This synergy helps to propel career and technical education (CTE) to new heights, enriching your experiences and contributing to a skilled and robust workforce that drives our state's economy forward.

Your involvement in SkillsUSA Washington is a testament to your personal and professional development dedication. Through your active participation, you are setting a strong foundation for a promising future while making a meaningful contribution to the larger community.

This handbook has been meticulously organized to provide a comprehensive understanding of various leadership roles within SkillsUSA Washington. From being a State Officer or a Student Advisor to the responsibility of your home school, it offers a glimpse into the procedural aspects, code of conduct, and the benefits associated with each role, thereby preparing you for the responsibilities you are eager to undertake.

As you peruse through the pages of this handbook, we hope you find clarity, inspiration, and the motivation to actively engage in the array of opportunities that SkillsUSA Washington presents. The journey ahead is promising, and the skills, relationships, and experiences you will garner along the way are invaluable.

We appreciate your role in SkillsUSA Washington. Together, we will continue to foster a nurturing environment that champions the SkillsUSA mission of empowering each member to become world-class workers, leaders, and responsible American citizens.

We wish you an enriching and rewarding experience!

SkillsUSA Washington Goal

“SkillsUSA Washington’s goal is to create a skilled workforce that values collaboration and meaningful connection. You cannot discuss the workforce without first committing to create a community that not only welcomes every individual, but creates the space for them. We recognize that the more diverse a work force, the more value it brings and strive to ensure that every person has the opportunity and skills to do what they love and earn what they deserve.”

Overview of SkillsUSA:

SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. We help each student excel. A nonprofit national education association, SkillsUSA serves middle-school, high-school and college/postsecondary students preparing for careers in trade, technical and skilled service occupations.

Mission Statement:

SkillsUSA is America’s proud champion of the skilled trades. Our mission is to empower students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members.

Importance of Leadership:

Leadership is a cornerstone of SkillsUSA Washington's mission to foster a generation of skilled, responsible, and forward-thinking individuals. It plays a pivotal role in personal, academic, and professional success. Below are some key points highlighting the importance of leadership within the SkillsUSA Washington community:

1. Personal Development:

- a. Leadership experiences cultivate self-awareness, confidence, and resilience.
- b. They encourage individuals to step outside their comfort zones, fostering growth and maturity.

2. Skill Enhancement:

- a. Leadership roles help in honing vital skills such as communication, problem-solving, time management, and strategic planning, which are essential for career success.

3. Team Building and Collaboration:

- a. Effective leadership fosters a culture of teamwork and collaboration, allowing for the pooling of diverse talents and skills toward common goals.

4. Community Impact:

- a. Leaders within SkillsUSA Washington have the opportunity to make a significant positive impact in their schools and the broader community by advocating for career and technical education and community service.

5. Networking Opportunities:

- a. Engaging in leadership roles opens doors to networking with industry professionals, educators, and peers, which can be invaluable for future career opportunities.

6. Career Readiness:

- a. Employers often seek individuals with demonstrated leadership abilities. The leadership experience gained in SkillsUSA Washington prepares students for challenges and responsibilities in the workforce.

7. Legacy Creation:

- a. Through effective leadership, individuals have the opportunity to leave a lasting legacy, inspiring and paving the way for future SkillsUSA Washington members.

In SkillsUSA Washington, being a leader is more than just having a title. It involves making a positive impact, guiding others toward common goals, and contributing to the growth and success of the organization and its members. As you consider the leadership roles available, keep in mind that each step towards good leadership is an opportunity for personal growth and to make a difference in the lives of others.

Student State Officer

Role Description

As a State Officer, you are a key member of a dynamic team that plays a crucial role in expanding membership, advocating for SkillsUSA, and championing the broader mission of our organization. You and your team will plan, lead, and execute various projects, workshops, and conferences aimed at promoting the values and objectives of SkillsUSA Washington. Your primary duty is to be an active and contributing member of this team, embodying the principles of SkillsUSA and providing unwavering support for your fellow officers and the association members of SkillsUSA Washington.

Your position serves as a conduit between the student body, advisors, and industry professionals, enabling a constructive dialogue and active engagement within the SkillsUSA Washington community. Through your actions and leadership, you help foster a sense of belonging, promote SkillsUSA initiatives, and ensure an enriched experience for every member involved.

Eligibility Criteria

To qualify, provide the necessary documentation or agreements for

- Active member status by December 1st.
- Endorsement from SkillsUSA Advisor and School Administrator.
- Maintaining a minimum accumulative GPA of 2.5.
- Remaining school year in a coherent series of courses or career major.
- Preparedness to earn SkillsUSA Knowledge Assessment (Statesman).
- Availability for personal appearances representing the state organization.
- Attendance to all mandatory state officer trainings.
- Adherence to national and state policy during the term.

Bylaws Guiding the State Officer Election Process

State Officers

Section 1 - Selection of State Officers Candidates:

- a. Each school/campus may nominate two candidates for a State Office.
- b. Nomination must be received in the state office by the designated deadline (Usually March 15). This form may be found on the SkillsUSA Washington website.
- c. Secondary candidates must be paid members with at least one full year of high school and one year of vocational or CTE instruction remaining.

Campaigning for a State Office

Section 1 -Each candidate will:

- a. Pass a Professional Development Test with a minimum score of 80 percent. (Statesman Award)
- b. Recite a part of the opening ceremony. Each candidate is free to choose which part he/she wants to recite.
- c. Be interviewed by a selected committee.
- d. At the State Conference, each candidate will be assigned a table for campaign material. Distribution of campaign materials and display of posters are limited to the campaign booth.
- e. During the delegate session, candidates will be kept in a reserved room and be escorted to and from the delegate session.
- f. All candidates will deliver a campaign speech (three minutes maximum).
- g. Candidates must wear official attire or equivalent business formal attire.
- h. New officers will be installed during the General Session, and a brief new officer meeting will be held following the conclusion of the Awards Ceremony.

Duties and Responsibilities

Responsibilities and Duties of State Officers

Section 1 - Each officer must:

- a) Be dedicated to CTE through Skilled and Technical Sciences and SkillsUSA.
- b) Be willing to commit the entire year to State Officer Activities and to properly perform the duties of his/her elected office.
- c) Be willing and able to travel without involvement that creates conflicts at home, work, or school.
- d) Be willing to work to develop into an effective public speaker and to project a desirable image at all times.
- e) Be prompt with all thank-you notes, letters, reports, and other correspondence that is necessary and desirable.
- f) Work to improve their ability to carry on meaningful and conversations with individuals of all ages and walks of life.
- g) Each officer must be willing to seek out and accept evaluation of his/her performance.
- h) Each officer must be willing to keep up to date on current events.
- i) Each officer must forego the use of all alcohol, tobacco, and non-prescriptive drugs while involved in any official or unofficial activity while representing SkillsUSA.
- j) Each officer must follow dress code requirements for SkillsUSA Washington activities.
- k) Each officer must serve as a member of the State Officer Team by maintaining a cooperative attitude and respecting each member.

- l) Each officer must be willing to take and follow instructions as directed by adults charged with responsibility for officer behavior, caretaking, and safety.
- m) Each officer must avoid language, behavior, places, or activities that would raise questions related to moral character or conduct.
- n) Each officer must use proper grammar in speeches and informal conversations.
- o) Each officer must avoid participating in and actively discourage conversations that belittle or downgrade any member, officer, or adult.
- p) Each officer must maintain acceptable (2.5 or better) grades in both home high school and technology center programs to ensure participation in officer activities.
- q) Each officer must maintain a good attendance record at his/her technology center and home high school to ensure his/her ability to participate in officer activities.
- r) Each officer must attend the first Officer Training Session, the Washington State Leadership Conference & Skills Conference the following year, and other conferences/meetings deemed necessary by the executive director.
- s) The majority of expenses incurred while serving as a state officer will be provided or reimbursed by SkillsUSA Washington.

Code of Conduct

As a state officer of SkillsUSA Washington, the **Student Officer** agrees to adhere to the following rules and regulations:

- The **Student Officer** will, at all times, represent SkillsUSA to the best of their abilities.
- The **Student Officer** will, at all times, respect all property and the rights of others.
- The **Student Officer** will, at all times, implement and support the SkillsUSA culture of inclusion and diversity.
- The **Student Officer's** conduct will be exemplary at all times, during and outside of SkillsUSA functions.
- The **Student Officer** will not use alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substances while representing SkillsUSA at events, functions, conferences, and during travel.
- The **Student Officer** will avoid places or activities that in any way would raise questions as to their moral character or conduct.
- The **Student Officer** will not engage in any behavior that might be deemed sexual harassment, which includes, but is not limited to, verbal, written, or physical statements or actions to or about others.

- The **Student Officer** will, at all times, use social media accounts appropriately. This includes not engaging in bullying or cyberbullying of others, including threatening words or behavior; menacing, hazing, taunting, or intimidation; the use of lewd, profane, or vulgar language; verbal or physical abuse of others; or other threatening behavior toward others at any time.
- The **Student Officer** will alert the State Officer Trainer or State Director of any disciplinary actions they incur at school or outside of school, including but not limited to actions involving law enforcement."

Travel Requirements

State officers must be available to travel for training and events throughout their year of service. After the election, the team will collaborate on availability and establish training dates and times.

State Calendar

State Officers must be available to attend the events listed below in full.

- State Officer Training (4 days)
- Winter Legislative Meeting (2-3 days)
- State Conference Planning Meeting(s) (1-3 days)
- State SkillsUSA Conference (6 days)
- Others as assigned

Student State Officer Section Acknowledgment

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agreed to the terms and responsibilities outlined in the Student State Officer section of this handbook.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Student Advisor

Role Description

Student Advisors play a crucial role within SkillsUSA Washington, guiding and mentoring students, facilitating events, and ensuring the organization's objectives align with educational standards. These Advisors work closely with State Officers, offering them support, ensuring they adhere to the SkillsUSA Washington guidelines, and assisting them in planning and executing various programs and initiatives.

Eligibility Criteria

- Must be a faculty member or educator affiliated with an educational institution in Washington.
- Prior experience or involvement with SkillsUSA or related organizations is desirable.
- Demonstrated commitment to student development and the promotion of career and technical education.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Provide consistent support and guidance to the State Officers and student members.
- Collaborate with SkillsUSA Washington officials to plan, organize, and oversee state-level events and programs.
- Serve as a bridge between students, the SkillsUSA Washington organization, and the educational institution, ensuring smooth communication and operations.
- Ensure that all activities and initiatives align with SkillsUSA's mission, vision, and objectives.
- Monitor and assist State Officers in adhering to the Code of Conduct and organizational guidelines.

Code of Conduct

Student Advisors are expected to maintain the highest standards of professionalism, ethics, and respect, serving as role models for students. They should adhere to the organizational guidelines, promote a positive environment, and ensure that their actions and decisions align with the best interests of SkillsUSA Washington and its members.

Student Support

Our state officer team's success largely depends on local advisors' support. The duties of such advisors are listed below:

- Ensure that their officer receives communication from the state office.
- Ensure that their officer responds in a timely manner to all requested materials or information.
- Ensure that their officer attends all called meetings and activities.
- Ensure that their officer abides by all policies and procedures outlined in their Leadership Handbook, State Officer Contract, and any other such items that may be communicated to them in writing or verbally by the state director or designee.
- Review all assignments before submitting them to the state office (speeches, articles, minutes, journal entries).
- Arrange transportation for your officer to and from events.
- Assist in planning and preparing state officer speeches, scripts, skits, sessions, and other documents.
- Encourage and support the state officer team in fulfilling their mission to serve Washington SkillsUSA.

Traveling

A crucial aspect of the Student Advisor role is accompanying the State Officer during various activities, ensuring their safety, and facilitating smooth interactions during events.

- **Mandatory Accompaniment:** The Student Advisor is required to travel with the State Officer to all SkillsUSA Washington activities. This ensures that the officer has guidance and support at all times, guaranteeing the successful representation and execution of duties.
- **Pre-arrangements:** In special circumstances where the Student Advisor cannot accompany the State Officer, it is essential to pre-arrange this with the State Officer Trainer and the Executive Director. Documentation from home school as well as parent/ guardian

may be required. Any alternative arrangements should be aligned with the best interests of the State Officer and SkillsUSA Washington's objectives.

- **Responsibility:** While traveling, the Student Advisor holds the responsibility for the State Officer's well-being, ensuring that all activities are conducted in adherence to the SkillsUSA Washington guidelines and that the officer receives the necessary support.

Traveling with the State Officer not only provides a layer of support and safety but also ensures that the organization's representation at various events is consistent and aligns with SkillsUSA Washington's values and objectives.

Advisor Section Acknowledgment

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agreed to the terms and responsibilities outlined in the Advisor section of this handbook.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Position/Title: _____

Student School Section

Schools that have the honor of hosting a Student State Officer play a pivotal role in the larger SkillsUSA Washington community. While it brings prestige, it also necessitates additional support and accommodations for both the officer and their advisor due to their responsibilities at the state level.

Support for the Student State Officer

- **Academic Flexibility:** Recognizing that the officer will miss school for various SkillsUSA duties, schools should provide flexibility in assignment deadlines and offer makeup tests or sessions as needed.
- **Communication Channel:** Establish a direct line of communication between the officer and the school's administration to address any concerns or needs quickly.
- **Counseling and Guidance:** Given their unique position, these officers might benefit from regular counseling sessions to balance their academic and leadership roles.

Support for the State Officer Advisor

- **Work Flexibility:** Advisors will also need to be away from their regular duties. Schools should ensure they have substitute teachers or adjusted schedules as required.
- **Professional Development:** The role of an advisor to a State Officer is distinct. Schools can support this by offering specialized training or resources to help advisors excel.
- **Recognition:** Advisors put in extra hours and effort. Recognizing and appreciating their work can be a significant morale booster.

Shared Responsibilities

1. **Event Participation:** Schools should actively participate in SkillsUSA events, showcasing the synergy between the school and its State Officer.
2. **Feedback Mechanism:** Establish a feedback mechanism where both the State Officer and Advisor can share their experiences, challenges, and suggestions with the school's administration.
3. **Collaboration:** Schools should collaborate with SkillsUSA Washington to understand how to better support their officers and advisors, perhaps by attending joint training sessions or meetings.

Resources and Support from SkillsUSA Washington

SkillsUSA Washington acknowledges the commitment schools make by hosting a State Officer. As such:

1. **Financial Support:** There may be provisions to assist with travel or other associated costs for officers and advisors attending mandatory events.
2. **Training Modules:** Specialized training modules to help schools understand the SkillsUSA framework and how to integrate their officer's responsibilities within the school's curriculum.
3. **Networking Opportunities:** Schools can benefit from networking with other institutions that have hosted State Officers, sharing best practices and solutions to common challenges.

Financial Support

Hosting a Student State Officer comes with unique challenges, and financial considerations are among the forefront. SkillsUSA Washington recognizes this and is committed to offering financial support to ease the burden and ensure the smooth functioning of both the school's academic environment and the officer's state-level responsibilities.

Financial Support for the Student State Officer

WA State Leadership and Skills Conference (SLSC) Costs:

- **Registration:** SkillsUSA will cover the complete registration fees for the State Officer for any conference they attend as part of their duties.
- **Accommodation:** The costs of the hotel during these conferences will be borne by SkillsUSA.
- **Meals:** SkillsUSA will also provide meals for the State Officer during the duration of the conferences.
- **Note:** While SkillsUSA takes care of these major costs, it's essential for the State Officer to be aware of any additional expenses they might incur and plan accordingly.

National Leadership and Skills Conference (NSLC) Costs:

- **Registration:** SkillsUSA will handle the registration costs for the State Officer.
- **Accommodation:** Hotel expenses for the State Officer during the NSLC will be covered by SkillsUSA.
- **Meals:** Meals during the NSLC will not be covered by SkillsUSA. State Officers should be prepared to handle their meal expenses and should plan in line with any guidelines or allowances set by their school.

CTSO State Officer Training Costs:

1. **Registration:** SkillsUSA will cover the entire registration fees for the State Officer for the State Officer Training.
2. **Accommodation:** The hotel costs associated with the training will be fully covered by SkillsUSA for the duration of the training.
3. **Meals:** SkillsUSA will take care of all meals for the State Officer during the training period.

Legislative Day in Olympia, WA:

1. **Registration:** SkillsUSA will cover the entire registration fee for the State Officer for the Legislative Day.
2. **Accommodation:** The hotel costs for the State Officer associated with Legislative Day will be fully funded by SkillsUSA.
3. **Meals:** SkillsUSA will provide meals for the State Officer during the entirety of Legislative Day.

Financial Support for the State Officer Advisor

WA State Leadership and Skills Conference (SLSC) Costs:

- **Registration:** The registration fees for the SLSC will not be sponsored by SkillsUSA. Participants or their schools will need to handle these costs.
- **Accommodation:** Hotel stays during the SLSC are the responsibility of the participating School. Ensure arrangements are made in advance to secure lodging.
- **Meals:** The School will cover meal expenses for the advisor throughout the duration of the SLSC in accordance with their overnight travel policy.

Support for the State Officer Advisor during NSLC:

- **Registration:** The registration cost for the State Officer's Advisor for the NSLC will need to be covered by the Advisor's affiliated school.
- **Accommodation:** The hotel expenses for the Advisor during the NSLC will also fall under the responsibility of the Advisor's school.
- **Meals:** The Advisor's meals during the NSLC will not be covered by SkillsUSA. The Advisor should seek reimbursement according to their school's out-of-state travel policy.

CTSO Advisor Training Costs:

- **Registration:** SkillsUSA will handle the complete registration cost for the State Officer's Advisor for the training.
- **Accommodation:** The Advisor's hotel expenses during the training will be borne by SkillsUSA.
- **Meals:** All meals for the Advisor during the State Officer Training will be covered by SkillsUSA.

Legislative Day in Olympia, WA:

- 4. **Registration:** SkillsUSA will cover the entire registration fee for the Advisor for the Legislative Day.
- 5. **Accommodation:** The hotel costs for the Advior associated with Legislative Day will be fully funded by SkillsUSA.
- 6. **Meals:** SkillsUSA will provide meals for the Advisor during the entirety of Legislative Day.

Travel Arrangements: All travel logistics and associated costs for participants attending any SkillsUSA activity are the responsibility of the **School**. SkillsUSA will not bear travel expenses unless explicitly stated for specific events or circumstances.

Approval Process: Schools may need to seek pre-approval for attending SkillsUSA activities. This can involve obtaining clearances from the school board, CTE Director, and/or the School Administrator(s) prior to confirming participation and travel.

School Policy Adherence: Coordinating all travel in alignment with institutional policies and guidelines ensures compliance and streamlined arrangements. This includes adhering to procedures for obtaining necessary approvals and meeting any documentation requirements.

Student School Section (Administration) Acknowledgment

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understood, and agreed to the terms and responsibilities outlined in the Student School section of this handbook.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____

Position/Title: _____

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- **What is the role of a State Officer in SkillsUSA Washington?**

As a State Officer, you play a pivotal role in promoting SkillsUSA Washington and its mission. This includes planning and leading projects, workshops, and conferences, and being a representative and positive example of SkillsUSA values and ethos.

- **How much time commitment is expected from a State Officer?**

State Officers should expect to miss approximately 10 school days throughout the year for SkillsUSA duties. This includes various activities, meetings, and events at the state level.

- **How are State Officers selected?**

Candidates undergo a selection process that includes submitting a comprehensive application, taking a professional test at the state conference, interviewing with the State Officer Trainer, and delivering a speech at the State Conference Delegate Session. Voting is then conducted via secret ballot.

- **What support and training opportunities exist for State Officer Advisors?**

State Officer Advisors are provided with ample support and training. This includes specialized training sessions, resources from SkillsUSA Washington, and coverage for specific event-related expenses.

- **What expenses does SkillsUSA Washington cover for State Officers and their Advisors?**

Coverage varies based on the event. For instance, during State Officer Training, SkillsUSA covers registration, accommodation, and meals for both advisors and state officers. However, schools are generally responsible for travel expenses and certain event-specific costs.

- **What are the responsibilities of a school hosting a State Officer?**

Such schools are pivotal in the SkillsUSA Washington community. They're expected to provide academic flexibility for the officer, maintain open communication channels, and handle certain expenses like travel and event-specific costs.

- **As a State Officer Advisor, what are my key duties?**

Advisors guide and mentor the State Officer in their responsibilities, ensure they are aligned with SkillsUSA Washington's objectives, and coordinate with school administration for necessary approvals and logistics.

- **Are there any specific guidelines for travel during SkillsUSA activities?**

Yes. All travel logistics and costs for attending SkillsUSA activities are generally the school's responsibility. Advisors and officers should coordinate travel plans according to the school's institutional policies, ensuring necessary pre-approvals are obtained.

- **What benefits does our school gain from hosting a State Officer for SkillsUSA Washington?**

Hosting a State Officer provides the school with increased visibility and representation at a state level, offering students unique leadership and networking opportunities and potentially drawing more attention and resources to the school's CTE programs.

- **What kind of support should our school provide to a Student State Officer?**

Schools should offer academic flexibility due to the officer's commitments, ensure a clear communication channel between the officer, advisor, and school administration, and provide financial and logistical support for travel and other event-specific costs.

- **How can our school support the State Officer Advisor?**

Schools should recognize the added responsibilities of the Advisor and offer them professional development opportunities, and flexibility in their duties to accommodate SkillsUSA Washington activities and ensure they have the resources needed to effectively guide the State Officer.

- **Are there any financial obligations our school should be aware of?**

Yes. While SkillsUSA Washington covers certain costs for events and activities, schools are typically responsible for travel expenses and may need to handle specific event-related costs like registration fees for some conferences.

- **How can our school prepare for the increased visibility and responsibilities of hosting a State Officer?**

Engage the school community, including staff, students, and parents, about the role and importance of the State Officer. Ensure you have channels in place for communication and feedback, and consider spotlighting the State Officer's activities and achievements in school publications.

- **How can our school ensure a smooth coordination between the State Officer, State Officer Advisor, and SkillsUSA Washington?**

Maintain regular communication, have a clear understanding of the calendar of events and commitments, and set periodic check-ins or meetings to address any concerns or needs.

- **What are the expectations in terms of academic flexibility for a Student State Officer?**

Given their commitments, State Officers may miss a number of school days. Schools are expected to provide academic flexibility, allowing them to make up for missed classes, assignments, and exams in a manner that doesn't hinder their academic progress.

- **Our school is considering hosting a State Officer. What are the first steps?**

Engage with SkillsUSA Washington to understand the requirements and expectations. Ensure you have the support of school administrators, and consider setting up an informational session for students and staff to introduce the concept and benefits.

- **How can our school be proactive in addressing any challenges that come with hosting a State Officer?**

Regular communication is key. By maintaining an open dialogue with the State Officer, Advisor, and SkillsUSA Washington, potential challenges can be identified early, and solutions can be collaboratively developed.

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