

## 2026 Healthy Democracy Student Leadership Award

### North West Region of the Ontario Public School Boards' Association

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#### Background information

The Healthy Democracy Student Leadership Award, a partnership between the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) and the Ontario Public School Boards' Association (OPSBA), is being awarded in the amount of \$1,000 to one graduating English public school student in each of OPSBA's regions. Scholarship recipients are students with strong leadership skills and potential, who care deeply about their communities and furthering their own learning.

#### Eligible Students

- A Canadian citizen or permanent resident
- In good standing with the secondary school
- Entering a post-secondary program (e.g., university, college, apprenticeship, etc.) within Ontario in 2026
- Graduating from a secondary school within one of the eligible school boards or school authority within the North West Region

#### Eligible School Boards and Authorities

- Keewatin-Patricia District School Board
- Lakehead District School Board
- Rainy River District School Board
- Superior-Greenstone District School Board

#### Selection Criteria

- A demonstrated commitment to civic engagement and the importance of local governments in Ontario's political system
- Diversity of leadership and perspective
- Community involvement such as volunteering, athletics, and extra-curricular activities, including within a First Nation, Métis or Inuit community
- Social identity, socio-economic status or other factors unique to each student's achievements and the opportunities available to them

#### Application Process

Applicants are asked to provide the following as part of their application:

- The name of their school, school board, local municipality, and applicant contact information (email, phone number, home address)
- An overview of their civic engagement initiatives along with any supporting materials
- Information about their post-secondary plans and how they plan to continue to demonstrate leadership and civic engagement
- Two letters of reference (*see below for details*)

To support a fair and equitable selection process, maximum word allocations for submission materials are clearly articulated below.

- Applicants must explain in a **maximum** of 300 words their suitability for the Healthy Democracy Student Leadership Award based on the established Selection Criteria above (Essay, PowerPoint, Video Submission, or alternate format will be accepted).
- All applications must be accompanied by two letters of reference, one of which must be from a school administrator, trustee or senior executive of a school board. These two letters must be from individuals in two differing roles (i.e. not two trustees). Letters of reference must be on official letterhead and include electronic or manual signatures. Reference letters should be at least one page, and no longer than two pages, with a font size of 11 or 12.
- Packages must be sent in PDF format to North West Regional Vice Chair Jason Nesbitt at [jnesbitt@sgdsb.on.ca](mailto:jnesbitt@sgdsb.on.ca) by May 25, 2026. **Please include “Healthy Democracy Student Leadership Award” in the subject line of the email with your package.**

If a student is unable to complete this application due to accessibility issues and has specific alternative format requests, please contact [jnesbitt@sgdsb.on.ca](mailto:jnesbitt@sgdsb.on.ca) or [inquiry@opsba.org](mailto:inquiry@opsba.org).

Any additional materials, letters, and/or submissions beyond the word limit will **not be taken into consideration**.

## Key Dates

*May 25, 2026* – Deadline for applications to be sent to Regional Vice Chair Jason Nesbitt

*July 2026* – Award recipient to be notified by OPSBA (with a copy to the school principal)

*August 2026* – Cheque to be mailed to recipient, following confirmation of proof of enrolment at a post-secondary program within Ontario for September 2026.