

A Letter from Your Youth Governor

Rhode Island YMCA Youth and Government, 2026-27



Hello RI YAG! And happy back to school.

My name is Ella Procaccianti, and I am very excited to serve as your 2026-2027 Youth Governor! Youth and Government has been one of the most transformative and important experiences of my High School career. I found my voice, my confidence, and pushed beyond my comfort zone. For the last four years, I've explored every opportunity that Youth and Government had to offer. I began in this program as a nervous delegate in the Senate, and now have debated national policy at the Conference on National Affairs, argued cases at the National Judicial Competition, advocated on Capitol Hill through the YMCA Youth Advocacy Program, and been elected Youth Governor.

Youth and Government is such an important program because it transforms students into leaders and empowers them to find their voices. My leadership journey began the first time I took my mic, stood up, and gave my first speech on the floor of the Senate, and so can yours. The theme I have selected for this year's conference is Taking the Floor. Whether you're an experienced returner or a brand-new delegate, finding the confidence to take the floor can be nerve-wracking. Taking the floor is an invitation to speak up about issues that you are passionate about, in committee, on conference day, and in your everyday lives. The importance of Youth and Government is the space that it creates for your voices to be heard. Make the most of this conference. Speak up, debate policy, and be unafraid to take up space and voice your ideas.

Taking the floor looks different throughout the program. The best way to be confident in your bill and your speeches is to prepare. Research your and others' bills, and prepare to debate the ideas presented to you, not the people that present them. Look out for more information and workshops coming from the Presiding Officer team on how to best prepare for conference!

When you have the floor during committee and conference day, it's important to respect it. If another delegate has the floor, listen actively and with an open mind. Respect yourself by communicating your ideas clearly and without use of inappropriate or rude language, and respect the chamber by listening to your Presiding Officers and the flow of debate.

Another way to embody this year's theme by empowering others to Take the Floor is by applying to be a member of the Governor's Cabinet. As a member of the Governor's Cabinet, you will be one of a handful of policy experts that new delegates can look to for guidance. You will also participate in small debate sessions with the Presiding Officers and your fellow cabinet members as we decide to veto bills or sign them into official RI Youth Law.

This year's Cabinet includes the following positions, each modeled on a real office in Rhode Island's state government:

- Secretary of Commerce
- Director of Administration
- Director of Labor and Training
- Director of Human Services
- Director of Environmental Management
- Director of Business Regulation
- Superintendent of State Police and Director of Public Safety
- Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education

Applications are open to all delegates; the link is below.

Governor's Cabinet Application: [apply here](#), due October 31, 2026

Please reach out with any questions or ideas for Rhode Island Youth and Government! I am so excited to begin this year's Youth and Government session, and I can't wait to see everyone in the State House.

Sincerely,
2027 RI Youth Governor, Ella Procaccianti