

Tip Sheet for Students



Thank you for entering our essay contest, *“If I Led My Community...”* – and best of luck. Here are some things that mayors, councilors and select board members in your community can and cannot do.

They can:

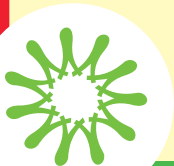
- Work with fellow elected officials to decide where businesses and housing should go.
- Apply for grants (most likely from the state or federal government) to make parks nicer, roads safer and introduce programs to serve residents.
- Work with the council or select board to decide how the municipality should spend its money on things like: fire and police protection; street paving and maintenance; recycling; parks and recreation; and, town or city employee salaries.
- Make laws or “ordinances” that discourage people from littering, smoking and the like.
- Recommend hiring key municipal employees such as managers, police and fire chiefs (if applicable), building inspectors and others.

They cannot:

- Pass ordinances to ignore or override state or federal laws.
- Give everyone money, fancy cars or free trips to theme parks.
- Make a law that says parents or teachers need to be less strict.

Research help:

- The Maine Municipal Association website is a great place to learn more about municipal government before you start writing. Go to www.memun.org and click on the “Citizen Education” link about halfway down on the left-hand side.



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