

Oklahoma Junior Academic Bowl Association

Rules and Regulations for 2026-2027

(Changes are in red.)

I. OJABA

The Oklahoma Junior Academic Bowl Association (OJABA) conducts competitive academic question-and-answer games played between two teams of four students each, from grades 5 through 9. To be eligible to compete in these academic bowl games, a school must be a member of OJABA; agree to abide by all OJABA rules, regulations, and policies; and must be able to supply a workable lockout system for each tournament entered.

II. DIVISIONS

A. There will be four competitive divisions: grades 5&6, 6&7, 7&8, and 8&9. Players may play “up” one or more grade levels. Players are not allowed to play “down”; for example, a freshman would not be allowed to play on a 7&8 team.

B. Schools may enter more than one team in any or all of the four divisions, but all teams entered by a school in a division must play in the same district tournament.

C. Schools with Two or More Teams in the Same Division:

1. The name of each team *must* be the school’s name followed by the letter *A, B, C, D, etc.*.

2. Each team member must play on the same team throughout the entire playoff series. In other words, if “John Smith” begins the series on TeamName A in the district tournament, he must remain on TeamName A for the regional and state tournaments. **He is not allowed to begin the year on more than one team within the same division. He is not allowed to move from one team to another within the same division,** for any reason, even if his team forfeits in the regional or fails to advance to state while another team from his school plays in the regional and/or advances to state. Any team playing with such an illegal team member will forfeit any games played with said member.

3. Any team that has a letter designation (“A,” “B,” “C,” “D, etc.”) attached to its name must keep that letter designation throughout the playoff series.

D. Player Eligibility:

1. Each player must be a student enrolled in the school district for which he plays.

2. A player who moves to a different school district after the playoff series begins may—after obtaining permission from the OJABA president—play on one or more teams in any of the four divisions in his new school district.

III. CLASSIFICATIONS

A. Public school districts will be divided into competitive classifications by size based upon the student average daily membership (ADM) of each school district of the immediate past school year. To maintain equanimity we will determine the ADM of each school district whose highest grade level is grade 6 or grade 8 by dividing its ADM by the number of grade levels of the school and multiplying this number by the number of grade levels needed to give us an ADM equal to a PK-12 school. For example, if a PK-8 school has an ADM of 390 (Class A), 390 divided by 10 equals 39 times

4 more grade levels (PK-12) equals 546 (Class B). These classifications—which are *not* the same as OSSAA classifications—will be A (ADM’s under 450), B (ADM’s from 450 to 999), C (ADM’s from 1000 to 2299) and D (ADM’s of 2300 and higher). All public school districts that have no grade level higher than eighth grade will be placed in either Class A or Class B (since no such district is large enough to be Class C or Class D) accordingly: in Class A if the district’s ADM is under 360 and in Class B if the district’s ADM is 360 or more.

B. Home-school teams will play in Class D.

C. Classifications for private schools will be determined by the officers, based upon—among other criteria—their geographic areas of recruitment and may not be the same class as would be determined by ADM.

D. In an effort to increase the number of teams within each division and therefore to reduce distances required to travel to tournaments, in Divisions 5&6, 6&7, and 8&9—in district and regional tournaments—teams in Classes A and B will compete together and teams in Classes C and D will compete together. In Division 7&8, each team will compete only with teams within their class.

E. Should there be too few teams in the state in a class at a grade level to offer legitimate competition throughout the playoff series, fees will be reimbursed to teams so affected.

IV. COST OF MEMBERSHIP

Member schools will pay \$75 to OJABA for each team entered. Once teams entered have been placed into district and regional groupings, fees for such teams are not refundable. (See team placement dates below.)

V. DEADLINES

A. Entry: The deadline for entry into OJABA is October 1. Schools that choose to be billed must submit a P.O. number on or before October 1. Any school that fails to meet this deadline will not be allowed to take part in any OJABA tournaments or other activities for the current academic year.

B. Placement of Teams: District and regional team placements will be posted on the website (ojaba.org) by October 15 for grades 5&6 and by November 1 for grades 6-9.

C. Setting of Tournament Dates: District tournament dates must be set by November 15 for grades 5&6 and by December 1 for grades 6-9. All coaches in each district must agree to a proposed date. Regional tournament dates are set by OJABA; all teams in each division will play on the same day. If a regional is postponed because of weather, all coaches in the affected region must agree to the proposed new date.

D. OJABA Comes First: When it comes to setting of tournament dates, OJABA membership takes precedence over all other organizations except for OSSAA. (**Note:** The high school area and state tournaments are scheduled for **January 16** and **January 30**; these two dates should be avoided when setting OJABA tournament dates.)

E. Payment of Fees: It is the responsibility of each member coach to make sure that his or her membership fees are paid before

December 1. Any school that fails to meet this deadline will not be allowed to take part in any OJABA tournaments or other activities for the current academic year.

F. Posting of Brackets: Brackets for grades 5&6 regional tournaments will be posted on the website by January 1 and for grades 6&7, 7&8, and 8&9 regional tournaments, the first Saturday in February.

VI. BECOMING A MEMBER

To join OJABA, a coach of one or more academic bowl teams in grades 5 through 9 must complete and deliver to the president the OJABA entry form by October 1. The preferred entry form is the on-line entry form, which may be accessed on the "On-line Entry" page of the website, *ojaba.org*.

VII. COMMUNICATION WITH MEMBERS

Emailing will be used to conduct most of the communication between OJABA and its member coaches, as well as to deliver forms and other documents. It is very important for each coach who joins OJABA to submit a working and regularly-checked email address as part of membership.

VIII. QUESTIONS

A. The officers of OJABA will select, purchase, sort, format, and edit (for accuracy and proper conciseness) all levels of tournament questions. Every round of questions for every level will contain six choices of sixty-second questions. There will be extra toss-up and sixty-second-quarter questions to use if needed, to be used as tie-breakers or because of moderator error, but not to be used arbitrarily by the moderator in an attempt to eliminate questions the moderator deems too difficult.

B. Host schools should allow at least a week before tourney dates for delivery of questions; rush-delivery costs must be paid by schools requesting rush delivery.

C. Questions sets used for regional and state tournaments will not be given to anyone after the tournaments end. All regional and state tournament officials shall return their copies of questions to the regional-tournament host coaches and to the OJABA president at state tournaments.

IX. COACHES

A. Each coach of an OJABA team must be employed by an Oklahoma school district and be covered by liability insurance. Each coach of a home-school team must present to OJABA a notarized statement detailing who is coach and that this person is authorized by the home-school group to act as coach. The coach of a home-school or private-school team must also have proof of liability insurance.

B. A coach of OJABA teams may use as a coach any high school student or post-high school adult who is familiar with OJABA rules and game procedures for the following reasons: (1) when said coach needs one or more assistant coaches (e.g., to coach an additional team or additional teams when more than one team is entered within the same division) and (2) if said coach cannot accompany his or her team(s) to a competition (e.g., because of illness). It is important that such coach surrogates be able to properly supervise the teams they are assigned and that are very familiar with OJABA-style academic bowl.

X. DISTRICT AND REGIONAL TOURNAMENTS

A. District Tournaments, only, will be round robin seeding tournaments (Each team will play every other team once.). They will

consist of not less than three (when possible) nor more than four teams. All teams advance to regionals according first to win-loss results and secondarily according to average numbers of points scored in the district. If two teams have the same win-loss record and the same average number of points scored, a toss of the coin will decide placement. District tournaments may be played on any day of the week agreeable to *all* schools involved. District tournaments played on school days must begin not earlier than 4 P.M. 5&6 district tournaments must be played before Christmas. 6&7, 7&8, and 8&9 district tournaments must be played in January. If teams do not play their district tournaments during the times specified, they will forfeit and advance to the regional.

B. Regional tournaments will be double elimination and will consist of not less than eight (when possible) nor more than twelve teams each.

C. Member schools will be asked to host district and regional tournaments. All member teams must be willing to travel to district and regional sites, or to host.

D. For grades 5&6, district tournaments will be held between November 15 and December 16. Regional tournaments will be held on **January 23, 2027, or as a backup because of weather, January 30.**

E. For grades 6&7, 7&8, and 8&9 divisions, district tournaments will be played during January. Host schools will be responsible for contacting the other schools in their districts and setting up dates and times agreeable to all schools participating.

F. Regional tournaments will be played in February as follows:

Grades 6&7 Regional Tournaments: Feb. 13

Grades 7&8 Regional Tournaments: Feb. 20

Grades 8&9 Regional Tournaments: Feb. 27

G. One team from a 1-to-4-team regional advances to the state tournament; two, from a 5-or-6-team regional; three, from a 7-to-9-team regional; and four, from a 10-to-12-team regional.

H. Results from each regional must be reported to the president by March 5. District results will be used for state tournament seeding for any regional whose results are not reported by March 5. The team(s) of regional-host coach(es) who fail to report results by deadline may be seeded last on state tournament brackets.

I. Every regional tournament must be played on one day. Once play begins in a regional tournament, it must be completed on the scheduled game day, unless there is an emergency situation that requires play to stop and the emergency situation cannot be resolved on the game day.

XI. STATE TOURNAMENTS

A. State tournaments will be double elimination. Seedings for 7&8 state tournaments will be based upon placings (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th) from regionals. Seedings within each placings group (e.g., all 1st-place teams) will be based upon team averages.

In Divisions 5&6, 6&7, and 8&9, the classes will return to playing teams in their classes only. There will be brackets for classes A, B, C, and D, not for classes A-B and C-D. From A-B and C-D regional tournaments, the trophy winners will automatically advance to State, but some teams that do not place will also advance to State to ensure that about one third of the teams in each class (A, B, C, and D) advance to State.

No state bracket will have fewer than four teams (if possible). If there are fewer than four trophy winners in the regionals of a

particular class and division, the next highest finishers among those teams that did not win trophies will advance to fill the minimum-four-team bracket for state. In other words, if there are three regional placers, one team not placing will also advance; two regional placers, two not placing will advance; one regional placer, three not placing (if possible) will advance.

B. All state tournaments will be held at Dale High School in Dale, Oklahoma. Games will begin promptly at 10 A.M. Teams that begin play at 10 A.M. must check in at tournament headquarters by 9:30 A.M. (Tournament headquarters is on the east side of the ground floor, near the main entrance.) Teams that begin play after round one ends must check in at tournament headquarters no later than thirty minutes before their first round.

C. State tournament dates in 2027:

Grades 5&6 State Tournament: April 3

Grades 6&7 State Tournament: April 10

Grades 7&8 State Tournament: April 17

Grades 8&9 State Tournament: April 24

Grades 5-9 Makeup Day: May 1

XII. HOSTING TOURNAMENTS

OJABA places no health-related restrictions on any attendees of our tournaments. Coaches who host our district or regional tournaments are forbidden from implementing such restrictions as well.

A. The responsibilities of the district or regional tournament host (who is usually the coach of the host school) are to

1. consult with all of the coaches involved in the tournament to determine a tournament date and time agreeable to *all* schools attending and report this date and time to the OJABA class vice-president and OJABA president by the deadline specified in "Section V";

2. obtain and provide trained officials (The number of rooms and officials needed to play a regional tournament will be as follows: for a three- to four-team tournament, one; five- to eight-team, two; nine-team, three; and ten- to twelve-team, four. Regional hosts who cannot provide trained officials will use officials provided by class vice-presidents. You should begin looking for experienced officials as soon as you are assigned to host a regional. If you need OJABA to supply trained officials, do not wait until time for your tournament; OJABA officers will need time to find officials for you.);

3. open the tournament-questions packet as soon as it arrives and survey the contents to make sure its contents are complete (**These questions are *not* to be used as practice questions prior to tournament play.**);

4. print a copy of the tournament questions for each moderator/chief judge (No one is to see the tournament questions other than the tournament host and the moderators/chief judges; for district tournaments, each coach who attends may be given a set of the questions to keep; for regional tournaments, only the host coach may keep a copy of the questions.);

5. for each game room arrange tables and chairs or student desks so that at least three seats for officials face two sets of four seats each for the teams playing each other (Place the officials seats near an electrical outlet or provide an extension cord if no outlet is close; seat players with their backs to spectators.);

6. place enough clean paper in each room for players to use for scratch paper for the appropriate number of rounds to be played

in that room;

7. place twelve sharpened pencils in each room for players and officials to use during games;

8. number each game room by placing a number sign on the *wall* near each game room door so that the sign will be visible whether the door is open or closed;

9. ask each arriving coach for his team roster (Keep these teams rosters on file until the end of the school year.);

10. For a District Tournament: About a week in advance, you will be emailed your questions and your tournament report sheet. It is recommended that you scan to PDF your completed tournament report, your score sheets, and your team rosters, and email these PDF's to the OJABA president. You may also mail them.

11. For a Regional Tournament: About a week in advance, you will be emailed your questions and your tournament report sheet. It is recommended that you scan to PDF your completed tournament report, your score sheets, and your team rosters, and email these PDF's to the OJABA president. You may also mail them.

12. Send Tournament Results immediately after your tournament, so that brackets can be drawn for the next level of play.

B. Weather Cancellations: For the most part, the officers of OJABA will not make judgments about canceling tournaments. Whether any tournament is canceled is up to the administrators of the schools participating. If even one school in a tournament is prohibited from traveling because of weather, the tournament will be canceled. In such a case, the host coach should let all of the other schools know that the tournament has been canceled and begin working on getting the tournament rescheduled as soon as possible.

A host coach should make sure that he or she has cell phone numbers for all of the coaches participating in each tournament. The host coach should email each coach and ask for his or her number if it is not already on hand.

The host coach might also consider moving the start time to later in the day. If schools are able to depart from their towns later in the day, their administrators might let them go ahead and travel.

XIII. TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS

A. Chief Judges and Moderators:

1. Before participating in *any* OJABA tournament on any level of competition, every chief judge and/or moderator, whether volunteer or paid, must be a high school graduate and should

a. obtain proper training and practice;

b. know the OJABA rules, preferably having previously officiated for OJABA;

c. follow *strictly* OJABA game rules and procedures in conducting every round of play (***Officials are not to make exceptions to the rules or add or delete rules.***);

d. make changes in questions *only* when absolutely necessary;

e. be fair, firm, and courteous;

f. be sure that the appropriate official and scorekeeper sign the official score sheet at the conclusion of every match; and

g. for state tournaments have officiated a district or regional tournament during the current school year.

2. It is recommended that all officials be identified with name tags or plates.

3. At district tournaments only, coaches may moderate or judge games in which their own teams are participating. OJABA will *not* pay for any officials for district tournaments.

4. OJABA will pay \$75 to each official needed for each regional tournament. The number of officials which may be hired for each regional will be based upon the maximum number of game rooms in use during the first three rounds, allowing for one official per room (for a three- to four-team tournament, one; five- to eight-team, two; nine-team, three; and ten- to twelve-team, four).

5. A coach whose team is participating in a regional tournament may not act as a moderator or judge in that tournament unless all other coaches involved agree to allow him or her to do so, and may not do so in the same room with his or her own team. Such coach will not be paid for officiating.

6. OJABA will pay a minimum of \$100 to each official (moderator or judge who is available to officiate throughout the entire tournament) at state tournaments. Each moderator or judge paid to officiate more than five games in a tournament will be paid \$5 for each additional game. (OJABA reserves the right to reduce or eliminate these payments to officials if sufficient funds are not available.)

7. Judges (or moderators when no judge is present) will make final decisions concerning all protests.

B. Score- and Timekeepers:

1. Each team attending a tournament must provide a trained score/timekeeper for each game played. At the start of a game, if a team cannot provide a trained score/timekeeper, the opposing team will be awarded ten penalty points. At any time during a game, if it is discovered that a team has not provided a trained score/time keeper, the opposing team will be awarded ten penalty points.

2. Score- and timekeepers are not to be involved in decisions made by judges or moderators. *They are not to speak unless asked to do so by an official, nor are they to make hand gestures or facial expressions to communicate in any way with game participants.*

3. Score- and timekeepers will not be paid by OJABA for their services.

4. Coaches who keep time or score are not allowed to coach during rounds in which they keep score or time.

5. Each score- or timekeeper must work an entire game, not just a half.

C. Scorekeepers: All scorekeepers should

1. obtain proper training and practice,

2. be familiar with the official score sheet prior to the competition,

3. keep an accurate record of the score during every round and complete the score sheet correctly according to the following guidelines:

a. Fill in all of the information requested (host, date, round number and letter, room number, and division—5&6, 6&7, etc.).

b. Fill in team name (name of school plus, in appropriate, “A,” “B,” etc.).

c. In each of the player boxes, write the first and last name of a player; in the third quarter, for a player who does not sub out, first name only is acceptable.

d. To show a correct answer, put a forward slash (“/”) across the box of the the number of the question answered correctly. Incorrect answers should *not* be noted in any way.

e. Fill in a score total seven times for each team: after the first quarter, after the second quarter, after the first half (first two quarters added together), after the third quarter, after the first three quarters totaled together, after the fourth quarter, and in the box at the bottom of each side (game total).

4. and sign the official score sheet at the conclusion of each round.

D. Timekeepers: All timekeepers should

1. obtain proper training and practice,

2. be familiar with various timing devices and buzzer systems, and

3. *be correct and consistent in the starting and stopping of the timing.*

XIV. TOURNAMENT BRACKETS

A. Brackets for district tournaments will facilitate round-robin play requiring each team to play every other team once, will not be seeded, and may be created by the host coach. (If there are only two teams in a district, they must play each other three rounds.)

B. Regional- and state-tournament brackets will be drawn up by the officers. Once regional- and state-tournament brackets are created, they shall not be redrawn by anyone for any reason. Any team of a coach who redraws—or who acquiesces in redrawing—a regional-tournament bracket and who advances to State, will be placed at the bottom of the seeding on their State bracket.

C. The number of rooms and officials needed to play a regional tournament will be as follows: for a three- to four-team tournament, one; five- to eight-team, two; nine-team, three; and ten- to twelve-team, four.

D. Brackets for regional and state tournaments will be seeded. To the extent possible, teams which placed first in districts will begin by playing third- or fourth-place teams. In the event that there is more than one first-place team in a bracket, the average number of points scored by each team in districts will determine which team is seeded higher. Average number of points scored will also be used for seeding if there is more than one team in the bracket which finished second or third in districts.

E. Any team that has paid for membership and has not withdrawn from membership or had its membership canceled by OJABA will be placed on district and regional brackets and will not be removed from those brackets because the team forfeits, even with advance notice of forfeiture. Teams that have advanced to a state tournament will be placed on the bracket for that tournament and will not be removed because of forfeiture, even with advance notice of forfeiture. Teams who advance by forfeiture of opposing teams will not have such advancements counted in their win-loss records (because of the adverse affect on their score averages), but teams who forfeit will be considered to have lost each game forfeited.

F. Once regional and state brackets have been created and published, they shall not be changed way except by an officer.

XV. TROPHIES AND MEDALS

No trophies will be supplied for district tournaments, nor will OJABA reimburse any school for the cost of trophies purchased for any district tournament. For regional tournaments the association will provide trophies for all teams advancing to state.

At state tournaments only, a plaque and six player medals will be awarded to each of the top four teams in each division. To receive a State plaque and State medals, a team must attend and compete in the State Tournament. Player medals may be purchased from the supplier by any team attending a state tournament. The tournament director will provide an order form to anyone who wishes to order medals.

NOTE: The official (moderator or, if available, chief judge) in each game room is the ultimate authority in that room. If the official deems it necessary, he or she may eject anyone (player, coach, spectator) from the room. Anyone who refuses to leave when told to do so will cause the forfeiture of the game for the team associated with ejected person.

XVI. GAME RULES and REGULATIONS

ADHERING TO OJABA RULES: Both officials and coaches should have a good knowledge of OJABA Rules before entering the game room. Every official and coach should have a copy of the Rules with him or her during every game. During a time of protest, if a coach points out that a rule is not being adhered to and the official questions whether there is such a rule, the official should check the Rules before making a ruling. For example, if an official requires a player to say "Capital C" when spelling the name "Canada," and the player's coach protests by saying that "Capital C" is not required (which it is not), the official (if he disagrees with the coach) should check the rules.

A. Lockout Systems: OJABA recommends the use of Zeecraft Challenger II wired lockout systems with Regular Buzzers. Whatever system you use, it must be programmed to have 10-, 20-, and 60-second times and must be programmed to lock out all but one player. Systems that are set to allow for a second player to buzz in and wait for the first player to miss so that the second player may then be called upon must be programmed to adhere to the previous sentence above. Zeecraft lockout systems have to be programmed after they are received to conform to Oklahoma rules. Each system is easily programmed using the clear directions that accompany the system. It is the coach's responsibility to perform this programming.

B. Seating Positions of Team Members: Unless he or she is replaced by a substitute, each team member must stay in the seat he or she took upon entering or re-entering the game.

C. Numbers of Team Members: A team at play consists of no more than four players, but cannot have fewer than three players. The team is not required to use the same players for every match.

D. Substitutions: Team members (up to four players) may be substituted at the end of each of the first three quarters and/or prior to a sudden death situation. After the first and third quarters, substitutions may be made after hearing the sixty-second topics. If a substitute has taken the place of the team captain, a new team captain must be designated. All substitutes must check in with the scorekeeper.

E. Late Arrival of Team: Any team that is more than ten minutes late for any OJABA tournament game shall forfeit that game. The time count begins at the scheduled start of the round. No protests will be allowed, even at state level. The chief judge and

the winning coach shall sign the official score sheet, which shall state: "Team _____ wins this game by forfeit." The chief judge shall then announce the winner and declare the game to be over.

F. Playing in Adherence to the Bracket: Any team that begins play in the wrong room or skips a round and "plays ahead" will be disqualified. Failing to read or understand the bracket is not a valid excuse for not being in the proper room on time.

G. Team Roster: At the start of *all* district, regional, and state tournaments, every coach must present a roster of eligible players to the tournament director. (This roster should list, from top to bottom, the name of the school, the coach's name, and each player's first and last name.) It is not necessary to present a roster to game officials before each match, but coaches should keep a copy with them during the tournaments in case there are any questions. Also, for each of his players present, every coach must have with him a medical release form, signed by the player's parent or guardian.

H. Players' Name Cards: Each player must have a name card to place in front of him when he is at the game table. Each name card shall include and be restricted to the player's first and last name and the school's name. A captain's designation (restricted to a large "C" or the word "Captain") should also be included on the captain's name card, although it is not required to be included. Name-card lettering must be large enough, bold enough, and legible enough to be read easily from several feet away. (Team designation—i.e., A, B, C, or D—is not required but may be placed on the player's card. If it is placed on the card, it must be correct according to the rules—See page one.) At the beginning of a game, if a team does not have a full set of proper name cards, the opposing team will be awarded ten penalty points. If a game is delayed because a team with improper name cards is attempting to create proper name cards, the opposing team will be awarded ten penalty points.

I. Placement of Coaches and Substitutes in Game Rooms: Coaches and substitutes must sit at the back of the room or at least the distance of two rows behind the contestants.

J. Types of Questions and Points: There are two types of questions in every match: *Toss-up questions* (twenty questions worth ten points each per quarter in quarters one and three, and, *Sixty-second questions* (ten related questions worth ten points each answered in sixty seconds or less).

K. Awarding of Points: Points are awarded for correct answers to questions asked by the moderator. Points are not subtracted for incorrect answers.

L. Timeouts because of Procedural Problems: If there is a procedural problem during a game, a coach may ask for time out to bring the matter to the attention of the game officials. However, the timeout cannot be called while a question is active during the toss-up questions or sixty-second questions. The game officials will use the association rules to make a decision.

M. Team timeouts: Each team coach may call one team timeout per half to talk to his or her team during the first or third quarter. Each coach may approach his or her team at this time. This timeout may be called only when a question is not active and shall be thirty seconds in length. The time will start once the chief judge grants the timeout.

N. Non-procedural Protests: Non-procedural protests must be made at the end of the first quarter, the half, the third quarter, and the fourth quarter. Protests must pertain to the quarter just completed,

not to a previous quarter.

O. Coach's Responsibility for Behavior of Others: Team coaches are responsible at all times for the behavior of their players, parents, and other spectators.

P. Using Pencils and Talking during Sixty-second Quarters: During a sixty-second period, the members of the non-participating team may not use pencils or talk while the other team is in play.

Q. Consultation between Coach and Players: Coaches may consult with their teams for one minute at half time at their players' seats. Coaches may not signal or consult with their team players at any time while the game is in play. Any coach who violates this rule will be removed from the game room.

R. Scratch Paper and Pencils for State Tournaments: For state tournaments only, each team attending must provide its own scratch paper and sharpened pencils or pens. At the beginning of a game, if a team does not have scratch paper and sharpened pencils or pens and delays the game to acquire paper and pencil or pen, the opposing team will be awarded ten penalty points. A team without scratch paper and pencils or pens may borrow from anyone else in the game room other than the officials; borrowed scratch paper must be clean on both sides at the beginning of each game. A team that is unable to borrow scratch paper and/or pencils will play the game without scratch paper and/or pencils or pens.

S. Check-out at End of Tournament: Before leaving a tournament, each coach must check out with the tournament director.

NOTE: The official (moderator or, if available, chief judge) in each game room is the ultimate authority in that room. If the official deems it necessary, he or she may eject anyone (player, coach, spectator) from the room. Anyone who refuses to leave when told to do so will cause the forfeiture of the game for the team associated with ejected person.

XVII. GAME PROCEDURES

A. First Quarter

1. Reading of Toss-up Questions: The moderator will read twenty toss-up questions in the first quarter. A question may be repeated only when the moderator deems it necessary because of a problem with the original reading of the question, not because a player has requested that it be repeated.

2. Points: Toss-up questions (which are drawn from a variety of subjects) are worth ten points each.

3. Game Clocks: If the lockout system in use has a clock facing the players, the clock will remain visible to the players at all times. Neither coaches nor officials are allowed to conceal lockout-system clocks from players.

4. Conferring between Players: During toss-up quarters team members are not allowed to confer with one another in any way. Written notes passed to or read by someone other than the author of the note constitute consultation and will not be allowed during toss-up questions. A clean sheet of paper is provided for each player at the start of every game. Use of hand signals to transfer answers will not be allowed during toss-up quarters.

5. Lockout System Use by Players: Lockout system parts not designed to be hand held are to remain on the game table and not be picked up to be held in the hand.

6. Activation of a Toss-up Question: Once the first word

of a question has been read by an official, the question becomes active. A player who buzzes in once the question is active must give an answer without having anymore of the question read.

7. Time Allowed to Answer Questions: Once a question has been completed by the moderator, the time allowed will be activated and will not be stopped. Players will have ten seconds in which to activate their buzzers; twenty seconds of response time will be given for math computation only. If neither team has answered in the time allowed or if both teams answer incorrectly, the moderator will read the correct answer and go to the next question. Neither team will receive points for an unanswered question.

8. Recognizing Players for Answers: Only a player activating the electronically-controlled lockout system will be recognized to answer a toss-up question. Chief judges are not to recognize players who speak or use body signals in an attempt to be recognized to answer toss-up questions.

9. Waiting to Be Recognized to Answer: The player first signaling (by using the electronically-controlled lockout system) readiness to answer a toss-up question must be recognized by the chief judge as the eligible respondent before giving his answer. An answer given before being recognized is a wrong answer, and the opposing team will be given opportunity to answer the question.

10. Answering before Lockout System Is Cleared: If the lockout system has not been cleared when the moderator has already begun reading a question, whichever player's light comes on first after the system is cleared will get to answer the question. A new question will not be substituted.

11. Manner of Recognizing a Player to Answer: The moderator or judge will recognize a player by saying the player's first name (or first and last names if more than one player has the same first name).

12. Time Allowed to Answer after Being Recognized to Answer: Once a team member is recognized, the answer must begin immediately. The moderator will allow for a natural pause but will not allow stalling. Each moderator's interpretation of a natural pause will vary slightly; however, it is normally a quick four count: "One, two, three, four." If the moderator determines a time period longer than a natural pause has elapsed and the player gives an answer after that time has been called, the answer will not count.

13. Answering before Completion of a Toss-up Question: It is not necessary for players to wait until a toss-up question has been read in its entirety by the moderator to signal their readiness to answer a question. However, the moderator will stop reading immediately when a player buzzes in. If the moderator is interrupted while reading a question and the recognized player gives an incorrect response or does not answer within the brief pause allowed by the moderator, the moderator will complete the question for the opposing team and the ten second time allotment will then be given.

14. First Response to a Question: The first response given is the one that counts.

15. Giving More Information than Necessary in Answering a Question: If the player's response to a question gives more information than is needed to answer the question, the

additional information must be correct and must not make the answer incorrect. (If the answer is a city name, such as “St. Louis,” and the player answers “*Spirit of St. Louis*,” which is the name of an airplane, the player is incorrect.) This situation is likely to occur when a player has interrupted the reading of a question in order to answer quickly. The chief judge will be the final arbiter concerning the acceptability of the answer.

16. Asking a Player to Clarify an Answer: The moderator may ask a player to clarify an answer by stating, “Be more specific.” However, all parts of the answer must be accurate.

17. Depletion of Time Allowed to Answer a Question: If a recognized player gives an incorrect answer or does not answer within the brief pause allowed by the moderator and if the ten second time allotment has been depleted, the moderator will call on the opposing team for an immediate answer. (“Immediate” means that a stall count will *not* be given.) If the first team to signal answers incorrectly, the opposing team has the opportunity to signal and to answer the question within the time remaining but must signal immediately if the time allowed to signal has expired.

18. Buzzing in as the Time Expires: In the event a team buzzes in at the same time the clock expires, the team will be allowed to respond. If the response is incorrect, the other team *will* be allowed an opportunity to respond. The moderator will call on the opposing team for an immediate response. (“Immediate” means that a stall count will *not* be given.) The opposing team must buzz in and be recognized before an answer is given.

19. Stating the Correct Answer: After both teams have had the opportunity to answer a question, the moderator will give the correct answer.

20. Substitute Questions: A toss-up question will be replaced with a substitute question if the moderator inadvertently gives an answer to a toss-up question while the question is still “active” for both teams. If the moderator inadvertently gives an answer while a question is “active” to only one team, the moderator will substitute, in its place, another toss-up question for that one team only. If a toss-up question has not been compromised (as illustrated above), it should not be replaced with a substitute question.

21. Answers Including Persons’ Names: If answering a question—either in a toss-up quarter or in a sixty-second quarter—requires a player to give a person’s name, only the person’s last name is usually required. Exceptions include two or more people associated with a subject who have the same last name, as for example, two or more U.S. Presidents with the same last name: Adams, Harrison, Roosevelt, Johnson, Bush.

22. Spelling Questions: If there is a spelling question, the recognized player who is answering the question may say the word before starting to spell it but is not allowed to stop and start over while spelling the word. He or she may pause and continue, but every character uttered while spelling counts. Repeated characters will cause a misspelling. The player is not required to say “Capital” for a letter that should be upper case, unless the question requires doing so. The moderator must not interrupt the first player attempting to spell the answer to a toss-up question before finishing the spelling, even if it is

obvious that the player has misspelled the answer; however, the moderator may interrupt and stop the second player attempting to spell a toss-up answer if that player is misspelling the answer.

23. Statement of Math Units in Answers: When the unit of measure of an expected answer to a math problem is stated within the math-problem question—and if only *one* unit of measure has been stated—the player answering is not required to state the unit in his or her answer. (Example: “How many degrees are in a right angle? Acceptable answer: 90.”)

24. Materials Posted on Walls of Game Rooms: There is no need to cover or take down materials posted on the walls of game rooms. Players should not look at these materials while tossup questions are being read. If a player does so, the official should not accept his answer, even if it is correct.

25. Checking the Score at the End of the Quarter: The moderator, chief judge (if there is one), and scorekeeper will check the score. If irregularities are found, the chief judge’s (or moderator’s, if there is no chief judge) score will stand as the correct score.

26. Announcing the Score and Calling for Questions and Protests: The moderator will announce the score for the first quarter of play. The moderator will ask if there are any questions. Coaches may confer with their team members at this time (concerning possible protests only) and may lodge protests at this point in the competition. All protests will be resolved by the chief judge or moderator, if there is no judge. All decisions by this official are final and cannot be appealed, even at state tournaments.

27. Tie at End of Quarter: If the score is tied at the end of the first quarter, a toss-up question will be asked. The team answering correctly will be awarded ten points.

28. Team Conferences: Coaches may approach their team tables and confer with their team members for thirty seconds.

B. Second Quarter

(Team Captain: The person designated Team Captain in Quarter 2 may be replaced with a different player in Quarter 4. The player replaced does not have to leave the game table.)

1. Reading of Questions: During the second quarter the moderator will read to each team ten questions within sixty seconds. Upon the request of the team captain, the moderator may re-read a question during this quarter, with the understanding that no additional time will be allowed after such a request.

2. End of Protest Period: Once the moderator begins the selection process, protests concerning the toss-up quarter will not be allowed.

3. Points Allowed: Each question in the sixty-second quarter will be worth ten points.

4. Choosing a Sixty-second Category: After the moderator announces the three sixty-second categories, each team will leave pencils and paper at the competition table and have 30 seconds to huddle away from the competition table to discuss with its coach and team members all aspects of category selection and substitutions. At the end of 30 seconds, the judge or moderator will announce that the time is up. Teams must then return to their tables and announce substitutions if any. The team that is ahead at the end of the first quarter will receive ten seconds to choose one of the three categories offered and

play, or defer. The choice of category or the decision to defer must be given by the team captain before, or immediately after, the ten seconds expires. If the time expires without a decision response from the team captain, the moderator will ask the team captain for his decision, and this decision must be stated immediately.

5. Failing to Choose a Category within the Time Allowed:

If the team does not make its selection within the ten seconds allotted, first-choice option reverts to the team not ahead at the end of the first quarter, meaning that this team will receive first pick in both the second and fourth quarters.

6. Players Conferring during the Sixty-second Quarter:

Consultation among a team's members is allowed during the sixty-second quarters. Players may temporarily leave their seats and huddle around the captain; each player who does so must return to the same seat he or she was in before.

7. Giving Answers: All answers must be given by the team captain with the following exception: the captain may defer to another teammate to answer a specific question, in which case the captain would say, "Defer to (teammate's name)"; for that one question, the designated teammate may give an answer which may be accepted or rejected by the moderator. The captain would then be required to answer the next question or to again defer to a teammate. The captain need not wait to be recognized before responding. The captain may respond before the moderator has completed a question.

8. Time Allowed to Answer Questions: The team responding to a category of questions is playing against the sixty-second clock. The clock will begin after the moderator has read the first question in the category. Once the clock has started, the moderator will give the team an indefinite period of time to answer each question (that is, until the buzzer indicates the sixty seconds have elapsed). All reading and response will end as the sixty-second buzzer sounds.

9. Game Clock Visible to Players: If the lockout system in use has a clock facing the players, the clock will remain visible to the players at all times. Neither coaches nor officials are allowed to conceal such a clock from players.

10. Saying "Pass": If a team does not know the answer, the captain must say "Pass" before the moderator will begin the next question. Once a team has passed on a question, it cannot return to answer that question even though time remains at the end of the sixty-second quarter.

11. Moderator's Saying Question Numbers and Responding "Yes" or "No": The moderator will state the number of the first question *only* and will say "Yes" for a correct response and "No" for an incorrect response at the end of each response. (Moderator, *do not* say "Correct" or "Incorrect." Say "Yes" or "No.")

12. Spelling Categories: The captain may say the word before starting to spell it but is not allowed to stop and start over while spelling the word. He or she may pause and continue, but every character uttered while spelling counts. Repeated characters will cause a misspelling. The captain is not required to say "Capital" for a letter that should be upper case, unless the directions require doing so. The moderator should say "No" to the captain as soon as he or she misspells a word and

not wait until the incorrectly-spelled word is completed.

13. Second Team to Play the Quarter: After the first team has finished the sixty-second questions, the second team will be given ten seconds to choose from the two remaining categories. The moderator will call for the selection and the team must give an immediate answer. ("Immediate" means that a stall count will *not* be given.) If the team fails to respond immediately with a selection, the first team to play the quarter will be allowed to pick the category for the second team to play the quarter.

14. Same Rules for Both Halves of the Quarter: All rules applying to the first half of the sixty-second quarter will apply during the second half.

15. Substitute Question because of Moderator Error: If the moderator inadvertently gives an answer to a question in a sixty-second quarter without giving the team a chance to respond, six seconds will be added by the timekeeper to the end of the original sixty seconds; and a substitute question will be added in order to make a total of ten questions available in that category.

16. Behavior of Team Not in Play: A team will not talk or write during its opponent's sixty-second questions. If talking or writing occurs, the officials will give *one* warning. If it occurs again, the team will be disqualified.

17. Materials Posted on Walls of Game Rooms: There is no need to cover or take down materials posted on the walls of game rooms. Players should not look at these materials while they are playing a sixty-second set of questions. If they attempt to do so, the official should interrupt and instruct the players to stop doing so. The opposing coach may also call a procedural and ask the official to interrupt the players and tell them to stop doing so. The time will not stop when such an interruption occurs.

18. Verification of Score: After both teams have finished their sixty-second questions, the moderator, chief judge (if there is one), and scorekeeper will check the score.

19. Announcing Score and Calling for Questions and Protests: The moderator will announce the score. The moderator will say, "Are there any questions?" Protests concerning the sixty-second quarter must be lodged at this point. All protests will be resolved by the chief judge. All decisions by the chief judge are final and cannot be appealed.

20. Declaring the End of the First Half: The moderator will declare the first half completed.

C. Half-time:

Substitutions: Substitutions may also be made during half-time. Four substitutes per team may enter the game at any substitution point. If a substitute has taken the place of the team captain, a new team captain must be designated. All substitutes must check in with the scorekeeper.

D. Third Quarter: The third quarter of play is a duplicate of the first quarter with one exception:

Tie at End of Quarter: In the event of a tie at the end of the third quarter, tie-breaker questions will not be asked.

E. Fourth Quarter: The fourth quarter of play is a duplicate of the second quarter with two exceptions:

1. The option to play first or defer applies only to the second quarter.

2. **Failure to Choose a Category within Time Allowed:** If either team fails to choose a category within the time allowed, the opposing team will be allowed to choose the category for the team that fails to choose within the time allowed.

F. Conclusion of the Game:

1. **Tie at End of Game:** If the score is tied at the end of the game, additional substitutions will be allowed. The first team to answer correctly a tie-breaker question wins the match and will have ten points added to its score.

2. **Declaring the End of the Game:** The declaration of the end of the game and the announcement of the winner will be the responsibility of the chief judge. *No* protests will be allowed once the game has been declared over.

XVIII. SPORTSMANSHIP

A. Good sportsmanship is required. Temper tantrums, use of profanity, and other unsportsmanlike behavior by coaches, players, or spectators are grounds for removal from the game.

B. Behavior Outside of Game Rooms: Teams and their entourage who stay just outside of game rooms *must* remain quiet. It is advised that such groups that are waiting for the next game to start, either leave the building or stay in a room or area away from the game rooms that is designated for teams who have byes, and perhaps leave *one* person near the game room to let the rest of the group know when the game room becomes available.

NOTE: The official (moderator or, if available, chief judge) in each game room is the ultimate authority in that room. If the official deems it necessary, he or she may eject anyone (player, coach, spectator) from the room. Anyone who refuses to leave when told to do so will cause the forfeiture of the game for the team associated with ejected person.

C. Electronic Devices in Game Rooms: *All* persons in game rooms must *turn off* their cell phones, iPods and other MP3 players, tablet computers, laptops, and all other electronic devices during games and *keep them off*. Any person accessing an electronic device once a game has started—especially if is with the intent of using information gained from accessing an electronic device to protest a question or to encourage the coach to protest a question—will be removed from the game room for the remainder of the game. If after a game has ended, it is discovered that a player has used an electronic device while at the game table, the player's team will forfeit that round.

D. Removal of a Player from a Game because of Unsportsmanlike Behavior: Students behaving unsportsmanlike may be removed from the game with or without prior warning. No substitution will be allowed if a student has been removed for unsportsmanlike behavior. Teams will continue to play with the remaining three players until normal substitution time. The player who has been removed from the game may not re-enter the round from which he or she was removed and must also sit out the following round.

E. Items Players Should and Should Not Have with Them at the Game Table: During play, players must not wear hats, must not have with them stuffed animals or other objects not essential to the game, and must have on the table or desktop in front of them—in

addition to lockout system components—only pencil, paper, and name card. (See "Game Rules" for name card specifications.)

F. Removal of Coaches from the Game Room: Coaches conveying answers or advice in any manner to their team members or exhibiting unsportsmanlike behavior may be removed from the room with or without prior warning. The coach that has been removed from the competition room may not re-enter the room during the round from which he or she was removed or coach the team during the remaining competition rounds for the rest of the tournament.

G. Spectators

1. **Seating for Spectators:** First preference for seating for spectators will go to the supporters of the two teams in a game room. A bye team may spectate in a game room only if there is adequate seating for the supporters of the two teams in the game room. The officials (as well as the coaches of the two teams in a game room) may ask a spectating team to leave if there is not enough seating to accommodate them.

2. **Removal of Spectators from the Game Room:** Parents and/or other spectators exhibiting unsportsmanlike behavior may be removed from the room with or without prior warning and may not re-enter the room during the remainder of that round. Refusing to comply will result in the disqualification of their team.

H. The school districts will be held responsible for the actions and behavior of the students and coaches representing their school. Misbehavior, littering, vandalism, and unsportsmanlike behavior will not be tolerated. If a coach, student, or group of students, is observed by an officer, or reported to be, misbehaving in any of these ways, their team may be disqualified, and asked to leave the tournament site. *Also*, their superintendent will be notified of their misconduct. If the misbehavior is extreme, the school may not be allowed to participate in OJABA in the future.

XVIII. OFFICERS

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XIX. WEBSITE

OJABA has its own web site: www.ojaba.org. Check this site for a description of the organization; upcoming events and other news; access to OJABA documents, including the rules; and state tournament results for the past several years.