

# PEE DEE REGIONAL ACADEMIC CHALLENGE RULES

2022-23 School Year

September 2022

These rules apply to the regular season and also to the Regional Tournament although the Tournament Round Robin format may have more specific procedures and rules.

It is very difficult to anticipate each “problem” that may occur during a match, but I am trying to provide you with more guidance. To do so however requires this document to be more lengthy. Most issues that I hear about involve the timing of questions, so I will spend more effort on those.

## TEAM COMPOSITION

There are two levels of competition -- middle school for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades, and high school for grades nine through twelve.

The team is coached by a person or persons selected by the school principal. A team consists of any number of students chosen by the individual school. Schools are encouraged to define their selection criteria. Students must be from the same building, except that a grade 8 and up school can use students from the grade 7 feeder school or a grade 7 and lower school can use students from the grade 8 school it feeds.

**Four members, selected by the team coach, play in any individual round.** Any number of substitutions may be made after each round. The team captain may change with each round. If both coaches agree before the match, a team captain may “defer” to another team member to give an answer if the captain would have difficulty pronouncing the answer.

## MATCH FORMAT

A match consists of four (4) rounds: Rounds one (1) and two (2) consist of twenty (20) questions each. Rounds three (3) and four (4) consist of twenty-five (25) questions. A one (1) minute break is allowed between rounds. **Matches that are held virtually can opt to reduce questions in rounds 1 & 2 to sixteen (16) and in rounds 3 & 4 to twenty (20). Also rounds 3 and 4 will not be toss up questions if match is held virtually, but teams will alternate going first as they did in rounds 1 and 2.** It is the responsibility of all coaches to contact the opposing team’s coach to determine if your match will be held virtually or in-person.

**Judges and moderators of the match should meet before the match to discuss questions. This should take place in a room separate from the students. Judges can choose to use an alternate question if they believe the answer given in the match’s question packet is incorrect.**

## ROUNDS 1 AND 2 - Directed Questions/Team Response

Teams are asked questions on an alternating basis until all twenty (20) questions have been presented. Team members have ten (10) seconds to confer before answering the question **with the exception of math questions. Teams will have thirty (30) seconds to answer math questions. Prior to asking a math question, the moderator should advise the teams and the time keeper that a math question is to be asked.** At the time of the buzzer, the captain will be asked for the answer if he/she has not already answered. The captain must answer immediately (within two to three seconds). The question will not be repeated.

If the answer is incorrect, the opposing team will be given the opportunity to respond. The team captain must respond immediately (within two to three seconds). The question will not be repeated.

One point is awarded for each correct response. The first response is the only response accepted. The chairperson of the judges' panel may request the captain repeat the response if the answer is not heard or understood or to give additional information. If the answer to any questions requires the name of a person, the last name is all that is required unless it is specified in the question. If the first name is given and is incorrect, the answer is ruled incorrect.

## ROUNDS 3 AND 4 - Toss -Up Questions

(ONLY if match is held in person. If match is held virtually, rounds 3 and 4 will be the same as rounds 1 and 2 except rounds 1 and 2 will have 16 questions and rounds 3 and 4 will have 20 questions and alternate teams going first.

**In-person matches:** Twenty-five toss-up questions are asked to the contestants in general. The first person from either team to buzz-in may answer, after being recognized by the time-keeper. **With the exception of math questions, team members have ten (10) seconds after a question has been read to buzz-in and must begin to answer immediately (within two to three seconds) after being recognized. Team members have thirty (30) seconds to answer math questions. Prior to asking a math question, the moderator should announce to the teams and the time keeper that a math question is about to be asked.** If the answer is incorrect, the opposing team may buzz-in **IF TIME HAS NOT EXPIRED** and answer immediately (within two to three seconds) after being recognized. The **only time a question is repeated** is when a question is interrupted. If the team member buzzes-in before the question is read in its entirety and gives an incorrect response, the question is reread in its entirety for the opposing team.

**PLEASE NOTE:** The timekeeper should not stop or restart the clock if the first person from either team buzzes in before the time has expired and gives an incorrect answer. In the event the buzzer goes off before the second person on the opposing team answers, the team member is given 3 seconds to respond. **If time expires before an answer is given, neither team receives a point. NOTE, Zeecraft Buzzer systems can be set so that the timer stops when a team buzzes in. (this must be set on the back of the timer box). If the answer is incorrect, the timekeeper pushes the reset button and the time continues (it does not reset but merely continues the count). If the time expires before the other team begins to answer the question, no response is accepted. If the other person buzzes in just before the time has expired, he/she may attempt to answer the question.**

One point is awarded for each correct response.

### TIEBREAKER

If there is a tie at the end of the match, the moderator and judges are to use five (5) additional questions (different subject areas). These questions should be selected by the moderator and judges before the match begins. Follow the rules of Rounds 3 and 4, Toss-Up Questions.

### WINNER

The winner is the team with the higher points at the end of the match.

### PERSONNEL

#### *Moderator*

The moderator serves as a master of ceremonies and questioner. He/she introduces the players and coaches, explains the general rules to the audience, reads the rules for each round before beginning the rounds, and controls the tempo of the match. If there is a disturbance of any kind from team members, the audience, or coaches, the moderator with the help of the judges settles the disturbance before continuing the match. He/she responds immediately that the answer is correct or incorrect, gives the correct answer if an incorrect answer is given by both teams, and awards the points. The moderator may not rule on the correctness or incorrectness of an answer if it is significantly different from the answer on the question sheet. **The moderator is not to refer to the judges until both teams have had the opportunity to answer.**

The moderator must be a certified professional (examples: certified staff, school personnel, college personnel, or retired teacher). A copy of the questions is given to the moderator to review thirty (30) minutes before the match begins. The team coach may not serve as the moderator unless it is an emergency. The visiting coach should be consulted prior to such a decision. When serving as a moderator, the coach must have no contact with the team members.

#### *Judges*

There should be three (3) judges for each match. The home team is responsible for providing the three (3) judges. However, it is strongly recommended that the visiting team bring one (1) judge as the third judge. The visiting team must notify the host team twenty-four (24) hours in advance if they are bringing the third judge. It is recommended science and mathematics teacher(s) be among the judges. Judges have the responsibility of determining if an answer is acceptable. Judges must be certified professionals (examples: certified staff, college personnel, or retired teacher). If the answer is different from that given on the question and answer sheet, the judges make the final decision as to the acceptability of the answer. Judges also serve as arbiters if procedural questions arise during the match. The chairperson of the judges' panel speaks for the judges' panel. The chairperson of the judges' panel is the only person with the authority to stop the official clock. Prior to the match the judges should choose which one will be the chairperson. It is recommended that the person with the most knowledge and experience with the rules be selected.

**Prior to the match the judges and moderator meet in a secluded room to review the questions.** If the question and the answer are obviously wrong, ambiguous or if a pronunciation clarification is needed, judges may make necessary deletions or substitutions (before the match). All questions that require a "YES" or "NO" response or a "TRUE" or "FALSE" response should be eliminated. All math answers should be given in simplest form. **Judges should not discard questions because they are too difficult or they are not taught in a particular curriculum. If match is being held virtually, the coaches can meet together virtually before the match begins without the teams being able to hear their discussion**

### *Scorekeeper*

The official scorekeeper is responsible for keeping the official score. He/she is assisted by two (2) unofficial scorekeepers representing the teams playing the match who sit at the scorekeeper's table.

### *Timekeeper*

The timekeeper may not be one of the judges. The timekeeper recognizes the team member to answer the question in the third and fourth rounds only. **The timekeeper MAY BE given a set of questions to read during the match but does not review the questions before the match begins. IF the timekeeper is a student, he/she should NOT be given the questions.** The timekeeper does not have to be a certified professional but must be familiar with the rules and regulations and knowledgeable of the buzzer system and timing device.

## **MATCH CONDUCT**

**Each team coach is responsible for the proper conduct (decorum) of his/her students and parents. I realize coaches cannot “control” parents, but they can be removed from the match if necessary.**

The captain of the team or the coaches may approach the judges concerning the validity of an answer **at the end of the round in which the question was asked.** Coaches may **only** approach the judges at other times concerning procedural irregularities which must be settled immediately.

**No one else is allowed to approach the judges or officials.** Violators should be required to leave the match room after one warning. **No coach, team member, or any other person may sit directly behind or beside the judges during a match.**

Questions answered aloud from the audience must be eliminated. Either the moderator or judges can intervene if this occurs. If the moderator "flubs" the question, the chairperson of the judges' panel should ask that the question be read again or the moderator may correct the reading himself/herself.

**No electronic devices (e.g. cell phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) are permitted to be turned on or be visible during the matches during in-person matches. No team member (or anyone in the room) should have such devices out and visible during the matches.**

**The home team coach will have the final say about visitors being allowed to watch matches. Some schools do not want visitors due to Covid. It is the coaches' responsibility to discuss this issue.**

## **HOME TEAM RESPONSIBILITIES**

## Each home team is responsible for the following:

Confirm receipt of the questions by the due date indicated on the cover sheet.  
Email confirmation to Dara Brockington [dbrockington@pdec.net](mailto:dbrockington@pdec.net) .

1. Print 4 sets of questions for the moderator and judges to use.
2. Tables and chairs for each team, for the judges, and for the coaches.
3. Podium and microphone (if needed) for the moderator.
4. Two (2) or three (3) judges. The visiting team may bring one judge as the third judge.
5. One (1) official scorekeeper, one (1) unofficial scorekeeper.
6. A moderator.
7. A timekeeper.
8. A dictionary for the judges.
9. Appoint someone to meet and greet the visiting team.
10. Scratch paper and pencils.
11. Buzzer system
12. Ensure that students and staff from home school treat visiting team with courtesy and respect in the spirit of good sportsmanship.
13. At the conclusion of the match, **email Daniel Miller at [pdac@pdec.net](mailto:pdac@pdec.net) and Dara Brockington at [dbrockington@pdec.net](mailto:dbrockington@pdec.net) with the final score and results.**

### Visiting Coach Responsibilities

1. **At least three days before the match**, contact the home team and let them know what time you plan to arrive and how many people you will bring. The visiting team has the option of bringing someone to act as the 3<sup>rd</sup> judge. Please let the home team coach know if you will be bringing someone to act as the 3<sup>rd</sup> judge.
2. Send in cover sheet for the match confirming you have received the questions. **This is due by the Friday (for high school) or the Monday (for middle school) before your match from both teams.**
3. **Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to match.** If a delay occurs, try to call the Home team coach on his/her cell phone.
4. The visiting team should bring its buzzer system as a backup.
5. Ensure that visiting students and staff treat the home team with courtesy and respect in the spirit of good sportsmanship. **At the conclusion of the match, team member should shake hands with their opponents.**

### Protest and Grievances

If possible, when a grievance occurs, each coach should make every effort to resolve the matter before the completion of the match. If not, **protests must be made in writing within forty-eight hours of the match to the administrator of Academic Challenge at the Pee Dee Education Center.**

The administrator will resolve the protest or present the protest to the advisory committee. The committee has the option of having the coaches appear or making the final decision.

After hearing the grievance, consequences that have been set will be administered ranging from formal reprimand to forfeiture of the match in question.

## **Roles of Judges, Scorekeeper and Timekeeper**

*Pee Dee Academic Challenge*

Each match has the following officials: 3 judges, a timekeeper, a scorekeeper, and a moderator.

### **JUDGES:**

There must be three judges for a match (however, a match may continue if only two are available). It is recommended that the team include specialists in math and science. Judges must be certified professionals.

- Judges review questions with the moderator prior to the match to decide if questions should be discarded and decide which ones to substitute. Questions should not be eliminated because they are too difficult or are not in the local curriculum.
- Judges determine whether an answer is acceptable when it differs from the answer key.
- Judges serve as arbiters if procedural questions or protests arise during the match.
- If the moderator "flubs" a question, the chairperson should interrupt the moderator and have the question read again.
- Remind the moderator to discard a question if the audience answers the question aloud.
- Only the chairperson can stop the official clock.

The chairperson of the judges' panel speaks for the panel and communicates decisions to the moderator. The chairperson should be selected by the judges prior to the match and should be the one with the most experience and knowledge of the rules.

### **SCOREKEEPER:**

The official scorekeeper keeps the official score. He/she is assisted by two unofficial scorekeepers from the teams. The scorekeeper provides the scores to the moderator at the end of each round and the final score. He should be sure each coach signs the official score sheet and circle the winning team.

### **TIMEKEEPER:**

The timekeeper operates the buzzer system. He/she recognizes the team member to answer a question during the toss-up rounds (rounds 3 & 4). After a player buzzes, the timekeeper should say, "Team xxxx, player #". He enforces the time limits for responding. If a player buzzes at the same time the clock expires, the player

should be given a chance to answer. **No answer is accepted after the buzzer goes off except if the student buzzes in AS THE TIME EXPIRES.**

The time keeper **may receive** a copy of the questions (**unless he/she is a student**) to read during the match but does not review them prior to the match.

The timekeeper does not have to be certified professional but must be familiar with rules and how to operate the buzzer and timer system.

## **Moderator's Role and Tasks**

*Pee Dee Academic Challenge Match*

### **General Match Format**

Each school has a four -player team on stage for competition. Players may be substituted between rounds.

A match consists of four rounds.

- Rounds 1 and 2 are 20 questions **(16 questions if virtual)** each and are directed question format.
- Rounds 3 and 4 are 25 questions **(20 questions if virtual)** each and are toss-up format if match is in person.

### **Moderator Role**

The moderator serves as the master of ceremonies. He/she also reads the questions. He/she controls the tempo and tone of the match. Before the match, the moderator should review the questions to be sure of clarity and pronunciations. The moderator does not have to rule on the correctness of answers that vary from the answer key; the judges will make those decisions.

### **Moderator Tasks**

#### **Beginning the match**

- Welcome the teams and audience
- Have the team captains introduce themselves and their teammates and coaches
- Read the general rules for the players and audience
- Request that the audience not distract players or judges by comments during play
- Be sure judges, timekeeper, and scorekeeper are ready
- Begin round 1

Moderator Tasks, continued

#### **Round 1 - Directed Questions**

- Read the rules for round 1
- Check to be sure which team has the odd questions
- Direct the first question to the appropriate team and then alternate which team responds first.
  - Suggested script: "Question #1 is for {school name}."  
{read question and wait for answer}

**If answer is obviously correct**, say "Correct" {proceed to question 2 for other team}

**If answer is not correct**, say "not correct. Team y, do you have a response?" {The other team has to respond within the time limit, monitored by the timekeeper. If answer is correct, say "correct" then go to question 2 for team y. If answer is not correct, say "not correct", read the correct answer, then go to question 2 for team y.}

**If answer is different from key and not obviously correct**, say "That answer is not the one given here. The other team can respond. Then the judges will rule on the first team's answer." **{The other team has to respond within the time limit, monitored by the timekeeper. The judges will determine whether the first team's answer was acceptable. If so, that team gets the point, even if other team gave a correct answer. Then go to question 2 for team y.}**

**If the buzzer sounds before the captain answers**, say "Your answer, please" {If no answer or incorrect, then say to the other captain} "do you have an answer?" {follow options above depending on response}

After response to question is settled, then turn to team y and say} "Question 2 is for team y."

{Read question and repeat response options above}

**\*Remind timekeeper that time limit is 30 seconds for math questions. The second team must answer immediately (within 3 seconds).**

- After last question, announce a one-minute break to allow player substitutions and for judges to confer on the score.

### Round 2 - Directed Question

- Announce the score for round 1
- Have team captains introduce any new players
- Remind players that same format is used.
- Conduct round 2 in same manner as round 1

Moderator Tasks, continued

### Round 3 - Toss-up (In-person matches only)



- Announce the score
- Have team captains introduce any new players
- Read the rules for toss-up questions
- Have the teams test their buzzers
- Remind players that they must WAIT to be recognized by the timekeeper before answering. The first time a team answers before being recognized, he/she will be warned but his answer accepted. The next time the team does this, its answer will not be accepted and the question will be offered to the other team.
- Begin with question 1
  - Suggested script
    - "Question 1. {read question}
      - {After a player buzzer sounds, the timekeeper will say "team x, player #. The player then must answer within 2-3 seconds.}

**If answer is obviously correct**, say "Correct" {proceed to question 2}

**If answer is not correct**, say "not correct. Team y, do you have a response?" {The other team has to respond within the time limit, monitored by the timekeeper. If answer is correct, say "correct" then go to question 2. If answer is not correct, say "not correct", read the correct answer, then go to question 2.}

**If answer is different from key and not obviously correct**, say "That answer is not the one given here. The other team can respond. Then the judges will rule on the first team's answer." **{The other team has to respond within the time limit, monitored by the timekeeper. The judges will determine whether the first team's answer was acceptable. If so, that team gets the point, even if other team gave a correct answer. Then go to question 2.}**

**If the time expires before anyone answers**, give the correct answer and go to question 2.

Note: if a team buzzes in before you finish reading the question and gives incorrect answer, then you reread the question for the other team.

**\*Remind timekeeper that time limit is 30 seconds for math questions. The second team must answer immediately (within 3 seconds).**

- After the last question, announce a one-minute break to allow player substitutions and for judges to confer on the score.

#### **Round 4 - Toss-up (In person matches only)**

- Announce the score
- Have team captains introduce any new players
- Remind player that the same format is used

**Tiebreak** (if needed)

If the score is tied at the end of the match, use the five questions (pre-selected by moderator and judges). The toss-up format is used. Addition five-point tiebreaks are used until the match is decided.

### Winner

The winner is the team with the higher points. Home team coach is responsible for emailing the match results to the Pee Dee Education Center – **email Daniel Miller at [pdac@pdec.net](mailto:pdac@pdec.net) and Dara Brockington at [dbrockington@pdec.net](mailto:dbrockington@pdec.net) at the conclusion of the match.**

I ask that all coaches contact each other at least three days before the match to discuss if the match will be held virtually or in person. This will give each school time to set up virtual platforms if necessary. Ideally, I think it would be a great idea for coaches to contact your opposing teams before the practice week for the season to be better prepared for the season.

**All schools that wish to participate in the Regional Tournament will be responsible to bring 2 volunteers to work at the Regional Tournament. The volunteers will act as moderators or judges at the tournament. We have at least 2 judges and one moderator in each room of competition. It is essential to have your volunteers to be able to host the Regional Tournament. We will ask for MS volunteers names in mid-January and HS volunteers in mid-February.**