



# Scholar Bowl

2025-26 RULE BOOK

# **Missouri State High School Activities Association**

P.O. BOX 1328  
Columbia, MO 65205-1328  
573.875.4880

[www.mshsaa.org](http://www.mshsaa.org) [email@mshsaa.org](mailto:email@mshsaa.org)

***MSHSAA Contact for Scholar Bowl: Daryl Bradley***

## **SCHOLAR BOWL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

### **SOUTHEAST**

Kim Huff  
Central (Park Hills) HS  
[khuff@centralr3.org](mailto:khuff@centralr3.org)

### **SOUTHWEST**

Angela Odom  
Kickapoo HS  
[aodom@spsmail.org](mailto:aodom@spsmail.org)

### **NORTHEAST**

Brian Toll  
Bevier HS  
[tollb@bevier.k12.mo.us](mailto:tollb@bevier.k12.mo.us)

### **NORTHWEST**

Nick White  
Nodaway-Holt HS  
[nwhite@nodholt.org](mailto:nwhite@nodholt.org)

### **CENTRAL**

Amy Johnson  
Skyline HS  
[ajohnson@skylineschools.net](mailto:ajohnson@skylineschools.net)

### **ST. LOUIS**

Bob Efken  
Bayless HS  
[befken@bayless.k12.mo.us](mailto:befken@bayless.k12.mo.us)

### **SOUTH CENTRAL**

Jason Loy  
Sullivan HS  
[loyj@sullivan-eagles.org](mailto:loyj@sullivan-eagles.org)

### **KANSAS CITY**

Shawn Logan  
Smithville HS  
[logans@smithville.k12.mo.us](mailto:logans@smithville.k12.mo.us)

### **President of MACA:**

Ex-Officio Member  
Scott Walker  
Clever HS  
[walkers@cleverbluejays.org](mailto:walkers@cleverbluejays.org)

## **SCHOLAR BOWL RULES INTERPRETERS**

### **Northeast and Central Board Districts**

Sandy Werr  
Shelbyville, MO  
[swerr201@gmail.com](mailto:swerr201@gmail.com)

### **St. Louis and South-Central Board Districts**

Scott Brinker, State Event Manager  
Ballwin, MO  
[mail@scottbrinker.com](mailto:mail@scottbrinker.com)

### **Northwest and Kansas City Board Districts**

Deborah Parker  
Kansas City, MO  
[schwarzerkaffee99@gmail.com](mailto:schwarzerkaffee99@gmail.com)

### **Southeast and Southwest Board Districts**

Bart Mitchell  
Farmington, MO  
[bartmitchell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bartmitchell@sbcglobal.net)

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# 2025-26

## ONLINE RULES REVIEW AND RULES TEST

**As per By-Law 4.1.3, all Scholar Bowl coaches (head coach, assistant coaches, junior high coaches, etc.) are required to complete the online rules review prior to the first interscholastic competition.**

### **How to access the Online Rules Review:**

- Coaches must log in to the MSHSAA website with their email address and password in order to view, complete and obtain credit for the online rules review and Rules Test. Once the ORR is complete, the link to the rules test will become available. That must be completed and passed as well.
- In order for a coach to log in they MUST be listed as a school coach on the Coaches and Directors page for the school—an administrator must add the coach to the online list and ALL coaches that have any instructional contact with students MUST be listed.
- If a coach needs to retrieve a password have them click on “I forgot my password” on the login page to retrieve it. You may change your password once you are logged in (under “account”).
- Look for the Online Rules Review link under the Education section once you are logged in and on your school’s homepage. Once the ORR is complete, the link to the rules test will become available in the same area. The test must be completed and passed as well.
- The review and test will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week but must be completed prior to the **team’s first interscholastic contest.**

### **Where they are located:**

- The link is located under the Education section once you are logged in and on your school’s homepage. Select the Scholar Bowl Online Rules Review. After that is completed, the link to the rules test will appear.

### **About how long will it take:**

- The online rules review will take an hour or less to complete.
- Credit is obtained on the last slide of the presentation.

### **When it will be available:**

- The online rules review will be available October 6, 2025.
- The online rules review needs to be completed before your team competes interscholastically. The ORR and Rules Test window will END on January 9, 2026.

### **Trouble-shooting:**

- If the online rules review “locks up” please hit the “refresh” button, log back in, click on the online rules review, and select “continue from where stopped.”

## **ETHICS**

(This section has been duplicated from Appendix C of the Manual)

**SCHOLAR BOWL COACHES' CODE OF CONDUCT:** As the coach of an activity which, by its nature, promotes academic excellence in the schools and which seeks to foster a climate of learning and scholarship through competition, I agree to support and abide by the following statements:

1. I agree to abide by all the rules and regulations for Scholar Bowl as stated in the MSHSAA Official Handbook and Scholar Bowl Manual.
2. I agree to both model and nurture a spirit of fair play and good sportsmanship for my students at all times.
3. I agree to discourage and curtail quibbling during competition on the part of my students. No extraneous comments or remarks should be directed toward teammates, opponents, or officials.
4. I agree to encourage my students always to award the benefit of the doubt both to the opponents and to the officials.
5. I agree to help my students understand that Scholar Bowl is a pursuit which can foster intellectual growth in all students.
6. I agree to teach my students to cooperate with one another and to offer encouragement to other teams to do their best. I believe that this not only promotes fair competition, it is also the essence of good citizenship.

**"WINNING":** The desire to win supplies a strong incentive to achieve and improve. This aspect of the activity is desirable in that winning is correlated with performance of merit; however, it sometimes happens that, under the stress of a desire to win, individuals become overzealous and their actions reflect on the good name of the school they represent. Every possible effort should be made to preserve friendly relations and to conduct all contests on the highest plane. A Scholar Bowl game is a friendly contest and to keep this spirit, it must be conducted in a fair and impartial manner by coaches, participants and spectators.

1. The highest kind of school loyalty is that which reflects credit on the home school, not that which tries to secure a victory at any cost.
2. Respect opponents and the schools they represent.
3. Competitors should help maintain an atmosphere of fairness and mutual respect.
4. Coaches and others present should always display proper audience behavior and use appropriate language.
5. Coaches should always be positive role models for their students.
6. Participants must go through the proper channels of appeal without causing "A Scene".
7. Always show respect for the host school and all property at the tournament site. Make certain that nothing is disturbed in the contest rooms and follow the rules for the use of the building.

**UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT:** Unsportsmanlike conduct includes actions which are unbecoming to an ethical, fair, honorable individual. It consists of acts of deceit, disrespect or vulgarity and includes taunting. The National Federation and the MSHSAA disapproves of any form of taunting which is intended or designed to embarrass, ridicule or demean others under any circumstances including on the basis of relative ability, race, religion, gender or national origin.

## **Rule Quick Reference**

Rule A: <a href="#">Scholar Bowl Defined</a> .....	<a href="#">Page 5</a>
Rule B: <a href="#">General Game Format</a> .....	<a href="#">Page 5</a>
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Rule J: <a href="#">Penalties</a> .....	<a href="#">Page 11</a>
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## **Rules Jurisdiction**

**The SCHOLAR BOWL RULES** are applicable for the **regular season**, as well as the **District and State Series**, with the **following exceptions**. The areas of Scholar Bowl competition listed below **may be modified or not used** during the regular season by event hosts after majority consent of participating teams. All participating teams must be apprised of any rules modifications in advance of the event.

### **Rules that MAY be modified or unused during the regular season:**

- Rule B
- Rule C: 1a,1f, 2b through e, 4, 5, 6
- Rule D
- Rule F
- Rule H
- Rule I
- Rule K
- Rule L

# GAME RULES

PLEASE NOTE: New wording has been underlined, and areas of emphasis are in **bold** text.

- A. **SCHOLAR BOWL:** Scholar Bowl can be characterized as competition in which subject matter in multiple academic disciplines is used. This activity features head-to-head scholar bowl team competition, quick response answers, time limits on questions and use of recognition systems by participants. Note: The current Scholar Bowl disciplines are literature, science, mathematics, fine arts, history and other (see C-4/C-5).
- B. **GENERAL GAME FORMAT**
  - 1. **Players:** A team shall consist of no more than ten (10) players. A team must have a minimum of four (4) players present and four (4) team players must play at all times. A coach must designate one of the four participating players as captain. If a player(s) on either team has inappropriate attire, i.e. hats, obscene slogan shirts, etc., that player(s) will not be allowed to participate in the game. (See also Rule J3.) (See Section D-6 for Player Emergencies during a match.)
  - 2. **Format:** A game shall consist of two halves. Each half will consist of eleven (11) toss-up questions and eleven (11) three-part bonus questions. There will be a half-time intermission of no more than five minutes at the conclusion of the first half.
  - 3. **Paper Provided:** Prior to each game, paper will be provided by the moderator for each player. The paper must remain blank until the moderator signals the start of the game. Substitutes shall be provided with a blank piece of paper. Players may only use the paper provided by the moderator and a writing utensil, which each player provides. If a player uses materials other than the paper provided by the officials and a writing utensil, that player will be ejected from the game. (See Rule J5, Penalties, as well.)
  - 4. **Prepared Materials:** The use of prepared materials, calculators, cell phones and/or any other electronic devices is not allowed. If a player is found using such an aid during a game, the player will be ejected from that game. (See Rule J5, Penalties, as well.)
  - 5. **Competition Room Closed:** During the contest, individuals (participants or spectators) should not enter or leave the room other than during half-time or a time-out. An official may enter or leave the room as necessary to the match (protest situation, etc.). (See also J6)
  - 6. **Competition Room Layout:** Competition rooms shall be set with the moderator facing the teams and audience, and the team members sitting with their backs to the audience. See Layout Diagram on page 14.
- C. **QUESTIONS:** Game questions will be a combination of toss-up and bonus questions.
  - 1. **Toss-Up Questions:**
    - a. **Points:** Toss-up questions are worth ten (10) points and may be answered by individuals only; no verbal conferring, or looking at another players' paper is allowed. Nonverbal signaling not related to question content is allowed. If the answer is correct, that team

receives ten (10) points and the opportunity to answer a bonus question.

- b. **Timing:** The first individual to press the response button within the five (5) second time limit and be recognized by the spotter is eligible to answer the question. The time will start at the completion of the reading of a toss-up question for the five (5) seconds to press the response button. A significant answer (which must be unique to the answer) must be started within three (3) seconds after a player is recognized by the spotter and completed within seven (7) seconds more for a total of ten (10) seconds. The timer will call time if a significant answer (which must be unique to the answer) is not begun within three (3) seconds of a player's recognition and if the answer is not completed within seven (7) seconds more for a total of ten (10) seconds (if needed).
- c. **Recognition:** A player shall wait to be **verbally** recognized before speaking an answer. If a player answers a toss-up question without being recognized by the spotter, the moderator will confirm that the player was indeed the first to respond, based on the buzzer system (light/recognition). If the player was the first to respond and the answer given is correct, there shall be no penalty. If a player besides the first responder (based on the buzzer system) provides an answer, the answer shall not be accepted and the other team will have an opportunity to answer the question, following the rules of recognition and time regarding toss-ups. If a player from the team opposing the first responder's team speaks an answer without being buzzed in, they will not have an opportunity to rebound the question, should the first responder's answer be wrong.
- d. **Interrupted Question:** Interrupting a toss-up consists of buzzing in while the actual text of the question is being read. If an individual interrupts a toss-up question and answers it incorrectly, the moderator will continue reading at the point of interruption for the opposing team. At the completion of the question, any member of the opposing team has five (5) seconds to press the response button. The answer must be started within three (3) seconds after a player is recognized and completed within seven (7) seconds more for a total of ten (10) seconds. **EXCEPTION:** For interrupted **calculation** questions, the moderator will complete the question for the opposing team, and any member of that team has **fifteen (15) seconds** to press the response button.
- e. **Rebound and Timing:** Once a toss-up question has been completely read, it will not be repeated. If an individual incorrectly answers a toss-up question which has been completed by the moderator, an individual from the other team has five (5) seconds to press the response button. The answer must be started within three (3) seconds of recognition and completed within seven (7) seconds more for a total of ten (10) seconds.
- f. **Calculation Exception to five (5) seconds response time for toss-ups:** An exception to the five (5) seconds response time is made with questions involving calculation. When a toss-up is a calculation, the moderator will announce, "Calculation," and after the question is read (not interrupted), a player will have fifteen (15) seconds to push the response button; then after a player is recognized, a significant answer (which must be unique to the

answer) must be started within three (3) seconds, and completed within seven (7) seconds more, for a total of (10) seconds. If the first team responding to a calculation gives an incorrect answer, the other team will have **five (5) seconds** to respond, three (3) seconds to begin a significant answer (which must be unique to the answer), and seven (7) seconds more to complete it.

g. **Answer:** If both teams respond with incorrect answers to a toss-up, the moderator will give the correct answer.

2. **Bonus Questions:** These are three-parts and are awarded to the team that answers a toss-up correctly. The three questions included within a bonus must be on a related topic. The moderator will read each part separately, allowing for rebounding on each part.

a. **Conferring and Deferring:** The entire team confers, but the answer or answers must come from the team captain unless he/she defers. The captain may defer to another team member by name to give the answer, verbally indicating (example) "I defer to John." Only the person to whom the captain defers may answer the question and that person may not defer back to the captain. A deferred answer must be started/completed under the normal timing rules - no extra time is allowed. If the moderator asks for clarification of the answer given, it would be acceptable for team members to give clarification to the captain who would restate the answer to the moderator within and not exceeding five (5) seconds. While the controlling team is answering the bonus questions, the opposing team may confer for possible rebound.

b. **Points:** Bonus questions are worth thirty (30) points and will consist of three (3) questions worth ten (10) points each.

c. **Timing:** Timing for bonus questions will begin when the moderator completes the reading of the question(s). The moderator will state the number of each part, such as Part A, etc. The team captain will have ten (10) seconds after the reading of the question to **complete** the team's response. The ten (10) seconds time limit will apply to each part. **EXCEPTION:** If the question involves calculation or spelling (which the moderator will announce before reading the question), the team captain will have fifteen (15) seconds after the reading of the question to complete the team's response to allow for conferring and the answer.

d. **Interrupted Question:** All bonus questions will be read in their entirety regardless of whether the team passes or **interrupts** the moderator with an answer. If the question is interrupted, the reading will stop until the answer is determined to be correct or incorrect. If incorrect, the remainder of the question will be read for the opposing team, which would have (5) seconds to complete its answer (see Rebounding and Timing). **EXCEPTION:** For interrupted calculation/spelling bonus question parts, the moderator will complete the question for the opposing team, which would have **fifteen (15) seconds** to confer & complete its answer.

e. **Rebound and Timing:** Bonus questions are rebounding. Rebounding refers to the fact that the team to which the bonus is not awarded has the opportunity to answer any part(s) that is unanswered or which is answered incorrectly by the team to whom the bonus was originally awarded. The moderator will indicate whether the answer is correct or incorrect and then offer **immediate** rebound to the opposing team if the response is

incorrect. To refer a rebounded bonus, the moderator will say to the other team, "Rebound XYZ High School". The moderator will not re-read the part. The rebounding team would have five (5) seconds to complete their answer. If the answer they give is also incorrect, the moderator will give the correct answer before going to the next part. The moderator shall then follow the same procedure for each part and offer immediate rebound after an incorrect response.

**3. Acceptable Answers:**

- a. A player's initial response to a question will be considered to be the player's answer. Corrections will not be permitted. Changes will not be permitted unless the moderator asks for more specific information. Two (2) part answers (also known as blitzing) are acceptable if both parts are correct, regardless of order. [Blitzing: Interrupting a question and providing multiple, related pieces of information.]
- b. Last names will be sufficient in answers unless full names are necessary for identification or clarification. If a full name is necessary and the player responded with only a last name, the moderator shall ask for a more specific answer.
- c. The answers to all calculation questions shall be given in simplest form. The answer must include units, unless the units are specified in the question.

**4. Categories/Subject Matter for Questions:** The moderator will announce the category of each question. The moderator shall NOT spell words within a question, including those that are difficult to pronounce. These categories are based on NAQT's High School Distribution Template.

- a. **Literature:** religious literature, English literature, Non-English literature, young reader literature, miscellaneous literature.
- b. **Science:** physics, astronomy, biology (and sub-groups), chemistry, earth science, computer science, technology, and miscellaneous science.
- c. **Mathematics:** General, geometry, trigonometry, algebra, calculus and computation.
- d. **Fine Arts:** visual art, music, performance, miscellaneous fine art.
- e. **History:** world history, European history, American history, ancient history, cross-history.
- f. **Other categories:** geography, mythology, pop culture, sports, social science, theology/philosophy, current events, miscellaneous.

**5. Numerical Breakdown of Questions:**

- a. Each match will contain a total of 22 toss-up questions and 22 bonus questions. Each match will consist of **approximately** the following number of questions in each category (toss-ups/bonuses):
  1. Literature: 3.8/3.8
  2. Science: 3.5/3.4
  3. Mathematics: 1.7/1.6
  4. Fine Arts: 1.5/1.4
  5. History: 4.4/4.1
  6. Other categories: 7.3/7.9
- b. The questions will be placed in random order and toss-up categories will be randomly associated with bonus question categories. If neither team answers the toss-up question correctly,

the bonus question following that particular toss-up WILL NOT be used with any subsequent toss-up question.

**6. Restrictions on Questions:**

- a. No true-false or other types of two-option questions are permitted.
- b. No listing questions are permitted.
- c. Multiple choice toss-up and bonus questions are not permitted except in the case of analogy-type toss-up questions. For such questions, any verbal response that indicates one of the choices will be acceptable.
- d. All questions included in a bonus question must be on a related topic.

**D. IRREGULARITIES, ERRORS, MALFUNCTIONS**

1. If there should be a repeat or similar toss-up or bonus question they will be used. No protest is allowed due to these questions.
2. If the first team answers a toss-up or bonus question incorrectly or does not give a response, and the moderator gives the correct answer before the second team has had an opportunity to answer, the question (toss-up) or part (bonus) will be discarded. The second team will then have an opportunity to answer the replacement toss-up question or rebounding bonus question part. The replacement should be from the same category, if possible.
3. **Replacement Questions:** For Districts and Quarterfinals, a small set of replacement questions will be provided to tournament management. Replacements will, most likely, not match the category of the original question. Moderators shall use replacements (toss-up or bonus) in the order they are listed, regardless of category. Questions for "overtime" will be handled similarly. More information on these new procedures will be contained in the District Manager's Instruction Booklet.
4. If a malfunction of the electronic lock-out response system occurs, thereby causing a tie between opposing teams, the toss-up question will be discarded. The spotter will call this tie and a replacement toss-up question will be asked of both teams. If a tie occurs among members of the same team, the spotter will designate the team member who is to give the response.
5. If any other malfunction of the buzzer system occurs, human or mechanical, the judges panel, in consultation with the coaches (as needed), may determine who attempted to signal first and shall recognize that player. If the officials are unable to determine who attempted to signal first, the question shall be thrown out and replaced. Such a situation should then be corrected - either the spotter or the buzzer system should be replaced.
6. **Emergencies:** A game may continue in the event a player has to leave the game room due to unforeseen or unavoidable circumstances, such as illness or family emergency. A timeout should be taken to allow the situation to be discussed with the moderator, and for a substitution to be made if a substitute is available. If a substitute is not available, the game may still continue on an emergency basis. This allowance does not allow a game to start with less than four players per team.

E. **BREAKS:** Coaches may confer with players during these breaks only; otherwise, a time-out must be taken.

1. **Half-Time:** Half-time shall be an intermission of no more than five (5) minutes between the end of the first half and the start of the second half. A shortened duration may be determined by a consensus of the two coaches in consultation with the officials.
2. **Break Before Overtime:** An overtime period, if necessary, will follow an intermission of no more than sixty (60) seconds. A shortened duration may be determined by a consensus of the two coaches in consultation with the officials. (See Rule H: End of Game Procedures)

F. **TEAM TIME-OUTS AND SUBSTITUTIONS**

1. Each team will be allowed one (1) sixty (60) second and one (1) thirty (30) second team time-out per half.
2. Only coaches or team captains may call a team time-out.
3. A team time-out must be called before the category of the next toss-up or bonus question is read.
4. A sixty (60) second time-out may be used to confer with players, to substitute, or for a score-check. The opposing team may do the same during this period.
5. A thirty (30) second time-out may be used to substitute a player or players. At this time, nothing except a substitution or a score check may occur. The opposing team may do the same during this period.
6. Players may be substituted at half-time. Other substitutions will require a time-out.
7. Overtime: Substitutions may be made prior to an overtime period.

G. **QUESTION/ANSWER PROTESTS**

1. **Toss-Ups and Bonuses:** In requesting a clarification of a moderator's decision or accuracy of the question, the captain or coach must explain the request to the moderator who then discusses the clarification with the judges. Another team member may indicate to the team captain that a protest is appropriate. The team captain or coach will then indicate to the judges that the team has a protest.
  - a. **Toss-ups:** All question/answer protests of a toss-up question must be made by the team captain or coach before the category of the bonus question is begun.
  - b. **Bonus:** If any part of the bonus is to be protested, it must be done after the completion of all bonus parts and before the category of the next toss-up is begun.
2. If a question/answer protest cannot be decided by the panel of judges (see Rule I6) in the room, they will refer the protest to the district/state tournament manager. The team captain or coach must then complete a protest card in writing at District, Quarterfinals, or State. The game will continue during the review of the protest. If the protest is in regard to a toss-up question, the moderator shall continue the game during the review of the protest by moving to the following **toss-up** question. Once the protest has been ruled upon, points for the protested toss-up will be confirmed, and the moderator will continue as applicable with that question (the toss-up rebounds or the associated bonus questions will be asked). When that question sequence is complete, the

moderator will return to the point in the game that had been reached previously.

3. Protests not made immediately will have no bearing on the outcome of the game. If a question/answer protest is denied, no further protest by the same team in regard to that question/answer will be heard.
4. Each team is limited to two (2) unsuccessful question/answer protests per game. If a team has a second denied protest, that team may not offer any more protests for that game and once made, cannot be withdrawn.
5. Protests in regard to general game or tournament administration shall be handled per MSHSAA Board Policy for On-Site Protests (MSHSAA Official Handbook) and must be resolved at the contest site before the conclusion of the tournament.

**H. END OF GAME PROCEDURES**

1. **Winner:** The team with the highest number of points at the end of the regulation match will be declared the winner.
2. **Overtime:** If teams are tied at the end of the regulation match, there will be an overtime period of play. (See also E2, F8 and K4) Only toss-up questions will be used and correct answers will be awarded one point each. The first team to correctly answer ONE question, using the rules of recognition and time regarding toss-ups, will be declared the winner of the game. (See also K4)
3. Results of a game are considered final when the coach signs the score sheet or when a formal protest is determined by the site protest committee.

**I. SCHOLAR BOWL OFFICIALS:** District and State Series officials shall be neutral and impartial. Managers may not use parents of current players as any part of the judges panel in any room in which that child is competing. At the Quarterfinal Level, the opposing team must agree upon the officials being used prior to arrival at the site. If the coaches cannot agree, each team is responsible to provide two officials.

1. **MODERATOR** reads the questions, moderates play, serves as the lead official, and interprets the rules during the game as necessary.
2. **SCOREKEEPER** keeps the running score throughout the game.
3. **TIMER** times response times, team time-outs, and half time.
4. **SPOTTER** recognizes the player who first presses the response button.
5. **PANEL OF JUDGES:** The panel includes, at a minimum, the moderator, the scorekeeper, and the timer. Extra judges chosen for academic expertise in a particular area may be added.
6. **DECISIONS/PENALTIES:** The panel of judges shall make all decisions and rulings, and shall determine all penalties. The panel may take a "judges panel time-out" as necessary to confer.

**J. PENALTIES:** Penalties will be applied by unanimous decision of the panel of judges for any of the following:

1. If a player(s) on either team talks or consults regarding question content or verbally communicates with teammates during the reading or answering of a toss-up question, that player's team will forfeit that

opportunity to answer the toss-up question.

2. If a player(s) on either team complain(s) about decisions of the judges or moderator, that player's team will forfeit its opportunity to answer the remaining parts of the bonus question or the next toss-up question, whichever comes first.
3. If a player(s) on either team has inappropriate attire, i.e. hats, obscene slogan shirts, etc., that player(s) will not be allowed to participate in the game. Officials should request the inappropriate attire be removed prior to disqualifying a student or team. If removed, the game may continue without penalty. (See also Rule B1)
4. If coaches or spectators are observed giving signs, mouthing answers, or engaging in similar actions which might influence the decision-making process of the player(s) answering a toss-up or bonus questions, that individual(s) will be requested to leave the room for the remainder of the game.
5. Any player or coach (including substitutes) engaging in unsportsmanlike conduct will be ejected from the game. Players or coaches ejected shall not be within sight or sound of the game, and shall be required to sit out one additional game (as per MSHSAA By-Law 5.5.1.c and d) as a penalty for this conduct. Should any person refuse to leave, the game shall be considered a forfeit. The judges panel will not tolerate unsportsmanlike conduct and, if problems occur, the event manager will monitor the game and take appropriate action.
6. Individuals shall not enter or leave the competition room during play. If an individual leaves during play, they should not be allowed to re-enter the game for the remainder of the half. Door security may be needed if problems occur. (See Rule B5)

## K. THE OFFICIAL SCORE

### Summary Table for Scoring (per Rule B):

Toss-Up Questions	10 points
Bonus Questions - Each Part	10 points each
Overtime Questions (K4 below)	1 point each

1. The person(s) keeping score is (are) considered to have the official score. In most games, if coaches agree and if it is possible, there will be a running score kept on a chalkboard. This is an unofficial score. At the end of each half, the official scorekeeper should announce the score and correct any discrepancies between the official score and the unofficial score. Also at the end of the second half, the game will not be declared officially ended until this is done. If coaches do not agree to keep an unofficial visual score, it will not be kept.
2. At the end of the first half and at the end of the game, a coach may check his score with the official scorekeeper or must take a time-out for a score-check. However, the official scorekeeper's score will be considered the correct score, unless it is generally agreed by the judges' panel that a mistake was made. In that case, the official score will be corrected.
3. Coaches should conduct themselves in a courteous manner when discussing the official score with the judges' panel.

4. The official score for an overtime game (See also H2) shall show the overtime questions that are correctly answered as one point each, added to the tied score at the end of regulation play. Example: For a game that was tied at 350 at the end of regulation, Final Score: 351-350. Points earned in an overtime period **will not** be added to an individual's total points.

**L. TIE BREAKING PROCEDURES: ADVANCEMENT AND SEEDING**

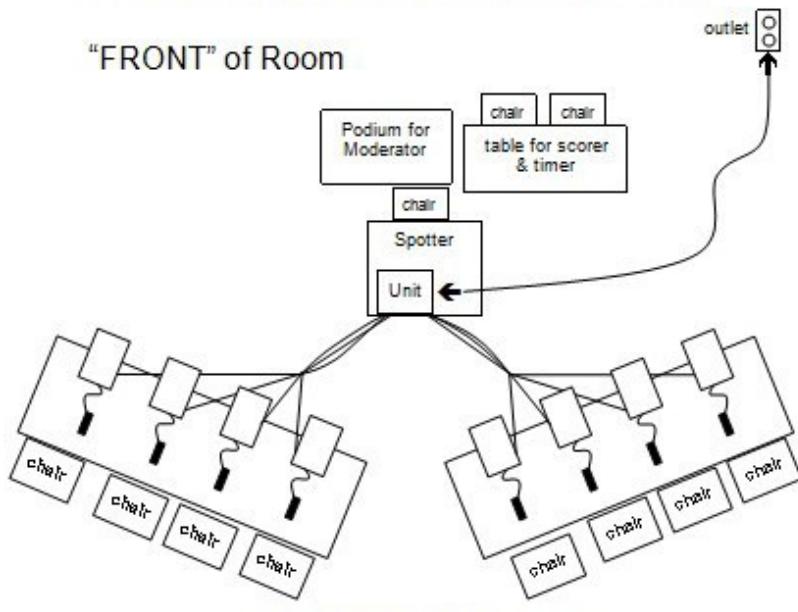
(See "Overtime" in Section H, End of Game Procedures, for information regarding handling a tied game at the end of regulation play.)

1. **ADVANCEMENT:** Use these steps in ORDER to determine which teams advance to the semifinals after the preliminaries at districts and at state. If still tied, move to the next step.
  - a. Games won / record after prelims (bye or forfeit victory = win)
  - b. Average points from prelim games played. A bye or forfeit victory does not count as a game played. A forfeit loss shall count as a game played with a score of zero. Total points scored do not include overtime points.
  - c. Result of head-to-head match-ups in prelims between tied teams: Head-to-head winner will advance in a two-way tie; in a three or more-team tie, any head-to-head loser(s) is (are) eliminated from tie consideration.
  - d. Total points scored against common opponents (Highest total advances) (multiple common opponents – add totals together)
  - e. Total toss-ups answered correctly against common opponents (not OT questions) (Highest total advances)
  - f. If a tie still remains:
    - i. Two teams tied for 4<sup>th</sup> spot: play-off: Unused toss-up questions would be asked. The first team to correctly answer one question, using the rules of recognition and time regarding toss-ups, will advance.
    - ii. A three-way tie would be determined by a one question round robin play-off (using unused toss-up questions and/or extra questions). Order for the play-offs is determined by random draw for letter (A vs B, then winner vs C). The play-off would continue until advancement is clarified or until there are no questions available. Once questions are exhausted, a coin toss/random draw will determine the team(s) to advance.
2. **SEEDING:** For the semifinals, the number 1 seed plays the number 4 seed, and the number 2 seed plays the number 3 seed. Use these steps in ORDER to determine seeding of the FOUR semifinalists. Seed the teams that you can based on each step. If there are tied teams, move to the next step to break those ties.
  - a. Games won / record after prelims (bye or forfeit victory = win)
  - b. Average points from prelim games played. A bye or forfeit victory does not count as a game played. A forfeit loss shall count as a game played with a score of zero. Total points scored do not include overtime points.
  - c. If there is a tie for the second and third seed positions only, break the tie with a coin toss now because they will play each other.
  - d. Result of head-to-head match-ups in prelims between tied teams: Head-to-head winner will be seeded higher in a two-way tie; in a three or more-team tie, any head-to-head loser(s) is (are) eliminated from tie consideration.

- e. If there is a three-way tie for the first or third seeding positions, break with a random draw. If there is a two-way tie for the first seeding position or the third seeding position, continue to next step.
- f. Total points scored against common opponents (higher total seeded higher)
- g. Total toss-ups answered correctly against common opponents (not OT questions) (Higher total advances)
- h. Final step: A random draw (multiple teams) or a coin flip (two teams).

# COMPETITION ROOM LAYOUT

"FRONT" of Room



Teams FACE Moderator and have  
their BACKS to the audience.

AUDIENCE BACK HERE:



# **Duties of Scholar Bowl Officials**

**NOTE: This information is reviewed annually by the Scholar Bowl Advisory Committee and is updated as needed for clarification or due to rules changes.**



The officials for Districts and the State Scholar Bowl Tournament shall consist of a moderator, scorekeeper, timer and spotter. The duties of the officials shall be described in the following pages. Each official should understand the responsibilities of all the officials in order for the group to work together as a unit. It is essential that the officials understand the rules and apply them in an impartial and consistent manner throughout the tournament.

### **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR OFFICIALS**

1. Officials shall provide immediate and courteous application of all MSHSAA Scholar Bowl rules.
2. Good officiating requires knowledge of the rules, organization of tasks and acute concentration. Officials may obtain experience in matches by volunteering to officiate team practices and information scrimmages.
3. Prior to each match, the officials shall meet together and discuss the rules, procedures and responsibilities. The tournament questions and answers shall be provided to the match moderator at least 45 minutes before the match for the purpose of previewing.
4. Do not permit individuals to enter or leave the competition room during a match. Door security may allow individuals to enter during half-time or a time-out.
5. Match officials shall be prepared to make judgment calls. At some point each official is required to make a decision that determines, or changes, the outcome of a match. Officials must act with a confidence founded on preparation. Once a decision has been made, concentrate on the match, not on past decisions.
6. Teams must be prompt. Each round of the tournament will begin at the designated time. Teams not ready to compete at the designated time will forfeit. A forfeit will be determined by the judges in the room where the team arriving late is scheduled to compete. The only exception will be if the late arriving team's preceding game was an overtime game, to the extent that the team was unable to report to its next game. However, the tournament has been designed to allow for overtime games.
7. Officials will exercise the following positive human relations skills:
  - Act with a kind spirit.
  - Act with certainty, never defensively.
  - Never argue. Walk away from irate individuals.
  - Be an effective listener, but do not prolong discussions.
  - Do not be arrogantly dogmatic.

## **GUIDELINES FOR JUDGES PANEL**

Description: The panel of judges make decisions on protests. The panel includes at a minimum the moderator, the scorekeeper, and the timer. Extra judges chosen for academic expertise in a particular area may be added. The judges panel, after conferring, shall resolve all issues regarding scoring, correctness of answers, and other rule interpretations. All protests shall be dealt with immediately and an explanation given as to the ruling. (Rules I & G)

## **MODERATOR DUTIES**

Description: The moderator is largely responsible for the flow of a match. He/she reads each question and makes the initial ruling as to whether an answer is acceptable. This individual controls the pace of the match through effective verbal skills. The pace of the match is the prime consideration.

**Duties:**

1. Moderators shall review the questions for the district tournament at the moderators meeting on the day of the tournament. This time should be spent previewing the questions, noting unfamiliar portions (especially mathematical symbols), and checking pronunciation. The moderator DOES NOT edit the questions.
2. The moderator shall introduce all tournament personnel working in the room.
3. The moderator shall introduce the teams and ask the players to give their names and grade levels as they ring in. The moderator should note if each buzzer works properly and coincides with the correct name. If some students do not speak loudly enough, this should be pointed out to them at this time.
4. The moderator shall introduce the teams' coaches and any substitutes.
5. The moderator shall briefly review the rules before beginning the match. This is usually not necessary after the first round.
6. The moderator shall provide scratch paper to all starting players. The paper must remain blank until the moderator signals for the start of the game.
7. The moderator shall announce the number and category of each toss-up question before it is read.
8. After each student's response, the moderator states if the response was correct or incorrect. When in doubt, the moderator shall defer to the judges' panel.

9. If an individual interrupts a toss-up question and answers it incorrectly, the moderator will continue reading at the point of interruption and finish the question for the opposing team.
10. If a toss-up question has been completed by the moderator, the question shall not be repeated.
11. The moderator shall NOT spell words within a question, including those that are difficult to pronounce.
12. If a player should answer a toss-up without being recognized by the spotter, the moderator will confirm that the player was indeed the first to respond, and if so and if the answer was correct, there will be no penalty. If a different player answers than buzzed in, the answer shall not be accepted. If the opposing team has not previously attempted to answer that particular question, then a player from that team may answer according to the rules of recognition and timing regarding toss-ups.
13. When a toss-up involves calculation, the moderator will announce, "calculation" before reading the question, as the players shall be allowed more response time. Likewise, if a bonus question is a spelling question, the moderator will announce "spelling" before reading the question as the players shall be allowed more response time. Note - It is allowed for a player to pronounce spelling words prior to spelling.
14. The moderator shall remember not to give an answer before the other team has had an opportunity to respond. If this should occur, however, the question will be discarded. The second team will then have an opportunity to answer the replacement toss-up question or rebounding bonus question parts. The replacement should be from the same category, if possible. If the replacement question has already been used from a particular category, the moderator will then draw randomly from the remaining replacement questions.
15. If both teams respond with an incorrect answer or time expires, the moderator shall give the correct answer before proceeding to the next toss-up.
16. The moderator may accept last names in answers unless full names are necessary for identification or clarification. If a full name is necessary and the competitor responded with only a last name, the moderator shall ask for a more specific answer.
17. When a team answers a toss-up question correctly, they are awarded a bonus question. The moderator shall give the category of the bonus question.
18. The moderator will state the number of each part, such as number 1 or number 2, etc. or refer to each part as Part A, Part B., etc. The moderator will indicate if the answer is correct or incorrect. If incorrect, the moderator shall immediately rebound to the opposing team after each incorrect response. The moderator will not re-read the parts.

19. A player's initial response to a question shall be considered to be the player's answer (see also definition of blitzing). Corrections will not be permitted. Change will not be permitted unless the moderator asks for more specific information. The moderator may ask a student to repeat an answer; however, both the moderator and the judges panel must be certain that the repeated answer is the same as the first answer stated.
20. The moderator shall declare when the first half of the match has been completed.
21. The pace of the match is determined by the reading of the questions. The moderator should read in a manner to be heard by participants and spectators and should maintain an impartial attitude at all times. Each word should be articulated clearly. Moderators should not rush through the questions.
22. The moderator shall help monitor crowd behavior, with special attention to distracting noise, inadvertent answers from the audience or coaching from spectators.
23. Protests: See Section 1, Game Rules, letter G for the guidelines and procedures for handling protests.
24. Overtime: If teams are tied at the end of the regulation match, there will be an overtime period of play. The overtime period will follow a break during which substitutions may be made. Only toss-up questions, randomly selected from the different academic categories, will be used. The first team to correctly answer one question, using the rules of recognition and time regarding toss-ups, will be declared the winner of the game.
25. At the close of the match, the moderator shall return the set of questions to the tournament director.

## **SPOTTER DUTIES**

(Optional position - if not available, the timer, moderator, or scorer may act as the spotter)

Description: The spotter (or buzzer operator) operates the main control on the buzzer equipment, recognizes the team and individual who buzzes-in first on a toss-up question, and resets the buzzer equipment.

### **Duties**

1. Prior to each match, the operator shall be sure that each team member has a writing instrument and clean scratch paper.
2. Prior to each half of competition, the operator shall help the moderator determine that each buzzer works properly.
3. When a team member buzzes-in, the operator immediately calls the name of the school followed by the name of the student. (First or last name is acceptable.) Please use a CLEAR, SMOOTH VOICE, LOUD ENOUGH FOR FANS AND SCORER TO HEAR.
4. If an answer to a toss-up question is ruled incorrect, the operator resets the equipment. If an answer to a toss-up question is ruled correct, the operator delays resetting the equipment until the bonus question is answered or time expires. This prevents inadvertent buzzing in on bonus questions by the opposing team.
5. In addition to recognition and resetting duties, the operator shall look for talking or conferring among team members during toss-up opportunities and shall notify the judges.
6. If a malfunction of the electronic lock-out response system occurs, thereby causing a tie between opposing teams, the toss-up question will be discarded. The spotter will call this tie and a replacement toss-up question will be asked. If a tie occurs among members of the same team, the spotter will designate the team member who is to give the response.
7. Following the match, the spotter shall prepare the contest room for the next match.

## **SCOREKEEPER DUTIES**

Description: The scorekeeper keeps the official record of the match score. Two individuals may be used as official scorekeepers, each recording the score of only one of the competing teams. This may make scoring easier and also help eliminate errors. There also should be an unofficial scorekeeper keeping score on a chalkboard, scoreboard, or other device. For the state championship, only one official scorer will be assigned to each match.

### **Duties**

1. Prior to each half, the scorekeeper verifies that the names of the students competing are listed on the school's roster or entry form. These forms should be provided by the tournament director at districts; the program serves as the roster at state.
2. If a toss-up question is answered correctly, the scorekeeper shall indicate this on the official score form by placing a tally mark by the appropriate student's name that answered the question correctly. The score for each team should be totaled and listed at the end of each half.
3. The score keeper shall keep a running score during the match. Each toss-up answered correctly is worth ten (10) points. For bonus questions, each part is worth ten (10) points each for a total value of thirty (30) points.
4. For each bonus question read by the moderator, the scorekeeper shall indicate on the official score form the number of points received by each team. These points are given to the team, not an individual player. The score shall be recorded as 0, 10, 20 or 30 as the case may be. Because the bonus questions are rebounding, the opposing team may also have points listed on any particular numbered bonus question.
5. At the close of each half, the scorekeeper shall correct any discrepancies between the official score and the unofficial score kept on a chalkboard. At the end of the second half, the game will not be declared officially ended until this is done.
6. At the end of the first half and at the end of the game, a coach may check his/her score with the official scorekeeper. However, the official scorekeeper's score will be considered the correct score, unless it is generally agreed by the judges panel that a mistake was made. In that case, the official score will be corrected.
7. The scorekeeper shall announce the score at the close of each half, and may do so during time-out periods. If a match score is altered following an inquiry, the scorekeeper shall announce the change.
8. At the close of a match, the scorekeeper shall obtain the signature of each participating coach on the score form, verifying that the indicated match result is correct. The scorekeeper shall also sign the score form for verification.

9. The scorekeeper shall serve on the judges panel and help the match run smoothly making sure the rules are followed in an impartial and consistent manner.

## **TIMER DUTIES**

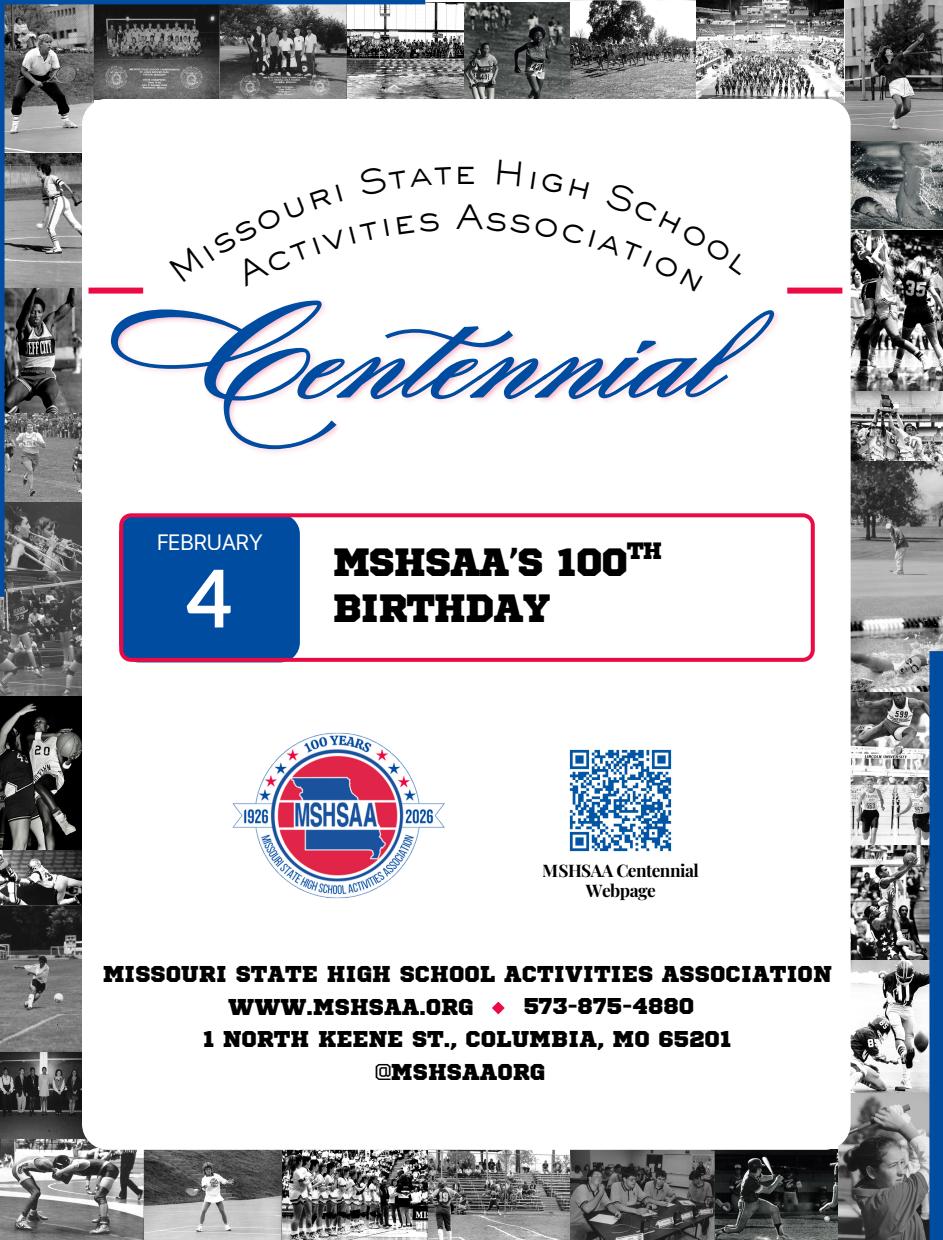
**Description:** The timer shall clock the response times, time-outs and half-time.

### **Duties**

1. Following the reading of a toss-up question, five (5) seconds shall be allowed for response time. If no individual responds during the five (5) seconds, the timer shall declare "TIME" in a clear voice.
2. If an individual responds in this allotted time, he/she then must begin a significant answer within three (3) seconds after recognition by the spotter and completed within seven (7) seconds more for a total of ten (10) seconds. The timer will call the three (3) seconds and the ten (10) seconds if needed.
3. Interrupting a toss-up consists of buzzing in while the actual text of the question is being read. If an individual interrupts a toss-up question and answers it incorrectly, the moderator will begin repeating only the sentence that was interrupted and finish the entire question for the opposing team. At the completion of the question, five (5) seconds shall be allowed for response by the other team. If no one responds in the allotted time, the timer shall declare "TIME." If an individual does respond, the player has three (3) seconds to begin a significant answer after recognition by the spotter, and seven (7) seconds more to complete the answer for a total of ten (10) seconds. The timer will call the three (3) seconds and the ten (10) seconds if needed.
4. If a toss-up question has been completely read and an individual has answered incorrectly, an individual from the other team has five (5) seconds in which to respond. If no one responds, the timer shall declare "TIME." If an individual responds, the player has three (3) seconds to begin a significant answer after recognition by the spotter, and seven (7) seconds more to complete the answer for a total of ten (10) seconds. The timer will call the three (3) seconds and the ten (10) seconds if needed.
5. EXCEPTION to the five (5) second response time: If the moderator announces "Calculation," the players shall have fifteen (15) seconds to make the initial response. The other time limitations for answering the question and response by the second team are the same, i.e. five (5) seconds to buzz in, three (3) seconds to begin a significant answer, and seven (7) seconds more to complete the answer.
6. EXCEPTION: If a bonus question is a spelling question, the players will have 15 seconds to answer.
7. Timing for bonus questions shall begin when the moderator completes the reading of the question. If a bonus question is composed of parts, the team captain shall have ten (10) seconds after the reading of each part to complete the team's response (Calculation and spelling bonuses shall have 15 seconds for each part.).

8. If a team does not answer the parts of its bonus correctly, the opposing team has the opportunity to answer those parts missed. The team receiving the rebounded bonus will have five (5) seconds per part rebounded in which to answer.
9. The timer should be prepared to determine if a student has buzzed-in prior to the end of the time interval for a toss-up question, or initiated an answer prior to the end of a time interval for a bonus question.
10. The timer shall time and keep track of time-outs used by the coaches. Each team shall be allowed one (1) sixty (60) second and one (1) thirty (30) second team time-out per half.
11. The timer shall time an intermission between halves of no more than five (5) minutes.
12. The timer shall serve on the judges panel and help the match run smoothly, making sure the rules are followed in an impartial and consistent manner.

## NOTES



MISSOURI STATE HIGH SCHOOL  
ACTIVITIES ASSOCIATION

*Centennial*

FEBRUARY

4

**MSHSAA'S 100<sup>TH</sup>  
BIRTHDAY**



MSHSAA Centennial  
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**WWW.MSHSAA.ORG • 573-875-4880**

**1 NORTH KEENE ST., COLUMBIA, MO 65201**

**@MSHSAAORG**