

CYPRAS, Inc.
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Rochester, NY 14614

August 24, 2017

TO: Capital District Region Middle School Principals
FROM: Scott Kroner, Academic Challenge Bowl Director
RE: Sign-up for the 2017-2018 Academic Challenge Bowl season

For 18 years, schools in the Albany/Capital District region have been able to sign up for an academic competition program called MasterMinds. With over 125 participating schools across upstate New York, MasterMinds is one of the larger academic extracurriculars in the state. Two years ago, the middle school version of MasterMinds — Academic Challenge Bowl, or ACB — was piloted in the Capital region. Last year, an expanded league was greeted with great enthusiasm.

Like its older sibling MasterMinds, the ACB program runs throughout the school year and gives students with academic strengths the opportunity to extend those talents against some of the best and brightest from other local schools. ACB has been available in the Rochester area for more than ten years and enjoys strong approval. With the program growing across the state, access to the program has been expanded to allow more schools the chance to participate. This expansion provides a fun, engaging opportunity for students, and provides schools with a new program offering for a classically, chronically under-programmed population.

Specifically, ACB is an academic, quiz bowl-style team competition for students in grades 6, 7 and 8. Schools play an eight game regular season, with participating schools meeting four times, and playing two games at each meet. Meets are roughly once a month, running December through March. If there are multiple leagues, the top finishers in each league will meet in playoffs in April. The dates of the competitions are scheduled at the convenience of the participating schools, and sites of competitions generally rotate among participants. Content-wise, ACB questions cover the entire breadth of schooling: history, science, literature, geography, math and art, plus some pop culture, just for fun.

The participation fee for Academic Challenge Bowl will be \$474, comparable to MasterMinds. This fee covers all participation costs including practice questions, game officials fees, a new school orientation (to help acquaint students with the rules and game procedures), and playoffs (if applicable). Transportation --- a school-specific expense --- remains the responsibility of each individual school. And if your school or district is involved with the MasterMinds program, you are eligible to take a discount off the fee.

To register and participate in Academic Challenge Bowl this year, the enclosed registration form should be completed and returned to CYPRAS as soon as possible. Forms should be received by **Friday, October 27, 2017** by mail, fax or e-mail. A coaches/scheduling meeting, which sets the dates and sites for competitions, will be held shortly thereafter.

If you are unsure of interest among your students, you can schedule a demonstration where we come to your school -- either during lunch or after school -- and show your students what the programs are like. If you are interested, please check the appropriate box on the enclosed form and return it as soon as possible or call 585-473-0864 or e-mail acb@rochester.rr.com to schedule a demonstration.

Whether or not you are affiliated with a school that plays MasterMinds, Academic Challenge Bowl is a great program to offer to your students. Academic Challenge Bowl is an exciting and growing program and the time has never been better to join one of the most worthwhile academic programs around. We hope to see your school registering this fall. If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to call Scott Kroner at 585-473-0864 or e-mail me at acb@rochester.rr.com. The ACB web site is also accessible to offer answers to a host of questions: www.nymasterminds.com/acb

We look forward to receiving your registration!