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August 24, 2017

TO: Buffalo Area Middle School Principals  
FROM: Scott Kroner, Academic Challenge Bowl Director  
Ron Lohrman, Interscholastic Chess League Executive Director  
RE: Sign-up for the 2017-2018 Academic Challenge Bowl/Middle School Chess season

The latest school year is about to begin and preparations are fully in motion for the 2017-2018 Academic Challenge Bowl (ACB). After over a decade of success in the Rochester area, last year we completed our first full season ACB for Buffalo schools; fulfilling the promise of a fun, engaging new program for schools.

Like 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. With the program growing across the state, access to the program has been expanded to allow more participation opportunities. This expansion provides a fun, engaging opportunity for kids, and provides schools with a new program offering for a classically, chronically under-programmed group of students.

Specifically, ACB is an academic 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. 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 cost for Academic Challenge Bowl will be \$474. Additionally, if you have a chess club, we can coordinate scheduling to allow schools the option of combining chess and ACB schedules to reduce transportation costs. The chess fee for schools playing in a middle school league scheduled concurrently with ACB will be \$191. If a school wanted to play in a high school league, perhaps traveling with a high school counterpart, the fee is \$319. (Like ACB, middle school chess leagues play eight games; the high school chess leagues play 12 games, like the MasterMinds teams.) Busing remains the responsibility of each individual school although coordinated busing — chess and ACB — saves on transportation costs.

Outreach over this past summer found a receptive audience for ACB. We are optimistic that we could have as many as three or four full leagues of teams participating this year. That would nearly equal the number of MasterMinds leagues!

To register and participate in Academic Challenge Bowl or Interscholastic chess 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. The annual 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 to schedule a demonstration.**

Academic Challenge Bowl and Interscholastic Chess are great programs to offer to your students. The time has never been better to join some of the most worthwhile academic programs around. If you have any questions about ACB, please contact Scott Kroner by phone at 585-473-0864 or by e-mail at [acb@rochester.rr.com](mailto:acb@rochester.rr.com). For the ICLs, contact Ron Lohrman of the Rochester Chess Center at 585-442-2430 or by e-mail at [chesscenter@rochester.rr.com](mailto:chesscenter@rochester.rr.com). The ACB web site also offers answers to a host of questions: [www.nymasterminds.com/acb](http://www.nymasterminds.com/acb). We look forward to receiving your registration!