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August 31, 2020

TO: Binghamton Area High School Principals  
FROM: Scott Kroner, MasterMinds Commissioner  
RE: MasterMinds sign-up/registration for the 2020-2021 school year

Last year, a record number of high schools [132] across upstate New York participated in **MasterMinds**, the fast-paced, quiz bowl-style, question-and-answer interscholastic academic competition program, **and this year it promises to be a season unlike any other in our history.**

**This year, for the first time ever, MasterMinds will be offered with remote play. With schools limiting or even prohibiting interscholastic events, a remote play option gives your students an opportunity to participate and compete against students from other schools. While in-person play remains the gold standard for these competitions, given the current pandemic situation, remote play at this point is the only reasonable option. If circumstances allow us to resume live, in-person play later in the year, we would look to restart face-to-face competitions. But failing that, we are preparing to play the entire regular season remotely if necessary.**

Also, recognizing that districts are facing unusual financial stress, the cost for this year's programs are being **frozen at last year's levels.** The fee for MasterMinds for the 2020-2021 season remains at **\$767/team.**

With so many extracurriculars — notably interscholastic athletics — currently in an uncertain position, the move to remote play presents a new opportunity to reach out to schools in the Greater Binghamton area and explore the possibility of finding enough schools to move ahead with MasterMinds. MasterMinds is a regular part of the extra-curricular offerings in districts across much of upstate New York. From Buffalo to Albany, more than a fifteen hundred students participating in MasterMinds last year. Played at both the varsity and JV levels and with a rapidly growing middle school version, MasterMinds provides a competitive structure to recognize the strengths of academically talented students, but does so in a 'sports model' that provides for a more robust experience.

The usual cost for MasterMinds for a full, 12-game regular season in 2020-2021 is normally **\$767** and the cost for an optional JV program is **\$340** (varsity participation is a prerequisite). **But in an effort to spur first time participation, we're offering a 35% discount, reducing the varsity fee to \$498 and the JV fee to \$221.** This fee includes practice questions, new school orientations, playoffs (if we have more than one league) and entry into the state playoffs.

To register and participate in MasterMinds for the 2020-2021 season, the enclosed registration form should be completed and returned as soon as possible, with a deadline of **Friday, November 13, 2019.** To assist with planning, a prescheduling form has been enclosed for your coach. If you are considering working with another school to field a joint team -- something that is permitted -- we encourage you to contact us to help with coordination. Please note: if we do not generate enough teams to form a league, schools will not be billed.

We would like to see the Binghamton region become the fifth region of New York to participate in MasterMinds, joining schools in the Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse and Albany areas. Please consider joining the increasing roster of schools participating in MasterMinds; the time has never been better to add the program to your catalog of extracurricular activities. If you have any questions about MasterMinds, contact Scott Kroner at 585-473-0864 or e-mail [nymasterminds@gmail.com](mailto:nymasterminds@gmail.com). You can also check out [www.nymasterminds.com](http://www.nymasterminds.com) for additional information.

We look forward to hearing from you!