

CYPRAS, Inc. and Rochester Chess Center
221 Norris Dr.
Rochester, NY 14610

August 31, 2020

TO: Buffalo Area Private and Charter High School Principals

FROM: Scott Kroner, MasterMinds Commissioner
Ron Lohrman, Interscholastic Chess League Executive Director

RE: Sign-up/registration for the 2020-2021 school year

MasterMinds and the Interscholastic Chess League (ICL) programs are now preparing for another season; **a season unlike any other in our history**. With the start of classes not far away, we ask that your school consider joining us for another fun and exciting year of interscholastic competitions. Both MasterMinds and the (ICL) are important parts of the extra-curricular offerings at nearly three dozen schools around the Greater Buffalo area; part of the more than 150 schools across upstate NY that participated last year. MasterMinds is a team-based, academic quiz bowl-style competition similar to the old College Bowl program. It provides a competitive structure to recognize the strengths of academically talented students. The Interscholastic Chess Leagues allow students to test their analytical skills in the classic game of logic and strategy against the talents of students from other schools.

This year, for the first time ever, both programs 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** and the cost for the optional JV program is still **\$340** (with varsity participation as a prerequisite). The cost for a team in the Interscholastic Chess League still stands at **\$333**.

To register and participate in MasterMinds and/or Interscholastic Chess for the 2020-2021 season, the enclosed registration form should be completed and returned, with a requested deadline of **Friday, October 23, 2020**. **Please note that this deadline is much later than it has been in previous years**. With schools having such a disruption to their regular routine, having extra time to adjust to the new system is important. Even with the delayed start, we remain confident that an entire 12-game season will be possible. 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. Previous non-participants in MasterMinds will still receive a new school orientation.

With so many schools having been participants, and more interested in joining — especially with the remote play — this is a good time to become involved! If you have any questions about MasterMinds, contact Scott Kroner at 585-473-0864 or by e-mail at nymasterminds@gmail.com. For the ICL, contact Ron Lohrman of the Rochester Chess Center at 585-442-2430 or by e-mail at chesscenter@rochester.rr.com. You can also check out www.nymasterminds.com and www.nychess.org for additional information.

We hope to see your school become a part of these popular programs, and we look forward to hearing back from you!