

NMAA CHESS CONSTITUTION

Approved by the coaches February 7, 2020

5.3 CHESS ASSOCIATION

Part 1 – Introduction and Eligibility

- A. The NMAA high school team chess championship shall be determined by a tournament consisting of qualifying high schools.. Except as otherwise noted, a school qualifies for the state tournament based on its performance at its corresponding regional tournament.
- B. There shall be two separate divisions for the state high school team tournament based on two NMAA classifications: A-3A and 4A-5A. A school may play up in a higher NMAA classification provided it plays in that classification at its regional tourney. It cannot later rescind this decision, nor may any school compete in a division lower than its classification. The competition is open only to NMAA member or affiliate schools but the State or Regional Director may set up a special tourney for non-qualifying schools.
- C. All members of a team must be properly recognized students in grades 8 through 12 within the boundaries of the high school being represented. Only one team may represent a high school in regional or state team tournaments. Transfers from other schools are eligible to play in state competition if they are in attendance prior to February 1. Eligibility of a team member shall not be affected by his/her playing in other tournaments.

Part 2 – State and Regional Tournament Rules

- A. The most recent edition of the “U.S. Chess Federation’s Official Rules of Chess” and all official USCF updates apply at the state team tournament and at the regional tournaments for detailed playing rules not covered herein. The State or Regional Director is encouraged to appoint a separate Tournament Director (TD) to pair the teams and to ensure that the tournament complies with USCF rules.
- B. All tournaments shall be team tournaments in which players of similar rank play each other. Pairings shall be based on match points and shall follow USCF tournament pairing procedures per USCF Rule 31. Membership in the USCF shall not be required of any participant.
- C. 4A-5A teams shall consist of six players and a substitute. A-3A teams shall consist of five players and one substitute. Prior to round one, players of each team shall be ranked by their coach in the order of their chess proficiency. The most expert player shall be ranked board one, the next-best shall be board two, etc. The substitute is the lowest ranked player. The TD may override the coach’s board order for good reason. A coach may, at his/her discretion, make one substitution per round with all team members playing in order of proficiency.
- D. Prior to pairing Round 1, the TD shall meet with the participating coaches and, using the best available information, rank the school teams in order of playing strength. These rankings shall be used as the basis for the pairings.
- E. A match being a contest between two teams, the winner shall be the team with the most total individual scores for the match. Team(s) with the highest match score(s) shall be declared the

winner(s). Tie breaks shall not in any way affect the match points other than to determine the relative standing of teams.

Part 3 – Regional Tournaments and the State Tourney

A. Regional Tournaments

1. Each Regional Director shall complete the regional tournament by a date falling between the second week of January and three weeks before the state team tournament. The Regional Director shall make a reasonable effort to invite all NMAA high schools in his/her region.
2. A Regional Director may schedule the style of team tournament that may be best suited to that region (time control, number of rounds, pairings, tie breaks, awards, a maximum registration fee of \$30 per school, etc) as long as the tourney is otherwise consistent with the rules in this constitution.
3. The coaches of the participating teams shall elect the Regional Director at their regional tournaments, one vote per school.

B. Geographical boundaries for the five regional tournaments are defined as follows (see attached map):

1. Region 1. – Northwest Region: All school districts lying north of US Highway 60 and west of Interstate Highway 25, west of state highway 599, and west of US Highway 285, excluding Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. School districts lying on or near the boundaries but included in Region 1 are: Bernalillo, Dulce, Española Valley, Jemez Mountain, Jemez Valley, Los Alamos, Magdalena, and Pojoaque.
2. Region 2 – Northeast Region: All school districts lying north of Interstate Highway 40 and east of Interstate Highway 25, east of state highway 599, and east of US Highway 285, excluding Albuquerque and Rio Rancho. School districts lying on or near the boundaries but included in Region 2 are: Chama Valley, Logan and Santa Fe.
3. Region 3 – Southwest Region: All school districts lying south of US Highway 60 and 380 and west of US Highway 54. School districts lying on or near the boundaries but included in Region 3 are: Alamogordo, Cloudcroft, Quemado and Tularosa.
4. Region 4 – Southeast Region: All school districts lying south of Interstate Highway 40 and east of Interstate Highway 25 between Albuquerque and Socorro and State Highway 54 between Carrizozo and Newman. School districts lying on or near the boundaries but included in Region 4 are: Carrizozo, Moriarty, Estancia, Mountainair, Ruidoso, San Jon, Santa Rosa, Tucumcari, Belen, Los Lunas and Socorro.
5. Region 5 – Albuquerque Region – All school districts lying within Bernalillo County including Rio Rancho.

C. State Team Tournament

- 1.** Any school that finishes in the top half of the field at its regional tourney is eligible to participate in the NMAA state team tournament but at least two schools from each division at each regional tourney shall qualify for the state tourney. If an odd number of teams participate in the regional tourney, the top half plus one is eligible. If a school fails to confirm its attendance to the state tourney at least two weeks in advance of the tourney, the State Director may disqualify the school. The registration fee shall be \$40 per school payable as instructed by the State Director.
 - 2.** In cases where there are not representative teams from each region in any division, the State Director in consultation with the Regional Directors, shall invite third-place team(s) and, if necessary, fourth-place team(s) from the five regions.
 - 3.** The State Director may invite an additional school based on performance at the regional tournaments so that an even number of teams participate in each division. In addition, the State Director, in consultation with the Regional Directors, may invite a total of two additional high school regional competitors in each division to compete for the state championship. Schools that did not participate in a regional tourney are eligible only after the pool of regional participants has been exhausted.
 - 4.** No more than four schools in any single division from the same region may compete in the state tournament except when the pool of qualifying regional participants has been exhausted.
 - 5.** The state tourney format shall be as follows:
 - a.** If there are four or fewer teams in any division, the championship will be determined by a round robin.
 - b.** If there are five or six teams in any division, the championship will be determined by a three round Swiss-paired tourney.
 - c.** If there are seven or more teams in any division, the championship will be determined by a four round Swiss-paired tourney.
 - d.** The time control at the state tourney shall be G/55 minutes and 5 seconds time delay.
 - e.** In Round 1, where possible, the TD shall avoid pairing teams from the same region.
 - f.** Tie-breakers for each state team tournament shall be in sequential order:
 - a)** USCF Modified Median
 - b)** Total game points (if tie persists, drop lowest board until tie is broken).
 - c)** Two or more teams tied for first in match points shall be declared state co-champions.
 - 6.** The state championships for all divisions will be held simultaneously at the same location in the greater Albuquerque area.
- F.** The State Director for the succeeding year shall be elected annually by the coaches of the teams participating at the current year's state tournament, one vote per school. Rotation of the position is encouraged.
- G.** The State Director shall purchase through the NMAA State Championship trophies for each of the three divisions. He/she shall purchase other awards as he/she deems appropriate.

- H.** The state team tournament should be held during the spring semester; however, the state team tournament shall not be held on the same weekend as the National High School Championships or Easter. The State Director shall poll prospective schools before setting the tourney date.

Part 4. Procedural Matters

A. Appeals.

1. Initial Appeal. A decision of a TD, Regional Director, or State Director may be appealed to the Appeals Committee. USCF Rule 21 I, Appeals Committee, shall guide the proceedings of the Appeals Committee. If possible, the Appeals Committee shall be made up of three coaches whose teams are unlikely to be affected by the decision.

2. Secondary Appeal. If aggrieved by the determination of the Appeals Committee, the student and/or school shall have a right to appeal that decision. Non-technical appeals (i.e., eligibility, deportment, etc.) are to be initiated by a simple letter to the NMAA from the aggrieved school. The letter shall request that the decision be reviewed by the Review Board, and such letters must be submitted within five (5) days of the incident in question. If such a letter of request is postmarked within five (5) days after the incident, then it shall be considered timely. Failure to appeal within the time specified constitutes a waiver of any right of appeal. Technical appeals are made to the USCF in accordance with USCF Rule 21 L, Appeal to USCF.

3. New Evidence. New evidence will not be allowed unless it was not in existence at the time of the decision by the member organization. Due diligence is assumed to be exercised in the discovery process by the contemporaneous tournament appellate committee.

B. Rules Changes

1. This constitution may be amended by a majority vote of the coaches of the participating teams at the state team tournament, one vote for each school. The State Director shall guide the procedure and vote only in case of a tie. If the State Director happens to be the sole coach of a given school present at the state event, then the State Director may vote in his/her capacity as the coach of that school. Each Regional Director shall encourage discussion of proposed amendment changes at the regional tournament. The State Director shall provide copies of the amended constitution to the NMAA no later than the end of the corresponding school year.

2. Changes to these rules may be made in the month preceding the state or a regional tournament if there is unanimous consent from those schools that are directly affected. Such changes shall not represent amendments to the constitution.

Major changes approved 2/7/20

Section 1B: changed number of divisions to two, A-3A & 4A-5A, based on current NMAA classifications (formerly three divisions); Section 3C5d: changed time control to G/55 minutes (formerly G70); 3H: changed timeframe for state tournament to be held to “during spring semester” (formerly between last Thursday in March & second Saturday in April.)

Map of NMAA Chess Regions

