

**PURDUE**  
UNIVERSITY

# Indiana Academic Spell Bowl



**COACHES  
HANDBOOK  
2010**

## **1.0 Indiana Academic Spell Bowl**

### **2010 RULES**

(Rules changes are in *italics*.)

#### **1.1 Content:**

- a) The Senior Division competition will be made up of ten rounds. The Junior and Elementary Divisions will be made up of eight rounds. A different team member must compete in each round.
- b) The DEPARTMENT OF STUDENT PROGRAMS Advisory Board and the IASP Board of Directors believe that academic competition is an extra-curricular activity. Therefore, organized team practices for academic competitions shall not take place during any instructional part of the school day. In addition, special courses should not be designed or implemented for the primary purpose of preparing teams for academic competition.

All building principals are encouraged to review this position statement with academic coordinators and coaches to clarify that all organized team practices occur as an extra-curricular activity. However, non-instructional time such as lunch and recess could be used for organized team practices.

It is permissible for students to read and do online research during the school day, as long as there is not any organized practice, and research does not occur during school instructional time.

#### **1.2 Word List:**

- a) The list of words which will be used in the competition can be downloaded from [www.iasp.org/dspspellbowl.aspx](http://www.iasp.org/dspspellbowl.aspx), beginning in May 2010. Word lists change each year. The only source used for pronunciations and definitions will be the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Eleventh Edition. Words must have identical spellings in both the word list and the dictionary in order to be used in competition. If a discrepancy is found after the list is published, words that do not match will not be used in competition. When creating the word lists and choosing words for competitions, every effort will be made to select only words which are appropriate for school use.
- b) The Senior word list will consist of approximately 3,500 words. The Junior word list will consist of approximately 1,750 words. The Elementary word list will consist of 750 words. Each list can be downloaded from [www.iasp.org](http://www.iasp.org)

#### **1.3 Expenses:**

- a) An entry fee will be charged to participate in the Indiana Academic Spell Bowl. The entry fee must be received by IASP by the end of the current school year. This fee will help defray the costs of writing and duplicating the list of words and sentences, purchasing awards, and other expenses associated with the competition. Each school will be responsible for its own expenses, including any incurred while attending competitions. Elementary Division schools who wish to enter more than one team may do so, but must notify the IASP office before the regular entry deadline, and must pay an entry fee for each team.

#### **1.4 Enrollment Classifications:**

- a) For each Division, four classifications of schools by enrollment size will be used. Schools may elect to compete up in enrollment classification if they so desire. The size classifications will be as follows:

<u>Senior Classifications:</u>	Class #1 = 1080 and up Class #2 = 612-1079	Class #3 = 356-611 Class #4 = up to 355
<u>Junior Classifications:</u>	<u>7-8 enrollment</u> Class #1 = 480 and up Class #2 = 300-479 Class #3 = 171-299 Class #4 = up to 170	<u>6-7-8 enrollment</u> Class #1 = 720 and up Class #2 = 450-719 Class #3 = 256-449 Class #4 = up to 255

Schools determine enrollment class by counting the previous year's enrollment for all grades in the building that are eligible for the contest (Elementary= 4-6, Junior = 6-8, Senior 9-12). Schools with teams in both the Elementary and Junior Divisions count 6<sup>th</sup> grade enrollment ONLY in the division where they choose to have 6<sup>th</sup> graders compete.

In Senior and Junior Area competitions, awards will be made in each size classification and teams will advance to the next level of competition based on performance by enrollment classification.

Elementary Classifications:

Schools with 6th grade

Class #1 = 187 and up

Class #2 = up to 186

Schools without 6th grade

Class #3 = 163 and up

Class #4 = up to 162

- b) This enrollment number will be determined by the official school enrollment as recorded by the Indiana State Board of Education from the previous year.

**1.5 Team Roster Form:**

- a) On the afternoon of *September 20, 2010* (junior and senior)/ *October 14, 2010* (elementary), a team roster form will be posted on [www.iasp.org](http://www.iasp.org). Each participating school must enter the names of their participating students, and electronically submit the form by midnight *October 3, 2010* (senior)/ *October 10, 2010* (junior)/ *October 28, 2010* (elementary). No additions will be allowed after entry form is submitted.
- b) Each Senior Division school may certify up to twenty (20) students on the team roster form. Students may be from any grade, 9-12, with no prescribed number from each grade level. Each Junior Division school may certify up to sixteen (16) students on the team roster form. Each Junior Division team will be composed of students from grades 6, 7 and/or 8 with no prescribed number from each grade level. Each Elementary Division school may certify up to sixteen (16) students on the team roster form. Students may be from grades 4, 5, or 6 (where appropriate) with no prescribed number from each grade level.
- c) Competing team members will be verified by proctors at the beginning of each round at the competition site.
- d) All students who are on the team roster are eligible for State Finals, regardless of whether they actually competed at the Area Competition. Names may not be added to the team roster between Area and State Finals competitions.

**1.6 Site Assignments:**

Every attempt will be made to have schools, regardless of size, compete at the geographically closest Area Host Site. Occasionally, to balance total competitors among sites, a school may be asked to travel to a more distant site.

**1.7 Eligibility:**

Any student enrolled full time in grades 4-12 is eligible to compete on that school's team. The building principal will be responsible for determining in which division sixth graders will participate. Within these constraints, schools may select their teams in any manner and with any additional criteria they choose.

**1.8 Team Selection:**

Complete Senior Division teams are composed of ten (10) members. Complete Junior and Elementary teams are composed of eight (8) members. Additional students may be used as alternates. There is no limit as to how many students may come from any one grade level. Teams may compete with less than a full team, and will still be eligible for all awards at their area contest, as well as state finalist positions and statewide rankings. No student may compete in more than one round during the competition.

**1.9 Procedural Committee:**

- a) A Procedural Committee of four site representatives and a Procedural Official will be appointed by the host coordinator. At the area level of competition, this committee will be composed of at least one representative from each of the size classifications competing at the site. Each member of the Procedural Committee must have been appointed and in receipt of the Spell Bowl rules and guidelines at least one week prior to the competition. The Procedural Official will be designated the chairperson and will be responsible for calling the committee together to decide questions involving procedure, rules, and violations.
- b) At the Senior and Junior State Finals competition, the Procedural Committee will be composed of certified Procedural Officials of non-competing schools. Therefore, all Procedural Committee members will rule on each challenge.

- c) When a proctor or competitor indicates by standing that there is a problem or question, the Procedural Official will approach the table to determine the nature of the problem. Based on the nature of the question, the Procedural Official either settles the matter or convenes the whole Committee. If the question is raised by schools from more than one class, then the entire committee will make the decision. The committee member whose class is raising the question may participate in the discussion but is not included in the final decision-making. The Procedural Official will explain the nature of a challenge and the resulting decision to the emcee, who will inform the competitors and spectators.
- d) Examples of situations that would be handled by the Procedural Committee include, but are not limited to:
  - How long to wait for a late arriving school.
  - Determination of what to do if a competitor becomes ill while at the competition table.
  - Deciding when alternate words should be used.
  - Problems arising between proctors and team members.
  - Awareness of problems with sound systems, projectors, screen visibility, etc.
  - Awareness of teams consistently asking for word repeats.
  - Awareness of "obnoxious" coaches or team members.
  - What to do if answers are repeatedly written on the wrong line of the answer sheet.
- e) The Procedural Committee, at its discretion, may disqualify a word, team member, and/or team.

#### **1.10 Dress Code:**

See the official Dress Code at the back of this packet.

#### **1.11 Supervision:**

- a) The host site will have an administrator present during the competition to handle any situations which may develop. The Procedural Committee may bring disruptive or questionable behavior on the part of coaches, competitors, or spectators to the host administrator's attention so the situation may be addressed.
- b) Each team is to be supervised by a coach designated by the school principal. This coach will be responsible for seeing that all team members follow all rules and behave in an appropriate manner. A high level of sportsmanship will be expected of competitors, coaches, and fans. Failure of a coach to adequately supervise the team may result in the disqualification of the whole team.

#### **1.12 Format:**

- a) The competition will consist of eight (8) rounds for Junior and Elementary and ten (10) for Senior.
- b) One student from each team will compete in each round. No student may compete in more than one round during the competition.
- c) All students competing must be listed on the team roster form that has been given to the proctor to verify at the beginning of the round when the student signs in by printing his/her name.
- d) The competing team member will be seated at the desk/table facing the projection screen. Tables will be arranged with the students' backs to the audience. Each table must have an unobstructed view of the screen.
- e) Each round will consist of seven words for the Elementary Division and nine words for the Senior and Junior Divisions. These words will be read by the emcee. All words are counted for the regular competition scoring, and the last word will also be used in the tie-breaking procedure. Each word will be read including alternate pronunciations, used in a sentence, and read again before the word "begin" is spoken. At the conclusion of the time allowed for spelling, the word will be scored before going on to the next word.
- f) If a speller does not clearly hear a word, the speller must raise his/her hand after the word, sentence, and word have been read by the emcee. The word, sentence, and word will be repeated. Other students may alter their spelling during this time. No more than one repeat per word will be allowed unless the Procedural Committee rules there are extenuating circumstances. If the emcee fails to see the raised hand, the proctor should stand and obtain the attention of the emcee. Before the emcee says "begin", he/she will pause and scan the spellers to ensure that no repeats are necessary. He/she will then say, "begin." No repeats will be allowed after the word "begin." If acoustics are a problem, the Procedural Committee will attempt to rectify the situation. (NOTE: Definitions of the words will NOT be given.)
- g) The intent of repeats and/or challenges is to give students a chance to correct a mistake in procedure that they feel has been made in the pronunciation and/or spelling of a word. "Challenges can only be made

after the word has been scored. Students may ask for repeats as described in section f.” Repeats and challenges should not be used to "buy" time or as a coaching strategy whenever a word is missed.

### **1.13 Word Selection:**

- a) Competition words are to be taken from lists published on [www.iasp.org](http://www.iasp.org). All words, alternate, and tie-breakers, shall be taken from this source.
- b) The Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition, will be used as the only source for pronunciations and definitions. All words chosen for competition are to appear in The Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition. Words must have identical spellings in both sources in order to be chosen as competition words.
- c) Words that are capitalized or hyphenated and homophones may be used, as well as compound words. An attempt will be made to have all rounds in a particular competition be of comparable difficulty.
- d) Words selected for the State Finals competition should reflect a higher level of difficulty than the words for the Area competition.
- e) The word/sentence selector(s) for all divisions will select words and write the sentences each spring and summer for the following year's competition. If a word has multiple pronunciations, up to three may be used at the discretion of the word selectors and proofreaders. If more than one pronunciation is given, they will be used in the order presented in the Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, 11<sup>th</sup> Edition (up to a maximum of three). An impartial and knowledgeable panel will conduct an evaluation of the words and sentences generated for competition and make necessary adjustments.

### **1.14 Time Limits:**

- a) After the reader finishes the pronunciation, sentence, pronunciation, and says "Begin", the participant will have fifteen (15) seconds (Junior/Senior), / twenty (20) seconds (Elementary) to write the correct word in the space on the answer sheet.
- b) Changes and corrections may be made as long as they are completed within the time limits and before the ending buzzer.
- c) When the timer announces "time" or the buzzer sounds, all pencils must be lifted from the paper. There is no warning sound given before time is up.
- d) Students are encouraged to wait until the emcee says "begin" before writing. However, there is no penalty for beginning early.

### **1.15 Consultation:**

- a) Each student competes independently and may not communicate with other team members, coaches, or spectators during the writing period.
- b) No pens, pencils, written material, mascots, stuffed animals, balloons, etc. of any kind may be brought to the competition table. Any such material will be taken by the proctor. No clothing may be worn which has any information on it that could be of assistance in spelling any words that could be used in the competition. Any team member wearing such apparel should be brought to the attention of the Procedural Committee, which can disqualify the offending party or parties. Pencils will be provided by the host school. Efforts to hide written material will be construed as being a conscious attempt to cheat, and the team member will be disqualified from the competition with no substitution allowed for that round.

### **1.16 Legibility:**

- a) All words must be legible. Students may print or write the words.
- b) Words that are to be capitalized must be capitalized. Words that are not to be capitalized will be marked wrong if capitalized. A clear distinction must be evident in relation to the size of the capitalized letter in the event that all capital letters are being used. There will be no penalty for mixing lower and upper case printed letters after the initial letter.

Acceptable:     Indiana   Indiana   INDIANA

Unacceptable:   INDIANA   indiana

- c) Students must cross t's and x's, and dot i's and j's. Students are not required to use diacritical marks. However, if a diacritical mark is used, it must be correctly placed or the word is wrong. Either all or no diacritical marks must be used for a word to be correct.
- d) Hyphenated words must be hyphenated. Two-word terms must be clearly written as two words. Apostrophes must be included when needed.
- e) To correct a word, cross outs are preferable. Erasures are acceptable, as long as the final spelling is clear and completed prior to the buzzer.

### **1.17 Challenges:**

- a) A challenge must be made after the correct spelling has been given, or at the end of the round and before the students are dismissed from the floor. All challenges must be ruled on by the Procedural chairperson or Committee. If the student currently competing believes a word has been incorrectly pronounced or incorrectly scored, he/she should immediately initiate a challenge by saying directly to the proctor, "I wish to challenge." The proctor will then stand to obtain the emcee's recognition and will state that a challenge has been raised.
- b) The Procedural Official will approach the table and determine the nature of the challenge from the student. The Procedural Official will then rule on the challenge or convene the committee to make the decision.
- c) Junior and Senior division spellers must initiate all challenges. At the Elementary level, a challenge may be initiated by a speller or procedural chairperson. Challenges initiated by anyone else will not be acknowledged.
- d) An upheld challenge will be honored for all spellers on the floor.
- e) If a coach feels the Guidelines have not been followed, he/she should contact a Procedural Official prior to dismissal of students for that round.
- f) If the challenge relates to a question of pronunciation, then:
  - 1) Procedural Committee members from those classifications not involved in the challenge will convene a meeting at the resource person's table. The Procedural Committee will determine the alternate pronunciations to verify the correct pronunciation. If necessary, the Procedural Committee can review the CD to verify the pronunciation given by the emcee/reader. (NOTE: At the state competition, the Procedural Committee will be made up of representatives from non-competing schools).
  - 2) If the Procedural Committee rules that the emcee has incorrectly pronounced a word to the detriment of the competition, those students who misspelled the word may be given an alternate word at the discretion of the committee.
  - 3) No more than one request for repeats per word will be allowed, unless the Procedural Committee rules there are extenuating circumstances.
- g) If the challenge relates to a question of legibility, the Procedural Committee representing those classifications not involved in the challenge will resolve the issue. (NOTE: At the state competition, the Procedural Committee will be made up of representatives from non-competing schools).
- h) If the correct spelling has been given or shown on the screen before the appropriate time, the emcee must consult with the Procedural Committee before using an alternate word.
- i) Any challenge of the Procedural Committee's decision or of the final score or placement, must be made to the IASP office within 48 hours of the end of the competition. A determination of the validity of the challenge and a response will then be made.
- j) There will be no challenges based on alternate spellings. The only accepted spellings used for this contest must be from the lists published on [www.iasp.org](http://www.iasp.org). Words must have identical spelling in Webster's and the word list to be chosen as competition words.

### **1.18 Alternate Words:**

- a) Two alternate lists of words will be provided to the host site for each competition. In the event a word or sentence validity is destroyed, the Procedural Committee will make all decisions concerning when to use

these alternate words. (Example: If the word being replaced is the third word in the list, then the third word on the first alternate list would be substituted.)

- b) If a member of the audience shouts out the spelling before the buzzer sounds or if the projector operator shows the spelling early, an alternate word would be used. The use of alternate words will be left to the discretion of the Procedural Committee.
- c) If the emcee inadvertently calls time or gives the correct spelling of a word before all participants have had the opportunity to write their word, the Procedural Committee will make a ruling. Those participants who wrote the word before the error was made should be scored according to the correct spelling. Those participants who had not written the word or had written it incorrectly will be given an alternate word and have it scored accordingly.
- d) If the Procedural Committee rules that an alternate word should be substituted for a previously read and scored word, only the participants who missed the word will have the chance to spell the new word.
- e) An alternate word cannot be used for what is perceived to be a "bad" choice of a word. All word choices and sentences will stand as written and read during the competition. Challenges should be sent directly to the state director (see 1.17 – Challenges). Host emcees/readers should review the words and sentences and notify the state director before the competition of any inappropriate words or sentences.

#### **1.19 Substitutions:**

- a) There are no substitutions during a round.
- b) In the event of an illness during the competition round, the Procedural Committee will rule.

#### **1.20 Decorum:**

- a) Every effort will be made during the competition to allow the contestants to concentrate. No unnecessary talking or gestures should be made to, or around, the contestants in competition. This is particularly important for judges, proctors, scorekeepers, timers, emcees, and coaches to note.
- b) See Code of Conduct at back of packet.

#### **1.21 Proctors - Student Assistants:**

- a) Each school competing will be responsible for furnishing an adult proctor. Proctor assignments will be made by the host coordinator. Proctors will be assigned to proctor a school not in the proctor's size classification, if at all possible. This will avoid a charge that a proctor tried to benefit his own school's position by his conduct with a competing school. Each school must provide a student assistant who will work as a team with the proctor. The student will be assigned to the same school as the proctor. Proctor-student assistant teams will not be assigned to their own school.
- b) The proctor will sit beside the contestant. Before the round begins, he will fill in the school name and indicate the round number. He will also have the contestant print his/her name in the appropriate space and check that name on the team roster form and initial the team roster form next to the correct name. (Any discrepancy should be reported to the Procedural Official immediately.)
- c) After the correct spelling is given by the emcee, mark an "X" on the number of the incorrectly spelled word. If the word is spelled correctly, do nothing. If a word is correct, signal the student assistant to add one point on the score chart. Make sure the contestant lifts the pencil from the answer sheet when the buzzer sounds. Refrain from talking to the student once the round begins.
- d) This is not a handwriting contest. However, the proctor should NOT ask the student to clarify the spelling of a word. If legibility is in question, the proctor should consult the Procedural Official, NOT THE STUDENT, before scoring the word.
- e) At the end of the round, total the score for the page by adding the number of unmarked correct answers. Record the contestant's score in the appropriate box (line) at the bottom of the page. The contestant must validate the accuracy of the score for the round by signing his/her name on the designated line. The proctor should sign the answer sheet to make it official. The scorekeeper will verify that scores on the score sheet and the flip charts (computer) agree at the end of each round. If there is a discrepancy, the Procedural Official will be contacted to determine the correct score.

#### **1.22 Scoring:**

- a) Every word a contestant spells correctly will be worth one point. The rounds are scored cumulatively.

- b) At competitions where flip charts are used, each school will be responsible for having a student keep the flip chart current. The student will operate the flip chart for the same school that the proctor from his/her school is proctoring. The proctor will signal the flipper each time that team scores a point. The Junior/Senior flipper will then turn a page on the flip chart to indicate that the point was scored. The Elementary flipper will turn a page on the flip chart at the end of the round. If the squad's answer was incorrect, no point is scored, but no penalty is deducted from the existing score. The score charts will be turned toward the audience throughout the competition. This has the effect of heightening their enthusiasm and support of their team.
- c) In the event of electronic scoring, the schools will not have to furnish a score chart flipper. However, flip charts will be available as a back up in case of technical difficulties with the electronic equipment.
- d) If the contestant inadvertently marks the answer on the wrong line, the proctor will warn the student of the error and allow the answer to be placed on the correct line. Similar subsequent errors should be referred to the Procedural Committee.

### **1.23 Breaking Ties:**

#### Senior Division:

- a) In the event there is a tie score at the end of the competition, the first tie-breaker (TB-1) will be the cumulative team score of the ninth tie-breaker words. The maximum score would be ten (10).
- b) If a tie remains after using the first tie-breaker method, the second tie-breaking procedure (TB-2) will be the number of students on the team with a perfect score for words #1-9.
- c) If a tie still exists after using the first two tie-breaker methods, the third tie-breaker (TB-3) will be the number of students who have exactly one miss for words #1-9. (Perfect scores are not to be included in TB-3.)
- d) If the tie is not broken after using the three tie-breaker methods, the fourth tie-breaker (TB-4) will be the greatest number of tie-breaker words spelled correctly in succession. (Example: The first student misses the tie-breaker word, but #2-8 spell their tie-breaker words correctly "in succession." Score = 7. A perfect score would be 90-10-10-0-10.)

#### Junior Division:

- a) In the event there is a tie score at the end of the competition, the first tie-breaker (TB-1) will be the cumulative team score of the ninth tie-breaker words. Maximum score would be eight (8).
- b) If a tie remains after using the first tie-breaker method, the second tie-breaking procedure (TB-2) will be the number of students on the team with a perfect score for words #1-9.
- c) If a tie still exists after using the first two tie-breaker methods, the third tie-breaker (TB-3) will be the number of students who have exactly one miss for the words #1-9. (Perfect scores are not to be included in TB-3.)
- d) If the tie is not broken after using the three tie-breaker methods, the fourth tie-breaker (TB-4) will be the greatest number of tie-breaker words spelled correctly in succession. (Example: The first student misses the tie-breaker word, but #2-8 spell their tie-breaker words correctly "in succession." Score = 7. A perfect score would be 72-8-8-0-8.)

#### Elementary Division:

- a) In the event there is a tie score at the end of the competition, the first tie-breaker (TB-1) will be the cumulative team score of the seventh tie-breaker words. Maximum score would be eight (8).
- b) If a tie remains after using the first tie-breaker method, the second tie-breaking procedure (TB-2) will be the number of students on the team with a perfect score for words #1-7.
- c) If a tie still exists after using the first tie-breaker methods, the third tie-breaker (TB-3) will be the number of students who have exactly one miss for the words #1-7. (Perfect scores are not to be included in TB-3.)
- d) If the tie is not broken after using the three tie-breaker methods, the fourth tie-breaker (TB-4) will be the greatest number of tie-breaker words spelled correctly "in succession." (Example: The first student misses the tie-breaker word, but #2-7 spell their tie-breaker words correctly "in succession." Score = 6. A perfect score would be 56-8-8-0-8.)

#### All Divisions:

- a) If the tie is not broken after using the four tie-breaker methods, the score will stand. Alphabetic order will decide who gets the award at this time and duplicate awards will be ordered for the other squad(s.) There is no "sudden death" elimination. The schools who rank below the tie will not move up in rank, i.e. schools A and B tie for first, school C finishes third, school C does not move up to second. No second place award is given.
- b) Because of the importance of word #9 (Senior/Junior) and #7 (Elementary) in the tie-breaker process, every effort will be made to ensure these are the most challenging.
- c) The scorekeeper for the competition will be responsible for figuring, verifying, and recording all tie-breaker scores.

#### **1.24 Qualifying for Senior/Junior State Final Advancement:**

- a) Complete teams advance through the levels of competition toward the State Finals.
- b) A predetermined number of spots will be permitted for the State Finals based on space available at the facility. Those spots will then be allocated based on the percentage of schools entered in the competition from each size classification. The teams with the highest point totals from each size classification from all sites around the state will then fill the positions. For example, if there are twenty-five spots available, six might go to Class 1 teams, six to Class 2 teams, seven to Class 3 teams, and six to Class 4 teams.

#### **1.25 Awards**

##### Junior/Senior Divisions:

- a) Area
  1. Certificates will be awarded to all team members.
  2. A Ribbon will be awarded to each student with a perfect score.
  3. Ribbons (blue, red, & white) will be awarded to members of the top three teams in each enrollment classification. A participant ribbon will be awarded to members of all other teams.
- b) State
  1. Certificates will be awarded to all team members.
  2. Medals will be awarded to members of the top three teams in each enrollment classification.
  3. Plaques will be awarded to each team.
  4. A banner will be awarded to the first-place team in each enrollment classification.

##### Elementary Division:

- a) Area
  1. Certificates will be awarded to all team members.
  2. Medals will be awarded to members of the top three teams in each enrollment classification. Medals are available for each team member up to fifteen and one coach (or two if the team has two coaches.) In the event there is only one or two teams in an enrollment classification, medals will still be presented to all team members and a coach (two if the team has two coaches.) There will be no distinction for enrollment classification printed on the medals. (The first place winner in Class 1 will receive an identical medal to the first place team in Classes 2, 3, and 4.)
  3. Participant ribbons will be awarded to members of each team that finishes in fourth place and below in each enrollment classification.
- b) State
  1. Plaques will be awarded to the top three teams in each enrollment classification, i.e., champion, runner-up, and third place.
  2. Certificates will be awarded to each school that finishes in fourth through tenth place in each enrollment classification.

# Code of Conduct

The Indiana Association of School Principals (IASP) sponsors various programs that benefit all students in Indiana. One of these programs, Department of Student Programs (DSP), organizes academic competitions for elementary, junior high/middle, and high school students. By the nature of academic competitions, the atmosphere at each competition should be challenging and intense, but sportsmanship, common sense, decency, fairness, and respect should prevail at all times. These virtues should be taught to students by adults, then adhered to by students and coaches at all competition sites.

The majority of coaches and students conduct themselves in an exemplary manner and are commended for displaying positive attitudes and behavior.

The IASP Board of Directors reminds principals of their responsibility to make certain all personnel and students conduct themselves in the proper manner at all school functions. Therefore, the board expects all principals to require coaches and students to display appropriate behavior and sportsmanship at all academic competitions. The board strongly suggests that principals share the DSP Position Statement, Philosophy, Objectives, and Potential Outcomes of the Program with academic coaches and, in turn, the students.

If inappropriate conduct occurs at academic competitions, an incident referral form will be submitted to the Program Director within 48 hours of the competition. Then, the Program Director will contact the principal with a warning (unless the situation is serious, then step two will be followed immediately). If inappropriate behavior occurs a second time, then the principal and coach(es) will be expected to appear before a panel of Advisory Board members and IASP Board of Directors members to explain the reason for the continued inappropriate behavior. Depending on circumstances, the school and/or involved parties could be placed on probation or even lose the privilege of participating in further academic competition(s).

## Dress Code

Academic competitions are not forums for personal statements, but rather are gatherings of talented students all with the primary objective of academic excellence. Principals and academic coaches have a shared responsibility to require and enforce standards of apparel deemed acceptable to represent their school and community. The Indiana Association of School Principals has approved the following rules for attire for students and coaches wishing to participate in academic competitions:

1. All clothing must be neat and clean.
2. If desired, team shirts or matching attire is encouraged.
3. Also encouraged are dress shirts, ties, jackets, sweaters, slacks, or dress shorts for boys; skirts, dress pants, dress shorts, blouses, jackets, or dresses for girls.
4. Jeans and shorts are acceptable for area Spell Bowl, area Super Bowl, and M.A.T.H. Bowl. **However, they are not acceptable for area/state Decathlon, Spell Bowl State Finals, and Academic Super Bowl State Finals.**

Immediately before or during the event and awards ceremony, the procedural committee at each site will disqualify students if it determines they are wearing the following unacceptable attire:

1. Hats, bandanas, and sunglasses.
2. Clothing that advertises drugs, alcohol, tobacco, or contains explicit, suggestive, and/or offensive language or graphics.
3. Unclean or torn clothing or shoes.
4. Shirts or adornment that contain potentially pertinent information to the contest.
5. Shorts or tops that are revealing and/or not of a dressed up nature.

Competing at the state level necessitates additional attention to apparel. Students and coaches must adhere to the aforementioned rules or face disqualification by the state procedural committee. Since these events are videotaped, publicized, and have larger audiences of a more diverse nature, principals and coaches must be especially diligent in monitoring student dress.

Specifically, Academic Decathlon finalists must wear dress clothing with no school insignia for the essay, interview, and speech phases. Dress or team apparel is required for Super Quiz and the awards ceremony. State Spell Bowl and Super Bowl qualifiers must also maintain the correct team or dress clothing throughout the event and awards ceremony. Shorts and jeans are not acceptable at any State Finals competitions.

Academic competitions are an extra-curricular extension of each school's program to develop students' academic and social standards. Therefore, these dress standards are vital to the success of the school mission and to all IASP academic events.

PLEASE NOTE: Disqualification can occur at any point for any participant during a competition or awards ceremony. Most schools comply with the Dress Code. For those few who don't follow the rules, the following is suggested:

When an individual or team is disqualified due to violation of Dress Code, the following steps will occur:

1. The Procedural Official and Site Coordinator will verbally inform the coach of the reason immediately.
2. The Procedural Official and Site Coordinator will prepare a written explanation of the reason(s) for disqualification that is to be faxed to IASP at the same time as the team scores.
3. IASP will send a letter to the school's principal stating the reasons for disqualification. It will also state that should a second infraction occur within one year of receipt of the letter, the school will be ineligible to compete for one year.

**Dress Code and Code of Conduct Sign-Off Form**

I have read, understand, and will abide (have my son or daughter abide) by the Academic Competitions Dress Code.

Student:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

Parent:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

**Note: This will be kept on file by the academic coach at each school.**