Texas Charter School Academic & Athletic League

2015-2016 Chess Tournament Rules

State Qualifiers: The top 4 teams from each qualifier will advance to State.

Fees: The entrance cost per school is $150 per team (teams are made up of 4 participants). There is no limit on the number of teams a school can enter in an age grouping.

Groupings: We will have 3 age levels of competition: 4th – 6th Grade, 6th - 8th Grade, and High School. Students can play up in grade level, but not down. 4th – 6th will not advance to state. 4-6 Grade will only compete regionally. They will earn trophies at regionals.

Tournament Rules:

1. Tournaments consist of a five round chess tournament

2. At most, games will last 30 minutes (25 minutes at regionals). We will not use clocks, Time will be kept by tournament administrator(s) with a maximum time limit of 30 minutes per game (25 minutes at regionals). Players must not stall. If an opponent fills a player is stalling then they should call over a tournament staffer. That staffer will give the opponent 30 seconds to make their next move.

3. A team is made up of 4 individuals

4. If you are assigned to play a teammate, please let the Tournament Director (TD) know before you start the game (in some cases we may make you play a teammate, but check with us first!)

5. The tournament will be conducted in the Swiss style method: meaning the results of each round will determine who you play in the following round. For example winners from the first round will be scheduled to play other first round winners, while first round losers will play other first round losers. This system allows for the most balanced of opponents and for most players to be able to walk away with a

victory. While at the same time having the better players play each other in order to determine the best overall player.

6. A win is worth 1 point, a Draw is worth 1/2 point, and a loss is worth 0 points.

7. Although we expect everyone to play with proper etiquette, TCSAAL does not enforce the “touch rule”

8. Scenarios for a Draw:

- Stalemate - if the player on turn has no legal move but is not in check, this is stalemate and the game is automatically a draw.
- Threefold repetition - if an identical position has just occurred three times with the same player to move, or will occur after the player on turn makes his move, the player on move may claim a draw (to the arbiter). In such a case the draw is not automatic - a player must claim it if he wants the draw. When the position will occur for the third time after the player's intended next move, he writes the move on his scoresheet but does not make the move on the board and claims the draw. Article 9.2 states that a position is considered identical to another if the same player is on move, the same types of pieces of the same colors occupy the same squares, and the same moves are available to each player; in particular, each player has the same castling and *en passant* capturing rights. (A player may lose his right to castle; and an *en passant* capture is available only at the first opportunity.) If the claim is not made on the move in which the repetition occurs, the player forfeits the right to make the claim. Of course, the opportunity may present itself again.
- Impossibility of checkmate - if a position arises in which neither player could possibly give checkmate by a series of legal moves, the game is a draw. This is usually because there is insufficient material left, but it is possible in other positions too. Combinations with insufficient material to checkmate are:

    - king versus king
    - king and bishop versus king
    - king and knight versus king
    - king and bishop versus king and bishop with the bishops on the same colour. (Any number of additional bishops of either color on the same color of square due to underpromotion do not affect the situation.)

- Mutual agreement - a player may offer a draw to his opponent at any stage of a game, ostensibly with the understanding that an eventual draw by other means is the likely result. If the opponent accepts, the game is a draw.

9. TCSAAL does not enforce the “50-move” rule

Prizes:

Prizes will be awarded to the top three finishers in both the team and individual categories.

Team Competition

The team winner will be determined by cumulating the scores of the teams' top 4 finishers. If there is a tie we will look at head to head between the tied teams. Whichever team won the most games head to head will be crowned the winner. If the teams are tied in head to head games then we will have the top player based on score from each team play a tie breaker game. If a team has two students tied as the top finisher then the coach will pick who will represent his/her school, at the coach's discretion or by a coin flip to be determined by the coach.

Tie-Breaker games will have a maximum of 15 minutes. If a winner has not determined at this point, then the winner will be determined via the points system. In the event that games are still tied we will add 5 minutes and re-score as necessary until a winner is determined by victory or points system.

Individual Awards

TCSAAL will recognize all individuals that finish in the top 3 point totals by awarding those individuals with certificates.

Important reminders for players:

1. You have the right to appeal a decision of a floor Tournament Director (TD). If you wish to see the chief TD, tell the floor TD right away. DO NOT wait until after the game is over to make this complaint.
2. TCSAAL suggests that all students take the time and effort to notate games (it is suggested that you write the moves of both players). The reason for this is so that students do not risk losing the ability to make many claims (i.e. draw by three fold repetition).

3. When finished with game, raise hand to signal for a tournament staffer before you reset the board. They will check the board before you reset it to confirm the finish. Then shake hands, reset the chessboard, and leave the playing area.

4. The playing area must remain quiet while games are in progress.

5. Please clean your area before leaving

6. Parents and coaches are spectators. Your help is very important to us, but you may not interfere with the chess games or help

7. Absolutely no running or horseplay will be tolerated! You may be asked to leave.

8. Coaches are responsible for controlling their students and spectators.

9. Have Fun!!!

Player & Coach Expectations:

All players must be able to do the following:

* Properly move all of the chess pieces

* Understand pawn promotion

* Understand rules for “advanced” moves: castling and en passant capture (note: en passant is tough to teach, but please present it to your players, so all players are exposed to this move prior to the tournament)

* Understand Check and the ways to get out of Check (move, block, capture). Can you move out of the way of check? Can you take the piece putting you in check? Can you block check by putting a piece in the way?

* Understand Checkmate

Players should also:

* Understand the relative value of the pieces (Q=9, R=5, B=3, Kn=3, P=1) The point system is used to determine tie breakers when time is up.

* Know how to achieve and stop “Scholar’s Mate” (the “four-move mate”)

* Be able to solve “mate-in-one” chess puzzles

* Have a sense of how to checkmate with only a King and Queen

Players should also (but not required):

* Have a basic understanding of chess strategy including opening play

* Be able to solve “mate-in-two” chess puzzles

* Be able to mate with only a King and Queen

* Have a sense of how to mate with a King and Rook or a King and 2 Bishops

* Know how to record the moves of a chess game