

WHAT PARENTS AND GUESTS SHOULD KNOW

- Plan to meet with your student's teacher coach to find out about practice schedules, transportation to/from the competition, snacks for practices, snacks for the competition, dress attire for each student, where to meet for the competition, competition schedule, etc.
- Parents and visitors are welcome to attend the competitions. Teams will be provided a maximum number of 24 "visitor" badges to watch their respective teams. Competing students, teacher coach(s) and attorney coach(s) will have separate "team" badges. Guests cannot view any round without the matching visitor badges which will be noted with two coded letters, e.g. "AB." (The codes mean nothing. It is a system in place to keep the teams anonymous from the scoring judges and the opposing team.) Parents and guests will receive the visitor badges from the lead teacher coach after the lead teacher coach has registered the team on the day of the competition.
- The identities of the students on the teams, to the extent possible, are to be kept confidential from the scoring judges. Visitors are strongly encouraged not to wear or bring school names, logos, or colors on any items brought into the courtroom. Also, the teams and their guests should only identify themselves by their assigned team codes for the competition, not by the school name.
- Seating may be limited in various courtrooms throughout the state. What this means for parents and visitors is sharing of name tags may be required for everyone to be able to see their student. Parents and visitors can share nametags by only having guests in the courtroom to watch either the Plaintiff/Prosecution OR Defense side depending on their student's performing side.

For example, Johnny is performing for the Defense side and the Plaintiff/Prosecution side is performing. Parents and guests associated with Johnny would sit out this round if space were limited, so that parents and guests of the students on the Plaintiff/Prosecution side could watch. The same courtesy should be extended when sides switch, should that courtroom present space constraints.

Know that teachers will receive the order of the performing sides seven business days prior to the competition. This announcement should help parents and guests know which round they can attend and better plan for space constraints. However, if teams drop out during the seven business days prior to the competition, agendas **WILL** change prior to the competition OR even on the morning of the competition should a team "no show." **The agenda is always subject to change.**

- All attendees, parents and guests are asked to respect the arrival times, competition round times, breaks and lunch time by never being late. Students need to be in their respective courtrooms 15 minutes prior to each round. Many of the courthouses require security to operate the metal detectors for the competitions, which requires additional time for gaining access into the building. (The more pockets, purses, brief cases, bags, etc. that has to be examined, the longer the entry time.)

- Should a parent or guest arrive late, there will be staff to assist in finding the appropriate courtroom their school is assigned. However, entering or exiting the courtroom should only take place during transitional periods taking place in the courtroom. For example, enter when a witness is getting on or off of the witness stand and not during an opening, direct, cross, or closing.
- An agenda with “approximate” times is provided to the lead teacher coach in advance and on the day of the competition to share with parents and guests. Know that these times are “approximate” and that a round could end earlier or later than estimated, thus causing following breaks, lunch, rounds and awards to be impacted by this shift in time either earlier or later. Even if the round a parent or guests views ends “on time,” all teams must wait to begin the next round until all teams have completed the same round.
- If a parent or guests knows in advance that they are only coming to see the one round their student is performing in, plan to arrive 15-30 minutes prior to the “approximate” start time to ensure a seat in the courtroom as times are not “fixed” and can vary. Parents and guests planning on to arriving for only one round are strongly encouraged to leave their cell phone number with the lead teacher in case the agenda changes on the morning of the competition.
- A welcome is given by the mock trial coordinator at the beginning of the competition. Any questions about the day’s events are asked at this time by students, coaches, parents and visitors. Teams are released upon the conclusion of the welcome and given fifteen minutes to find their assigned rooms and prepare for their first trial.
- Parents and visitors are not allowed to move around in the courtroom during a trial or participate in the trial in any way to include asking about remaining time, signaling, passing notes, raising disputes, or arguing a dispute on behalf of the student(s).
- It is strongly encouraged that cell phones are not brought to the courthouse and/or mock trial facility. Some courthouses prohibit the entrance of cell phones and they will be confiscated by security personnel. Should a cell phone be permitted into the courthouse, it is asked that all cell phones be turned off while in the courtroom.
- Video cameras may be used during the competition only with the consent of the presiding judge AND with the consent of the opposing team. The presiding judge will ask for consent from both teams prior to beginning the trial. Flash pictures may NOT be taken during the competition at any time. (In the past, some teams have nominated one parent from a team to film all of the rounds and share the video with everyone on that team.)
- For 2008, the state competition will be professionally photographed throughout the competition. In addition, the championship round will be videotaped. The professional photographer and the video crew will be advised about using discretion when moving about the courtrooms. Media coverage is also invited to the competitions and will be allowed to document the mock trial rounds, as approved by the SC Bar, LRE Division Staff. (See the talent release form for additional information on pages 43 and 44.) Should a parent object to any kind of photography

being present in the courtroom filming their student, they should notify the mock trial coordinator upon arrival to avoid any conflicts.

- The SC Bar promotes each competition statewide and sends press releases to all media outlets. Look for promotion of each school's participation in the local newspaper close to the competition date.
- Teams assigned to each regional competition are notified in advance in the event that there are more than two rounds, as three rounds require a break for lunch. In general, there are very few, if any, restaurants within walking distance of the competition locations. It is strongly suggested that students stay on the competition grounds and parents and guests either bring prepared food for lunch or opt for take-out in the area that is brought to the students.
- The length of the competition day will vary by region depending on the number of teams. There can be as many as three rounds taking place, while only each team participates in two of the three rounds. When not participating in a round, the entire team and its guests wait in a pre-determined area announced at the morning welcome. (This additional round cannot be added to a lunch. This additional time is used by the team for preparation and/or reflection.)
- The presiding judge will allow for a five (5) minute recess prior to the closing statements. Parents and guests cannot leave the courtroom at this time, nor communicate with any of the competing and non-competing team members. Students who are excused to leave the courtroom during the five (5) minutes recess are only allowed to talk among their team members and not with or to the opposing team members.
- There is an awards ceremony at the end of the competition day and parents and guests are welcome to attend. This is when the most effective attorney and most effective witness from each round will be announced and the awards ceremony will conclude with the announcement of the two teams that will advance to the state competition. It is strongly encouraged that everyone is in the assigned meeting area for the awards ceremony **at least thirty minutes prior** to the start time in case the awards preparation happens faster than planned. Attorneys, teachers, students, parents, and visitors do not want to miss this awards ceremony.
- Teams advance from each of the five regional competitions to the state competition. Should a parent's or guest's student advance to the state competition, plan to meet as a team with the mock trial coordinator following the awards ceremony to discuss the details of the state competition, scheduled for December 6, 2008, in Lexington, South Carolina.
- Teachers and parents should block December 6, 2008, on the calendar now in case their student(s) advance to the state competition, even if it is a first year team. Should a team be selected to advance to the state competition, it is very important that the team stays together. Should the team not be able to advance to the state competition due to not enough team members available on that competition date, the school forfeits their slot.