

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

For the students, the mock trial competition will:

1. Increase proficiency in basic skills such as reading and speaking, critical thinking skills such as analyzing and reasoning, and interpersonal skills such as listening and cooperating.
2. Provide the opportunity for interaction with positive adult role models in the legal community.
3. Provide an interactive experience where students will learn about law, society and the connection between the Constitution, courts and the legal system.

For the school, the competition will:

1. Promote cooperation and healthy academic competition among students of various abilities and interests.
2. Demonstrate the achievements of high school students to the community.
3. Provide a challenging and rewarding experience for participating teachers.

At the first meeting of the Mock Trial Team, these objectives and the general rules should be read and discussed by students and their coach. The Code of Ethical Conduct governs participants, observers, guests and parents at all mock trial events.

All participants in the Mock Trial Competition must adhere to the same high standards of scholarship that is expected of students in their academic performance. Plagiarism of any kind is unacceptable. Students' written and oral work must be their own.

General Rules

1. The official mock trial materials, consisting of Witness Statements and pieces of evidence, comprise the sole source of information for testimony. The Stipulated Facts, if any, may not be disputed at trial.
2. Each witness is bound by the facts in the given witness statement. All participants agree that the witness statements are signed and sworn affidavits. Witness statements may not be introduced as evidence, but may be used for impeachment. Fair additions which are consistent with facts contained in the witness affidavits and do not materially give an advantage to the testifying party are permitted.
3. If a witness testifies in contradiction of a fact in the witness statement during direct examination and cross examination, there is no objection for "violating the rules of mock trial". The opposition must show the contradiction through correct use of the affidavit for impeachment.
4. Witnesses are not permitted to use notes in testifying during the trial.
5. All participants are expected to display proper courtroom decorum and sportsmanship conduct. The decisions of the judges with regard to rules, objections, and all other decisions are final.
6. Neither team may introduce surprise witnesses nor call witnesses from the other side. All witnesses (three for each side) must take the stand, in whatever order or sequence determined by the party calling them.
7. Witnesses will not be excluded from the courtroom during the trial.
8. During the actual trial, team members are only allowed to communicate with their team members. Parents, coaches, and all other observers are not allowed to communicate

with the team members and must remain outside the bar in the spectator section of the courtroom.

9. All teams must consist of two attorneys and three witnesses. Each team is allowed to have one alternate team member to substitute any team member, including the student attorney slot, if conditions occur that prevent a team member from participating. This substitution must be done at the beginning of the competition.
10. Recording or photographing of the competition by the team members, parents, or any other observer is only allowed if granted by the presiding judges.
11. Any questions relating to the fact pattern or the rules must be submitted to the Mock Trial committee by October 20, 2025. All questions (and the responding answer) will be submitted to all participating teams to ensure that everyone has the same understanding.
12. Coaches, non-performing team members, observers, guests and parents shall not talk to, signal or communicate with any member of their team or any other participating team during the trial competition. Likewise, these individuals shall not contact the judges with concerns about a round; concerns should be taken to the competition coordinator. These rules remain in force throughout the entire competition.
13. Team members, coaches and any other persons directly associated with the Mock Trial team's preparation are not allowed to view other teams, outside of the opposing team for their round, in competition so long as they remain in the competition themselves. The public is invited to attend the final round of the last two teams on the last day of the competition.

14. Students promise to respect their fellow students, opponents, judges, coaches and competition coordinators and volunteers. All competitors will focus on accepting defeat and success with dignity and restraint. Trials will be conducted honestly, fairly and with the utmost civility. Students will avoid all tactics they know are wrong or in violation of the rules. Students will not willfully violate the rules of the competition in spirit or in practice.
15. Teacher coaches agree to focus attention on the educational value of the mock trial competition. Attorney coaches agree to uphold the highest standards of the legal profession and zealously encourage fair play. All coaches shall discourage willful violations of the rules. Coaches will instruct students as to proper procedure and decorum and will assist their students in understanding and abiding by the competition's rules. Coaches are reminded that they are in a position of authority and thus serve as positive role models for the students. Teacher and attorney coaches should ensure that students understand and agree to comply. Violations may result in disqualification from the competition.