MESA DAY CONTEST RULES 2026-2027
(FINAL)

Team Math Challenge

LEVEL: Middle School (MS) & High School (HS)

DIVISION(S): Grades 6-8 (combined) and Grades 9-12 (combined)

COMPOSITION OF TEAM: 2-3 students per team

NUMBER OF TEAMS: Preliminary – Determined by your local MESA center
Regional - # of teams per division at the discretion of each region (Northern, Central, LA/Central Coast, and Southern)

SPONSOR: California State University, Los Angeles MESA College Prep
Ukiah Field Station MESA College Prep

OVERVIEW: Changes, if any, from "DRAFT" rules are highlighted in "yellow." Teams of two or three students will work together to solve a series of challenging math problems emphasizing critical thinking, problem-solving, computation, and mathematical reasoning. The objective is to earn the highest score in the shortest amount of time. **Participation logistics and limits may vary by host site. Advisors and students are responsible for verifying this information with their local MESA center.**

This competition will be in-person for 2026-2027 but can also be hosted virtually, dependent upon the Host Center. These rules are written for in-person events; however, they can be adjusted for virtual events. The Host Center will also determine how the questions are administered, which may include:

- A paper-based test, or
- A third-party platform, such as Kahoot, Google Forms or Math Mania.

MATERIALS: The Host Center will provide the following:

- One set of math problems for each team or access to the designated online competition platform
- Computer lab with internet access, space for teams to use their own computers, or an appropriate competition space
- Scratch paper
- Pencils
- A Zoom meeting invitation, if the competition is held virtually

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Teams must bring the following:

- Calculator(s)
- Own computers, if required

GENERAL RULES:

1) Teams must consist of 2 to 3 students. Teams consisting of 1 (one) student will not be allowed to compete.
2) There is no restriction on the composition of a team; teams may consist of students from any grade or math level. It is suggested that teams consider the math levels of their teammates; they should have a good balance of math knowledge within their team. For example, a team can consist of one 6th grader, one 7th grader and one 8th grader.
3) The students' full name, grade level, school name, and MESA center must be clearly entered on the testing paper or platform. A 10% penalty in the team score will be assessed for failing to properly label.
4) Teams will have **60 minutes** to:
    a) Solve five math challenges.
    b) Complete the final equation problem.
    c) Submit final answers.
5) Teams may complete the five math challenges in any order.
6) Each team must designate one student as the Team Leader. The Team Leader is responsible for:
    a) Entering or recording the team's final answers.
    b) Managing the team's competition session.
    c) Submitting the team's answers.
    d) Submitting the team's scratch paper.
7) Teams must submit their scratch paper at the end of the competition. Scratch paper must have the following:
    a) Show meaningful mathematical work used to solve the problems.
    b) Student names, Grades, School, and MESA Center.
    c) Clearly identifiable answer for each math question. The final equation will require the answers for the previous 5 math questions to complete.
8) Teams must bring their own calculators and adhere to the following:
    a) Standard, scientific, or graphing calculators are permitted.
    b) Cell phones, laptops, tablets, or other electronic devices may NOT be used as calculators.
    c) Calculators may NOT have internet access or artificial intelligence capabilities.
9) No outside help (e.g., online resources, AI, textbooks, etc.) is allowed at any time during the 60 minutes. Violation will result in disqualification.
    a) The use of artificial intelligence tools is strictly prohibited. Prohibited tools include, but are not limited to: ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, Claude, Perplexity, or any other AI-powered assistant or application.
10) Digital media (e.g., photos, video recordings, screen recordings, etc.) of any kind is not permitted.
11) **All judging decisions are final.**

ONLY IF VIRTUAL:

1) All team members must login to the Zoom meeting 15 to 20 minutes prior to the competition start time so that proctors can put them in their break-out rooms and a quick overview of the competition can be given.

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2) Each team member's name, school name, (and MESA center for Regionals only) must be listed as the login name for Zoom to be placed in the appropriate break-out room.
    a) There are only 15 characters available for your Zoom name
        i) For Preliminaries, names should look like: School Name_Team Member Name
        ii) For Regionals, names should look like: MESA center_Team Member Name

JUDGING:

1) The lead competition proctor will review the competition procedures, explain the rules, and answer procedural questions.
2) Teams will receive a total of five math challenges and one final equation problem. Once the proctor has signaled the beginning of the contest, teams may begin solving the challenges in their preferred order.
3) Once a math challenge is solved, the team will record their answer and continue solving the remaining math challenges until all five challenges and the final equation problem are completed or time is called.
4) The proctor will announce when there is five (5) minutes and one (1) minute remaining.
5) When teams complete the Team Math Challenge, teams will submit their answers, scratch paper, and pencil to the competition proctor.
6) Teams which finish the challenge prior to the 60 minute mark may quietly leave the competition room at the proctor's discretion.

SCORING:

1) **5 points** will be given for each correctly solved math challenge (maximum of 25 points).
2) **1 point** will be given for correctly completing the final equation problem.
3) Teams will first be ranked by their final competition score. If two or more teams have the same score, the following tie-breaker will be applied:
    a) The team with the fastest official completion time will receive the higher ranking.

AWARDS:

- Medals will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place.
- Please check with your MESA center to determine the number of teams that advance to Regional MESA Day.

ATTACHMENTS:

- A: Math Subjects
- B: Math Concepts and Resources
- C: Score Sheet

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A: Math Subjects

Middle School Level
- General Mathematics
- Pre-Algebra
- Algebra I

High School Level
- Algebra I
- Geometry
- Algebra II
- Pre-Calculus

B: Math Concepts and Resources

The following math concepts may be used in any variation in the challenges, but the challenges are not limited to these concepts:

- Geometry
- Two- and three-dimensional figures
- Area, surface area, volume, and circumference
- Probability
- Rational and irrational numbers
- Equations and inequalities
- Fractions
- Ratios and proportions
- Percentages
- Algebraic reasoning
- Measurement
- Data analysis

A single math challenge or final equation problem may combine several mathematical concepts.

Teams should focus on:
- Strengthening core math skills
- Developing problem-solving strategies
- Showing clear and meaningful mathematical work
- Working collaboratively
- Becoming familiar with the competition format and online platform, when applicable

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C: SCORE SHEET FOR MATH ESCAPE CHALLENGE

Student Names: _____ **Team Number:** _____

School: _____

MESA Center: _____

Division: ☐ Middle School ☐ High School

Item	Points Earned
Math Challenge 1	/ 5
Math Challenge 2	/ 5
Math Challenge 3	/ 5
Math Challenge 4	/ 5
Math Challenge 5	/ 5
Final Equation Problem	/ 1
Subtotal	**/ 26**
Labeling penalty (10% deduction)	–
Final Team Score	**/ 26**

Official Completion Time: _____

Final Placement: _____

Judge's Notes:

_____

_____

Lead Judge's Signature: _____

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