

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONTESTANT

• **ENTRIES.** As many as THREE students from EACH GRADE LEVEL (grades 6, 7 and 8) OR ages 11, 12 and 13 respectively by Sept. 1 of the current school year, if in an ungraded school, may be entered in the SCIENCE District Contest from each school. Designated adults representing each school will select contestants to represent the campus at the District Meet based on their abilities and interest in science, as well as other factors, which are decided upon by each school. Each grade level is judged separately in contest.

• **ADVANCING TO STATE.** 4 must compete in a grade for 2 to advance (See page 8 for complete rules.)

• **NATURE OF THE CONTEST.** The contest presents 50 multiple choice problems. Emphasis in science is placed on three main areas: knowledge of scientific fact, understanding of scientific principles, and the ability to think through scientific problems. This last area is a cognitive challenge requiring students to use higher learning skills in order to arrive at a “solution” or understanding of a problem without previously having been exposed to that particular set of circumstances. Approximately 40% of the 50-item test consists of Earth Science questions; 40% of the questions are about Life Science; and about 20% are Physical Science. Some overlapping of these scientific areas may be within the test questions, as well.

• **WHAT HAPPENS IN THE CONTEST.** The contest director will announce the time and place that contestants and one adult should report for verification of the scoring of tests. Tests and answer sheets will be distributed to contestants face up, and contestants will be instructed to write their grade levels and their contestant ID numbers in the spaces provided on the front cover of the test and the answer sheet. Contestants must not open the test until the start signal is given. The contest director will tell

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contestants their ID numbers, usually during roll call. (Alternates taking the place of absent registered contestants should be sure to let the contest director know as they enter the room to save time in roll call.) **No calculators**, alarm watches or other devices that emit sound are allowed in the contest room.

• **TIME ALLOTTED.** Contestants will have 30 minutes beginning at the start signal. No time warning will be given. Contestants will remain quietly in their seats until the time has expired.

• **MARKING ANSWERS.** Contestants will use a pen or pencil to write their CAPITAL letter answers in the blanks provided on the answer sheet. Any marking or erasure in the answer space will constitute an attempt. **Contestants may place an X in the box provided where an erasure, mark-out or undesired answer has occurred in order to not have points deducted for these errors.**

• **SCORING.** Add 5 points for each correct answer. Subtract 2 points for each incorrect answer and for each answer that was marked through or erased, without arriving at a correct answer. **No points are deducted for skipped or unanswered test items, or erased, marked-out, or answered items when an X is placed in the box beside the answer blank.**

• **VERIFICATION PERIOD.** No pens, pencils, papers, cell phones, or any other items should be in contestants’ area while tests and answer sheets with keys are reviewed. Contestants and ONE coach OR parent OR adult have 15 minutes to check the computation of scores and ask questions about items counted incorrect. If the contest is held before **March 28**, tests must be turned back in to the contest director. Contestants will be disqualified from the contest should the paper be taken from the room prior to this date. After verification has been completed, awards will be issued. (At State, medals will be awarded through 6th place.)

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR COACHES / CONTEST DIRECTORS

• **PREPARATION FOR CONTEST.** Read and follow all instructions provided in the “Information Pertaining to All Contests” section of the *PSIA Academic Handbook*. Observe and practice with students all rules and procedures delineated in the “Instructions to the Contestant” and in the “Checklist for Contest Directors” and the “Checklist for Graders.” Preparation for the Science Contest should include studies in above grade level state-adopted Science textbooks, from which most of the test items are derived. The reading list of current science publications is also very helpful. Tests from previous years are available on the PSIA order forms.

• **PERSONNEL NEEDED FOR CONTEST.**

Contest Director and Assistant Director from two different schools, each knowledgeable of contest construction and administration.

Graders. Director and assistant director may also serve as graders. To expedite the grading process, provide at least two graders for every 15 papers.

• **READING LIST.** *Science World*, Scholastic, Inc. *Popular Science*, *National Geographic Magazine* - *National Geographic Kids*—800 647-5463

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