

Are you looking for an experience that will challenge your students? Do your students want to improve their mathematical problem solving skills? Do your students enjoy participating in contests? If yes, join the **Chicago Junior Mathematics League (CJML)**! This is a mathematics competition sponsored by the Chicago Public Schools Office of Teaching and Learning, which oversees all CPS Academic Competitions. Students from grades 6, 7, and 8 are all welcome to participate in this competition.

This is a great opportunity for your students to get involved in doing challenging and fun mathematics. The competitions take place on Saturday mornings at two locations: Lane Tech High School (for schools on the north side) and Whitney Young High School (for schools on the central/south side). Doors will open at 8:15am, the competition will begin at 9:00am and will end at about 11:30pm. Our first competition this year is taking place on Saturday, November 5, 2022. The 2<sup>nd</sup> competition will be held on January 28, 2023 at both sites, and there will be a final citywide competition this year on April 29, 2023 (location TBD)

For more information, please take a look at the FAQs below. We also have a website: [www.cjml.org](http://www.cjml.org).

We look forward to seeing you soon! Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions, concerns, or suggestions.

The CJML Directors

Julienne Au ([jau@cps.edu](mailto:jau@cps.edu)) and Chris Barrett ([cbarrett@cps.edu](mailto:cbarrett@cps.edu))

## **CJML – Frequently Asked Questions**

### ***What is the CJML?***

CJML stands for the Chicago Junior Mathematics League. It is a mathematics competition targeted towards 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in the Chicago Public Schools.

### ***What is the purpose of the CJML?***

The objective of the CJML is to provide CPS students with a unique opportunity to use and engage their mathematical problem solving skills in a competition setting. The earlier students start participating in math competitions, the more mathematics preparation and problem solving they will experience. These skills and mindsets are essential for continued success in high school mathematics courses and competitions. Also, this is a great opportunity for students to meet and interact with their peers from around the city. The students have a wonderful time!

### ***Who participates in the CJML?***

Any Chicago Public School that has students in the 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades is eligible to participate in the CJML. This includes K-6 schools, K-8 schools, middle schools (6-8), and Academic Centers (7-8). A CJML team consists of six students competing at each of the three grade levels (6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>). Any additional students may compete as alternates. There is no limit to the number of students a school may bring to any of the contests, so if you have a lot of students who are interested in competing, bring them all! Students who are in grades lower than 6<sup>th</sup> grade may participate if they compete at a level above their current grade.

### ***Why should my school participate in the CJML?***

The CJML provides great opportunities where students can do challenging math problems in both an individual and in a team setting. The problems in any given CJML contest cover topics in mathematics that

are accessible to 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students. While content knowledge from high school level math courses (such as Algebra I) is not required to solve many of the contest problems, this is an experience that schools with 8<sup>th</sup> grade Algebra I programs can provide to their students to get them involved in doing more advanced problem solving and in learning enrichment topics. The topics and problems are aligned with the Common Core State Standards for Mathematics in grades 6 to 8.

***My school already participates in Mathcounts. Should we participate in another contest?***

Yes! One of the reasons why the CJML was created is because we feel that students need more experience with math contests throughout the school year. CJML is intended to complement other math competitions like Mathcounts; in fact, the second CJML contest is planned with Mathcounts in mind and we hope that your students find it to be good practice for the regional Mathcounts competition in February. The schedules for both contests will not conflict with each other.

***I don't think my school will be ready for the first competition. We don't have enough students for a full team. What should I do?***

There is nothing to worry about! Even if you only have a few students (or even one or two) who are interested, we encourage them to participate and they are always eligible to win awards. Schools may join the CJML at any time during the school year; all schools are eligible for awards at each competition they attend and no one is penalized for missing a contest.

***I don't have a lot of experience with coaching math teams. What should I do?***

Be enthusiastic! The whole purpose of this is to get students excited about doing math. We have sets of practice materials and previous years' competitions that will be made available to coaches, so you will have plenty of time to acquaint yourself with the material and prepare your students for the competitions. Any questions or concerns may be shared with the CJML directors at any time. We plan to hold coaches' meetings and professional development sessions several times a year. Both of these are great opportunities to meet teachers at other schools who are also participating in the CJML.

***How much time should my students spend on practices? What can they practice with?***

A reasonable commitment is about one to two hours per week. Practices can be scheduled during lunch periods, before school, after school, or whatever works best for you and your students. One valuable resource is CJML contests from previous years; after your team is registered, we'll send you those documents. The Mathcounts School Handbook (published yearly) is another great resource; we have access to handbooks from the last fifteen years and can share them with you as well.

***How are the three CJML Divisions determined?***

Each school in the league is assigned to one of three divisions. Division A consists of selective enrollment schools (Academic Centers, Classical Schools, Gifted Centers). Division B consists of non-selective enrollment schools. Division C (which is new this year) will consist of schools who are in their first or second year in the league. We created Division C this year to encourage new schools to join the league and to get in a couple years of experience before competing with longer established programs.

***What other mathematics competitions are there for my students to participate in?***

In addition to CJML and Mathcounts, two of the more easily accessible contests are the American Mathematics Competition (AMC-8) and the Illinois Council of Teachers of Mathematics (ICTM) middle school contest.

***How can my students and I learn more about the CJML?***

We have a website: [www.cjml.org](http://www.cjml.org). Contest topics, dates, locations, procedures, rules, etc. may all be found on the website, along with scores from previous years and this year's competitions. Keep checking the website so that you may stay updated on any CJML announcements or developments throughout the school year.

***Who sponsors the CJML?***

From 2009 to 2013, the CJML was supported by the CPS Office of Mathematics and Science. From 2013 to 2016, the CJML was sponsored by the CPS Office of Pathways to College and Career. Currently, all CPS Academic Competitions are sponsored by the CPS Office of Teaching and Learning. Our liaisons in that office are Sylvia Nelson Jordan and Paschel Bennett (they may contact coaches and principals during the competition season); they support what we do, advocate for funding the league, and love seeing hundreds of CPS students participating in math contests on Saturday mornings!

***How can my school register for the CJML?***

Please contact the CJML directors, Julienne Au ([jau@cps.edu](mailto:jau@cps.edu)) and Chris Barrett ([cbarrett@cps.edu](mailto:cbarrett@cps.edu)) for more information. You will need to fill out some forms and pay a registration fee of \$25. We look forward to assisting you!