

INFORMATION GUIDE
2020 Wisconsin Civics Games



WISCONSIN CIVICS GAMES



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BUILDING ON OUR MISSION

... WHY WISCONSIN NEWSPAPERS LAUNCHED THE CIVICS GAMES



A decline in civics education

Prior to the 1960s, three courses in civics and government were common in American high schools and encouraged students to explore the role of citizens and discuss current issues. Today, such courses are rare.

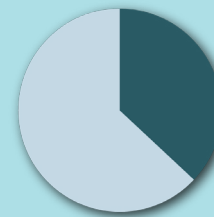
As a result, too few Americans understand how our government works and their role in our democracy.



Only 32% of Americans can name all three branches of government



33% of Americans cannot name any of the three branches of government



37% of Americans cannot name any rights guaranteed by the First Amendment

An absence of civic participation



In 2017, three in five Wisconsin municipalities reported an average of 1 or fewer candidates for each village board or city council seat.



A lack of knowledge in civic affairs makes individuals less likely to be active, engaged citizens. It's a result that has been felt by municipalities across Wisconsin.

NEWSPAPERS SUPPORTING CIVIC EDUCATION & ENGAGEMENT AMONG WISCONSIN YOUTH

In response to declining civics education and participation, the Wisconsin Newspaper Association Foundation launched the Civics Games in 2018.

It was a natural fit — newspapers were founded to inform communities and encourage public dialogue. Working to bridge gaps in civic awareness is at the core of our mission.

By engaging young adults in a collaborative competition, as well as through coverage of civic affairs, Wisconsin newspapers aim to help cultivate an understanding among future generations of their role in our democracy.

.....

“ I believe that civics education is frankly more important than ever , and the newspaper association’s work to make this opportunity available to the school districts in this state is a great step forward. ”

- GOV. TONY EVERS

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 2019 GAMES

More than **100 students** from **25 schools** participated in the inaugural Wisconsin Civics Games, which included four regional competitions on Feb. 23, 2019, and the state finals March 29, 2019, at the Wisconsin State Capitol.

During the Games, students heard from several **local officials**, newspaper **editors**, state **legislators**, a state **Supreme Court chief justice** and the **governor**.

They even received a **congratulatory letter** from **U.S. Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor**.

After months of preparation and two days of competition, the team from **Platteville High School** was named the first-ever Wisconsin Civics Games champion. Each member of the team was awarded a **\$2,000 scholarship** to a Wisconsin college or university.



Gov. Tony Evers takes a photo with the 2019 Wisconsin Civics Games finalists on March 29, 2019, at the Wisconsin State Capitol in Madison, Wis.



(Left to right) Advisor Garrett Jones, Jacob Sherer, Spencer Olds, Alex Sonsalla and Liam Reinicke of Platteville High School pose for a photo after winning the 2019 Wisconsin Civics Games. Students back at their school had gathered to watch the broadcast live on WisconsinEye.



“ **Maintaining democracy** requires that we be **knowledgable** about **democratic practices**.

We need to remember those practices that were **required to begin our democracy** and are **required now to sustain it.** ”

- STATE SUPREME COURT CHIEF JUSTICE PATIENCE ROGGENSACK

Madison Memorial High School students Cory Forbes (right) and Alex Blue — champions of the Madison-area Civics Games regional competition — face off against a team of Wisconsin Newspaper Association and WNA Foundation board members in a mock Civics Games match March 8, 2019, at the 2019 WNA Convention & Trade Show. (The students won.)





2020 CIVICS GAMES



Registration

Registration for the 2020 Wisconsin Civics Games will open on **Monday, Sept. 16**, and close on **Tuesday, Nov. 5**.



Local Competitions

Schools should conduct their local competitions in **February or March**, to determine which team will advance to the regionals. Only one team per school is eligible.



Regional Competitions

Regional competitions will be **Friday, April 24**, at college campuses across the state. The number and location of regionals will be based on participation and announced after the registration deadline. Each team will be assigned to the regional competition closest to their school whenever possible.



State Finals

The 2020 state finals will be **Friday, May 15**, at the Wisconsin State Capitol. Members of the state championship-winning team will again receive \$2,000 scholarships to the Wisconsin college or university of their choice.

INVESTING

IN THE FUTURE

Members of the state championship-winning team receive \$2,000 scholarships to the Wisconsin college or university of their choice.



“ I learned many things I hadn’t from the **school social studies curriculum**.

As a member of a village committee in the town where I live, I found that the topics I learned about while preparing and studying for the competition helped me do a better job of **serving my local constituents**.

I absolutely look forward to doing it over again in 2020!

”

- SAMUEL KAUFMANN
WAUNAKEE STUDENT & 2019 CIVICS
GAMES FINALIST

PREPARING FOR THE CIVICS GAMES



SIGN UP TO PARTICIPATE & GET YOUR MATERIALS

Once you've decided to participate in the Wisconsin Civics Games, go to www.wisconsincivicsgames.com, and sign up — then we'll send you study materials, including "The Framework of Your Wisconsin Government" textbook that specifically addresses Wisconsin state and local government.



USE OUR ONLINE RESOURCES

In addition to "The Framework of Your Wisconsin Government," we've made several online resources available through our partnering organizations, including Wisconsin Public Television, the Public Broadcasting Service, iCivics and WisconsinEye. These resources can be found at www.wisconsincivicsgames.com.



REVIEW THE RULES & SAMPLE QUESTIONS

Before competing in the Wisconsin Civics Games, all participants should review the Official Rules and the sample questions, both of which are included in this guide.



DISCUSS CURRENT EVENTS

By this point, you've probably broadened your civic knowledge quite a bit. Pick up your local newspaper and put that knowledge into context.

Find relevant issues that demonstrate democratic participation and discuss the issues involved. Talk about if those who are participating are being effective. Could the situation have been handled better? Write comments in response to the news (you could even send a letter to the editor). Past Civics Games participants have attended city hall or school board meetings to gain a better understanding of their local government.

HOSTING YOUR

LOCAL CIVICS GAMES

A school-level Civics Games competition determines the team that will advance to the regionals.



PICK A DATE

In order to give the team representing your school at the regional competition adequate time to plan and prepare, school-level Games should be held in February or March.

IDENTIFY JUDGES, MODERATOR

Once you have a date set, you should recruit 3-4 teachers or administrators to serve as judges and/or a moderator.

COMPETITION MATERIALS

If you plan to host a school-level Civics Games, email WNA Membership & Communications Director Julia Hunter at Julia.Hunter@wnanews.com, and we'll send you a packet of resources, including 20 starter questions.

REGISTERING YOUR WINNERS

Once you have conducted your school-level Civics Games competition, be sure to register your winning team at www.wisconsinincivicsgames.com, so we know who will be attending the regional competition.

OFFICIAL RULES

TEAMS

A team shall consist of any number of players who meet all eligibility rules. However, no more than four players may actively compete at any one time. Teams may compete with fewer players, with a minimum of one player.

No student may play for two different teams in the course of the competition

A team may substitute players between rounds.

Each team shall designate a captain prior to the beginning of each match. The captain shall provide the team's answer to tiebreaker questions, should that be necessary, and is expected to be the primary student spokesperson for the team.

Alternates may be used in the event of illness or scheduling conflict.

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SPECTATORS

Prior to competing in any given round, participants must wait in a designated waiting area. Following each match, they may join the audience until the conclusion of that round, at which time they must return to the waiting area.

If a team is eliminated from further competition, they can remain in the audience until the conclusion of the Games.

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GAME OFFICIALS

Three judges and a moderator will oversee each competition.

Judges will read questions, enforce time limits, supervise the clock, determine the accuracy of responses, award points, and otherwise enforce the rules of competition.

The moderator will act as host for the Games, assist the judges with any needs during competition and oversee all activities.

EQUIPMENT

A buzzer system provided to moderators by the Wisconsin Newspaper Association will be used to determine which player has signaled first.

COMPETITION FORMAT

Competition will consist of four rounds, during which teams will compete in head-to-head matches. Each match will consist of 20 questions.

During the first two rounds, teams will be matched by random drawing. The eight teams with the highest cumulative scores through two rounds will advance.

In the third round, teams will be paired according to scores as follows: 1 vs. 8, 2 vs. 7, 3 vs. 6, 4 vs. 5. Cumulative scores through the first three rounds will be tallied, and teams will be re-ranked.

For the final round, teams will be paired according to scores as follows: 1 vs. 2, 3 vs. 4, 5 vs. 6, 7 vs. 8. The 1 vs. 2 match will be designated as the championship match, and the 3 vs. 4 match will determine third place. Following the completion of four rounds, the three top finishers will advance to the state finals.

At the state finals, competition will proceed under the same rules as the regionals. First, second and third place finishers at the state finals will receive awards following the completion of the fourth round.

If fewer than eight teams compete in any regional competition, the four teams with the highest cumulative scores through two rounds will advance. The final two rounds will follow the same format adjusted from eight teams to four.

RESPONSE TIME

A player may buzz at any point after the judge begins to read the question.

Only after being acknowledged by a judge as the eligible respondent may a player begin to answer the question, and they must do so immediately. If the eligible respondent doesn't begin to answer within 2 seconds, they will lose the opportunity to respond. (Decisions as to whether players have exceeded allowable

time constraints will be made by the judges and are not subject to protest.)

Only the player who buzzed may give an answer, and teammates may not consult at any point (with the exception of during a tiebreaker question).

If neither team buzzes within 10 seconds of completion of the question, the judge will read the answer and move on to the next question.

If a player buzzes in before the entire question is read, the judge will stop reading. If the response is incorrect, the judge will reread the question for the opposing team.

If an ineligible respondent answers a question out of turn, their response is disqualified and the other team is given the opportunity to answer.

In such a case, the judge will not reveal the answer — or acknowledge if the ineligible respondent's answer was correct — before the second team is given the opportunity to respond. If the judge inadvertently reveals the answer, the eligible respondent will be read a replacement question.



POINTS & TIEBREAKER

If at the conclusion of a regional competition there are not two distinct highest-scoring teams, a bonus, tiebreaker round will be played to determine which two teams advance to the state finals.

If there is a tie at the conclusion of a match in the last round of the state finals, a tiebreaker question will be asked. Tiebreaker questions must be answered by each team's captain. However, the captain may consult with his/her teammates prior to buzzing.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS

The following questions have been compiled to help students and teachers better understand the type of

questions that will be asked during the Wisconsin Civics Games competitions. The answers can be found on Page 19.

- 1.** Although amended many times the original Wisconsin constitution is still being used and is one of the oldest state constitutions in the nation. Describe two ways that the Wisconsin state constitution can be changed; and which of the two has never been attempted?
- 2.** In Wisconsin, the governor has the power to veto bills passed by the legislature. The Wisconsin constitution was amended in 1930 to give the governor the authority for a specific form of veto. Name the veto authority added to the constitution in 1930 and describe the type of legislation where the governor has that authority?
- 3.** City and Village governments in Wisconsin have been given wide-ranging powers to deal with providing services. A 1924 constitutional amendment granted them authority known as “home rule.” What is “home rule” and what are these locally enacted laws called?
- 4.** What is the term used to describe the practice of drawing legislative district lines to establish a political advantage for a group or political party; and what is proposed by some as an alternative means for drawing district boundaries?
- 5.** The tenth amendment to the United States Constitution delegates to the states powers not delegated to the federal government. These are known as reserved powers. Name two of the reserved powers; and name one power not given to the states by the federal government?
- 6.** United States Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch was recently quoted as saying that ten percent of Americans surveyed believe that the TV star Judge Judy is a member of the United States Supreme Court. Describe the process by which Judge Judy would become a member of the Wisconsin Supreme Court and the United States Supreme Court?

ANSWERS

The following are answers to the sample questions found on Page 18.

1. The constitution can be changed via a constitutional amendment or by convening a constitutional convention. A constitutional convention has never been convened.

2. The veto authority is the line item veto and it may only be applied to bills dealing with appropriations.

3. Home rule is when a city or village may do things the way it wants unless the state constitution prohibits it.; or if it is something of state-wide concern that the legislature should handle. These locally enacted laws are called ordinances.

4. The term used to describe the practice of drawing legislative district lines for political advantage is called Gerrymandering. The alternative to gerrymandering would be the appointment of a non-partisan independent commission to draw the district boundaries.

5. Powers given to the states include the ability to:

- Establish local governments and public schools
- Issues licenses
- Regulate business within the state
- Conduct elections – local, state and federal
- Provide for public health and safety.

Powers not given to the states include the ability to:

- Create its own currency
- Sign international treaties
- Stop interstate commerce

6. In Wisconsin, Judge Judy would run in an election to be seated on the state Supreme Court. Judge Judy would be nominated by the president of the United States and confirmed by the US Senate to serve on the United States Supreme Court.

SUPPORTING THE WISCONSIN CIVICS GAMES

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Wisconsin Civics Games wouldn't be possible without the support of our dedicated volunteers and generous donors. Here are some ways to support the Civics Games and join our effort to revive interest in current events, local government and civics education.

SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER

Volunteer your time to assist with registration, coordination and logistics at regional sites, as well as the state finals.

BECOME A SPONSOR

Help provide young adults with the knowledge and tools they need to make significant contributions to society and the state of Wisconsin.

MAKE A CONTRIBUTION

Help cultivate a passion for public service in the next generation with a donation to the WNA Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization.



FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THESE OPPORTUNITIES, SIGN UP TO BE A VOLUNTEER OR MAKE A CONTRIBUTION ONLINE AT WWW.WNANEWS.COM/WISCONSINCIVICSGAMES/SUPPORT.

2020 Sponsors

