



Madeira Board of Education, 7465 Loannes Drive, Cincinnati, OH 45243 • 513.985.6070
Kenji Matsudo, Superintendent
Dave Bergan, Assistant Superintendent,
Diane Nichols, Public Relations

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Madeira's Undefeated Academic Team

The Madeira High School (MHS) Academic Team finished the regular 2020-2021 season as undefeated champions in the Cincinnati Academic League (CAL), qualifying for the Regional competition.

The Academic Team is a school club open to all MHS students. They compete against ten other schools in the Greater Cincinnati area in American Literature, Mathematics, World History, Fine Arts, Life Science, English, and World Literature, American Government and Economics, Physical Science, World Geography, American History, and occasionally Pop Culture. Competitions include team question rounds and lightning round buzz-in questions for which they receive points. MHS competes against students from Cincinnati Hills Christian Academy, Indian Hill, Seven Hills, Wyoming, Cincinnati Country Day, Reading, Norwood, Finneytown, and Summit Country Day. The league is run by Ryan Shadle, a math professor at Cincinnati State.

The team's eleven members began practicing twice a week after school in late September. They ran games from previous seasons and participated in buzzer drills and quiz games in person when possible - and via Zoom, Schoology, and Buzz In Live when it wasn't. In regular-season competition, the MHS Academic Team finished 8-0, defeating their opponents by an average of 45 points per game. In each match, an MVP was selected by the coaches. René Polanco was named MVP in five games, with Stephen Woo and Murray Katkin also earning the honor during the season.

The Madeira students will now compete in the virtual regional competition held at Cincinnati State on April 17. Each region will consist of up to 16 teams, with the top two teams advancing to the State competition. All other teams will be eligible for one of the four wild card spots.

Madeira High School's Academic Team members for the 2020-2021 school year were Emma Faz, Olivia Heath, Murray Katkin, Luke Knull, Stephan Long, Bea Manning, Niklas Polanco, René Polanco, Margaret Sampson, Owen Tucker, and Steven Wu. The team is coached by Justin Belarski and Barb Linser.



Pictured: MHS Academic Team coach Justin Belarski with members Emma Faz, Olivia Heath, Murray Katkin, Luke Knull, Stephan Long, Bea Manning, Niklas Polanco, René Polanco, Owen Tucker, and Steven Wu. Not pictured: Coach Barb Linser and Margaret Sampson.