2027 North Carolina ProStart Invitational (NCPI)

Procedures and Rules

for the

Culinary, Management, and Technique Competitions

March 7–8, 2027 | Westin Raleigh-Durham Airport

Participating teams and individual competitors are responsible for understanding and following all the procedures and rules contained in this document; they will not be reviewed at the North Carolina ProStart Invitational. Please read this document carefully to maximize your opportunity for success and to avoid receiving penalties during the competition. Refer all questions to chamm@ncrla.org prior to arrival at NCPI.

Updated October 12, 2026

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GENERAL COMPETITION OVERVIEW

Event Details

Event	2027 North Carolina ProStart Invitational (NCPI)
Dates	Check-ins: Sunday, March 7, 2027 | Competition: Monday, March 8, 2027
Location	Westin Raleigh-Durham Airport
Hosted by	NCRLA Foundation
Questions	chamm@ncrla.org

Purpose

The North Carolina ProStart Invitational (NCPI) is the premier state student competition of the NC ProStart program, challenging students to demonstrate the knowledge, skills, creativity, and professionalism required to succeed in the restaurant, foodservice, and hospitality industry. Through the Culinary and Management competitions, students apply what they have learned through the ProStart program and the Foundations of Restaurant Management and Culinary Arts curriculum in a real-world, high-stakes environment that mirrors industry expectations.

NCPI is a student-led competition designed to develop the next generation of restaurant and hospitality leaders. Students are responsible for understanding and following the competition rules; creating and refining their restaurant concepts and menus; researching and developing recipes; completing costing and pricing analyses; preparing competition materials; and delivering all aspects of the culinary or management presentation. While educators, mentors, and ProStart Coordinators play a critical role in coaching, guidance, registration, and administrative support, the work presented at NCPI must reflect the students' own ideas, decisions, problem-solving abilities, and execution.

In addition to the team competitions, NCPI offers Technique Competitions, where individual students demonstrate focused culinary and front-of-house skills in timed, judged events such as knife skills, chicken fabrication, cake decorating, and mocktail mixology. These events give students who are not on a team, as well as team members, a chance to showcase their individual craft and build confidence in a competitive setting.

Participation reinforces not only technical knowledge and industry competencies, but also leadership, teamwork, communication, critical thinking, and professionalism—skills that prepare students to become future leaders of the restaurant and hospitality industry. By placing students at the center of the learning and competition experience, NCPI showcases the power of ProStart to develop career-ready talent and inspire the next generation of industry professionals.

Event Personnel

The North Carolina ProStart Invitational (NCPI) is hosted by the NCRLA Foundation and made possible through the generous support of industry sponsors, donors, and dedicated volunteers. Together, these partners help provide a high-quality, industry-driven experience that showcases student talent and supports the development of future restaurant and hospitality leaders.

Personnel Group	Who They Are	Primary Responsibilities
Event Organizers	NCRLA Foundation staff members	Plan, manage, and oversee all aspects of NCPI; coordinate competition operations, logistics, and participant experience.
Volunteers	Trained and assigned by the NCRLA Foundation	Provide event support, assist with competition operations, guide participants, and help ensure a successful event experience.
Team Ambassadors	NCRLA Foundation-trained volunteers assigned to teams	Serve as official timekeepers, escort teams through the competition process, communicate timing milestones, and support fair competition procedures.
Judges	Restaurant and foodservice industry professionals, post-secondary educators, and educators from schools not participating in that segment of the competition	Evaluate team performance, provide feedback, and score competitions according to established criteria.
Lead Judge	One senior judge designated by the NCRLA Foundation for each competition segment	Oversees judging consistency, assists with rules interpretation and scoring processes, and supports the judge panel; does not score teams directly.

Eligibility Requirements

Students

Enrollment	Must be currently, actively enrolled in a confirmed ProStart program. Only confirmed ProStart schools and their students are eligible to compete at NCPI.
Team Member Definition	Members include active competitors (i.e., cooking or presenting) and team managers.
Competition Limit	May compete in NCPI for a maximum of three (3) competition years: • Up to two (2) years as an active competitor. • Up to one (1) year as a team manager. Years do not have to be consecutive. A student can serve as manager in any year of participation (first, second or third year). This limit applies to team competitions only. It does not apply to Technique Competitions.
Competition Categories	May compete in Culinary, Management, or both in the same year. Competing in both counts as one competition year. These categories apply to team competitions only. Students may also compete in Technique Competitions in the same year, and doing so does not count toward the competition limit.

Eligibility Compliance	Failure to meet eligibility requirements may result in disqualification. Teams that advance to NPSI must also meet NPSI eligibility requirements, which override NCPI requirements for that event.

Teams

School Representation	Schools may send multiple teams. Each team competes in Culinary, Management, or both.
Team Size	Two (2) to four (4) competitors plus one (1) optional Team Manager. (Max 5 students)
Adult Support	Up to two (2) adults per team may attend, in any combination of educators and/or industry mentors. They are not competitors and may not communicate with teams during competition. Only these two (2) adults may observe Check-In, judge critique, and feedback segments (where observation is allowed). Spectators of all ages are welcome to observe during competition phases: Team & Menu Introduction, Mise en Place, and Production (Culinary); Presentations (Management); and Production for Technique Competitions. Spectators may not communicate with or coach competitors.
Alternates	No alternate competitors are allowed. Only the Team Manager may replace a competitor if approved by the Lead Judge and Event Organizers. Team rosters are final as of **February 5, 2027.** Team members may not be added or changed after that date (other than a Team Manager replacement approved as described above).
Replaced Competitor	Must leave active team area; may not communicate with team until competition dismissal.

Team Manager (Optional)

Competition Status	Considered part of the team and subject to all communication restrictions.
Communication	May not communicate with anyone outside of the team and event personnel.
Emergency Replacement	May replace a competitor with approval from the Lead Judge and Event Organizers.
Post-Replacement	If Manager replaces a competitor, they remain in that role for the rest of the competition.

Culinary-Specific	• May serve as an expediter. • May talk to the team at any time. • May have printed materials, writing utensils, notebooks, timers, etc., to help keep team on track. • May taste food during production (must carry their own supply of tasting spoons). • May fully participate in Product Check-In, organization prior to arriving at station, feedback segments, and station clean-up. • May carry framed menu to tasting room after production segment. • May not handle, organize, or prepare anything during Mise en Place or Production segments. • May not carry backpack to hold materials. Small bags such as fanny packs are allowed.
Management-Specific	• May serve as a consultant to provide feedback, guidance and/or notes on previous and/or upcoming segments, ONLY during three (3)-minute breaks between competition segments and two (2) assigned break segments. • May have writing utensils and paper, notebook, cards, etc., for taking notes during presentation. • May be introduced with team at beginning of production segments. • May actively participate in feedback segment after presentation segments. • Must remain in the designated Team Manager seating area throughout the team presentation. • May not communicate with team or judges or answer questions directly during presentations. • There are no additional provisions for teams without a Team Manager.

KEY DATES AND PROPOSAL REQUIREMENTS

Date	Requirement
Friday, February 5, 2027 (midnight)	**Teams:** Digital proposals due (Culinary and Management). Submit as one PDF to chamm@ncrla.org. Management teams using a social media tactic must also submit their video or promotional post by email to chamm@ncrla.org by this deadline. **Rosters:** Team rosters are final. Team members may not be added or changed after this date. **Individual competitors:** Technique Competition proposals due by 11:59 PM to chamm@ncrla.org (Amuse-Bouche, Between Bread, Build a Better Burger, Cake Decorating, Mocktail Mixology, Napkin Folding, and Wrap Battle). Chicken Fabrication and Knife Skills do not require a proposal.
Friday, February 12, 2027 (midnight)	**Teams:** NCRLA Foundation proposal feedback deadline. This is also the final cutoff for participation (see below). **Individual competitors:** Technique Competition proposals not received by 11:59 PM result in disqualification.

Date	Requirement
Friday, February 26, 2027	**Teams:** Revised digital proposals due, including a change summary page. Only changes requested by the NCRLA Foundation and minor edits are allowed. **Individual competitors:** Revised Technique proposals due if a revision is required. **Culinary teams:** Dish request forms due. Teams that do not submit their dish request form by this date receive a 5-point penalty.
Sunday, March 7, 2027	All check-ins: Culinary Product Check-In, Materials Check-In (Management), and Technique Product Check-In for events that require it (at assigned times). Opening Ceremony.
Monday, March 8, 2027	Competition day: Culinary Production Day and Management Presentation Day.

Any team that does not submit a proposal by February 12, 2027 will not be allowed to participate in NCPI and will forfeit its registration fee.

Late proposals: A proposal submitted after the February 5 deadline but on or before February 12 is considered late and receives the proposal penalty in the Culinary or Management score sheet (5 points). Late Technique Competition proposals receive a 1-point penalty per 24-hour period.

COMPETITION EXPECTATIONS & GENERAL DISQUALIFICATIONS

Failure to comply with the requirements below will result in disqualification. See full lists of disqualifications and penalties in the sample Culinary and Management Competition Score Sheets.

Participation

- Teams, official chaperones, and individual competitors must attend all required NCPI events, including the Opening Ceremony, event check-in, the Awards Dinner, and all assigned competition segments.
- Teams and individual competitors are responsible for arriving on time and following all competition schedules and instructions.
- If you encounter unexpected travel delays beyond the control of your team or individual competitor that impact your attendance at any portion of NCPI, please notify Event Organizers in a timely manner to avoid disqualification.

Communications

- From check-in through the completion of competition, competitors may not receive coaching, assistance, or communication from spectators, educators, mentors, family members, or other supporters.
- The determination of what constitutes coaching or unauthorized communication is solely at the discretion of Event Organizers and Judges.
- NCPI strives to provide fair and consistent evaluations; however, all judged competitions involve professional discretion. All judges' decisions and scores are final. All questions regarding scoring must be directed to chamm@ncrla.org. Judges should not be contacted directly after the competition by teams, individual competitors, or educators.

Conduct & Professionalism

- Competitors are expected to conduct themselves in a safe, respectful, and professional manner throughout the event.
- Competitors must follow safe foodservice and workplace practices at all times. Unsafe behavior, horseplay, or actions that create a risk of injury will not be tolerated.
- Prohibited behavior includes, but is not limited to, illegal activity, nonprescription drug use, alcohol use, unsportsmanlike conduct, harassment, or any behavior that threatens the safety or integrity of the competition.
- Teams and individual competitors must comply with all written and verbal instructions provided by Event Organizers.
- Educators, mentors, chaperones, family members, and other supporters share responsibility for supporting appropriate conduct and compliance with competition rules. Misconduct by any adult associated with a team or individual competitor that compromises the fairness, safety, or operation of the event may result in penalties or disqualification of the team or individual competitor.

ADVANCEMENT TO THE NATIONAL PROSTART INVITATIONAL (NPSI)

- First-place winners in the Culinary and Management competitions advance to the National ProStart Invitational (NPSI), hosted by the National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation (NRAEF), April 23–25, 2027.
- Advancing teams must follow the NPSI Procedures and Rules, which are separate from this document and are the team's responsibility. NPSI rules, deadlines, and eligibility requirements override NCPI rules for that event.
- NPSI currently requires digital proposals by March 25, 2027, and any revised proposals by April 14, 2027. Teams should confirm all NPSI dates and requirements with the NCRLA Foundation after NCPI.
- NPSI applies its own Standard of Change to materials submitted to NPSI in the previous three competition years.

CULINARY COMPETITION

Culinary Competition Overview

Teams demonstrate their culinary knowledge, skills, and creative abilities during the competition through demonstration of skills and the preparation of a unique three-course meal consisting of (i) a starter; (ii) an entrée; and (iii) a dessert. Performance during the Culinary event is observed and rated by judges from the foodservice industry, post-secondary schools, and secondary culinary programs that are not competing in the Culinary competition. Teams demonstrate their ability to work together while creating and presenting their meal.

- Each team prepares two (2) identical three-course meals, garnished and served appropriately. One meal is evaluated by the judges for both taste and presentation, and one meal will be used for display.
- Each meal component should be appropriate to the complete menu. Flavors across the menu should have harmony for the palate. Dishes will be evaluated across five characteristics.

Meal Components	Description & Specifications
Starter	Soup, salad or appetizer 4-6 ounces total edible weight
Entrée	Center of the plate item (suggested 4-6 ounces) Two accompaniments, e.g., vegetable and/or starch (suggested 2-3 ounces each) Sauce
Dessert	Something sweet served at the end of a meal 3+ ounces of total edible weight

Category	Five Characteristics
Oral	Flavor, Texture, Temperature
Visual	Color, Shape

Competition Segments and Scoring

Segment	Time (in minutes)	Possible Points
Pre-Production Day (March 7)		
Product Check-In & Critique	Open check-in during allotted timeframe	5
Production Day (March 8)		
Report to Competition	15	
Team & Menu Introduction	5	Evaluated with Team Presentation & Knife Skills Critique (below)
Production Mise en Place	20	

Segment	Time (in minutes)	Possible Points
Meal Production	60	
Plate Presentation	5	
Team Presentation & Knife Skills Critique	5	10
Work Skills & Organization Critique	5	15
Tasting Judges Critique	10	Starter: 15 / Entrée: 20 / Dessert: 15
Menu & Recipe Critique	10	5
Station Cleanup	20	
Sanitation Critique & Dismissal	5	15
Dishwashing (Optional)	15	
Totals	**~2 hours, 55 minutes**	**100 points**

In the event of a tie:

- The tying teams will each be interviewed by a panel of judges for further insights into their performance.
- Teams will answer questions regarding the methods, preparation and presentation of their meal/concept.
- Judges will discuss and make a group determination as to the ranking of final winner(s).

Competition Schedules

Competition schedules will be distributed in advance of the event once all teams have been identified. The schedule will include assigned start and finish times for all competition segments. All schedules are subject to change and will be communicated with as much advance notice as possible. (See Appendix 1 for sample)

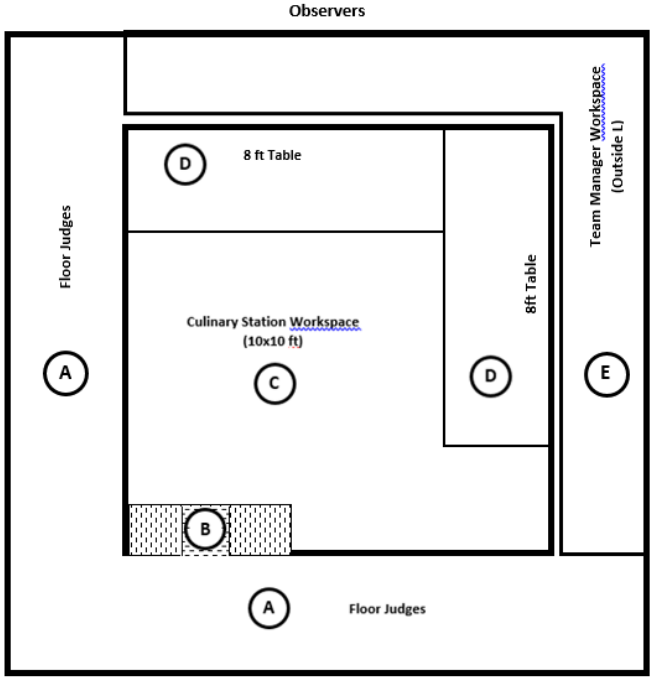
Equipment & Workspace

Item	Notes
Provided at Product Check-In	
• **1 speed rack**	Will be stored in refrigerator until assigned report time.
• **Four (4) full-size sheet pans**	Will be stored on speed rack in refrigerator.
• **Uniform Elements: Aprons, Hats, Team Manager Armband**	Teams must confirm they have received the correct amount of items as they are required uniform elements on Production Day.
• **Dishware for Meal Presentation**	Teams must submit a dish request form listing the dishes they need by February 26, 2027. Teams that do not submit the form by this date receive a 5-point penalty. Teams should review issued dishes for accuracy at Check-in. Changing dishes after Check-In is not allowed. (See Exhibit F for sample dishware)
Provided at Workspace for Production	

Item	Notes
• **Two (2) Tables**	See Workspace section for more details.
• **Two (2) 15,000 BTU burners (or equivalent) and fuel**	No additional burners are permitted, but fuel will be replenished as needed.
• **Sanitation Buckets**	Will be prepped with solution when teams arrive in station.
• **Access to ice**	
• **Access to running water**	Available prior to and after the competition only.
• **Provided at Workspace for Judge Evaluation**	
• **Acrylic frame for presentation menu**	Menu must be placed in frame and displayed prior to beginning Team Introduction and Menu Presentation.
• **Two (2), 2 oz. containers for Knife Skills selections**	Knife cuts for judging must be presented within the first 20 minutes of production.

Teams must provide ALL necessary supplies to prepare the food they have selected, such as small utensils, cutting boards, knives, small hand tools, cookware, hair/beard nets, gloves, and enough cloths for competition and clean-up.

Culinary Station Blueprint



Note: This is a sample layout. The locations of tables, doorways, observer spaces, etc. are subject to change; however, general configuration will remain consistent. Image not to scale.

Area	Description & Specifications
(A) Competition Floor	• This area falls outside of the team's Culinary Station Workspace. • Teams may access this area to use handwashing station ONLY. • Floor judges have access to this space.
(B) Presentation Staging Area (~2.5 ft. wide)	• Space designated for presentation trays. • No equipment is allowed in this area (space is not marked). • Tray jacks will be set within the final ten (10) minutes of production.
(C) Culinary Station Workspace (10 ft. x 10 ft.)	• All materials must be inside this designated area. • Teams may store equipment under and around the tables, but storage should not impede movement. • Teams may not move doorway or tables in the workspace at any point. • Team Managers may not enter this space.
(D) Two Tables (8 ft long x 36 in height)	• Covered with fire-retardant materials for consistency across stations. (Covers must remain in place during competition.) • Set up in "L" formation.
(E) Team Manager Workspace	• Team members are not allowed in this space. • Judges and Team Ambassadors may access this space.

Evaluation Criteria, Penalties and Disqualifications

Evaluation criteria for each judging category, Culinary penalties, and general- and Culinary-specific disqualifications are included in the Sample Culinary Competition Score Sheet (Appendix 1).

CULINARY COMPETITION RULES

Team Proposal Submission

Each team must prepare a packet of materials that allows judges to review preparation and execution of the meal on a menu. Teams are required to provide the following, with specifications, procedures and deadlines in the next sections:

- A digital packet with the required documentation prior to the competition.
- Eight hard-copy folders to be turned in at Product Check-in for in-person judge review.
- One presentation menu to bring with team equipment upon Report to Competition and displayed at their assigned station.

Materials Formatting

- The digital and hard copy proposals should be identical.
- All materials should be typed and submitted on 8½" x 11" sized documents.
- All pages should be single sided.
- All documentation must use the official templates provided in the rules exhibits.

Materials Requirements

Materials must be organized in this order for all courses. Presentation menu only needs to be included once at the beginning of the packet. Teams will receive a penalty if documents are not arranged in the correct order.

Item	Requirements
Presentation Menu	• School name prominently placed at the top of the page • Menu item descriptions • Menu item prices • Two (2) knife cuts and two (2) cooking methods selected for judging in the footer • Creative elements may be included but should not obstruct required components
Recipes (Exhibit B)	• All recipes used for any element of the meal presentation • Acknowledgements and sources listed in MLA formatting • Written in a logical sequence
Recipe Costing (Exhibit C)	• Recipe cost must be calculated for each individual recipe • Small amounts of kosher/table salt and black pepper may be priced at 1% of the total recipe cost • Oil for deep frying may be priced at 2% of the total recipe cost • Everything else must be costed out, including garden-grown ingredients
Menu Pricing (Exhibit D)	• One menu price worksheet for each course • Calculations should be based on the recipe's costs and calculated at a 33% food cost percentage • Final calculation before rounding must be indicated in the costing template • Total menu price for the entire menu may not exceed $125 after applying the 33% food cost percentage

Item	Requirements
Plate Photographs	• Color photographs only • Photos should be large enough to fill the page • One photo/dish per page • Photos must be of the team's own plated dishes; stock photos and AI-generated images are not allowed

Proposal Submission Requirements

Digital Submission

Submit all proposal materials as one PDF document to chamm@ncrla.org by **Friday, February 5, 2027 at midnight.**

Minor corrections and adjustments are permitted after submission; major changes are not allowed. Review the Standard of Change section or contact chamm@ncrla.org if you have questions regarding whether a change is considered minor.

Teams making revisions after the initial submission must include a change summary page that identifies all changes and the page number where each change was made. Revised digital proposals should be submitted to chamm@ncrla.org by **Friday, February 26, 2027.**

Any team that does not submit a proposal by February 12, 2027 will not be allowed to participate and will forfeit its registration fee. Proposals submitted after February 5 are late and receive the proposal penalty.

Hard-Copy Submission (submitted at Product Check-in on March 7)

- Submit eight (8) identical hard copy packets for judge review.
- Hard copy must match the final digital submission.
- Display the team's school name and competition year on each cover.
- Use softbound binders or folders only. (See Exhibit A for examples)
- Do not use plastic page protectors or pockets, as they hinder judges' ability to review and provide feedback.

Presentation menu for display in Production is NOT submitted at check-in.

Please review the Culinary Competition Checklist for competition deadlines, proposal outline, and other general competition requirements.

Standard of Change and Proposal Review

To promote student-led innovation and creativity, team submissions must represent original work and may not be significantly repetitive of materials submitted to NCPI within the previous three competition years.

The NCRLA Foundation will review all proposals for originality and adherence to the Standard of Change. Feedback will be provided to teams no later than **Friday, February 12, 2027 at midnight**, allowing sufficient time for required revisions prior to competition. Revised digital proposals must be submitted to chamm@ncrla.org by **Friday, February 26, 2027.**

Meal Component	Required Changes from Previous NCPI Submissions
Starter	• Protein or cooking method must change. • Vegetable or cooking method must change. • Starch or cooking method must change. • Presentation must be visibly different.
Entrée	• Protein or cooking method must change. • Vegetable or cooking method must change. • Starch or cooking method must change. • Presentation must be visibly different.
Dessert	• Base must change (e.g., mousse, Bavarian, tart, cake, etc.). • Garnish components or processing must change (e.g., whole raspberry vs. coulis). • Presentation must be visibly different.

Teams are encouraged to review the Standard of Change during menu development. Work, or portions of work, that is significantly repetitive of a previous NCPI submission within the last three years will require a revision, which must be resubmitted by February 26, 2027.

Product Check-In

Not Timed | 5 points

Product Check-in is the first segment of the competition, occurring on **Sunday, March 7, 2027**, the day before the Production Day. Teams will reserve their scheduled Product Check-in timeframe prior to attending the event. Teams must report at their confirmed day/time. All team members must be present and in uniform. The Team Manager is allowed to fully participate in the Product Check-in segment.

Teams will:

- Present their dry and refrigerated ingredients for review
- Turn in ingredients for storage until their assigned competition time
- Review meal presentation dishes
- Submit menu presentation folders
- Receive uniform elements for use in competition
- Receive feedback for this segment immediately

Policies and Procedures

- The team's two (2) designated adult supporters (educators and/or mentors) may **observe only**, from a designated area, during the entire Product Check-in process.
- Parents, chaperones, and/or any other team supporters are not allowed to observe any portion of Product Check-in.
- Food and/or drinks unrelated to a team's ingredient check-in are prohibited.
- Failure to comply with Event Organizer and Judge instructions, or any form of communication or coaching will result in team disqualification.

Submission Specifications

All ingredients must be turned in at Product Check-in.

- Dry ingredients must be submitted and stored in a single container
- Refrigerated product will be placed on the provided speed rack

Complete printed product inventory lists must be placed on ALL containers holding food items. Inventory lists must:

- Be attached to both the inside AND outside of containers
- Be placed in plastic sleeves to protect from damage
- Include every item in the container, in alphabetical order
- Be submitted on the official Inventory Template (Exhibit E)

Each team's food is placed in an appropriate and secure location at the competition site until the team's designated report time.

SEGMENT NOTES

- Teams are responsible for storing and safeguarding their ingredients until they are checked in at Product Check-In, and their equipment until Report to Competition.
- Cooler access is not available until check-in.
- Freezer storage is not provided at all.
- Refrigerated products are limited to one speed rack.
- Teams will receive: one speed rack, four full size sheet pans, aprons, beanies, Team Manager armband, and selected dishware (for review only).
- All items above are required for the duration of competition. With the exception of additional sheet pans, teams may not bring/use their own items.
- All other equipment must be provided by the team.
- Equipment and presentation menu are not submitted at check-in.
- Teams must review dishes for accuracy and cleanliness. Substitutions are allowed at the discretion of Judges and Event Organizers, based on a case-by-case basis and pending availability.

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Unauthorized coaching or communication.
- Team did not compete in a required segment.

Permitted Ingredients

- Team-prepared stocks
- Team-prepared clarified butter
- Team-prepared pre-soaked beans
- Dry goods, open but in the original packaging/not premeasured
- Pre-measured butter and oil
- Pre-washed produce (may also be washed during Mise en Place)
- Dry ice
- Spray pumps

Prohibited Ingredients

- Pre-chopped, pre-sliced, or pre-prepared food not commercially manufactured
- Meat, poultry, seafood that is not in original or commercial/professional labeled packaging

- Reductions, finished sauces, and clarified broths
- Items that risk food illness
- Pre-measured dry goods
- Sprays that use compressed air/aerosol as propellant or require electric or battery power to operate, including pan sprays (except pump-operated sprays).

Ingredient Specifications and Review

Packaging	Produce and proteins must be submitted in the manner in which it was purchased. Products must remain in original, professionally/commercially labeled packaging. They must be properly contained with no leaking or pooling liquids. Repackaged ingredients are not permitted.
Required Label Information	Labels must include item type, weight, packaging date, and source (e.g., grocery store, butcher shop, etc.)
Ingredient Approval	Ingredients that do not meet competition requirements (e.g., temperature, packaging, prohibited items) will be discarded.
Replacement Products	Disallowed ingredients may be replaced and resubmitted for approval before the team's assigned report time. If it does not meet requirements, it will be discarded.

SEGMENT NOTES

- Any items not listed on the permitted list are prohibited even if not on the prohibited list.
- All refrigerated products must be stored on the speed rack in the cooler.
- Each team's food is placed in an appropriate and secure location at the competition site until the team's designated report time.
- Follow your school guidelines concerning alcohol in your recipes. NCPI permits the use of alcohol for Culinary Competition recipes.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Missing required folders at check-in — 2 pts
- Dish request form not submitted by February 26, 2027 — 5 pts
- Replacement product did not meet requirements and was discarded — 2 pts
- Team not in uniform — 5 pts
- Use of prohibited ingredients — 5 pts

Uniform Requirements

Element	Specifications	When to Wear
Chef Coat	White, Long-Sleeved Sponsor names and/or logos are permitted; chef coat must remain white	All Segments
Pants	Loose, Long, Black or Checkered Must pull away from body by at least 1 in.	All Segments
Shoes	Black, hard sole, non-slip, non-porous, closed toe AND heel	All Segments
Apron & Hat	MUST wear items provided	Production Day
Mgr. Armband	MUST wear item provided	Production Day

Teams should refer and adhere to ServSafe standards as they relate to uniform and hygiene in the workspace to include: Hair completely covered, facial piercings taped over, no jewelry or accessories.

Report to Competition

15 Minutes | Not Scored (Penalty assessed for late arrival)

On Production Day (March 8), teams must arrive at their assigned Report to Competition time. Teams who arrive more than 15 minutes early may be instructed to leave the area and return at their assigned report time. Teams who arrive late lose points (see Related Penalties below).

Teams will:

- Meet their NCRLA Foundation-assigned Team Ambassador, who will escort them through the event facility and will time each segment of competition
- Retrieve dry good containers and speed rack with refrigerated ingredients and dishes
- Take ingredients and equipment to a holding area and the competition floor

Policies and Procedures

- NCPI name badges are not required during competition. Upon reporting, team members should give their name badges to their educator or mentor (no further communication is allowed).
- While in the holding area, teams may organize their equipment and speed racks. If they do not finish before being called to the competition floor, they may finish organizing during Mise en Place.

SEGMENT NOTES

- Once teams report, they are not allowed to communicate with or receive assistance from anyone outside of Event Organizers, Judges, Assigned Team Ambassador.

RELATED PENALTIES

- A ½-point penalty will be assessed for every 15 seconds a team arrives after its assigned report time. More than 10 minutes late results in disqualification.

Team Presentation & Menu Introduction

5 Minutes | 5 points (assessed with Knife Skills)

Teams will:

- Display their presentation menu in the provided acrylic frame
- Introduce themselves and present menu to judges:
  - Describe the three (3) course meal
  - Explain how they designed their unique menu
  - Explain what each team member is charged with executing

SEGMENT NOTES

- Teams may start to organize their station before their introduction begins, but may not move tables or presentation staging area.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Team not in uniform — 5 pts
- Presentation menu not displayed correctly or on time — 1 pt
- Started segment early or finished segment late — ¼ to 10 pts (¼ pt per 15 seconds)

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Team arrives more than 10 minutes late.
- Unauthorized coaching or communication.
- Failed to compete in a required segment.
- Started or finished segment 10 or more minutes early or late.

Mise en Place

20 Minutes | Evaluations considered in category critiques

Teams will:

- Set up station for meal production; organize equipment/ingredients
- Check burner functionality
- Measure dry and liquid ingredients; put ingredients together in bowls (without combining or mixing)
- Obtain water/ice from designated area; wash produce at washing station (escorted by Team Ambassador)

Policies and Procedures

- Teams may not alter, process, or transform ingredients beyond their original state, or perform any tasks beyond what is permitted during Mise en Place.
- After Mise en Place, team members may only leave the workstation to use the handwashing stations. Other requests to leave the workstation must be approved by a competition official.
- Large containers or items may not be larger than 2 ft x 4 ft x 3 ft. Stacked containers may not exceed dimensions, may not be used to create additional workspace, and may not block station entryway.

Equipment

Category	Permitted	Not Permitted
Workspace Storage & Prep	• Additional sheet pans	• Plastic or Plexiglass for covering tables • Additional speed racks or luggage carts

Category	Permitted	Not Permitted
Burners & Heat Sources	• Camping oven and/or smoker attachments for provided burner • Metal, stone, or other types of plates or apparatus to extend cooking surface • Handheld butane/propane for FINISHING & CARAMELIZING only (must bring own fuel)	• Additional burners or butane fuel (except handhelds) • Additional heat sources (e.g., insulated bags, MRE heat packs, etc.)
Meal Production	• Dry ice • Handheld whipped cream chargers • Digital scales • Digital thermometers • Cutters, slicers, spiralizers, etc., for decorative cuts (e.g., crinkle, waffle, ribbon, noodle)	• Electric, battery-operated, or compressed air/aerosol or gas devices, including pan sprays (except pump-operated sprays) • Mandolines, cutters, choppers, etc., for uniform cuts (e.g., dices, minces, and cuts from the evaluation list) • Cutting guides or measurement aids
Electronic Devices	• Devices with no communication abilities (basic calculator or timer) • Audio recording device for feedback sessions only	• Cell phones, tablets, smart watches, meta glasses or other internet-connected communication devices, unless needed for health reasons.

SEGMENT NOTES

- Teams must carry all containers, along with their dry ingredients and speed rack, without assistance from anyone, in one trip, from report to competition to station.
- All equipment can be stored on or under tables, or around the station perimeter. Containers may be stacked.
- Ingredients may be stored on speed rack or on tables as needed.
- Students who need electronic devices for health reasons should email their request in advance to chamm@ncrla.org. Event Organizers will confirm the accommodation with appropriate event personnel.
- All equipment must be used in a safe manner and must not obstruct proper butane function.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Team manager touches or handles any equipment or food (with the exception of permitted tasting) — 5 pts
- Started segment early or finished segment late — ¼ to 10 pts (¼ pt per 15 seconds)
- Used prohibited equipment — 5 pts
- Used prohibited ingredients — 5 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Unauthorized coaching or communication.
- Failed to compete in a required segment.
- Started or finished segment 10 or more minutes early or late.
- Used prohibited electrical equipment or heat source.

Production

60 Minutes | Evaluations considered in category critiques

Each team must cook and plate two (2) identical, three (3) course meals consisting of a starter, entrée and dessert. The NCRLA Foundation-assigned Team Ambassador will announce the time at regular intervals, becoming more frequent towards the end of meal production.

- Teams must demonstrate proficiency in two (2) cooking methods, with one (1) method selected by Event Organizers. Teams will choose a second method for judge evaluation from the approved list below.
- Both the required cooking method and the team-selected cooking method must be listed in the footer of the presentation menu, and must be used in the meal.
- Additional cooking methods and techniques are permitted in addition to the required cook methods.
- Molecular Gastronomy such as spherification, foams, and meat glue (transglutaminase) is allowed; Liquid nitrogen is prohibited.

Required Cooking Method	Shallow Poach
Approved Cooking Methods	Braise, Pan Fry, Poach, Steam, Sauté

Production segment ends when food is plated, dishes are placed on service trays, and all team members have stepped away and raised their hands.

SEGMENT NOTES

- Team is responsible for knowing their start time and be ready to begin when start is announced.
- Teams may present their final dishes up to three (3) minutes before the scheduled production end time without penalty.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Started segment early or finished segment late — ¼ to 10 pts (¼ pt per 15 seconds)
- Used prohibited equipment — 5 pts
- Used prohibited ingredients — 5 pts
- Team manager touches or handles any equipment or food (with the exception of permitted tasting) — 5 pts
- Team uses unapproved dish/glassware — 5 pts
- Did not use required/approved cooking method(s) — 1 pt

Knife Skills

First 20 Minutes | 10 points w/ Team & Menu Presentation

Teams must demonstrate two (2) of eight (8) knife cuts from the list below.

- Knife cuts for evaluation must be demonstrated in the first 20 minutes of production time.
- Teams must set aside and fill a two (2) oz. cup volume measurement for each knife cut for evaluation in the designated workspace area.
- Knife cuts may only be demonstrated on fruits, vegetables, or herbs.
- Selected knife cuts must be listed in the footer of the presentation menu, and must be used in the meal.
- Additional cuts are permitted in addition to the selected cuts.

Knife Cut	Description
Rondelle	¼" thick disc shaped slices
Diagonal	¼" thick oval shaped slices
Batonnet	Cut into long, thin, rectangular pieces ¼" x ¼" x 2"
Julienne	Cut into long, thin, rectangular pieces 1/8" x 1/8" x 2"
Brunoise	Very small dice 1/8" x 1/8" x 1/8"
Paysanne	Square cut ½" x ½" x 1/8"
Chiffonade	Leafy green vegetables stacked, rolled tightly, and then cut into long thin strips. Width approx. 1/8"
Tourne	Football shape, seven equal sides, flat ended ¾" dia. x 2" long

SEGMENT NOTES

- Cutting guides or measurement aids are not permitted.
- Judges will observe and evaluate knife cuts on a rotation. Teams do not need to notify judges when they are complete.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Knife cuts not listed on menu — 1 pt
- Unapproved knife cuts presented — 1 pt

Post-Production: Category Critiques, Cleanup & Dishwashing

60 Minutes | Evaluations considered in category critiques

After production, teams receive feedback from production category judges and clean up their stations before dismissal.

Teams will:

- Designate which set of plates will be evaluated by tasting judges and which will be for display
- Transport both trays and presentation menus to the tasting room
- Return to station for Judge critiques from:
  - Work Skills/Organization – 5 minutes
  - Team Presentation & Knife Skills – 5 minutes
- Return to the tasting room for Judge critiques from:
  - Tasting – Starter, Entrée, Dessert – 10 minutes
  - Menu and Recipe – 5 minutes
- Deliver display plates to the photo station
- Return to station for clean up – 20 minutes
- Receive Judge critiques from Safety & Sanitation – 5 minutes
- Complete Dishwashing segment (optional) – 15 minutes

Policies and Procedures

- The Lead Judge and Team Ambassadors will escort teams to the tasting room. Team Ambassadors will track time and ensure teams remain on time for all Judge critique segments.
- Tasting judges will have ten (10) minutes to evaluate plates.
- A maximum of two (2) people (the team's designated educator(s) and/or mentor) may observe only during Tasting and Menu & Recipe critiques. Communication with the team is still prohibited.
- During station clean up, teams must clean and pack all items to be taken to dishwashing or dismissal. Stations must be left in the same condition as the start of competition in preparation for the next team.
- Teams may not leave the competition area until they are dismissed by the Safety & Sanitation judges.
- Dishwashing is an optional, unscored segment of the competition. Teams may opt out of dishwashing and go straight to dismissal. Team Ambassadors will confirm the team's selection at Report to Competition.
- Teams who opt to go to dishwashing have fifteen (15) minutes to thoroughly rinse dishes and utensils. All food debris should be scraped into the trash on the competition floor BEFORE going to dishwashing to avoid clogging the venue sinks.
- Teams will be dismissed when they have returned their speed rack and sheet pans to the designated area.

Post Competition

Softbound folders and presentation menu must be picked up by 7 pm on Monday, March 8, 2027 or the Event Organizers will dispose of unclaimed materials. Report to the registration desk with a team member's badge to claim the team folders. The NCRLA Foundation will retain one folder from each team.

SEGMENT NOTES

- Teams must produce two identical meals. There should not be a major variance between the two sets of plates.
- Evaluation plates receive the most critical judging.
- Team Manager may carry the framed menu to tasting room.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Started segment early or finished segment late — ¼ to 10 pts (¼ pt per 15 seconds)
- Used prohibited equipment and/or ingredients — 5 pts
- Team manager touches or handles any equipment or food (with the exception of permitted tasting) — 5 pts
- Team uses unapproved dish/glassware — 5 pts
- Meals not identical — 2 pts
- Did not use required/approved cooking method(s) — 1 pt
- Cooking methods not listed on menu — 1 pt
- Menu differed from approved proposal — 5 pts
- Station left in an unsanitary manner — 3 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Unauthorized coaching or communication.
- Failed to compete in a required segment.
- Started or finished segment 10 or more minutes early or late.
- Team did not produce two (2) complete meals.

MANAGEMENT COMPETITION

Management Competition Overview

Teams will demonstrate their knowledge of the restaurant and foodservice industry by developing a new restaurant concept and presenting it to a panel of judges at a simulated business exposition. The teams will also submit a written proposal for review and will present their concepts to various groups of judges through verbal presentations, question and answer periods, and posters.

- Mentors and educators may assist teams in preparation for the competition; however, they may not prepare the written materials or posters. Their expertise is limited to acting as a sounding board for concept development.
- Each team will be assigned a booth space at a simulated trade show, where they will set up to demonstrate their restaurant concept. They will present their restaurant concept to judges as they rotate throughout the competition floor.

Concept Components	Description & Specifications
Written Proposal	• Restaurant Concept Description (2 pages maximum) • Floorplan and Selected Restaurant Space Scenario (1 page maximum) • Interior and Décor (2 pages maximum) • SWOT Analysis (1 page maximum) • Organizational Chart (1 page maximum) • Menu (1 page maximum) • Recipes • Costing • Menu Pricing • Photographs (2 pages maximum) • Two Marketing Tactics (2 pages maximum per tactic, including sample)
Posters	• Two (2) 24x36 inch posters • Entirely flat and may not include 3-dimensional objects • Poster one (1) – sample menu and floorplan • Poster two (2) – one marketing tactic and tactic ROI • If using a social media tactic – a QR code that leads directly to the posted tactic is allowed, but an image of the tactic must be included

- Restaurant Concept must be located in ProStartville, USA. The strongest concepts use the selected location as an advantage.

Teams should use the demographic, economic, and location information provided to develop a concept that responds to the needs of the ProStartville community. Strong proposals will demonstrate how the restaurant's menu, target market, operations, staffing, marketing, and financial strategy align with the opportunities presented by the city's residents, visitors, businesses, and attractions.

While every team works within the same ProStartville framework, creativity is encouraged in how teams bring their concept to life and position it for success within the community.

About ProStartville, USA

Population	275,508	Year-Over-Year Population Change	+2.6%

ProStartville, USA is a fictional city created exclusively for the National ProStart Invitational (NPSI) and used for NCPI. The geographic location of ProStartville is at the discretion of each team, allowing competitors to creatively position their concept in the region of the country that best supports their restaurant vision. While fictional, ProStartville is designed to reflect the opportunities and challenges of a vibrant, growing American community.

Home to a diverse mix of families, students, and young professionals, ProStartville features a thriving arts and entertainment scene, a large university with a strong athletic program, an international airport, and a collection of unique neighborhoods that each contribute to the city's character and culture. Together, these elements create a dynamic environment in which a variety of restaurant concepts can succeed.

Demographic Profile

Median Age	31.8 years	Gender	49% Male • 51% Female
Age Distribution	0–9: 8% • 10–19: 12% • 20–29: 26% • 30–39: 16% • 40–49: 11% • 50–59: 10% • 60–69: 9% • 70+: 8%	Families	33% of population
Foreign-Born Population	13%	Median Household Income	$76,817
Civilian Labor Force Participation	65%	High School Graduate or Higher (Age 25+)	96%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher (Age 25+)	59%		

- Teams will select one (1) of the four (4) provided restaurant space scenarios. Teams may enhance their selected scenario but the team may not change the set parameters. For example, a team selects the freestanding option but explains that many of the offices are actually open seven days a week so it's always busy.

Scenario	Location Description	Advantages	Considerations
Freestanding	Located on Main Street between the county courthouse and the ProStartville Community Center.	High visibility; strong daytime foot traffic.	Business district activity may result in slower evenings and weekends.
Airport	Located in Concourse B of ProStartville International Airport, beyond TSA security.	Consistent traveler traffic; strong seasonal demand.	Customer base is limited primarily to travelers and airport employees.

Scenario	Location Description	Advantages	Considerations
Food Truck	Mobile operation that can serve multiple locations and events throughout ProStartville.	Maximum flexibility to reach customers where demand is highest.	Limited workspace and storage require efficient operations and dependable staff.
Strip Mall	Located near the university alongside a nail salon, craft store, bank, and other developing businesses.	Benefits from university traffic and growing commercial activity.	Increased visitor traffic may create parking challenges.

The Management team may collaborate with their school's Culinary team on the menu and recipe items, including recipe development, costing, pricing and photography.

Competition Segments and Scoring

Segment	Time (in minutes)	Possible Points
Pre-Presentation Day (March 7)		
Materials Check-In	Open check-in during allotted timeframe	5
Presentation Day (March 8)		
Report and Setup	5	
Concept	10	30
Menu	10	35
Break	10	
Marketing	10	40
Critical Thinking A	10	55 (total)
Critical Thinking B	10	
Operations	10	30
Break	10	
Menu & Costing	10	5
Break	5	
Judge Feedback	10	
Totals	**~1 hour, 50 minutes**	**200 points**

In the event of a tie:

- The tied team with the highest number of Critical Thinking points will be awarded one (1) additional point to break the tie.
- Teams will only be evaluated on information and materials requested in these rules.
- If a team has scores from multiple rounds of judging in a single segment, the scores will be averaged (e.g., two (2) rounds of critical thinking).

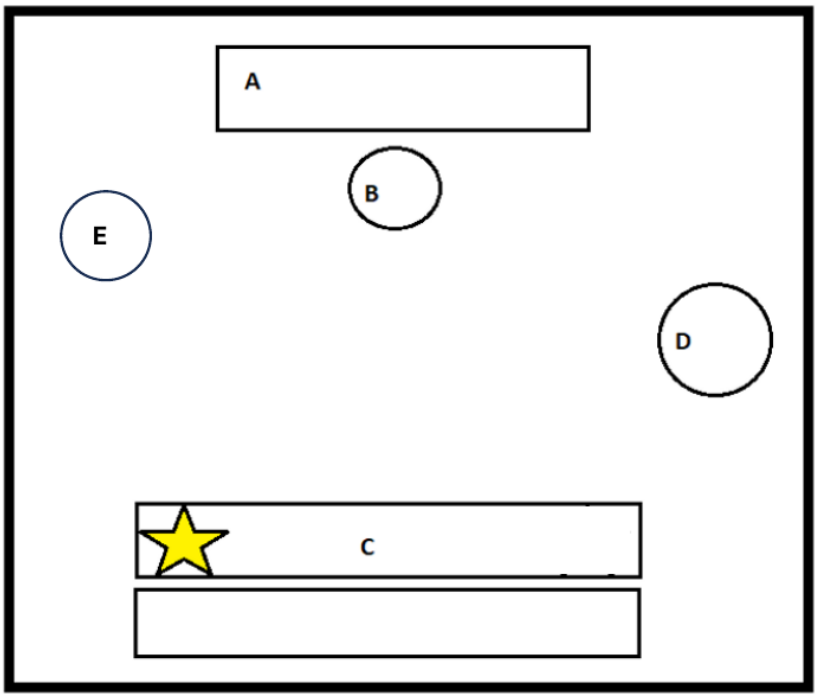
Competition Schedules

Competition schedules will be distributed in advance of the event once all teams have been identified. The schedule will include assigned start and finish times for all competition segments. All schedules are subject to change and will be communicated with as much advance notice as possible. (See Appendix 2 for sample)

Equipment & Workspace

Item	Notes
Provided at Presentation Booth	
Eight (8) binder clips	Used to affix posters to the competition booth More binder clips are available upon request

Management Station Blueprint



Area	Description & Specifications
(A) Competition Booth	• Teams will remain at their booths from the time they report and setup until the competition is over, and they are escorted to judge feedback. • During competition, each judge category grouping will rotate between all teams.
(B) Team Table	• Teams' two (2) posters and copies of three (3) proposals will be placed here prior to report and setup.

Area	Description & Specifications
(C) Spectator Seating	• Outermost front-row seat reserved for Team Ambassador.
(D) Judge High-Top Tables	• Reserved for judges to discuss and enter notes in between category rotations. • Please refrain from placing any personal items on these tables.
(E) Team Manager	• Team Manager designated seating area in the booth.

Evaluation Criteria, Penalties and Disqualifications

Evaluation criteria for each judging category, Management penalties, and general- and Management-specific disqualifications are included in the Sample Management Competition Score Sheet (Appendix 2).

MANAGEMENT COMPETITION RULES

Team Proposal Submission

Each team must create a written proposal that allows judges to review preparation and execution of the restaurant concept. Teams are required to provide the following, with specifications, procedures and deadlines in the next sections:

- A digital, written version of the concept proposal with the required documentation prior to the competition.
- Fifteen (15) identical printed copies to be turned in at Materials Check-In for in-person judge review.
- One manila folder with the school name and an additional copy of the sample menu, recipes, photographs, and costing and menu pricing worksheets.
- Two (2) posters for display in their booth.

Materials Formatting

- The digital and hard copy proposals must be identical.
- All fifteen (15) printed copies must be identical.
- Typed, 12 point, Times New Roman or Arial font, 1-inch margins.
- Printed on 8 ½" x 11" white paper, double-sided, and stapled (not in a folder, spiral bound, binder, etc.).
- Front cover must include only the following information: school name, names of team members, concept name, concept logo, and year. Style and font of the cover page should match the contents.
- Sections should be separated by tabs, with each tab labeled with its corresponding section. When assembling, teams should print each section of their proposal rather than printing the entire proposal at once. This will better allow for tabs to separate each section. Note: Tabs do not need to be a single page; they may be attached to proposal pages.
- All documentation must be on the official templates provided in the rules exhibits.

Materials Requirements

All packets must include the following documents and all the listed elements. Teams should utilize Foundations of Restaurant Management & Culinary Arts Levels 1 and 2 when crafting their written proposals. Definitions, explanations, and examples of complex topics are included throughout the curriculum and can provide sufficient background knowledge for teams to develop unique and creative concepts. Additional research and use of outside resources is also encouraged.

Item	Requirements
Restaurant Concept Description (Maximum two (2) pages)	• Type of establishment • Purpose and impact • Meals served (breakfast, lunch, dinner, etc.) • Hours of operation • Type of cuisine served • Target market within the fictional city of ProStartville (defining characteristics, demographics, business/leisure, etc.)
Floorplan and Selected Restaurant Space Scenario (Maximum one (1) page) (Exhibit G)	• Identify restaurant space scenario: Freestanding, Airport, Food Truck, Strip Mall • Basic floorplan of the restaurant's layout – front of house and back of house required • Handwritten or electronically diagrammed • As close to scale as possible – scale will not be judged • Convey the restaurant's flow and inclusion of features necessary to run a restaurant
Interior and Décor (Maximum two (2) pages)	• Description of interior and décor for the restaurant concept • May include photos, samples of paint, etc. • Entirely flat and printed on paper
SWOT Analysis (Maximum one (1) page)	• Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats analysis
Organizational Chart (Maximum one (1) page) (Exhibit H)	• List of positions necessary to staff the restaurant • Demonstration of the reporting structure for the restaurant • It is not mandatory to include how many staff will fill each position • Charts should not be hand drawn
Menu (Maximum one (1) page)	• Must support restaurant concept • Includes exactly twelve (12) menu items • Representative of how information would be communicated to customers • Must include pricing • Even if a team has developed a build-your-own concept, the 12 menu items must all be composed dishes with static ingredients • Dishes should exemplify a team's unique concept • Menu items that offer ingredient choices or substitutions will result in a penalty for the menu containing fewer or greater than twelve (12) menu items
Recipes (No page limit) (Exhibit B)	• Recipes for the same one (1) of the twelve (12) menu items • Use official template • Must include acknowledgements and sources in MLA format • Must be written in logical sequence

Item	Requirements
Costing (No page limit) (Exhibit C)	• Costing information for the same one (1) of the twelve (12) menu items • Use official template • All items printed single sided • Must include acknowledgements and sources in MLA format • Recipe cost must be calculated for each individual recipe • Small amounts of kosher/table salt and black pepper may be priced at 1% of the total recipe cost • Oil for deep frying may be priced at 2% of the total recipe cost • Everything else must be costed out, including garden-grown ingredients
Menu Pricing (No page limit) (Exhibit D)	• Prices for the same one (1) of the twelve (12) menu items • Use official template • Calculated at 33% food cost percentage • May be rounded up after applying the 33% food cost percentage for a more realistic price • Final calculation before rounding must be indicated
Photographs (Maximum two (2) pages)	• Prepare and photograph at least one (1), and up to four (4), menu items • Must be made by the team • Should not be stock photo, AI-generated images, clip art, or other published images

Item	Requirements
Marketing Tactics (Maximum two (2) pages per tactic, including sample)	• Present two (2) traditional tactics or one (1) traditional and one (1) social media tactic • Include tactic description, tactic goal, detailed budget with associated costs (use local rates, list rate sources), ROI, paper-based sample • At least one traditional tactic from the list below: – Print or digital ad – mockup of ad – Radio commercial – script – TV commercial – storyboard – Public relations campaign – sample press release – Promotional giveaway items – photo or mockup – Email or mail campaign – email text and mockup of accompanying artwork • The other tactic may be traditional or social media: – Video (20-second limit) – Submitted via email to chamm@ncrla.org with the management proposal. A QR code on the paper-based sample must lead directly to the posted video – Promotional post – Submitted via email to chamm@ncrla.org with the management proposal along with a screenshot on paper-based sample. A QR code on the paper-based sample must lead directly to the posted promotional post – Specific to one (1) social media platform (Instagram or Facebook) – Use the following cost-per-click amount (the amount team spends per the cost of each click the ad receives): Instagram – $1.53 per click; Facebook – $0.51 per click • All content produced by the team but may feature an influencer • Enlisting the services of a PR firm or 3rd party agency is strictly prohibited • Required Return on Investment (ROI) formula: (Return [profit] – investment [expense]) / investment [expense] x 100
One (1) Manila Folder	• Sample menu • Recipes • Photographs • Costing and menu pricing worksheets • Label with school name
Two (2) Posters	• 24” x 36” in size • Must be entirely flat • May not include 3-dimensional objects • Should be able to be rolled up when fully constructed • Poster one (1): Sample menu; Floorplan • Poster two (2): One marketing tactic and tactic ROI

Proposal Submission Requirements

Digital Submission

Submit all proposal materials as one PDF document to chamm@ncrla.org by **Friday, February 5, 2027 at midnight.**

If a team elects to use a social media marketing reel or post, submit it by email to chamm@ncrla.org by **Friday, February 5, 2027.**

Minor corrections and adjustments are permitted after submission; major changes are not allowed. Review the Standard of Change section or contact chamm@ncrla.org if you have questions regarding whether a change is considered minor.

Any team that does not submit a proposal by February 12, 2027 will not be allowed to participate and will forfeit its registration fee. Proposals submitted after February 5 are late and receive the proposal penalty.

Hard-Copy Submission (submitted at Materials Check-In on March 7)

- Submit fifteen (15) identical hard copy packets for judge review (3 will be placed in booth for competition)
- One (1) manila folder with school name on front and include: sample menu, recipes, photographs, costing and menu pricing worksheets
- Two (2) Posters

Please review the Management Competition Checklist for competition deadlines, proposal outline, and other general competition requirements.

Standard of Change and Proposal Review

To promote student-led innovation and creativity, team submissions must represent original work and may not be significantly repetitive of materials submitted to NCPI within the previous three competition years.

The NCRLA Foundation will review all proposals for originality and adherence to the Standard of Change. Feedback will be provided to teams no later than **Friday, February 12, 2027 at midnight**, allowing sufficient time for required revisions prior to competition. Revised digital proposals must be submitted to chamm@ncrla.org by **Friday, February 26, 2027.**

Requirement	Expectations	Notes/Deadlines
Proposal Originality	All eleven (11) components of the Management concept proposal must be unique and not significantly repetitive of work submitted to NCPI within the previous three years.	Failure to meet the Standard of Change will require a revision.
Proposal Changes	Teams making revisions after the initial submission must include a change summary page immediately following the cover page. The summary must identify all changes and the page number where each change was made.	Required with any revised proposal submission.
Video or Promotional Post Submission	Teams must submit their required video or promotional post by email to chamm@ncrla.org.	February 5, 2027
Revised Proposal Submission	Teams must submit a digital copy of the revised proposal, including annotated changes, to chamm@ncrla.org for advance judge review.	February 26, 2027

Requirement	Expectations	Notes/Deadlines
Judge Review	Revised proposals will be provided to judges prior to the competition to facilitate evaluation and feedback.	The NCRLA Foundation will distribute materials after the February 26 deadline.

Teams are encouraged to review the Standard of Change during menu development. Work, or portions of work, that is significantly repetitive of a previous NCPI submission within the last three years will require a revision, which must be resubmitted by February 26, 2027.

Materials Check-In

Not Timed | 5 points

Materials Check-In is the first segment of the competition, occurring on **Sunday, March 7, 2027**, the day before team presentations. Teams will reserve their scheduled Materials Check-In timeframe prior to attending the event. Teams must report at their confirmed time. All team members must be present and in uniform. The Team Manager is expected to fully participate in the Materials Check-In segment.

Teams will:

- Submit their fifteen (15) written proposals
- Submit one (1) manila folder with school name, sample menu, recipes, photograph(s), costing and menu pricing worksheets
- Submit two (2) 24” x 36” posters, rolled for storage

Policies and Procedures

- The team’s two (2) designated adult supporters (educators and/or mentors) may observe only, from a designated area, during the entire Materials Check-In process.
- Parents, chaperones, and/or any other team supporters are not allowed to observe any portion of Materials Check-In.
- Food and/or drinks unrelated to a team’s check-in are prohibited.

SEGMENT NOTES

- Teams are responsible for storing and safeguarding all materials until they are checked in at Materials Check-In.
- Teams will receive ProStart Pins (only if uniform does not include ProStart logo).
- Any team that arrives to check-in with incomplete items has until the end of the check-in time to resubmit completed items.
- Items not submitted by close of check-in time will not be accepted at a later time.
- Judging and scoring is based on the initial check-in by the team.
- Judges will not provide feedback on content at this time and will only notify teams of completion status.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Team not dressed in uniform — 5 pts
- Posters do not meet specifications or include additional information — 5 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Team does not check in for Materials Check-In on time or at all.

Uniform Requirements

Element	Specifications	When to Wear
Dress Shirt	Collared, solid color, ¾- or long-sleeved Only ProStart logo and sponsor names are permitted; no other logos are permitted – including concept logos	All Segments
Dress Pants or Skirts	Appropriate and professional Khakis allowed; jeans prohibited	All Segments
Shoes	Professional, suitable for business meeting, closed toe and heel, heel height no more than three (3) inches	All Segments
ProStart Logo	Positioned on right or left chest Printed on shirt OR NCRLA Foundation-provided pin, if uniform does not include ProStart logo	Presentation Day
Mgr. Armband	MUST wear item provided	Presentation Day

SEGMENT NOTES

- Neckware of any sort (e.g., necktie, bowtie, bolo tie, etc.) should not be worn.
- Team uniforms should reflect a professional event, not their restaurant concept.

Report to Competition

5 Minutes | Not Scored (Disqualification for late arrival)

On Presentation Day (March 8), teams must arrive at their assigned Report to Competition time. Teams who arrive more than five (5) minutes early may be instructed to leave the area and return at their assigned report time. Teams that do not report on time are subject to disqualification (see Disqualifications at the end of this section).

Teams will:

- Report to the Management Competition floor
- Use an additional five (5) minutes to set up their booth

Policies and Procedures

- Team posters and three (3) copies of the Written Proposal will be in the assigned booth prior to arrival.
- Students should not enter their booth until instructed to do so by Event Organizers.

SEGMENT NOTES

- Once teams report, they are not allowed to communicate with or receive assistance from anyone outside of Event Organizers, Judges, Assigned Team Ambassador.
- Each student may bring a bottle of water and notecards into the booth. No other items are permitted.
- Teams may not shake hands, distribute materials, or use additional materials. Any relevant materials must be included in the written proposal.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Team not dressed in uniform — 5 pts

Competition Flow

Competition includes seven (7)-minute presentation segments for each judging category.

- During this time, students will present on the relevant section of their concept, reference their posters, and answer judge questions.
- Each set of judges will rotate to the next booth at the conclusion of this seven (7)-minute period.
- There will be a three (3)-minute break, and announcement of the next group of judges before the next judges arrive.

SEGMENT NOTES

- There may be more than one round of judging per segment. Scores from multiple rounds will be averaged (i.e., two rounds of critical thinking).

RELATED PENALTIES

- Restaurant concept not located in ProStartville or does not match one of the provided restaurant space scenarios — 5 pts

Concept | 30 pts

- Teams should be prepared to clearly describe their restaurant concept, including its purpose, target market, distinguishing characteristics, and overall value proposition.
- Presentations should demonstrate how demographic and market data from ProStartville support the concept and explain how the SWOT analysis influenced business decisions, strategic planning, and long-term viability.
- Teams should be able to confidently explain why their concept fills a need in the market and what positions it for success.

Menu | 35 pts

- Teams should be prepared to explain how their menu supports the restaurant concept, appeals to the target market, and contributes to overall business success.
- Presentations should demonstrate thoughtful menu development, including item selection, menu descriptions, pricing strategy, and how menu offerings align with the concept's brand, customer expectations, and operational capabilities.
- The intent is for teams to develop a menu featuring only twelve (12) menu items. This may be treated as a representative of the concept's broader menu.

Menu Item Description

- Anything packaged together for one price counts as one item
- Outline a menu with twelve (12) feature items or guest favorites
- Build-your-own dishes, or any dishes featuring substitution options, will result in a penalty. Teams may still develop a build-your-own restaurant concept, but the 12 items featured on the menu must be composed dishes with static ingredients.
- An exception to this rule is a table d'hôte menu or prix fixe menu. In those cases, each dish that makes up the table d'hôte or choice for prix fixe counts as one menu item. (See FRMCA Level 2, 1st Edition, pp. 473-74, 2nd Edition, pp. 28-29, 3rd Edition, p. 46.)

Sample Menu

On the sample menu below, there are examples of how to count menu items. Item count is shown in parentheses.

APPETIZERS **Calamari (1)** — $8.00 Fresh, tender squid lightly floured then deep fried, served with lemon wedges and homemade marinara sauce **Spinach and Artichoke Dip (2)** — $7.50 Warm blend of creamy spinach, tender artichokes, and melted Asiago and Parmesan cheeses. Served with tortilla chips.	**SALADS** **House (3)** — $6.50 Spring greens, avocado, roasted peppers, onions, shredded carrots, tomatoes & balsamic dressing **Crazy (4)** — $8.50 Chicken breast, goat cheese, spring greens, crushed walnuts, bacon, roasted peppers, onions & balsamic dressing **Wild Alaska Salmon (5)** — $10.50 Alaska salmon, spring greens, tomatoes, sliced lemon & balsamic dressing
SANDWICHES **Best Burger (6)** — $8.50 ¼ lb. beef patty, pickle, tomatoes, sauteed onions, spring greens, cheddar cheese. Served with fries. **Best Chicken (7)** — $8.00 Chicken breast, spring greens, tomatoes, onions & basil mayo. Served with pasta salad. **Garden Burger (8)** — $7.00 Veggie patty, sun-dried tomato pesto, spring greens, avocado, tomatoes, onions, shredded carrot & basil mayo. Served with mix green salad.	**ENTREES** **Pot Roast Dinner (9)** — $15.75 Piled high with cippolini onions, carrots & mushrooms over mashed potatoes, served au jus **Chili Glazed Salmon (10)** — $16.50 Served over a roasted vegetable & quinoa pilaf finished with micro greens **Chicken Pot Pie (11)** — $13.00 Roasted chicken, carrots, peas & celery in a creamy gravy, topped with a flaky pastry crust
DESSERTS **Cake of the Day (12)** — $4.00 **Ice Cream Sundae (13)** — $3.50	**BEVERAGES** **Soda (14)** — $2.00 **Housemade Lemonade (15)** — $2.50 **Brewed Coffee (16)** — $1.50

Total menu count is 16 – (Appetizers 2, Salads 3, Sandwiches 3, Entrees 3, Desserts 2, Beverages 3). Menu pricing should reflect the plated menu item.

SEGMENT NOTES

- The twelve (12) selected menu items should serve as the true highlights of the restaurant's brand and concept.
- Teams are not permitted to present a menu with a Build Your Own concept for the purpose of competition. Teams may acknowledge opportunities to integrate "Build Your Own" options in the concept's broader menu.
- For beverages, each item of the same variety that is individually priced counts as one (1) menu item. For example, Brewed Coffee in S – $1.75, M – $1.95, L – $2.00 and XL – $2.15 counts as four (4) items.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Posters do not meet specifications or include additional information — 5 pts
- Team submits more or fewer than twelve (12) menu items — 5 pts
- Team includes an alcoholic beverage or any adult consumables as one of their menu items — 5 pts

Operations | 30 pts

- Teams should be prepared to explain how the restaurant will function on a day-to-day basis, including facility layout, customer flow, staffing structure, organizational design, and operational procedures.
- Presentations should connect floorplan and décor decisions to the guest experience while demonstrating how operational efficiencies support profitability, employee effectiveness, and customer satisfaction.

Menu & Costing | 35 pts

- Teams should be prepared to explain how their menu supports the restaurant concept, appeals to the target market, and contributes to overall business success.
- Presentations should demonstrate thoughtful menu development, including item selection, menu descriptions, pricing strategy, and how menu offerings align with the concept's brand, customer expectations, and operational capabilities.

Critical Thinking | 55 pts

- Critical Thinking Judges will question each team and evaluate their critical thinking skills and ability to react to management challenges.
- The Judges will present each team mini-scenarios from four (4) of the following seven (7) categories: Safety and Sanitation; Customer Service; Social Media; Human Resources and Staffing; Menu Development and Design; Marketing; Concept Knowledge.
- All teams will be evaluated on the same categories – the chosen categories will not be distributed at check-in. The team will present how they would address that scenario from the context of their unique restaurant concept.
- Teams should be prepared to analyze business scenarios, explain their decision-making process, and demonstrate a strong understanding of restaurant and hospitality operations.
- Responses should reflect sound business judgment, application of industry knowledge, and the ability to think strategically when addressing operational, financial, marketing, or customer-service challenges. Judges will look for thoughtful reasoning, confidence, and the ability to adapt ideas when presented with new information.

Sample Critical Thinking Scenarios

Social Media

- A guest leaves a negative comment of your restaurant on a popular restaurant review website. How would you handle?
- Someone posts a bad comment on your restaurant's Facebook page. What should you do?

Safety & Sanitation

- While pulling out the beef for your signature ribeye, your prep cook notices that the walk-in seems a bit warm. What do you do?
- While cutting lemon wedges for iced teas, your server finds a moldy lemon halfway through the box of lemons. What should the server do?
- We see that you have a line cook position. While the line cook is carrying your signature soup, he slips in a puddle of water by the dish area. What do you do?

Customer Service

- A reservation for a party of 4 is showing up in your system as cancelled, yet they have arrived and checked in. What will you tell them?
- A guest chokes on a toothpick on their way out the door. What do you do?

Human Resources & Staffing

- One of your employees reports that he is being bullied by another employee. How would you address this? Who would you speak to first?
- A guest calls the day after dining and complains that the server added an extra $5 to the tip the guest left. How do you address this?

Marketing

- In the coupon you printed in the newspaper, you forgot to put an expiration date. Two months later, a table presents it for redemption. What do you do?

Menu Development and Design

- You don't sell as much of the filet as you anticipated on Friday night. What will you do with the extra filets?
- A guest at your steakhouse is a vegetarian. What can you serve them?

Concept Knowledge

- Due to your location, you serve a high-volume during lunch. However, dinner tickets are down. What can you do to increase dinner volume?
- A restaurant very similar to yours opens up across the street. How do you compete?

SEGMENT NOTES

- Team Manager may not answer questions directly, but may join the team as a consultant during assigned break segments.

Marketing | 40 pts

- Teams may submit two traditional marketing tactics, or one traditional marketing tactic and one social media marketing tactic.
- Teams MAY NOT submit two social media marketing tactics.
- Teams should be prepared to explain their overall marketing strategy, including why specific tactics were selected and how those tactics support the target market and restaurant concept.
- Presentations should demonstrate an understanding of budgeting, anticipated results, return on investment, and the role each marketing activity plays in generating awareness, attracting guests, and supporting business goals. Teams should be able to articulate both the creative and financial reasoning behind their decisions.

Traditional Marketing Tactics

- For the traditional marketing tactic, website and social media presence are not tactics in and of themselves. For example, Sprinkles Cupcakes uses twitter for a "whisper words" promotion. Each day a "whisper word" is announced via the official Sprinkles Twitter account, and the first 50 patrons to whisper the word-of-the-day receive a free cupcake. In this example, Twitter is the vehicle for the promotion. The marketing tactic employed is actually sample/free product.

Tactic	Definition	Examples
Advertising	Paying to present or promote an operation's products, services, or identity.	Newspaper, Radio, Magazine, Billboard, Metro Transit, Digital advertisements on social media or billboards
Promotions	Incentives to entice customers to patronize an operation.	Frequent shopper program, Special Pricing, Special Events, Samples, Contest or Sweepstakes, Signage & Display Materials, Merchandising, Carryout & Door Hanger Menu
Public Relations	The process by which an operation interacts with the community at large.	Hosting a Charity Event, Press Release, Sponsoring a Team or Event
Direct Marketing	Making a connected effort to connect directly with a certain segment of the market.	Post Card Mailing Campaign, E-mail Campaign, Deal of the Day Website (Groupon, Living Social, etc.)

Social Media Marketing Tactics

- For the social media marketing tactic, the social media platform itself is not the marketing tactic; rather, it is the vehicle used to deliver and amplify the tactic. Teams should focus on the specific promotional strategy being implemented and explain how social media supports the achievement of their marketing goals.
- For example, a restaurant might use Instagram to promote a limited-time offer, host a giveaway, showcase behind-the-scenes content, highlight menu items, feature customer testimonials, or build community engagement. In each case, Instagram or Facebook serves as the communication channel, while the actual marketing tactic is the promotion, campaign, or customer engagement strategy being executed.
- The video or promotional post created by teams should reinforce the restaurant's brand identity, clearly communicate the concept, and encourage potential customers to take action, such as visiting the restaurant, attending an event, trying a featured menu item, or engaging with the brand online.

Tactic	Definition	Examples
Video	Promoted short form videos, with captions	Instagram story, Instagram reel, Facebook reel
Promotional Post	Promotion posts with images and captions	Instagram reel, Facebook reel

SEGMENT NOTES

- Teams should be careful to avoid combining tactics. For instance, offering free shirts at a street fair consists of two tactics: a promotion and public relations.
- If a team chooses to utilize a social media tactic, they may only choose from two platforms: Instagram and Facebook.

RELATED PENALTIES

- More/fewer than 2 marketing tactics — 5 pts
- Alcohol-related marketing tactic used — 5 pts

Post-Presentation & Feedback

- After the final judge rotation of the competition is complete, all teams will receive a five (5)-minute break.
- The entire team (including the team manager) will then be escorted to the Feedback Room at the designated time for a ten (10)-minute feedback session from the judges.
- A maximum of two (2) people comprised of the team's designated educator(s) and/or mentor are allowed to be present to observe only during the Feedback sessions.
- After feedback, teams will be escorted back to their booths.
- Teams must remove their posters from their booths and may collect their presentations.
- Teams take their posters to their assigned frame in the Hall of Champions for display.

SEGMENT NOTES

- Any communication with the team by outside parties, including educator(s), mentor(s), or other observers is prohibited during this time.
- Team managers may fully participate in the feedback segment.

ALL MANAGEMENT PENALTIES — WORTH 5 PTS EACH

- Proposal missing, incomplete, or late.
- Team not in uniform.
- Posters do not meet specifications.
- Concept not in ProStartville/approved scenario.
- Menu contains more or fewer than 12 items.
- Alcoholic beverage/adult consumable on menu.
- Recipes submitted for more/fewer than 1 menu item.
- Costing worksheets submitted for more/fewer than 1 menu item.
- More/fewer than 1 menu pricing worksheet.
- More/fewer than 2 marketing tactics.
- Alcohol-related marketing tactic used.

RELATED MANAGEMENT DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Unauthorized coaching or communication.
- Missed required NCPI event or segment.
- Unsafe, illegal, or unsportsmanlike conduct.
- Failed to check in for Materials Check-In on time or at all.
- Failed to report to competition on time.
- Failed to compete in a required segment.

TECHNIQUE COMPETITIONS

Technique Competitions Overview

Technique Competitions give individual students the opportunity to demonstrate focused culinary and front-of-house skills in a timed, judged setting. These events are separate from the Culinary and Management team competitions. Participating in a Technique Competition does not count toward a student's three-year team eligibility limit, and students on a Culinary or Management team may also compete in a Technique Competition in the same year.

Competitors are responsible for understanding and following all the procedures and rules in this section; they will not be reviewed at NCPI. Please read this section carefully to avoid receiving penalties during the competition. Refer all questions to chamm@ncrla.org prior to arrival at NCPI.

The NCRLA Foundation reserves the right to add or remove Technique Competitions from the schedule at any point until November 1, 2026.

Event	Time (min)	Points	Proposal Due Feb 5	Product Check-In (Mar 7)	Uniform
Amuse-Bouche	15	75	Yes	Yes	Culinary
Between Bread	15	75	Yes	Yes	Culinary
Build a Better Burger	30	75	Yes	Yes	Culinary
Cake Decorating	30	75	Yes	Yes	Culinary
Chicken Fabrication	15	60	No	No	Culinary
Knife Skills	30	75	No	No	Culinary
Mocktail Mixology	15	75	Yes	Yes	Front-of-House
Napkin Folding	10	55	Yes	No	Front-of-House
Wrap Battle	15	75	Yes	Yes	Culinary

Technique Eligibility

Enrollment	Any student enrolled in ProStart is eligible to compete.
Multiple Events	Students may register for more than one Technique Competition in the same year. There is no additional registration fee for multiple competitions.
Team Competitions	Competitors on Culinary or Management teams may also participate in Technique Competitions in the same year.
Educator Escort	All competitors must be accompanied by an educator from their school.

Technique Proposal Submissions

The following events require a proposal submitted to chamm@ncrla.org by **11:59 PM on Friday, February 5, 2027.** Amuse-Bouche, Between Bread, Build a Better Burger, Cake Decorating, Mocktail Mixology, and Wrap Battle each require a proposal packet (description page, recipe, recipe costing, menu pricing, and photograph) and three hard copies at Product Check-In, as described in each event's rules. Napkin Folding requires a one-page proposal. The Chicken Fabrication and Knife Skills competitions do not require advance submissions.

- Submissions received after February 5 will incur a 1-point penalty per 24-hour period late.
- Submissions not received by 11:59 PM on **Friday, February 12, 2027** result in disqualification.

Technique Product Check-In

5 points (events with Product Check-In)

Product Check-In takes place on **Sunday, March 7, 2027** at a time selected in advance through the sign-up process. It is required for Amuse-Bouche, Between Bread, Build a Better Burger, Cake Decorating, Mocktail Mixology, and Wrap Battle. Chicken Fabrication, Knife Skills, and Napkin Folding competitors are exempt from Product Check-In.

- Competitors in Amuse-Bouche, Between Bread, Build a Better Burger, Cake Decorating, Mocktail Mixology, and Wrap Battle must submit three (3) identical hard copy proposal packets at Product Check-In.
- All refrigerated product must be stored on a competitor-provided full-size sheet pan (a half or full-size sheet pan for Mocktail Mixology). Competitors are limited to what fits on that single pan. No freezer storage is available.
- Every container holding food items must have a complete printed inventory list, in alphabetical order on the official NCRLA template (see Exhibit E), attached to both the inside and outside in a plastic sleeve.
- All items must be in original packaging, commercially labeled, and include: date packaged, weight, item type, and origin (e.g., butcher shop or grocery store).
- Items found in the temperature danger zone will not be available for use.
- Competitors with disallowed items have until their assigned report time to present an approved replacement to judges. Replacement products must be coordinated through chamm@ncrla.org.
- If a travel delay prevents on-time check-in, competitors must maintain proper storage and coordinate a new check-in time with the NCRLA Foundation (chamm@ncrla.org) before the close of the check-in window.

Technique Uniform Requirements

Culinary Events

Required for Amuse-Bouche, Between Bread, Build a Better Burger, Cake Decorating, Chicken Fabrication, Knife Skills, and Wrap Battle.

Element	Specifications	When to Wear
Chef Coat	Long-sleeved, white Logos and sponsor names are permitted; accent colors are permitted provided the coat remains white	All Segments
Pants	Checkered or black	All Segments
Shoes	Non-porous, closed toe AND heel, non-slip, hard sole, black	All Segments
Apron & Hat	Hair must be fully restrained and covered	All Segments
Piercings & Jewelry	Facial piercings must be taped or removed from Report to Competition through the end of the event. No jewelry or other accessories on the competition floor.	All Segments

Front-of-House Events

Required for Mocktail Mixology and Napkin Folding.

Element	Specifications	When to Wear
Dress Shirt	Collared, solid color, ¾- or long-sleeved. No neckwear of any kind.	All Segments
Dress Pants or Skirts	Appropriate and professional	All Segments
Shoes	Professional, suitable for a business meeting; heel height no more than three (3) inches	All Segments
ProStart Logo	Positioned on right or left chest. Embroidered, or via the NCRLA Foundation-provided pin (no scoring impact for pin versus embroidery).	All Segments

General Technique Competition Procedures

- Competitors must arrive at their assigned report time. Competitors who arrive more than 15 minutes early may be instructed to leave the area and return at their assigned report time.
- Competitors who arrive late lose points: ¼ point is deducted per 15 seconds after the assigned report time. More than 10 minutes late = disqualification.
- Starting a task more than 10 minutes early = disqualification. ¼ point is deducted per 15 seconds before that threshold.
- No communication with educators, mentors, or observers from report time through the conclusion of judge feedback — verbal or non-verbal. Violations result in immediate disqualification.
- Tables may not be moved, rotated, or repositioned. All items must fit on or under the competitor's 6-foot table.
- Competitors must carry and/or roll all equipment and products onto the competition floor.

GENERAL TECHNIQUE DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Failure to meet eligibility requirements.
- Missing the Opening Ceremony on Sunday, March 7, 2027, or the Awards Dinner (exception: documented travel delay with advance notice to Event Organizers).
- Failing to complete a required Product Check-In on Sunday, March 7, 2027 at the assigned time.
- Competing without an educator from the competitor's school present.
- Failing to check in at the designated location at the assigned time.
- Coaching or communication from spectators, educators, mentors, or anyone outside the competition floor from check-in through the conclusion of judge feedback.
- Misconduct, including underage alcohol use, non-prescription drug use, unsportsmanlike behavior, or any illegal activity. These will result in investigation and potential disqualification at the NCRLA Foundation's sole discretion.

Amuse-Bouche Competition

Time limit: 15 minutes | Total points: 75

Competitors prepare three identical servings of the same single bite-sized hors d'oeuvre that demonstrates creativity, refined flavor balance, and elegant presentation. The item must be eaten in a single bite. Competitors must incorporate an Unexpected Texture Element — such as crispy quinoa, edible flowers, puffed grains, or similar creative components.

Scoring

Category	Points	Description
Product Check-In	5	Safe product storage and transportation
Creativity & Composition	15	Originality, innovative use of ingredients, visual impact
Flavor & Balance	20	Harmony of flavors; balance of seasoning and texture
Presentation & Technique	15	Professional plating, precision, and use of Unexpected Texture Element
Cleanliness & Organization	10	Efficiency, neatness, and sanitation during and after competition
Time Efficiency	5	Completed within 15 minutes
Proposal Preparation & Presentation	5	Completeness, accuracy, and neatness of the proposal; adherence to format and submission requirements

Proposal Requirements

Submit a proposal packet as one PDF to chamm@ncrla.org by 11:59 PM on **Friday, February 5, 2027.** The packet must be typed on 8½" x 11" pages, single-sided, and organized in the order below using the official templates in the rules exhibits.

- **Description page** including:
  - School and competitor name
  - Menu name for the item
  - Customer-facing description including the Unexpected Texture Element and a list of major allergens
  - Primary cooking method(s) or technique(s) used
  - Proposed menu price (from the Menu Pricing Worksheet, Exhibit D)
- **Recipes (Exhibit B):** a recipe for every component of the item, on the official Recipe Worksheet, written in logical sequence, with acknowledgements and sources in MLA formatting.
- **Recipe Costing (Exhibit C):** recipe cost calculated for each individual recipe. Small amounts of kosher/table salt and black pepper may be priced at 1% of the total recipe cost, oil for deep frying at 2%, and everything else must be costed out, including garden-grown ingredients.
- **Menu Pricing (Exhibit D):** one Menu Pricing Worksheet calculated at a 33% food cost percentage. The price may be rounded up for a more realistic price; the final calculation before rounding must be indicated.
- **Photograph:** one color photograph of the finished item, large enough to fill the page (no stock or AI-generated images).

Hard-Copy Submission (submitted at Product Check-In on March 7)

- Bring three (3) identical hard copy packets for judge review. Hard copies must match the final digital submission.
- Display the competitor's school name and name on each cover.
- Use softbound folders or binders only. Do not use plastic page protectors or pockets, as they hinder judges' ability to review and provide feedback.

Standard of Change and Proposal Review

- Submissions must represent original work and may not be significantly repetitive of materials submitted to NCPI within the previous three competition years.
- The NCRLA Foundation will provide feedback no later than **Friday, February 12, 2027.** Work that is significantly repetitive of a previous NCPI submission will require a revision, which must be resubmitted with a change summary page by **Friday, February 26, 2027.**

Equipment & Workspace

Provided by Event Organizers	Competitor Must Provide
• Individual competition station with flat surface • One butane burner and fuel • Standardized dishware for presentation • Access to handwashing stations, ice, and running water (before and after competition only) • Access to sanitizing solution	• All ingredients (may be pre-chopped, prepped, or pre-cooked) • One full-size sheet pan for refrigerated storage • All tools, smallwares, and utensils • Sanitizer buckets and cleaning towels

Prohibited Items

- Non-edible garnishes, decorations, or props
- Electric appliances or powered tools
- Multi-bite portions

Task

In 15 minutes: set up station, prepare and plate three (3) identical servings of the same amuse-bouche, then clean and sanitize the station. Judges each receive one serving. The station must be cleared and clean — with only the plated items remaining — before judges begin scoring.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Proposal late (after February 5, before February 12) — 1 pt per 24-hour period
- Not in proper uniform — 3 pts
- Missing required folders at Product Check-In — 2 pts
- Amuse-bouche does not match submitted description — 3 pts
- Multi-bite portion presented — 3 pts
- Replacement product discarded — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited equipment — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited ingredients — 3 pts
- Finished item lacks Unexpected Texture Element — 5 pts
- Station not cleared and clean — 2 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Proposal not submitted by February 12
- Task started 10+ minutes early or competitor arrived 10+ minutes late
- Unsafe food handling practices
- Non-edible elements in presentation
- Fewer than three complete, identical servings produced

Between Bread Competition

Time limit: 15 minutes | Total points: 75

Competitors create a gourmet sandwich on any non-white, non-wheat bread. The sandwich must include a protein, vegetables, and a homemade spread or infused butter. The competition emphasizes artistry, execution, flavor, and presentation.

Scoring

Category	Points	Description
Product Check-In	5	Safe product storage and transportation
Creativity & Bread Choice	15	Innovative use of non-white/non-wheat bread and unique ingredient pairings
Execution & Technique	20	Professional preparation, assembly precision, and knife skills
Flavor & Balance	15	Quality of homemade spread/infused butter, overall harmony, and taste
Cleanliness & Organization	10	Efficiency, neatness, and sanitation during and after competition
Time Efficiency	5	Completed within 15 minutes
Proposal Preparation & Presentation	5	Completeness, accuracy, and neatness of the proposal; adherence to format and submission requirements

Proposal Requirements

Submit a proposal packet as one PDF to chamm@ncrla.org by 11:59 PM on **Friday, February 5, 2027.** The packet must be typed on 8½" x 11" pages, single-sided, and organized in the order below using the official templates in the rules exhibits.

- **Description page** including:
  - School and competitor name
  - Menu name for the sandwich
  - Customer-facing description including: bread type, protein(s), vegetables, homemade spread or infused butter, and major allergens
  - Primary cooking method(s) or technique(s) used
  - Proposed menu price (from the Menu Pricing Worksheet, Exhibit D)
- **Recipes (Exhibit B):** a recipe for every component of the item, on the official Recipe Worksheet, written in logical sequence, with acknowledgements and sources in MLA formatting.
- **Recipe Costing (Exhibit C):** recipe cost calculated for each individual recipe. Small amounts of kosher/table salt and black pepper may be priced at 1% of the total recipe cost, oil for deep frying at 2%, and everything else must be costed out, including garden-grown ingredients.
- **Menu Pricing (Exhibit D):** one Menu Pricing Worksheet calculated at a 33% food cost percentage. The price may be rounded up for a more realistic price; the final calculation before rounding must be indicated.
- **Photograph:** one color photograph of the finished item, large enough to fill the page (no stock or AI-generated images).

Hard-Copy Submission (submitted at Product Check-In on March 7)

- Bring three (3) identical hard copy packets for judge review. Hard copies must match the final digital submission.
- Display the competitor's school name and name on each cover.
- Use softbound folders or binders only. Do not use plastic page protectors or pockets, as they hinder judges' ability to review and provide feedback.

Standard of Change and Proposal Review

- Submissions must represent original work and may not be significantly repetitive of materials submitted to NCPI within the previous three competition years.
- The NCRLA Foundation will provide feedback no later than **Friday, February 12, 2027.** Work that is significantly repetitive of a previous NCPI submission will require a revision, which must be resubmitted with a change summary page by **Friday, February 26, 2027.**

Allowed Ingredients

- Any non-white, non-wheat bread (e.g., rye, sourdough, pumpernickel, brioche, ciabatta, focaccia, multigrain, naan, pita)
- Protein(s) of choice (meat, seafood, eggs, plant-based)
- Fresh, grilled, or pickled vegetables
- Homemade spread or infused butter
- Condiments or sauces (may be pre-prepared)
- Optional edible garnish

Equipment & Workspace

Provided by Event Organizers	Competitor Must Provide
• Individual competition station with flat surface • One butane burner and fuel • Standardized dishware for presentation • Access to handwashing stations, ice, and running water (before and after competition only) • Access to sanitizing solution	• All ingredients (may be pre-chopped, prepped, or pre-cooked) • One full-size sheet pan for refrigerated storage • All tools, smallwares, and utensils • Sanitizer buckets and cleaning towels

Prohibited Items

- White or wheat sandwich bread (disqualification if used)
- Pre-assembled sandwiches or fully finished spreads
- Non-edible garnishes or props
- Electric devices or powered appliances

Task

In 15 minutes: set up station, prepare components, and assemble one (1) finished sandwich — sliced as part of the intended presentation. Judges will cut it for tasting. The station must be cleared and clean before judges begin scoring.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Proposal late (after February 5, before February 12) — 1 pt per 24-hour period
- Not in proper uniform — 3 pts
- Missing required folders at Product Check-In — 2 pts
- Sandwich does not match submitted description — 3 pts
- Replacement product discarded — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited equipment — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited ingredients — 3 pts
- Missing required element (per element: bread type, protein, vegetable, spread) — 3 pts each
- Station not cleared and clean — 2 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Proposal not submitted by February 12
- Task started 10+ minutes early or competitor arrived 10+ minutes late
- White or wheat bread used
- Unsafe food handling practices
- Non-edible elements in presentation

Build a Better Burger Competition

Time limit: 30 minutes | Total points: 75

Competitors craft a gourmet burger featuring a protein of their choice, at least one condiment, and an unexpected ingredient incorporated into the patty (such as dried fruit, nuts, herbs, or cheese). The burger patty must arrive completely raw and be cooked entirely on-site.

Scoring

Category	Points	Description
Product Check-In	5	Safe product storage and transportation
Creativity & Composition	15	Originality, use of unexpected ingredient, and overall flavor cohesion
Execution & Technique	20	Proper cooking of protein, doneness, and assembly precision
Flavor & Texture	15	Seasoning balance, patty quality, condiment effectiveness, and mouthfeel
Cleanliness & Organization	10	Efficiency, neatness, and sanitation during and after competition
Time Efficiency	5	Completed within 30 minutes
Proposal Preparation & Presentation	5	Completeness, accuracy, and neatness of the proposal; adherence to format and submission requirements

Proposal Requirements

Submit a proposal packet as one PDF to chamm@ncrla.org by 11:59 PM on **Friday, February 5, 2027.** The packet must be typed on 8½" x 11" pages, single-sided, and organized in the order below using the official templates in the rules exhibits.

- **Description page** including:
  - School and competitor name
  - Menu name for the burger
  - Customer-facing description including: protein, unexpected ingredient, condiments, presentation elements, and major allergens
  - Primary cooking method(s) or technique(s) used
  - Proposed menu price (from the Menu Pricing Worksheet, Exhibit D)
- **Recipes (Exhibit B):** a recipe for every component of the item, on the official Recipe Worksheet, written in logical sequence, with acknowledgements and sources in MLA formatting.
- **Recipe Costing (Exhibit C):** recipe cost calculated for each individual recipe. Small amounts of kosher/table salt and black pepper may be priced at 1% of the total recipe cost, oil for deep frying at 2%, and everything else must be costed out, including garden-grown ingredients.
- **Menu Pricing (Exhibit D):** one Menu Pricing Worksheet calculated at a 33% food cost percentage. The price may be rounded up for a more realistic price; the final calculation before rounding must be indicated.
- **Photograph:** one color photograph of the finished item, large enough to fill the page (no stock or AI-generated images).

Hard-Copy Submission (submitted at Product Check-In on March 7)

- Bring three (3) identical hard copy packets for judge review. Hard copies must match the final digital submission.
- Display the competitor's school name and name on each cover.
- Use softbound folders or binders only. Do not use plastic page protectors or pockets, as they hinder judges' ability to review and provide feedback.

Standard of Change and Proposal Review

- Submissions must represent original work and may not be significantly repetitive of materials submitted to NCPI within the previous three competition years.
- The NCRLA Foundation will provide feedback no later than **Friday, February 12, 2027.** Work that is significantly repetitive of a previous NCPI submission will require a revision, which must be resubmitted with a change summary page by **Friday, February 26, 2027.**

Key Rules

- The burger patty must arrive completely raw and be cooked entirely on-site. Pre-cooked or partially cooked burger meat is prohibited.
- An unexpected ingredient must be incorporated into the patty itself (not just as a topping).
- Other components (toppings, buns, condiments) may be pre-cooked or pre-prepared; reheating or finishing must occur during competition.
- Competitors present one finished burger (whole, uncut unless slicing is part of the intended presentation). Judges will cut it for tasting.

Equipment & Workspace

Provided by Event Organizers	Competitor Must Provide
• Individual competition station with flat surface • One butane burner and fuel • Standardized dishware for presentation • Access to handwashing stations, ice, and running water (before and after competition only) • Access to sanitizing solution	• All ingredients (may be pre-chopped, prepped, or pre-cooked) • One full-size sheet pan for refrigerated storage • All tools, smallwares, and utensils • Sanitizer buckets and cleaning towels

Prohibited Items

- Pre-cooked or partially cooked burger meat
- Electric appliances
- Non-edible decorations

Task

In 30 minutes: set up station, cook the raw patty on-site, finish the toppings and condiments, and assemble one (1) finished burger. The station must be cleared and clean before judges begin scoring.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Proposal late (after February 5, before February 12) — 1 pt per 24-hour period
- Not in proper uniform — 3 pts
- Missing required folders at Product Check-In — 2 pts
- Burger does not match submitted description — 3 pts
- Replacement product discarded — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited equipment — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited ingredients — 5 pts
- Missing required element (per element: protein, condiment, unexpected ingredient, bun) — 3 pts each
- Station not cleared and clean — 2 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Proposal not submitted by February 12
- Task started 10+ minutes early or competitor arrived 10+ minutes late
- Unsafe food handling practices
- Non-edible elements in presentation

Cake Decorating Competition

Time limit: 30 minutes | Total points: 75

Competitors transform a pre-baked, crumb-coated cake into a professionally finished, retail-ready product. All decorative work is performed on-site. Competitors are evaluated on decoration technique, creativity, and the flavor and texture of the cake and filling.

Scoring

Category	Points	Description
Product Check-In	5	Safe product storage and transportation
Design & Creativity	20	Originality, visual composition, and retail appeal
Execution & Technique	20	Clean application of required techniques: smooth buttercream, consistent piping, legible lettering
Flavor & Filling	10	Flavor, texture, and proper execution of the filled middle layer
Adherence to Standards & Sanitation	10	Correct dimensions, required elements, approved tools, and food safety
Time Efficiency	5	Completed within 30 minutes
Proposal Preparation & Presentation	5	Completeness, accuracy, and neatness of the proposal; adherence to format and submission requirements

Proposal Requirements

Submit a proposal packet as one PDF to chamm@ncrla.org by 11:59 PM on **Friday, February 5, 2027.** The packet must be typed on 8½" x 11" pages, single-sided, and organized in the order below using the official templates in the rules exhibits.

- **Description page** including:
  - School and competitor name
  - Cake type and filling type
  - General description of decoration
  - Script lettering phrase to be placed on the cake (18–25 characters including spaces and punctuation)
  - Type of food coloring being used
  - List of major allergens
  - Primary cooking method(s) or technique(s) used
  - Proposed menu price (from the Menu Pricing Worksheet, Exhibit D)
- **Recipes (Exhibit B):** a recipe for every component of the item, on the official Recipe Worksheet, written in logical sequence, with acknowledgements and sources in MLA formatting.
- **Recipe Costing (Exhibit C):** recipe cost calculated for each individual recipe. Small amounts of kosher/table salt and black pepper may be priced at 1% of the total recipe cost, oil for deep frying at 2%, and everything else must be costed out, including garden-grown ingredients.
- **Menu Pricing (Exhibit D):** one Menu Pricing Worksheet calculated at a 33% food cost percentage. The price may be rounded up for a more realistic price; the final calculation before rounding must be indicated.

- **Photograph:** one color photograph of the finished item, large enough to fill the page (no stock or AI-generated images).

Hard-Copy Submission (submitted at Product Check-In on March 7)

- Bring three (3) identical hard copy packets for judge review. Hard copies must match the final digital submission.
- Display the competitor's school name and name on each cover.
- Use softbound folders or binders only. Do not use plastic page protectors or pockets, as they hinder judges' ability to review and provide feedback.

Standard of Change and Proposal Review

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Cake Specifications

- Two cakes required, pre-baked in a crumb-coated state. All decorative work and filling between layers is applied on-site.
- Each cake: 8 inches in base diameter, 2.5–4 inches in height. The cakes will be layered on top of each other, creating a final cake that is 5–8 inches in height.
- Commercially prepared cakes are not allowed.
- Maximum 3 lbs of commercially or classroom prepared white buttercream icing.

Required Cake Elements

- Smooth white buttercream base coat
- Top shell border in white buttercream
- Embellishments using at least two additional buttercream colors (e.g., flowers, leaves)
- Script lettering of 18–25 characters
- Filled middle layer (e.g., fruit, jam, ganache, or flavored buttercream). Filling must be added on site.

Allowed Equipment

- Piping bags and up to 5 tips (round, star, petal, leaf styles)
- Primary food colors only: red, yellow, blue, and black. All color formats (powdered, liquid, natural, gel) are allowed but must be labeled as one of the four allowed colors.
- Decorating comb, bench scraper, and/or offset spatula
- Flower nail for buttercream flower construction
- Measuring spoons or small cups/bowls
- Basic cake board for support (the finished cake must be presented on the basic cake board for judging)
- Cake turntables, decorating wheels, or Lazy Susans (must be removed from the station before judging)

Equipment & Workspace

Provided by Event Organizers	Competitor Must Provide
• Individual competition station with flat surface • Access to handwashing stations, ice, and running water (before and after competition only) • Access to sanitizing solution	• All ingredients (may be pre-chopped, prepped, or pre-cooked) • One full-size sheet pan for refrigerated storage • All tools, smallwares, and utensils • Sanitizer buckets and cleaning towels

Prohibited Items

- Food coloring beyond the four primary colors
- Pre-mixed colored icing, pre-made icings, or gels
- Commercially prepared decorations: sprinkles, fondant, gum paste shapes, pre-piped royal icing, chocolate shavings, candy, edible printed decorations
- Non-edible decorations: figurine toppers, acrylic or wooden toppers, banners, candles, ball picks
- Any battery-, electric-, or fuel-powered equipment

Task

In 30 minutes: apply filling and all decorative elements to the crumb-coated cake, then clear and clean the station. The finished cake must be presented on the basic cake board for judging, and any cake turntable, decorating wheel, or Lazy Susan must be removed. Only the finished cake should remain when judges begin scoring.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Proposal late (after February 5, before February 12) — 1 pt per 24-hour period
- Not in proper uniform — 3 pts
- Missing required folders at Product Check-In — 2 pts
- Cake does not match submitted description — 3 pts
- Replacement product discarded — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited equipment — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited ingredients — 3 pts
- Cake does not meet dimension requirements (per dimension: diameter, height) — 3 pts each
- Missing required element (per element: white base coat, shell border, embellishments, script lettering, filled middle layer) — 3 pts each
- Cake not presented on the basic cake board, or turntable, decorating wheel, or Lazy Susan not removed — 3 pts
- Station not cleared and clean — 2 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Proposal not submitted by February 12
- Task started 10+ minutes early or competitor arrived 10+ minutes late
- Unsafe food handling practices
- Non-edible elements in presentation

Chicken Fabrication Competition

Time limit: 15 minutes | Total points: 60

Competitors fabricate a whole chicken — provided on-site — into specific industry-standard portions using precise knife technique, proper food safety, and efficient yield management.

Scoring

Category	Points	Description
Accuracy of Cuts	20	Clean joint separation, proper technique, and correct fabrication of all required parts
Oyster Intact on Each Thigh	5	Both thighs must include the oyster muscle, fully intact and properly trimmed
Uniformity of Portions	10	Consistency in size and shape across both sides; reflects industry standards
Cleanliness & Yield	10	Clean, well-trimmed cuts with minimal waste; efficient use of the whole bird
Station Sanitation & Knife Safety	10	Organized workstation; proper knife handling and cross-contamination prevention
Completion Within Time Limit	5	Fabrication completed within 15 minutes at efficient, steady pace

Required Portions

- Two airline breasts — skin-on, boneless, with drumette attached; uniform in size; free of visible fat or cartilage
- Two bone-in thighs — with oyster intact; skin-on or skin-off (competitor's choice)
- Two drumsticks — cleanly separated, skin intact
- Two whole wings — flat and wingtip, separated from drumette

No proposal submission or Product Check-In is required for this event.

Equipment & Workspace

Provided by Event Organizers	Competitor Must Provide
• One whole chicken per competitor • Individual competition station • Access to handwashing stations and sanitizing solution	• Sanitized cutting boards (no visible measurement markings) • Sharp, appropriate knives • Sanitizer buckets and cleaning towels

Prohibited Items

- Electric, battery-powered, or fuel-powered knives or cutting devices

Task

In 15 minutes: fabricate one whole chicken into the required portions. After completion, clear and clean the station — only the fabricated chicken and one cutting board may remain when judges begin scoring.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Not in proper uniform — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited equipment — 3 pts
- Missing required portion (per portion: two airline breasts, two bone-in thighs, two drumsticks, two whole wings) — 3 pts each
- Station not cleared and clean — 2 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Task started 10+ minutes early or competitor arrived 10+ minutes late
- Use of prohibited equipment
- Unsafe practices

Knife Skills Competition

Time limit: 30 minutes | Total points: 75

Competitors demonstrate precision, consistency, and professionalism by executing eleven classical knife cuts on a standardized selection of vegetables provided on-site. The vegetable selection is at the organizers' discretion and subject to change.

Scoring

Category	Points	Description
Accuracy & Uniformity	40	Each set of six pieces must meet classical dimensions and show consistent size and shape
Safety & Sanitation	15	Safe knife technique, proper grip, and sanitation throughout
Efficiency & Time Management	10	All required cuts completed and displayed within the 30-minute limit
Presentation & Organization	5	Cuts neatly arranged and clearly labeled; workstation orderly and clean
Waste Management	5	Minimal waste generated; trimmings handled appropriately

Required Cuts — Six Identical Pieces of Each

- Rondelle — round disc-shaped slices, ¼" thick
- Diagonal — oval-shaped slices cut on a bias, ¼" thick
- Batonnet — ¼" x ¼" x 2"
- Julienne — 1/8" x 1/8" x 2"
- Large Dice — ¾" x ¾" x ¾"
- Medium Dice — ½" x ½" x ½"
- Small Dice — ¼" x ¼" x ¼"
- Brunoise — 1/8" x 1/8" x 1/8"
- Paysanne — ½" x ½" x 1/8"
- Chiffonade — thin ribbons of leafy greens, approximately 1/8" wide
- Tourne — football-shaped, seven-sided, ¾" diameter x 2" long

No proposal submission or Product Check-In is required for this event.

Equipment & Workspace

Provided by Event Organizers	Competitor Must Provide
• Standardized selection of vegetables (e.g., carrot, celery, potato, bell pepper, leafy greens). The selection is at the organizers' discretion and subject to change. • Individual ramekins and labels for each cut type • Individual competition station	• Commercial or professional-grade knives • Cutting boards with no visible measurement markings • Sanitizer buckets and cleaning towels

Prohibited Items

- Mandolins and other mechanical cutting tools
- Cutting boards or items with measurement markings or cut descriptions
- Ingredients not provided by competition organizers

Task

In 30 minutes: produce six identical pieces of each of the eleven required cuts. At the end of the time limit, each cut type must be displayed in its own labeled ramekin. The station must be cleared and clean before judges begin scoring. Competitors who complete fewer than half of the required cuts within the time limit may receive a score of zero for Efficiency & Time Management.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Not in proper uniform — 3 pts
- Use of ingredients not provided by organizers — 3 pts
- Fewer than 6 pieces of a required cut (per cut) — 3 pts each
- Station not cleared and clean — 2 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Task started 10+ minutes early or competitor arrived 10+ minutes late
- Use of prohibited equipment
- Unsafe practices

Mocktail Mixology Competition

Time limit: 15 minutes | Total points: 75

Competitors prepare two identical servings of the same original, alcohol-free beverage demonstrating creativity, balanced flavor structure, and refined presentation. The mocktail must incorporate a Signature Sensory Element — such as infused syrups, clarified juices, flavored foams, smoked glassware, carbonated elements, or other enhancements that elevate aroma, mouthfeel, or taste.

Scoring

Category	Points	Description
Product Check-In	5	Safe product storage, accurate inventory, proper temperatures
Creativity & Composition	15	Original concept, innovation, and beverage artistry
Flavor & Balance	20	Harmony of sweetness, acidity, bitterness, aromatics, and mouthfeel
Presentation & Technique	15	Glassware, garnish precision, visual impact, and Signature Sensory Element execution
Cleanliness & Organization	10	Efficiency, sanitation, and station organization
Time Efficiency	5	Completed within 15 minutes
Proposal Preparation & Presentation	5	Completeness, accuracy, and neatness of the proposal; adherence to format and submission requirements

Proposal Requirements

Submit a proposal packet as one PDF to chamm@ncrla.org by 11:59 PM on **Friday, February 5, 2027.** The packet must be typed on 8½" x 11" pages, single-sided, and organized in the order below using the official templates in the rules exhibits.

- **Description page** including:
  - School and competitor name
  - Menu name for the mocktail
  - Customer-facing description including the Signature Sensory Element and a list of major allergens
  - Primary cooking method(s) or technique(s) used
  - Proposed menu price (from the Menu Pricing Worksheet, Exhibit D)
- **Recipes (Exhibit B):** a recipe for every component of the item, on the official Recipe Worksheet, written in logical sequence, with acknowledgements and sources in MLA formatting.
- **Recipe Costing (Exhibit C):** recipe cost calculated for each individual recipe. Small amounts of kosher/table salt and black pepper may be priced at 1% of the total recipe cost, oil for deep frying at 2%, and everything else must be costed out, including garden-grown ingredients.
- **Menu Pricing (Exhibit D):** one Menu Pricing Worksheet calculated at a 33% food cost percentage. The price may be rounded up for a more realistic price; the final calculation before rounding must be indicated.
- **Photograph:** one color photograph of the finished item, large enough to fill the page (no stock or AI-generated images).

Hard-Copy Submission (submitted at Product Check-In on March 7)

- Bring three (3) identical hard copy packets for judge review. Hard copies must match the final digital submission.
- Display the competitor's school name and name on each cover.
- Use softbound folders or binders only. Do not use plastic page protectors or pockets, as they hinder judges' ability to review and provide feedback.

Standard of Change and Proposal Review

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Allowed Ingredients & Techniques

- House-made syrups, shrubs, infusions, reductions, foams, and gels
- Fresh juices, produce, herbs, and spices
- Carbonated or still non-alcoholic beverages (carbonation must be pre-carbonated; no carbonation machines on-site)
- Edible garnishes (citrus, herbs, edible flowers, dehydrated fruit, aromatics)
- Signature Sensory Elements: clarified juices, smoked glassware, flavored foams, infused ice

Equipment & Workspace

Provided by Event Organizers	Competitor Must Provide
• Individual competition station • One butane burner and fuel • Access to handwashing stations, ice, and running water (before and after competition only) • Access to sanitizing solution	• All ingredients (may be pre-chopped, juiced, infused, or pre-prepared) • Glassware for presentation • All tools (jiggers, shakers, strainers), smallwares, and utensils • One half or full-sized sheet pan for refrigerated storage • Sanitizer buckets and cleaning towels

Prohibited Items

- Alcohol or any alcohol-containing ingredient (disqualification if used)
- Non-edible garnishes, decorations, or props
- Electric appliances or powered tools (e.g., immersion blenders, smoking guns, carbonation machines)
- Batch-prepared beverages that cannot be fully assembled during the 15-minute window

Task

In 15 minutes: set up station, prepare and serve two (2) identical servings of the same mocktail, then clean and sanitize the station. Judges each receive one serving. Both completed mocktails must remain on the station when judges begin scoring.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Proposal late (after February 5, before February 12) — 1 pt per 24-hour period
- Not in proper uniform — 3 pts
- Missing required folders at Product Check-In — 2 pts
- Mocktail does not match submitted description — 3 pts
- Replacement product discarded — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited equipment — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited ingredients — 3 pts
- Finished mocktail lacks Signature Sensory Element — 5 pts
- Station not cleared and clean — 2 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Proposal not submitted by February 12
- Task started 10+ minutes early or competitor arrived 10+ minutes late
- Alcohol or alcohol-containing ingredient used
- Unsafe food handling practices
- Non-edible elements in presentation
- Fewer than two complete, identical servings produced

Napkin Folding Competition

Time limit: 10 minutes | Total points: 55

Competitors execute three identical folds of the same napkin design using three 20" x 20" fabric napkins provided on-site. Judging focuses on accuracy to the submitted design, precision, consistency, creativity, and stability.

Scoring

Category	Points	Description
Accuracy to Submitted Design	15	Fidelity to the competitor's pre-submitted photo and folding instructions
Precision & Neatness	10	Clean, symmetrical folds with crisp lines and minimal wrinkling
Consistency	10	All three folds uniform in size, symmetry, and execution
Creativity	10	Originality, aesthetic appeal, and suitability for professional dining
Stability	5	Folds remain upright or hold their shape independently without collapsing
Proposal Preparation & Presentation	5	Completeness, accuracy, and neatness of the proposal; adherence to format and submission requirements

Proposal Requirements

Submit a PDF (one single-sided 8½" x 11" page) to chamm@ncrla.org by 11:59 PM on **Friday, February 5, 2027.** The proposal must include:

- School and competitor name
- A photo of the finished fold (no stock images)
- A description and brief folding guide (written or visual)

Key Rules

- No materials or equipment other than those provided by organizers may be used.
- Folds must be completed by hand only — no tools or supports.
- Designs must be achievable within the 10-minute time limit.
- Judges use the submitted photo and instructions when scoring for accuracy.

Equipment & Workspace

Provided by Event Organizers	Competitor Must Provide
• Three 20" x 20" square fabric napkins • Individual competition station	None. No materials or equipment other than those provided by organizers may be used.

Prohibited Items

- Any materials, tools, or supports other than the napkins provided by organizers

Task

In 10 minutes: complete three identical folds of the same napkin design. No cleanup is required after the event.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Proposal late (after February 5, before February 12) — 1 pt per 24-hour period
- Not in proper uniform — 3 pts
- Fold does not match submitted design — 5 pts
- Fewer than 3 complete folds — 5 pts each

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Proposal not submitted by February 12
- Task started 10+ minutes early or competitor arrived 10+ minutes late
- Presentation of more than one type of napkin fold

Wrap Battle Competition

Time limit: 15 minutes | Total points: 75

Competitors reimagine the classic wrap using a non-tortilla wrapping material, inspired by a global cuisine theme such as Mediterranean, Asian, Latin American, or another regional influence. Tortillas of any kind are prohibited and their use results in immediate disqualification.

Scoring

Category	Points	Description
Product Check-In	5	Safe product storage and transportation
Creativity & Global Theme	15	Originality, alignment with chosen cuisine, and innovative use of wrap base
Execution & Technique	20	Proper preparation of fillings, assembly precision, and visual presentation
Flavor & Balance	15	Cohesiveness of flavors, texture contrast, and seasoning
Cleanliness & Organization	10	Efficiency, neatness, and sanitation during and after competition
Time Efficiency	5	Completed within 15 minutes
Proposal Preparation & Presentation	5	Completeness, accuracy, and neatness of the proposal; adherence to format and submission requirements

Proposal Requirements

Submit a proposal packet as one PDF to chamm@ncrla.org by 11:59 PM on **Friday, February 5, 2027.** The packet must be typed on 8½" x 11" pages, single-sided, and organized in the order below using the official templates in the rules exhibits.

- **Description page** including:
  - School and competitor name
  - Menu name for the wrap
  - Customer-facing description including: global cuisine inspiration, wrap base, ingredient overview, and major allergens
  - Primary cooking method(s) or technique(s) used
  - Proposed menu price (from the Menu Pricing Worksheet, Exhibit D)
- **Recipes (Exhibit B):** a recipe for every component of the item, on the official Recipe Worksheet, written in logical sequence, with acknowledgements and sources in MLA formatting.
- **Recipe Costing (Exhibit C):** recipe cost calculated for each individual recipe. Small amounts of kosher/table salt and black pepper may be priced at 1% of the total recipe cost, oil for deep frying at 2%, and everything else must be costed out, including garden-grown ingredients.
- **Menu Pricing (Exhibit D):** one Menu Pricing Worksheet calculated at a 33% food cost percentage. The price may be rounded up for a more realistic price; the final calculation before rounding must be indicated.
- **Photograph:** one color photograph of the finished item, large enough to fill the page (no stock or AI-generated images).

Hard-Copy Submission (submitted at Product Check-In on March 7)

- Bring three (3) identical hard copy packets for judge review. Hard copies must match the final digital submission.
- Display the competitor's school name and name on each cover.
- Use softbound folders or binders only. Do not use plastic page protectors or pockets, as they hinder judges' ability to review and provide feedback.

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Allowed Wrap Bases

- Any alternative to tortillas, such as:
- Lettuce or cabbage leaves
- Rice paper
- Pita, lavash, or naan
- Seaweed sheets
- Specialty flatbreads

Allowed Fillings & Sauces

- Proteins, vegetables, and grains reflecting the chosen world cuisine
- Sauces or spreads (may be pre-prepared)
- Optional edible garnishes appropriate to the cuisine theme

Equipment & Workspace

Provided by Event Organizers	Competitor Must Provide
• Individual competition station with flat surface • One butane burner and fuel • Standardized dishware for presentation • Access to handwashing stations, ice, and running water (before and after competition only) • Access to sanitizing solution	• All ingredients (may be pre-chopped, prepped, or pre-cooked) • One full-size sheet pan for refrigerated storage • All tools, smallwares, and utensils • Sanitizer buckets and cleaning towels

Prohibited Items

- Tortillas of any kind — flour, corn, or whole wheat (disqualification if used)
- Non-edible decorations or props
- Electric appliances or devices

Task

In 15 minutes: set up station, prepare wrap components, and assemble one (1) finished wrap cut in half. The station must be cleared and clean before judges begin scoring.

RELATED PENALTIES

- Proposal late (after February 5, before February 12) — 1 pt per 24-hour period
- Not in proper uniform — 3 pts
- Missing required folders at Product Check-In — 2 pts
- Wrap does not match submitted description — 3 pts
- Replacement product discarded — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited equipment — 3 pts
- Use of prohibited ingredients — 5 pts
- Wrap not globally inspired or does not match selected cuisine — 5 pts
- Missing required element (per element: wrap base, fillings, sauce/spread) — 3 pts each
- Station not cleared and clean — 2 pts

DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Proposal not submitted by February 12
- Task started 10+ minutes early or competitor arrived 10+ minutes late
- Tortilla used
- Unsafe food handling practices
- Non-edible elements in presentation

Technique Competition Checklist

Deadlines

☐ Submit proposal packet as one PDF (Amuse-Bouche, Between Bread, Build a Better Burger, Cake Decorating, Mocktail Mixology, Wrap Battle) or one-page proposal (Napkin Folding) — **Friday, February 5, 2027 (11:59 PM)**

☐ Technique proposal feedback — **Friday, February 12, 2027**; revised proposals due (if required) — **Friday, February 26, 2027**

☐ Final cutoff: proposals not received by **Friday, February 12, 2027 (11:59 PM)** result in disqualification

☐ Product Check-In (events that require it) and Opening Ceremony — **Sunday, March 7, 2027**

To Bring to Product Check-In (March 7)

☐ Competitor present (with an educator from the competitor's school) and in uniform

☐ Three (3) identical hard copy proposal packets (softbound, no plastic page protectors), with the competitor's school name and name on each cover

☐ All refrigerated product on one competitor-provided sheet pan (full-size; half or full-size for Mocktail Mixology)

☐ All items in original, commercially labeled packaging with date packaged, weight, item type, and origin

☐ Inventory list on every container: on the official template, alphabetized, inside and outside in plastic sleeves

To Bring at Report to Competition

☐ Competitor in uniform (culinary or front-of-house, as required for the event)

☐ All ingredients, tools, smallwares, glassware, and cleaning supplies listed under "Competitor Must Provide" for the event

☐ Everything fits on or under the 6-foot table and can be carried or rolled onto the floor by the competitor

EXHIBITS

Exhibit A: Proposal Folder Examples

Culinary — Team Proposal Submission: Hard Copy Folder or Binder (softbound only; no plastic page protectors or pockets)



Management — Team Proposal Submission Manila Folder



Exhibit B: Recipe Worksheet Example

School Name:	Your School Here
Educator Name:	Chef Jane Doe
Menu Item	Ratatouille
Dish Element (e.g., Protein, garnish, sauce, etc.)	Accompaniment (Vegetable)
Number of Portions	500 Portion Size: 5 ounces
Cooking Method(s)	Sauté
Recipe Source	Lagasse, Emeril. "Ratatouille." Food Network, http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/emeril-lagasse/ratatouille-recipe0.html. Accessed 30 September 2016.

Ingredients: Item	Amount
Olive oil	¼ cup
Yellow onion, small dice	1 ½ cup
Garlic, minced	1 tsp
Eggplant, medium dice	2 cups
Thyme	½ tsp
Green bell pepper, diced	1 cup
Red bell pepper, diced	1 cup
Zucchini squash, diced	1 cup
Yellow squash, diced	1 cup
Tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and chopped	1 ½ cup
Basil, chiffonade	1 tbsp
Parsley, chopped	1 tbsp
Salt and black pepper	TT

Procedure

Set a large 12-inch sauté pan over medium heat and add the olive oil.

Once hot, add the yellow onions and garlic to the pan.

Cook the onions, stirring occasionally, until they are wilted and lightly caramelized, about 5 to 7 minutes.

Remainder of procedures…

Exhibit C: Recipe Costing Worksheet Example

School Name:	Your School Here
Educator Name:	Chef Jane Doe
Menu Item	Ratatouille
Dish Element (e.g., Protein, garnish, sauce, etc.)	Accompaniment (Vegetable)
Number of Portions	6 Portion Size: 5 ounces

Ingredient	Purchase Unit	Purchase Cost	Unit Cost	Amount Needed	Ingredient Cost
Olive oil	51 oz / 6.375 cup	$16.79	$2.634 / cup	¼ cup	$0.658
Yellow onion, small dice	1 lb / 4 cup	$1.40	$0.35 / cup	1 ½ cup	$0.525
Garlic, minced	1 head	$0.50	$0.10 / tsp	1 tsp	$0.100
Eggplant, medium dice	1 lb / 3 cup	$2.05	$0.683 / cup	2 cups	$1.367
Thyme	Harvested	$0.00	$0.00	½ tsp	$0.000
Green bell pepper, diced	1 lb / 4 cup	$2.30	$0.575 / cup	1 cup	$0.575
Red bell pepper, diced	1 lb / 4 cup	$1.07	$0.268 / cup	1 cup	$0.268
Zucchini squash, diced	1 lb / 2.5 cup	$1.93	$0.772 / cup	1 cup	$0.772
Yellow squash, diced	1 lb / 2.5 cup	$1.93	$0.772 / cup	1 cup	$0.772
Tomatoes, peeled, seeded, and chopped	1 lb / 2 cup	$2.40	$1.20 / cup	1 ½ cup	$1.80
Basil, chiffonade	Harvested	$0.00	$0.00	1 tbsp	$0.000
Parsley, chopped	Harvested	$0.00	$0.00	1 tbsp	$0.000
Herb Garden Seeds	3 seed packets	$8.00	$0.080 / recipe	Recipe share	$0.080
Soil/Compost	2 cu.ft. bag	$12.00	$0.120 / recipe	Recipe share	$0.120
Fertilizer	1 lb. bag	$6.00	$0.060 / recipe	Recipe share	$0.060
Water	Seasonal usage	$1.00	$0.010 / recipe	Recipe share	$0.010
Pest Control	24 oz. bottle	$8.00	$0.080 / recipe	Recipe share	$0.080
Tool Depreciation	Seasonal allocation	$5.00	$0.050 / recipe	Recipe share	$0.050
Garden Labor ($15.00/hr)	2 hrs	$30.00	$0.300 / recipe	Recipe share	$0.300
Subtotal					**$7.537**
1% for small amounts of salt and pepper (Q Factor)					$0.075
2% for frying oil (if used)					$0.00
Total Recipe Cost					**$7.612**
Portion Cost					**$1.269**

Exhibit D: Menu Pricing Worksheet Example

School Name:	Your School Here
Educator Name:	Chef Jane Doe
Menu Item	Ratatouille
Menu Category	☒ Starter ☐ Entrée ☐ Dessert

Recipe	Portion Cost
Ratatouille	$1.212
Couscous (from additional recipe & costing sheets not provided in sample)	$0.972
Garnish (from additional recipe & costing sheets not provided in sample)	$0.127
Total Plate Portion Cost	**$2.311**
Menu Price at 33% Food Cost	**$7.003**
Actual Price on Menu	**$8.00**

Exhibit E: Inventory List Example (Culinary)

School Name:	Your School Here
Year:	2027
Educator Name:	Chef Jane Doe
Container Purpose	☒ Refrigerated Storage ☐ Dry Storage
Number of Items in Container	11

Item	Confirmed (Column for Judge use only)
Basil	
Eggplant	
Garlic	
Green Bell Pepper	
Parsley	
Red Bell Pepper	
Thyme	
Tomatoes	
Yellow Onion	
Yellow Squash	
Zucchini	

Exhibit F: Dishware (Culinary)

Dish	Size	Service	Sample
Round Large Plate	11”	7”	
Square Large Plate	10”	7”	
Round Medium Plate	9”	5.5”	
Square Medium Plate	8.5”	5.5”	
Round Small Plate (B&B)	6.5”	4”	
Square Small Plate (B&B)	5”	3.5”	
Bowls	6.5”	5”	
Rectangular Plate	14” x 7”	~11” x 4.5”	
Ramekin	1.5”	1.5 oz.	

Exhibit G: Sample Restaurant Floor Plan (Management)

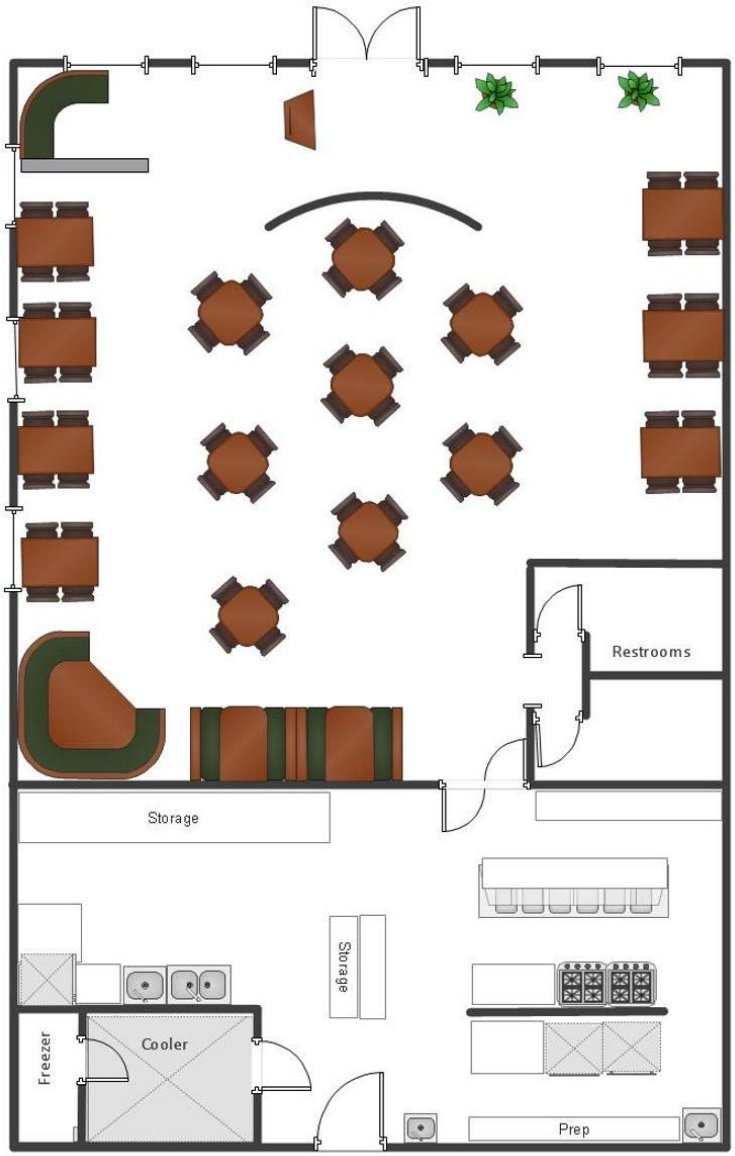
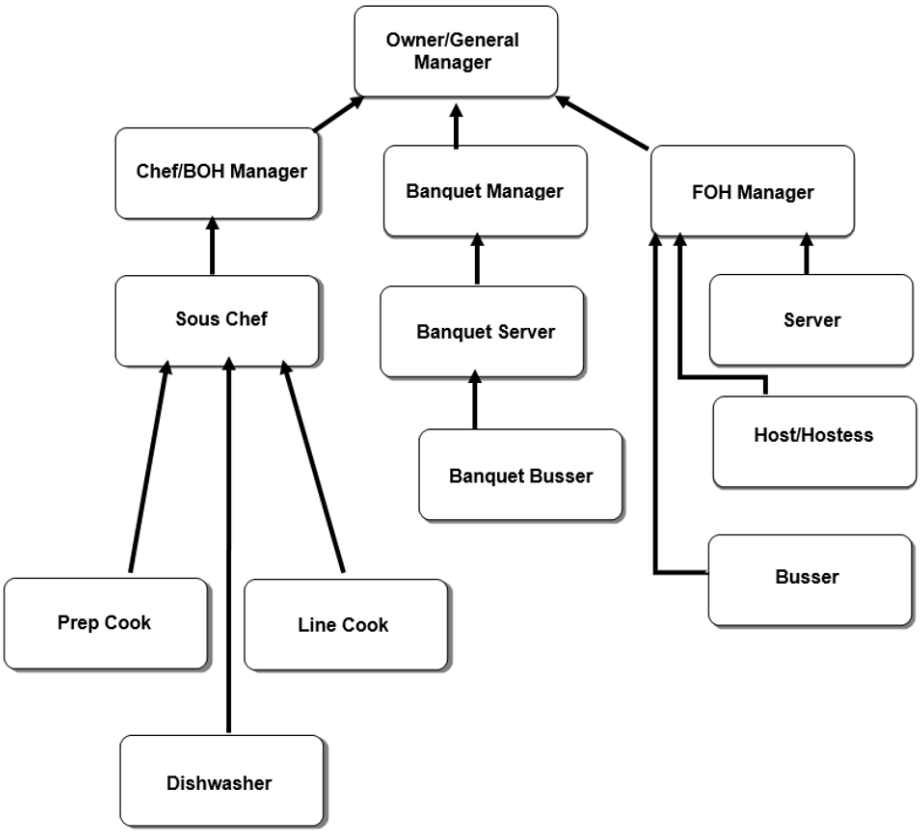


Exhibit H: Sample Organizational Chart (Management)

The Organizational Chart below is an example of the positions needed to staff a full-service restaurant with catering functions.



APPENDIX 1: Culinary Competition Supplemental Information

Sample Culinary Competition Timeline

Team	Team Report	Team & Menu Presentation	Production Mise en Place	Start Cooking	Present Plates / Skills Critique	Tasting Critique	Menu Critique	Clean Up	Sanitation Critique / Dismissal	Out
1	7:45 AM	8:00 AM	8:05 AM	8:25 AM	9:25 AM	9:35 AM	9:45 AM	9:50 AM	10:10 AM	10:15 AM
2	7:45 AM	8:00 AM	8:05 AM	8:25 AM	9:25 AM	9:35 AM	9:45 AM	9:50 AM	10:10 AM	10:15 AM
3	8:05 AM	8:20 AM	8:25 AM	8:45 AM	9:45 AM	9:55 AM	10:05 AM	10:10 AM	10:30 AM	10:35 AM
4	8:05 AM	8:20 AM	8:25 AM	8:45 AM	9:45 AM	9:55 AM	10:05 AM	10:10 AM	10:30 AM	10:35 AM
5	8:25 AM	8:40 AM	8:45 AM	9:05 AM	10:05 AM	10:15 AM	10:25 AM	10:30 AM	10:50 AM	10:55 AM
6	8:25 AM	8:40 AM	8:45 AM	9:05 AM	10:05 AM	10:15 AM	10:25 AM	10:30 AM	10:50 AM	10:55 AM
7	8:45 AM	9:00 AM	9:05 AM	9:25 AM	10:25 AM	10:35 AM	10:45 AM	10:50 AM	11:10 AM	11:15 AM
8	8:45 AM	9:00 AM	9:05 AM	9:25 AM	10:25 AM	10:35 AM	10:45 AM	10:50 AM	11:10 AM	11:15 AM
9	9:05 AM	9:20 AM	9:25 AM	9:45 AM	10:45 AM	10:55 AM	11:05 AM	11:10 AM	11:30 AM	11:35 AM
10	9:05 AM	9:20 AM	9:25 AM	9:45 AM	10:45 AM	10:55 AM	11:05 AM	11:10 AM	11:30 AM	11:35 AM

Sample Culinary Competition Score Sheet

EVALUATION CRITERIA	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
Product Check-In Including but not limited to: Proper temperature; Proper packaging; Complete product inventory list(s); Uniform and hygiene	1	2	3	4	5
WORK SKILLS/ORGANIZATION **Work Organization/Teamwork** Including but not limited to: Utilization of a team plan; Mastery of skills required for individual tasks; Workload evenly distributed; Team cohesiveness; Communication; Professionalism; Proper Production Mise en Place; Proper time management	1	2	3	4	5
Proper Cooking Procedures Including but not limited to: Appropriate cooking method for product used; Required cooking techniques used minimum of two cooking methods from provided list; Cooking procedures done in a time efficient manner; Proper amount of product for recipe requirements; Effective use of remaining product; Proper pans and tools for intended use	1	2	3	4	5
Degree of Difficulty Including but not limited to: Creativity; Complicated techniques; Preparation of item during competition rather than using commercial product	1	2	3	4	5
TEAM PRESENTATION/KNIFE SKILLS **Team Appearance** Including but not limited to: White chef coats, long sleeve; Loose, black or checkered pants; Uniform clean & presentable; Hard sole shoes; Hats, aprons, and arm band (provided); Team uniformity	1	2	3	4	5
Proper Knife Usage Appropriate Selection; Consistency; Accuracy; Safety; Waste	1	2	3	4	5
SAFETY AND SANITATION **Follows Safety and Sanitation Procedures** Including but not limited to: Personal hygiene; Proper knife safety; Proper use and handling of food contact surfaces	1	2	3	4	5
Proper Food Handling Including but not limited to: Proper use of gloves; Appropriate temperature control of ingredients; Proper sanitation practices regarding food contact surfaces; Proper storage of food; Avoidance of cross contamination	1	2	3	4	5
Work Area Cleaned Including but not limited to: Work area cleaned in appropriate time frame; Dishes & equipment properly prepared for dishwashing and packing; Return of station to original condition	1	2	3	4	5
PRODUCT TASTE — Product Taste – Starter A subjective category based on tasting judges' expertise	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
FINISHED PRODUCT — Appearance – Starter Including but not limited to: Balance of color; Shape; Texture; Portion size	1	2	3	4	5

EVALUATION CRITERIA	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
Product Taste – Entrée A subjective category based on tasting judge's expertise	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	13-15
Appearance – Entrée Including but not limited to: Balance of color; Shape; Texture; Portion size	1	2	3	4	5
Product Taste – Dessert A subjective category based on judge's expertise	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
Appearance – Dessert Including but not limited to: Balance of color; Shape; Texture; Portion size	1	2	3	4	5
MENU AND RECIPE PRESENTATION — Presentation Including but not limited to: Typewritten; Recipe structure; Menu presentation; Recipe costing; Menu pricing; Within food cost guidelines; Sources and acknowledgements listed	1	2	3	4	5

GENERAL DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Team and/or individual competitor failed to meet NCPI eligibility requirements.
- Unauthorized coaching or communication.
- Failure to attend required NCPI events and/or competition segments.
- Unsafe, illegal, or unsportsmanlike misconduct from team member(s) and/or adult supporters.

CULINARY-SPECIFIC DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Team began a segment more than 10 minutes early.
- Team finished a segment more than 10 minutes late.
- Team arrived 10 or more minutes late to Report to Competition or after their assigned competition start time.
- Team used a prohibited electrical/battery-operated device, additional burner, or additional heat source.
- Team did not produce two (2) complete meals.
- Team did not compete in a required segment.
- Team did not submit a proposal by February 12, 2027 (not allowed to participate; registration fee forfeited).

PENALTIES

Penalty	Points
Replacement product did not meet requirements and was discarded.	2 pts
Menu and/or written proposal does not meet specifications, or was not submitted on time.	5 pts
Team was not dressed in uniform.	5 pts
Team did not submit folders with all required materials at Product Check-In.	2 pts
Dish request form not submitted by February 26, 2027.	5 pts
Team arrived to Report to Competition late or after their assigned competition start time.	½ pt per 15 secs
Team began any competition segment before their assigned start time.	¼ pt per 15 secs

Penalty	Points
Team did not finish any competition segment within their allotted time.	¼ pt per 15 secs
Presentation menu was not displayed at time of team presentation, or was not displayed in provided acrylic frame.	1 pt
Team Manager touched or handled any equipment or food when not allowed (with the exception of permitted tasting).	5 pts
Use of dishware or glassware other than those provided by Event Organizers.	5 pts
Knife cuts are not listed in the footer of the presentation menu.	1 pt
Team presented knife cuts that were not approved.	1 pt
Team did not use the required cooking method or did not use an approved cooking method.	1 pt
Cooking methods are not listed in the footer of the presentation menu.	1 pt
Team presented menu items that did not match submitted proposal or presented updated dishes that were not approved.	5 pts
Use of prohibited equipment.	5 pts
Use of prohibited ingredients.	5 pts
Team produced two meals that are not identical.	2 pts
Station left in unsanitary manner.	3 pts

Culinary Competition Checklist

Deadlines

☐ Submit electronic copy of culinary proposal — **Friday, February 5, 2027 (midnight)**

☐ NCRLA Foundation proposal feedback deadline — **Friday, February 12, 2027 (midnight)**. Teams with no proposal submitted by this date may not participate and forfeit their registration fee.

☐ Revised Proposal Deadline (only changes requested by the NCRLA Foundation and/or minor edits allowed) — **Friday, February 26, 2027**

☐ Product Check-In — **Sunday, March 7, 2027** (at assigned time)

☐ Competition (Production Day) — **Monday, March 8, 2027**

Culinary Proposal Documentation

☐ Presentation Menu

- ☐ School name at top of page
- ☐ Course Descriptions
- ☐ Course Prices
- ☐ 2 Knife cuts in footer for judging
- ☐ 2 Cooking methods in footer for judging

☐ Starter Materials

- ☐ Recipe Worksheets: One for each element of the dish
- ☐ Recipe Costing Worksheets: One for each element of the dish
- ☐ Menu Pricing: One that combines all elements of dish
- ☐ Plate Photograph

☐ Entrée Materials

- ☐ Recipe Worksheets: One for each element of the dish
- ☐ Recipe Costing Worksheets: One for each element of the dish
- ☐ Menu Pricing: One that combines all elements of dish
- ☐ Plate Photograph

☐ Dessert Materials

- ☐ Recipe Worksheets: One for each element of the dish
- ☐ Recipe Costing Worksheets: One for each element of the dish
- ☐ Menu Pricing: One that combines all elements of dish
- ☐ Plate Photograph

To Bring to Product Check-In (March 7)

☐ Full team present and in uniform (Aprons & hats not required at this time)

☐ 8 hard copies of culinary proposal in softbound folders/binders

☐ All dry ingredients in ONE container

☐ All refrigerated ingredients

☐ Inventory Lists – Each container should have its own list!

- ☐ On official template

- ☐ Ingredients alphabetized
- ☐ Inside each container, in a plastic sleeve
- ☐ Outside each container, in a plastic sleeve

To Bring at Report to Competition (March 8)

- ☐ Full team present and in uniform
- ☐ 1 hard copy of presentation menu
- ☐ All equipment needed for menu production
- ☐ Containers fit guidelines specified in rules
- ☐ Team can carry all equipment, speed rack, AND dry ingredients by themselves in one trip

For Dismissal

- ☐ Clear all trash, debris and equipment from sheet pans and speed rack (either at workspace or in dishwashing)
- ☐ Return sheet pans and speed rack to designated area (do not leave at workspace or in dishwashing)

Post-Competition

- ☐ Pick up hard copy proposals from registration by 7 p.m. on Monday, March 8, 2027

APPENDIX 2: Management Competition Supplemental Information

Sample Management Competition Timeline

Morning session (first 8 teams):

Team	8:00 AM	8:05 AM	8:15 AM	8:25 AM	8:35 AM	8:45 AM	8:55 AM	9:05 AM	9:15 AM	Feedback Sessions	Students Out
1	Report & Setup	Critical A	Critical B	Operations	Break	Menu	Marketing	Concept	Break	9:30 AM	9:40 AM
2	Report & Setup	Critical B	Operations	Break	Menu	Marketing	Concept	Break	Critical A	9:30 AM	9:40 AM
3	Report & Setup	Operations	Break	Menu	Marketing	Concept	Break	Critical A	Critical B	9:40 AM	9:50 AM
4	Report & Setup	Break	Menu	Marketing	Concept	Break	Critical A	Critical B	Operations	9:40 AM	9:50 AM
5	Report & Setup	Menu	Marketing	Concept	Break	Critical A	Critical B	Operations	Break	9:50 AM	10:00 AM
6	Report & Setup	Marketing	Concept	Break	Critical A	Critical B	Operations	Break	Menu	9:50 AM	10:00 AM
7	Report & Setup	Concept	Break	Critical A	Critical B	Operations	Break	Menu	Marketing	10:00 AM	10:10 AM
8	Report & Setup	Break	Critical A	Critical B	Operations	Break	Menu	Marketing	Concept	10:00 AM	10:10 AM

Afternoon session (teams 1–8, starting at 10:25 AM): same rotation as above; feedback sessions begin 11:55 AM (Teams 1–2), 12:05 PM (Teams 3–4), 12:15 PM (Teams 5–6), and 12:25 PM (Teams 7–8), with students out ten minutes later.

Sample Management Competition Score Sheet

EVALUATION CRITERIA	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
Check-In (5 points) Including but not limited to: Arrival within timeframe; Items meet specifications; Complete submission; Uniform	1	2	3	4	5
CONCEPT (30 points) Description of Concept	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
SWOT Analysis	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
Presentation Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Q & A – Depth of Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
MENU AND COSTING (35 points) Menu Matches Concept	1	2	3	4	5
Description of 12 items	1	2	3	4	5
Sample of how presented	1	2	3	4	5
Photos	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Q & A – Depth of Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
Menu Poster	1	2	3	4	5
MARKETING (40 points) Matches Concept	1	2	3	4	5
ROI	1	2	3	4	5
Tactic Budgets	1	2	3	4	5
Samples	1	2	3	4	5
Creativity	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Q & A – Depth of Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
Marketing Poster	1	2	3	4	5
CRITICAL THINKING (55 points) Teamwork	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Q & A – Depth of Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
Category 1	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
Category 2	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
Category 3	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
Category 4	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10

EVALUATION CRITERIA	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	VERY GOOD	EXCELLENT
OPERATIONS (30 points) Layout Selection & Floorplan	1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
Interior and décor	1	2	3	4	5
Organizational chart	1	2	3	4	5
Presentation Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Q & A – Depth of Knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
MENU AND COSTING (5 points) Recipes, Costing, Pricing	1	2	3	4	5

GENERAL DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Team and/or individual competitor failed to meet NCPI eligibility requirements.
- Unauthorized coaching or communication.
- Failure to attend required NCPI events and/or competition segments.
- Unsafe, illegal, or unsportsmanlike misconduct from team member(s) and/or adult supporters.

MANAGEMENT-SPECIFIC DISQUALIFICATIONS

- Team did not arrive during allotted check-in window on the appropriate date or did not check in at all.
- Team did not report to the competition floor on time.
- Team did not compete in a required segment.
- Team did not submit a proposal by February 12, 2027 (not allowed to participate; registration fee forfeited).

PENALTIES

Penalty	Points
Written proposal does not meet specifications, or was not submitted on time.	5 pts
Team was not dressed in uniform.	5 pts
Posters do not meet specifications or include additional information.	5 pts
Restaurant concept is not located in ProStartville or does not match one of the provided restaurant space scenarios.	5 pts
Team menu includes more or fewer than twelve (12) items.	5 pts
Alcoholic beverage or any adult consumable is used as a menu item.	5 pts
Team submits recipes for more or fewer than one (1) menu item.	5 pts
Team submits recipe costing worksheets for more or fewer than one (1) menu item.	5 pts
Team submits more or fewer than one (1) menu pricing worksheet.	5 pts
Team submits more or fewer than two (2) marketing tactics.	5 pts

Management Competition Checklist

Deadlines

☐ Submit electronic copy of management proposal and supplemental materials (including social media video/post, if used) — **Friday, February 5, 2027 (midnight)**

☐ NCRLA Foundation proposal feedback deadline — **Friday, February 12, 2027 (midnight)**. Teams with no proposal submitted by this date may not participate and forfeit their registration fee.

☐ Revised Proposal Deadline (only changes requested by the NCRLA Foundation and/or minor edits allowed) — **Friday, February 26, 2027**

☐ Materials Check-In — **Sunday, March 7, 2027** (at assigned time)

☐ Competition (Presentation Day) — **Monday, March 8, 2027**

Management Proposal Documentation

☐ Restaurant Concept Description

- ☐ Type of establishment
- ☐ Purpose and impact
- ☐ Meals served
- ☐ Hours of operation
- ☐ Type of cuisine served
- ☐ Target market

☐ Floorplan of selected restaurant space scenario

☐ Description of interior and décor

☐ SWOT Analysis

☐ Organizational chart

☐ Sample menu

☐ Recipe Worksheet(s) for one menu item

☐ Costing Worksheet(s) for one menu item

☐ Menu Pricing Worksheet for one menu item

☐ Photo of one to four menu items

☐ Two Marketing Tactics

- ☐ Description
- ☐ Goal
- ☐ Budget
- ☐ ROI
- ☐ Sample

☐ QR code leading directly to the posted social media tactic, if one is used

To Bring to Materials Check-In (March 7)

☐ Full team present and in uniform

☐ 15 hard copies of management proposal

☐ 2 Posters

- ☐ Manila Folder
  - ☐ School Name
  - ☐ Sample Menu
  - ☐ Recipe Worksheet(s)
  - ☐ Costing Worksheet(s)
  - ☐ Menu Pricing Worksheet
  - ☐ Photograph(s)

Post-Competition

- ☐ Pick up hard copy proposals from registration by 7 p.m. on Monday, March 8, 2027

Blank Worksheet Templates

Recipe Worksheet

School Name:	
Educator Name:	
Menu Item	
Dish Element (e.g., Protein, garnish, sauce, etc.)	
Number of Portions / Portion Size	
Cooking Method(s)	
Recipe Source	

Ingredients: Item	Amount

Procedure

Recipe Costing Worksheet

School Name:	
Educator Name:	
Menu Item	
Dish Element (e.g., Protein, garnish, sauce, etc.)	
Number of Portions / Portion Size	

Ingredient	Purchase Unit	Purchase Cost	Unit Cost	Amount Needed	Ingredient Cost
				Subtotal	
				1% for small amounts of salt and pepper (Q Factor)	
				2% for frying oil (if used)	
				Total Recipe Cost	
				Portion Cost	

Menu Pricing Worksheet

School Name:	
Educator Name:	
Menu Item	
Menu Category	☐ Starter ☐ Entrée ☐ Dessert

Recipe	Portion Cost
Total Plate Portion Cost	
Menu Price at 33% Food Cost	
Actual Price on Menu	

Inventory List

School Name:	
Year:	
Educator Name:	
Container Purpose	☐ Refrigerated Storage ☐ Dry Storage
Number of Items in Container	

Item	Confirmed (Column for Judge use only)