Odyssey of the Mind

COACHES – THIS IT THE LETTER THAT I SEND IN THE SPRING TO UPDATE PARENTS AND INTRODUCE SOME DETAILS ABOUT COMPETITION. Copy and paste as you like!

Dear Parents and Family Members,

Our teams have some wonderful and creative ideas for our performance coming up in March!    Please check your calendars and be sure to keep the whole day - Saturday, March 3h - clear.  The Odyssey of the Mind competition can be busy, so I am trying to share as much as I can ahead of time to clarify a few things.   The competition runs all day and there is an awards ceremony in the evening.  We will know our exact competition times (for the long term problem and spontaneous) when I receive them the last week of February at the coaches meeting.  This is what we have been working toward, so the teams are depending on all team members being there.

There is an audience for the **long term problem**, so this is the one for which you might want to invite family to watch – and your child will likely want you there too!  **Spontaneous** is held in a closed room with the team and judges only – the coach accompanies them to the holding room before they compete.  I will share these times when I receive them at the coach’s meeting.

**LOCATION and TRANSPORTATION** –  The competition will be held at Viera High School (6103 Stadium Pkwy, Melbourne, FL 32940  Team members will need meet me at Bayside.   If you need help with transportation, please contact another parent on the team.  For our Harbor City Team, I may need help transporting large items; if you have a minivan or larger SUV please (that can hold a washing machine box), please contact me if you can help us.   Based on the performance times that I receive at the end of February, I will set a time for each team to meet at Bayside – and give a specific location.

**REMIND APP** - I will be using this to communicate updates - please look for texts.

**PARENT SUPERVISOR/ASSISTANT COACH** – Since I may need to leave the team from time to time, I will need to be sure that there is at least one parent who can stay with the team members at all times and make sure that they are supervised during the day at our “Base”.  This is usually not a problem, as many parents usually do stay, but it would be helpful to have someone designated in charge of the team when I am not with them.  If you are willing, please let me know.  If you (parent) are not able to stay all day, we will arrange a time for pick up after the spontaneous and Long term are complete – once I receive the times; we will also need to have your cell phone number.  During the competition day, if teams wish to view other performances, they will need to contact me for permission to leave our team - as we will likely be preparing for the Long term or Spontaneous.

**WORKER** – We will receive our worker assignment soon.  The team will need a parent volunteer to man the station that may be assigned on competition day.  It is for two hours and will not coincide with the team’s Long Term performance time.  Please let us know if you can go this- just in case! ☺

**THE TEAM** -  Once the team has met at competition, please support the team in staying together.  If you would like to bring snacks or food to your child, but please do not remove your child from the group without letting the coach know.

**AWARDS CEREMONY** – The awards ceremony will be in the evening and is a time for students to dress creatively.  Really fun hats and outfits are commonly worn and it has a festive party atmosphere.   It is great to have the whole team together there -  I would like to have the teams from both schools together.  Each team is completing a different long term problem and spontaneous, so it would be great if they could meet each other and cheer each other on!

There is a period of time between the last team competition time and the awards ceremony.  Many families and teams choose to go to have dinner at this time.  There are several restaurants – and a Publix – nearby, so if you choose to have dinner nearby, there are options.  Awards usually start at 7:00PM – but I will give the definite time after the final coach’s meeting.

**OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE** – On competition day, parents may help carry items throughout the campus.  If any repairs need to be made to props or costumes, students must do this themselves.  If students are going to wear any kind of make-up – or do their hair (as part of a costume), they need to apply it or do it themselves – or have another team member help them.  If a team is witnessed by a district official having outside assistance, they may lose points.

**LONG TERM PERFORMANCE** – Our team and parents can stay together until we reach the Check in area.  This is a good time for family members to go into the performance room to find good seats.  You also may get a glimpse of another team’s performance.  I will stay with the team until they reach the staging area – from where they will begin their performance.  They carry all items out to the performance area themselves and begin performing.  When the performance is over, the team remains in the performance area while the judges ask questions.  Once they are done, the coach and parents can help the team remove items from the performance area.  These items do need to be treated with care, as they could be needed again if the teams advance.

**SPORTSMANSHIP** – OM stresses sportsmanship; therefore, teams can be penalized if someone in the group (including adults) is overheard criticizing another group or individual.  It can be tempting to comment or compare – especially if we have a chance to see other teams perform.    In general, I tell the team members to only say what they like about other teams…

**LUNCH** – I recommend that students bring lunch (if there is a large gap between Spontaneous and Long Term).  If someone could volunteer to bring a cooler with water/drinks that would be very helpful.   Please e-mail the group to let us know!  Also, a portable shade/cover (like the one you would bring to soccer games) may be helpful.

**BEHAVIOR** – I have never had an issue with team behavior, but I do like to be sure that we have consistent expectations at competition to ensure student safety and respect for the facility.  Of particular importance, student should refrain from climbing and running on the campus.  They also need to talk in quiet voices as they walk through the halls, as there are at least 20 different long term competition rooms and spontaneous rooms throughout the campus.  There is a large courtyard area where they are able to relax while we wait.

**MY NUMBER** – My cell phone number is (321) \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.  Please add it to your phone book.  Also, please text me with your child’s name and I will add your number to my phone book.

Please go over these items with your child, just in case I do not have a chance to cover everything with them at the meeting.  ☺

Thank you so much for helping to make this possible!

Amy Springer