

Odyssey of The Mind



Dear Parents,

Looking for an Odyssey!

Are you and your child ready to “embark” on an Odyssey like no other? If so, you and your child should consider joining an Odyssey of the Mind team.

Odyssey of the Mind is a worldwide competition that teaches students to learn creative problem-solving methods while having fun in the process. According to the Odyssey of the Mind website (<https://www.odysseyofthemind.com/>), creativity and imagination are key elements:

By tapping into creativity, and through encouraging imaginative paths to problem-solving, students learn skills that will provide them with the ability to solve problems -- great and small -- for a lifetime. The Odyssey of the Mind teaches students how to think divergently by providing open-ended problems that appeal to a wide range of interests. Students learn how to identify challenges and to think creatively to solve those problems. They are free to express their ideas and suggestions without fear of criticism. The creative problem-solving process rewards thinking "outside of the box."

Teams of five to seven members, and coaches/co-coaches, are formed based on grade levels. For example, a division one team can consist of students from grades three to five and a division two team can consist of students from grades six through eight. The coach and/or co-coaches are parents of one or more of the team members. As we said, this Odyssey is not just for the students, but for parents as well! Don't take our word for it, below are some comments by an actual team member and coach...

“The Odyssey of the Mind experience impacted me because it showed me that with hard work, dedication, and imagination I can achieve anything. The best part of being on the team is being able to be with my friends and work on a creative way to solve a problem.”

– Ava Durruthy, member of World Finalist team

“When my Son Aidan showed interest in joining a team, I did not set out to be the Coach, but agreed to do it on the condition that the other six parents would support. As it turned out I had great parental support which included two of our team moms co-coaching. As a coach my job is to organize and guide the team to solve the long term problem while challenging the team to come up with the best possible solution. It is amazing to watch the kids develop teamwork and work skills as they work each week on solutions to the problem. It is great to see them brainstorming an issue and coming up with a unique solution.”

– Marty Fallon, coach of State Finalist team

Our two teams were very successful this year! As a result, we encourage other to get involved by forming teams of their own. If you and your child know a group of other students and parents who can form a team – that's great! If you and your child are interested but aren't sure where to begin in forming a team – we can help! There will be two information sessions in early September – look for specific dates in future newsletters. Until then, you can check out the Odyssey of the Mind website for information on the competition, <https://www.odysseyofthemind.com/>.

We would love to have you join next year's ‘Odyssey!’”