

Odyssey of the Mind 2016-17

Welcome to the 30th year students in the Pittsford Schools have the opportunity to participate in the Odyssey of the Mind competition. This is an enriching experience for the teams that participate. This program is an AFTER SCHOOL activity. The volunteer parent coach is in charge of the team and in setting up weekly meeting times. All of the teams will compete at the regional competition, with some advancing to the State and World level competitions.

A Pittsford Odyssey of the Mind Team is a group of 5-7 students from a Pittsford school, with a parent adult coach or coaches. Students are judged at their division level in both long-term and spontaneous problem solving. The students do not have to be “A” students or even close friends when they start a team. They have to enjoy thinking and solving things creatively and be willing to share their talents and strengths with the group. Creative problem solving and a team effort are the basic principles of Odyssey of the Mind. When students work together on a project, it encourages them to find new and different ways of tackling a problem in an enjoyable way, it teaches students to think.

There is a membership fee of **\$25.00 per team member** to cover the cost of competition fees, awards and for registration costs when teams advance to the State or Worlds level.

For the Competition each team must choose one of the five long term problems available and prepare a solution during the months before the event. On competition day each team must present their solution to the long term problem as well as solve a spontaneous problem within a few minutes. Spontaneous problems may be verbal brainstorming-type problems involving drawing, dramatization or creative writing or be of a “hands-on” nature.

Important Dates to Remember: * Put all dates on your calendar *****

February 4th	Pittsford Spontaneous Day at Thornell Road School
March 4th	Regional Competition in Webster School District
April 8th	NY State Competition in Binghamton (for advancing teams)
May 24-27th	World Competition @ Michigan State University (advancing)

Student Responsibilities:

- Find team members who are willing to make a weekly commitment and are willing to work on developing team effort and spirit
- Get an adult coach or coaches and give them this information packet and a copy of the problem chosen
- Turn in a team roster, permission slips, media releases and checks as soon as possible (must be turned in by November 1st). Problems will be assigned on a "first-in" basis. There are a limited number of problems for each school, please give your first and second choice of problems
- Design and produce the solution to the long-term problem
- Practice spontaneous problem solving with your coach
- Attend all practices and all competitions (check all dates)
- Students are not allowed to change teams or team rosters once they have been registered with the region
- Teams are not allowed to add new members once seven members have been registered with the region (even if someone drops out)

Coaches Responsibilities:

- Provide one judge for the competition (information to follow)**
- Organize the team and arrange for practice sessions, usually once a week
- Conduct brainstorming sessions that allow the students to develop solutions to solve the long-term problem. **Adult assistance is prohibited in developing the solutions**
- Help the team obtain materials and knowledge necessary to solve the long-term problem
- Conduct Spontaneous problem solving sessions
- Accompany the team to all competitions
- Get detailed support materials from Building Advisor to assist in coaching
- Send 3 photos of team practicing for the Show Off Day presentation

Parent Responsibilities:

- Parents can coach or assist in coaching a team
- Take turns providing a snack for the team
- Encourage and support their child and the team to make sure their time commitment is met
- Let the children solve the problem without outside assistance
- Check your calendar to make sure your family can attend all competitions
- Give the Advisor names or any friend or relative that would be willing to help out during District Show Off Day and/or the Regional Competition in March (they would have appropriate training)