

TPA/TPJA Odyssey of the Mind FAQs – 2010-2011

Q. How are teams determined?

A. During the Registration process information is collected from the student as to;

- if they are on a returning team
- what grade they are in
- what problem they prefer to do
- who they'd like to team with
- what their cross streets are
- any schedule restrictions
- parent volunteer coach available

Using this information, the coaches have a meeting and determine the best fit for team rosters to form teams of 4 to 7 students. Diverse gender teams are preferred, and diverse grades may be teamed depending on availability. Jr High students will form Division 2 teams, and High School students will form Division 3 teams. The desire is to keep veteran teams together, unless there is unanimous consent amongst team members to alter the roster. The TPA OM system now can only handle two new teams without a parent coach. If more than 2 teams do not have parent volunteer coach, the team without a coach will be disbanded and the fees refunded at the beginning of the season.

Q. When are the meetings?

A. The typical time commitment for preparation for the various competitions are listed below;

For Regional Level Competition - 70 -90 hours over 6 months – Sept - March

For State Level Competition - 90 – 110 hours over 7 months – Sept - April

For World Level Competition - 110 – 150 hours over 8 months – Sept - May

This is usually attained by teams meeting 2-3 times a month, for 3- 5 hours per meeting. Saturday's are usually the day teams use to meet, but if the team decides to meet on other days, that's fine – it's up to the team. The meetings usually start in September and run through to the Regional Tournament in March. If the team progresses to the State competition and World after that, teams can be together until the end of May. It is recognized that not all students will be able to attend all meetings, the teams will need to figure out how to handle the various rare absences. But it is expected that team members be able to make 80% of the meetings.

Q. Where are the meetings held?

A. Initial meetings are held at facilities that have a white board for brainstorming and planning. This can be at TPA, the library, or other similar facility. Once the team starts building, they meet at a team member's house/garage.

Q. Is attending the World Tournament mandatory if the team progresses that far?

A. The cost and time requirement can make the World Tournament difficult to attend. Choosing to attend the World Tournament is strictly an individual voluntary decision. There will be no pressure by attending team members to try to get non-attending members to attend. Non attending team members have contributed greatly to the team by helping them win at the State competition. However, that scenario should be discussed by the entire team at the beginning of the season and plans should be made accordingly.