



19 June 2017

Dear Parents /Caregivers

Your child has chosen to participate in the Opti-MINDS Challenge. The Opti-MINDS Challenge is a problem-solving event for participants between the ages of six and adult. Through participation, students develop enterprise; critical and creative thinking skills; sustainable thinking; cooperative problem solving; time and budget management; communication skills and responsibility.

Teams, of four to seven students, will have six weeks to solve an open-ended Challenge in the areas of Science Engineering, Language Literature or Social Sciences. To encourage creativity, teams must present their Challenge solution using props, costumes and special effects as outlined in the Challenge. Teams are also required to complete a spontaneous challenge where they are given 5 minutes to outline how they would respond to the challenge provided. There are four divisions; Division I: Prep- Yr 6, Division II: Prep- Yr 9, and Division III: year Prep – Tertiary, and Open Division: any combination of participants.

The competition begins in Term 3 with the release of this year's challenges in July and the competition occurs on Sunday, 20 August at the Central Queensland University (CQU Open Day). Team preparation will begin in Term 3 with team weekly meetings with either Mrs Meager or Ms Pripic to check on team progress. Teams will also practice the skills required to complete these challenges, learning from other students and staff who have competed in prior competitions and judged performances at both regional and state competitions.

The regional competition is a whole day event and the timetable for the day will be forwarded as soon as it is available. Ms Pripic will be supervising teams on the day. Mrs Meager will be at the competition but in an official regional Opti-MINDs role.

Once teams have been nominated, your child is making a commitment to the other members of their team over the following six weeks to attend practices and session times as agreed upon by the team. Only team members may work on the Challenge solution and presentation. It is vital that students receive absolutely NO assistance from teachers, parents, siblings, friends etc. Parents and teachers may assist with encouragement and teaching a skill the team requires (but not as a direct part of the Challenge solution).

At regionals, the day will feature Long Term and Spontaneous Challenge presentations. However, only the Long Term Challenges will be presented in front of an audience. You are welcome to come early and watch other schools perform their creatively sustainable Challenge solutions - it is half the fun! As the Spontaneous Challenge is common to all teams, this section will be performed to a panel of judges only. Stay for the closing ceremony too! It is the culmination of your child's endeavours and like the day, it celebrates the many learning outcomes your child has achieved through the Opti-MINDS Challenge.

To assist with covering the cost of school registration and team nominations this year we have a registration fee of \$30.00 per child. Payment can be made by cash, cheque, EFTPOS, or through the RGS website. Please make cheques payable to The Rockhampton Grammar School. Note that Bpay is not available for this event. For payments through the RGS website, please click 'Make a Payment', select school activities and events and down arrow to Optiminds. Please make payment by Tuesday, 27 June to enable teams to be registered and challenges emailed during the last week of holidays.

Kindly complete the attached consent form and return it to school. I would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your support and encouragement.

Samantha Meager (Teacher in charge)

Lacey Pripic