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 6 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 4 to 7 students) will have 6 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 4 divisions; Division I: Prep-Yr 6, Division II: Prep-Yr9, and Division III: year Prep – Tertiary, and Open Division: any combination of participants.

Whilst the competition begins in Term 3 with the release of this year’s challenges and the competition occurs on Sunday 28th August at the Central Queensland University, team preparation will begin in Term 1 with weekly meetings [alternating Monday (Mrs Meager) and Friday (Ms Pripic) afternoons 3:15pm – 4pm] where students will 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 further detail of which rooms at the University and when teams will be presenting will be forwarded as soon as we are aware. Successful teams have the opportunity to compete at National/International Finals (The University of Queensland) on October 14th-16th.

Once teams have been nominated your child is making a commitment to the other members of their team over the following 6 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’s 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’s 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 introduced a registration fee of $30.00 per child. Payment may be via the School’s online payment portal at https://quickweb.westpac.com.au/OnlinePaymentServlet2?communityCode=ISQWEB&currencyCode=AUD&supplierBusinessCode=ROCKHAMPTONGMR and selecting the School Activities and Events option. Note that Bpay is not available for this event.
Can you please 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