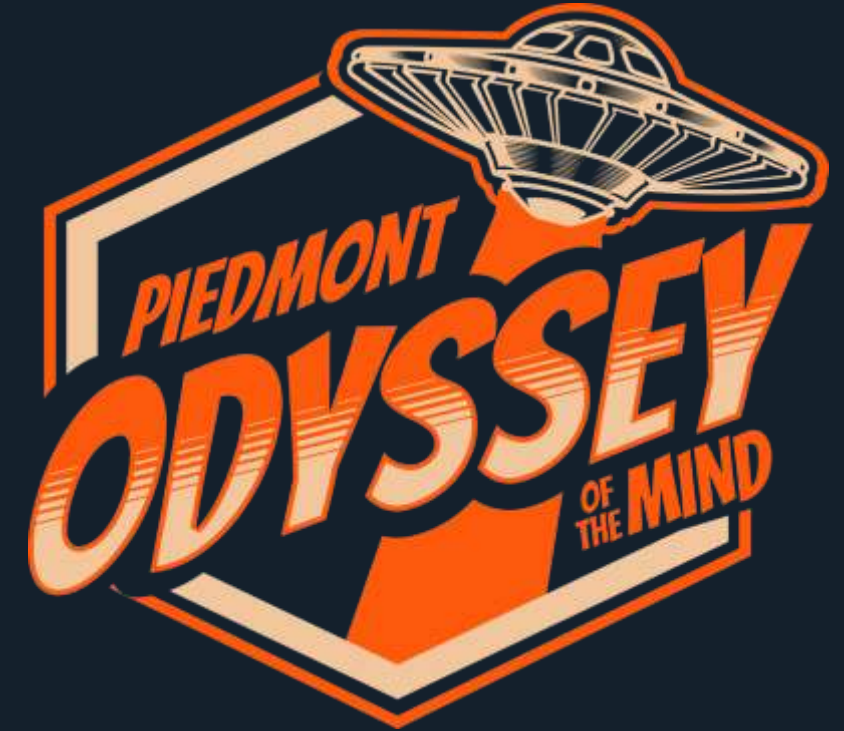


IMAGINATION MEETS INNOVATION

2026 – 2027 SEASON KICK-OFF

SEPTEMBER 17, 2026



OKLAHOMA
ODYSSEY OF THE MIND

WHAT IS

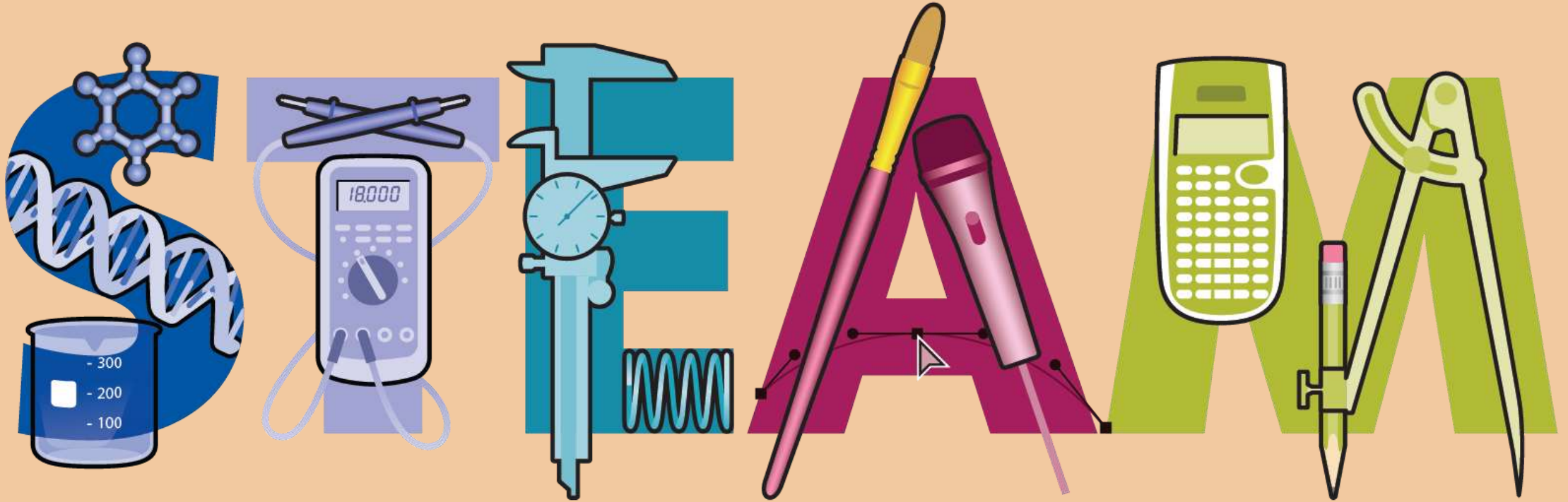


Odyssey of the Mind®

- Worldwide, team driven, creative problem-solving program started in 1978
- Teams of up to seven students with diverse skill sets work together to solve an open-ended problem
- Divisions
 - Primary (Non-Competitive, K-2)
 - Elementary (D1 - Grades 3-5)
 - Middle School (D2 - Grades 6-8)
 - High School (D3 - Grades 9-12)
 - Collegiate



TRUE STEAM EDUCATION



SCIENCE. TECHNOLOGY. ENGINEERING. ARTS. MATH.

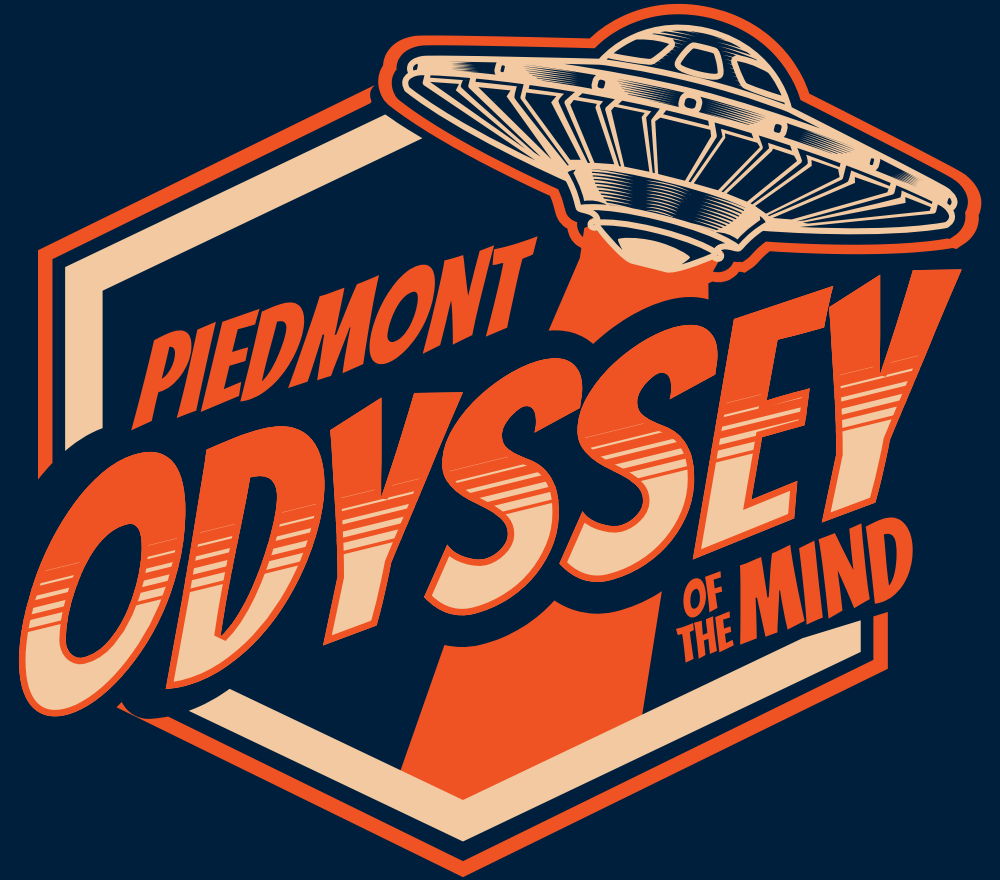
PIEDMONT ODYSSEY OF THE MIND

- Piedmont students have competed in Odyssey of the Mind for over 30 years
- Now, proudly supported by PAVA.
- 100% volunteer-led 501(c)(3) organization
- Piedmont teams have:
 - Multiple state tournament winners
 - Multiple state Ranatra Fusca winners
 - Several top 10 world finals teams
 - World Finals Championships!



PIEDMONT ODYSSEY OF THE MIND BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Melissa Atkinson – Director
- Richard Thanscheidt – Director
- Shay Ross – Secretary
- Brandon Madison – Treasurer
- Aaron Beasecker – President



LONG-TERM PROBLEMS

- Each team selects one long-term problem to solve.
- Teams present their solutions during a competitive tournament in a performance skit that highlights various elements.
- Points are awarded with a focus on creativity and risk-taking in the team's solution.
- Types of problems (following slides)

PRIMARY NON-COMPETITIVE (GRADES K-2)

Teamwork Effect



PROBLEM ONE

VEHICLE

Omer's Shopping Service



PROBLEM TWO

TECHNICAL

Haywire Hijinx



PROBLEM THREE

CLASSICS

Wonders of the Ancient World Awaken



PROBLEM FOUR

STRUCTURE

Copycat Structure



PROBLEM FIVE

PERFORMANCE



The Musician



WHICH PROBLEM WILL YOU SOLVE?

OM 2026-2027 LONG-TERM PROBLEM SYNOPSES

Primary: TEAMWORK EFFECT

Are you seeing what I'm seeing? Team members will create and wear costumes that present different images at different times and from different perspectives. The performance will include an announcer character who explains the action of the images being changed and portrayed during the performance. The performance will conclude with a surprise humorous ending.

Problem 1: OMER'S SHOPPING SERVICE

Clean up in Problem 1! In this problem, teams will develop their very own creative OMER's shopping service. They will build one or more vehicles that will perform tasks such as taking an order and shopping for the items requested. One of the items will not be available and the vehicle will choose a substitute item and eventually check out. For divisions 2 through 4 the items will be unloaded by a team-made device. As the finale, the vehicle will be released and return to its parking location.

Problem 2: HAYWIRE HIJINX

Oh no! Something has gone terribly wrong! In this problem, teams will create two "animatronic" devices. One device will "go rogue" and will make its own independent decisions, defying the orders it was assigned. The second animatronic character must correct the defiant actions and save the day, which allows the performance to continue. Each animatronic character will complete two tasks and the setting must include a representation that allows each animatronic character to see what it looks like to others.

Problem 3: CLASSICS... WONDERS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD AWAKEN

It's alive! Teams will create a historian character who presents three of the seven Wonders of the Ancient World, explaining to an audience some of the lessons and meanings humans have learned from their creation. However, there might be more to these wonders than we think in modern times. During the performance, the ancient wonders will come to life and correct the historian character, explaining to the audience what real lessons they gave to humanity. The performance will include the use of Arm & Hammer™ baking soda and artistic replicas of the three selected ancient wonders.

Problem 4: COPYCAT STRUCTURE

Are you copying me? In this problem, teams will use balsa wood and glue to make a structure which will be tested by balancing and holding as much weight as possible. They will also create a copycat structure that looks like the balsa wood and glue structure. During the performance, the copycat structure will mirror the actions and experiences of the balsa wood structure.

Problem 5: THE MUSICIAN

Many songs have been written about great events and people, but we don't hear so many songs about everyday life. Teams will create a humorous performance featuring a Musician Character who meets a disheartened/saddened community. The musician must create a musical instrument out of "trash" items, play music and present songs that celebrate the ordinary parts of life. The performance will include a dancer character, a growing audience that loves the performances, and a grand finale.

SPONTANEOUS PROBLEM SOLVING

THREE TYPES OF PROBLEMS



Verbal

Teams speak their ideas aloud, racking up as many original responses as the clock allows.



Hands-On

Teams build or solve on the spot using only the materials provided at the site.



Verbal + Hands-On

One problem, both skills: spoken ideas paired with a hands-on challenge.

Spontaneous problems build quick thinking, teamwork, and creativity — and count toward the team's overall competition score.



SPONTANEOUS

VERBAL EXAMPLE

Your problem is to name things that come back. One point for common answers, three points for creative answers.

DEBRIEFING:

Common Answers:

- Boomerang
- Dog

Creative Answers:

- Hunger, shortly after eating
- A song that is stuck in your head
- Telemarketers
- Movie remakes

HANDS-ON EXAMPLE

IDEAS
DESIGN
BUILD
SOLVE

CREATIVITY
BUILDS
BRIGHTER
FUTURES



THE CHALLENGE

Use the provided materials to build the two bridges shown below. Your bridges must connect the starting and ending edges of the tables (point to point). Nothing else can be used.

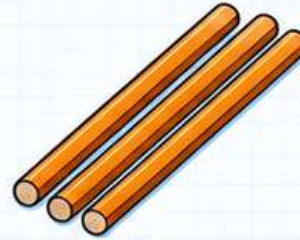
RULES

- The tables are sectioned off into different scoring areas (point to areas). Your score will be based on the sections that you choose to start and end your bridges.
- You will use only the materials provided (point to materials). Nothing else can be used.

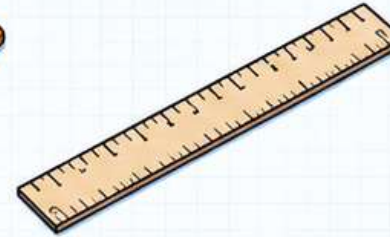
SCORING

- Each legal bridge will receive the score of the highest scoring area it touches on each table.
- You will receive 1 to 15 points for the creativity of your solution.
- You will also receive 1 to 10 points for how well you work together.

SUPPLIES



3
unsharpened
pencils



1 ruler

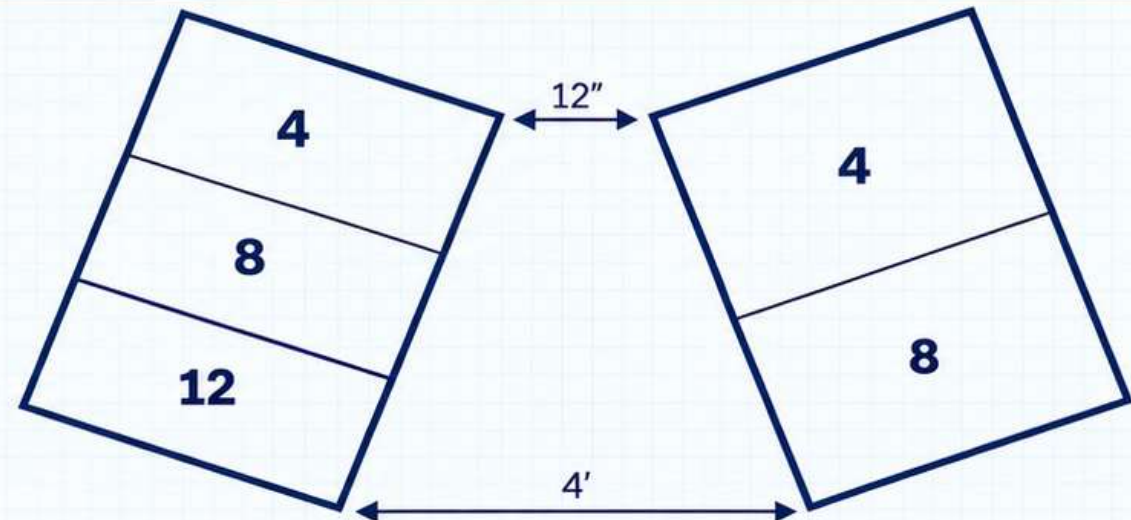


8 paperclips



8 rubber bands

TABLE LAYOUT



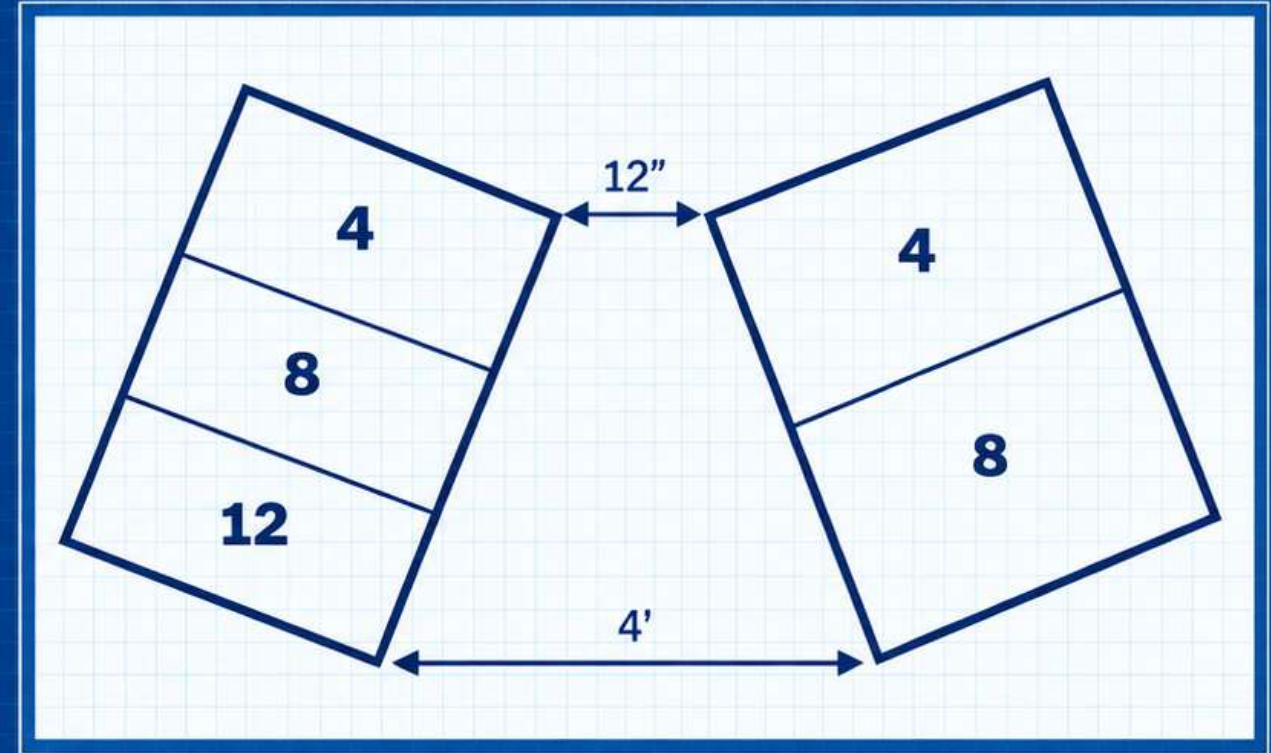
Debriefing:

IDEAS
DESIGN
BUILD
SOLVE

CREATIVITY
BUILDS
BRIGHTER
FUTURES



- Can you move the tables?
- Can I span the small gap across the tables but then connect the scoring sections on the table (the bridge doesn't have to suspend the entire area)?
- Can bridges be on top of other bridges?



COMPETITION JOURNEY



STEP 01

Regionals

TBD

Teams' first official competition. They perform their long-term solution, tackle a Spontaneous problem on the spot, and earn the scores that decide who advances. The top 10 teams from each problem and division advance to the State Tournament.



STEP 02

State Finals

Oklahoma State University

Regional qualifiers compete one more time where the top two teams in each problem and division earn an invitation to World Finals.



STEP 03

World Finals

Michigan State University

800+ teams from across the U.S. and 25+ countries on one campus:

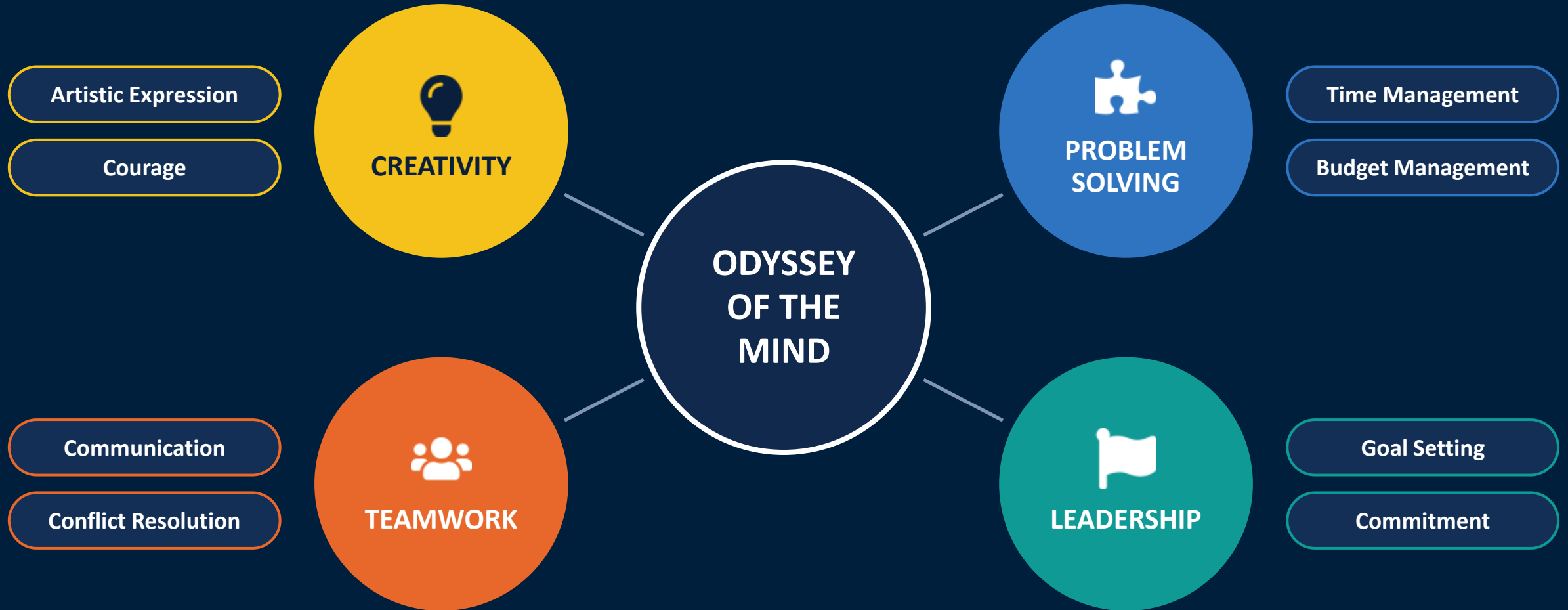
- Parade of Countries and laser light show
- A week of pin trading with teams worldwide
- Creativity Festival and World Champions crowned

OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

- Odyssey of the Mind is hands-on for students and hands-off for adults.
- Team members must conceive, design, build, and perform their own solution.
- Help from anyone outside the team is called Outside Assistance and can result in competition penalties.



SKILLS THAT LAST BEYOND COMPETITION



HEAR IT FROM THE TEAMS!

**What surprised
me most**

**My favorite
Odyssey memory**

What I learned

Why I came back

COACHES

- Coaches make teams possible.
- Anyone can coach — parents, grandparents, teachers, friends, or community members.
- No Odyssey experience is required.
- Coaches receive training, mentor support, and resources.
- Teams may have more than one coach.
- Coaching is a rewarding way to help students create something entirely their own.



THE ROLE OF THE COACH

- Schedule meetings
- Organize snacks and supplies
- Guide brainstorming
- Help students understand the problem and scoring
- Arrange “experts” to teach skills
- Help students track tasks and deadlines
- Communicate with parents and coordinate necessary supplies

**MOST IMPORTANTLY
YOU MAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY POSSIBLE**

**YOU FACILITATE -
STUDENTS CREATE**

HOW ARE TEAMS FORMED?

- Applications are reviewed using several factors including:
 - Coach availability
 - Grade/division
 - Student skills and interests
 - Problem preferences



WHEN DO TEAMS MEET?

- Teams typically meet once a week.
- As competition approaches, additional meetings may be needed.
- Teams start in October and continue at least through late February or early March
- Advancing teams continue preparing for State and potentially World Finals.
- This is a real commitment; team members are not replaceable.

HOW MUCH DOES IT COST?

- Piedmont's annual Odyssey of the Mind membership fee is donated.
- Student Participation Fee: \$50
 - \$20 — Team tournament registration fee
 - \$30 — Supplies to solve problem
- If a team qualifies for World Finals the average cost is about \$850 per team member before fundraising.



APPLICATION PROCESS

- Applications are completed online.
- Instructions will be emailed and are also included on the handout.
- You can access registration by scanning the QR code on this slide or at the check-in table or visiting www.piedmontodyssey.com
- Questions
 - Email piedmontootm@gmail.com or call 405-503-4919
 - First round applications due: Sunday, September 27



CONTACT INFORMATION

www.piedmontodyssey.com

Aaron – piedmontootm@gmail.com

405-503-4919

Brandon – brandon@piedmontodyssey.com

KEY DATES

DATE	EVENT	LOCATION
Sep 27	Applications Due	Online
Sep 26	Piedmont Odyssey Car Show	PAVA Events Center
Oct 3	Coaches Training - OKC	Piedmont High School
Oct 24	Coaches Training - Tulsa	First Christian Church Jenks
Nov 21	Spontaneous Workshop	Oklahoma State University
Mar 6	Regional Tournament	TBD (OSU-Tulsa or OCCC)
April 3	State Tournament	Oklahoma State University
May 25 – May 29	World Finals	Michigan State University

***YOUR
ODYSSEY
STARTS
HERE***

