

**Dear Families,**

Our class is participating in the Young Inventor's Program (YIP). This nationally recognized program, hosted by the University of New Hampshire, provides hands-on STEM opportunities for youth.

YIP combines many of the skills that we have been learning in the fields of science, social studies, writing, art, and math. Invention education promotes analytical and creative thinking and problem solving. During the unit, each student will develop an original invention and take it from an idea to a completed design. The capstone to the unit will be a presentation of the inventions. We invite you to enjoy this project at home with your child by encouraging them as they build models (working or non-working) of their inventions.

Here are a few things you can do at home to help your child:

Set Criteria: A successful invention must meet several criteria. Ask your child to list all the things that will make an invention useful. Examples might include: Can I make it work? Can I make a model of it? Is it safe? Would other people want to use and buy it?

Questioning: Instead of giving your child answers, ask questions that focus on the problem. For example, if they say, "I don't know what to build it out of", you may respond with "What do you think you could use?", "What materials are available to you?", "What do you know how to use?". This procedure helps each child retain ownership in the inventive process.

Construction: Encourage your child to use materials that are available at home or to recycle materials. Families should not spend much or any money on the project. Students should build models on their own. However, it is appropriate for them to receive adult help if working with materials or tools that require supervision, such as woodworking, sewing or cutting. Use this as an opportunity to teach your child the skill safely. Students should be involved in the process even when receiving help.

YIP is administered by The University of New Hampshire. You can learn more about it at <https://www.unh.edu/leitzel-center/young-inventors-program>. And you can find more information about Invention Convention Worldwide, a coalition of programs, including YIP, at www.inventionconvention.org. If you have any questions about YIP or your child's participation and project, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,