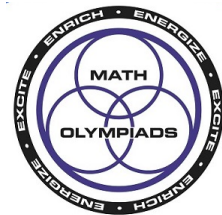




Dear Fourth and Fifth Grade Families,

Last spring, we offered a pilot of the **Mathematical Olympiads for Elementary and Middle Schools (MOEMS)**. After a great show of interest and enthusiasm around having a Math Olympiads program at PS 29, I'm excited to share that we will offer Math Olympiads this fall as a weekly lunchtime math enrichment opportunity, including participation in official MOEMS monthly competitions.

For over 40 years, the Math Olympiad has worked toward its mission of “stimulating enthusiasm, fostering creativity, and strengthening intuition in mathematical problem solving.” (moems.org). Each school year, from November through March, Math Olympiads hosts a monthly 30 minute contest.



The PS 29 Math Olympiads team will meet during the students' lunch and recess period on Thursdays, beginning on Thursday, October 23rd and continuing through the end of March, 2026. ***Any student who would like to participate must complete a set of math problems (attached to this letter).*** The problems are from past competitions and will give your child a sense of what it will feel like to participate in this group. Today I gave out hard copies of these problems to any interested students. If your child enjoys **independently** working on the problems, they would probably enjoy being part of this opportunity.

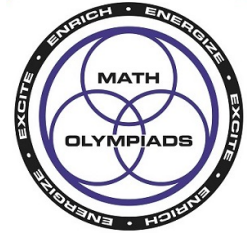
It's worth discussing with your child how this math experience will feel different than what they're used to in their classrooms. For starters, it's a competition, with points awarded for correct answers, and also the contest is timed. As you'll see, the problems are challenging, so struggle is expected. While your child may feel frustrated at times, it is a learning opportunity to work through difficult problems with the support of a team. While we'll celebrate the work of each student and maintain a positive team spirit, we do think it's important to consider these features of the experience. Please also discuss with your child that this is a commitment that involves missing one lunch and recess period every week. Students will eat lunch during the team meeting, but will not be able to play outside on Thursdays. It's important that students feel OK about committing to this!

Please reach out to me kvanduzer@ps29bk.org with any questions.

Thank you,

Kim Van Duzer, PS 29 Math Coach

FAQ about Math Olympiads



Q: Will there be homework?

A: Students are welcome to take home unfinished work and complete it in their free time. For students who are motivated to improve their scores in competitions, doing some work at home may be helpful, but it will not be required.

Q: When does the team meet?

A: The team meets once a week from October 23rd-late March during the lunch/recess period. The team will eat together first and then do math together or compete in a contest.

Q: Is this for extra credit?

A: No, this will not impact a child's report card and/or classroom grades.

Q: Will my child fall behind if they don't join?

A: No! This is an enrichment opportunity and is in fact quite different from our classroom approach.

Q: Is this a place for my child to catch up on math?

A: No. If your child has gaps in math understanding or lacks confidence in math, we don't recommend this opportunity. But feel free to attend Math Coach Office Hours to discuss other supports. Email kvanduzer@ps29bk.org to set up an appointment.

Q: What do the competitions look like?

A: Students are given 30 minutes to independently solve 5 problems. The coach (Ms. Van Duzer) grades the contests. The coach enters each student's score into the team's website. The next week, the students get their competition papers back along with the correct answers.

Q: Is there a winner?

A: At the end of the competition season, a trophy is given to the student with the highest score on our team, and other students receive patches or pins depending on the percentage of problems they solved correctly. All students will receive a certificate and participate in a celebration at the end of the season.

First and Last Name:

Class:

Attached are five problems from past Math Olympiad contests. Here are important rules:

1. Show your problem solving steps and your thinking, not just your answers.
2. You might not solve each problem and that's okay. Show your work even if you don't have a solution.
3. Work independently!
4. Hand in to Ms. Van Duzer in Room 527 by **Friday, October 17th** if you'd like to be part of the PS 29 Math Olympiads team.