



**Alamo Heights ISD**  
**Team Creative Problem Solving**  
**Program Guidelines**

## **AHISD Curriculum and Instruction Department**

We are dedicated to the goal of providing a guaranteed and viable curriculum for all AHISD students. We believe all students deserve rigorous curriculum and engaging instruction. Our goal is to provide the leadership, resources, support and professional development necessary to lead all students to high achievement.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>TEAM CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING (CPS): AN OVERVIEW .....</b>	<b>4</b>
GOALS OF TEAM CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING.....	4
CREATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING GUIDELINES:.....	4
<i>Selection of Competitive Programs .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Eligibility .....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Team Formation.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Competition Divisions.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Coaches.....</i>	<i>Error! Bookmark not defined.</i>
<i>Student Registration and Regional Tournament Fees and Fundraising.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>State Registration and Tournament Fees and Fundraising .....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>National Registration and Tournament Fees and Fundraising.....</i>	<i>7</i>
2020 LONG TERM PROBLEMS .....	8
<i>Problem 1: Longshot Solution.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Problem 2: Net Working.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Problem 3: Classics... The Effective Detective .....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Problem 4: Balsa Limbo.....</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>Problem 5: Gibberish or Not.....</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>Primary: The Fashion Bug.....</i>	<i>9</i>
TOURNAMENT DATES.....	10
FINANCIAL GUIDELINES FOR TEAM MANAGERS .....	11
<i>Expenditure Guidelines:.....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Reimbursement .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Competition Travel Expenses .....</i>	<i>11</i>
<i>Travel .....</i>	<i>12</i>

## Team Creative Problem Solving (CPS): An Overview

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The AHISD Team Creative Problem Solving Program engages students in their learning by allowing their knowledge and ideas to come to life in an exciting, productive environment. Participants build self-confidence, develop life skills, create new friendships, and are able to recognize and explore their true potential. Students participate in small teams, led by a volunteer coach, to solve both long-term and short-term challenges. Participation in Team Creative Problem Solving (CPS) is a year-long extracurricular commitment offered to students in grades 1-12.

### Goals of Team Creative Problem Solving

- Foster creative and critical thinking.
- Learn and apply Creative & Critical Problem Solving method and tools.
- Develop teamwork, collaboration, and leadership skills.
- Nurture research and inquiry skills.
- Enhance and apply communication and presentation skills.
- Promote the recognition, use, and development of varied strengths and talents.
- Encourage competence in, enthusiasm for, and commitment to real-life problem solving.

### Creative Problem Solving Guidelines:

CPS programs are coordinated through the AHISD Curriculum office. Campus Programs are funded through participant registration fees and fundraising efforts. Creative Problem Solving teams are formed according to the following goals and guidelines.

#### Selection of Competitive Programs

- AHISD will select a specific CPS competitive program each year. This decision is based on the quality of the experiences provided for students and the financial costs to parents and the district. The selection of a CPS competitive program is based on feedback from previous coaches and AHISD campus coordinators.
- All AHISD teams must compete within the specific competitive program selected by AHISD.

### Eligibility

- All AHISD students in grades 1-12 are eligible to participate.
- Participation in these extracurricular opportunities is a privilege and not a right, and students must adhere to the AHISD Code of Conduct and Extracurricular Code.
- Violations of the Extracurricular Code may result in students not being able to practice or compete with their teams.

### Team Formation

- Each team is allowed up to seven members who attend that school. There is no minimum team size. Under the guidance of an adult coach, teams work on their solutions throughout the school year and present them in organized competitions in the spring.
- Teams must be made up of participants who are enrolled in AHISD
- Campus CPS Coordinators will facilitate team formation.
- A single team may only register for one team challenge declared before regional competition. Exceptions must be approved by the AHISD Curriculum Office.
- PLEASE NOTE: Teams that do not follow the AHISD team formation guidelines are considered to be independent teams. AHISD cannot support an independent team.
- Once teams have started to work on the Central Challenge solution, additional members may be added to the team (up to a maximum of 7) until registration roster for Regional competition is submitted.
- Teams may not replace team members once a team is registered and after the total number of members has reached 7, even if a team member quits, moves away, or is unable to attend the Tournament for any reason.
- If a majority of team members leave the team within the current year of competition, a new team may be formed. The new team may not use any part of the original solution and must select a different Team Challenge.
- First and Second grade teams only compete at the regional level.

### Competition Divisions

Teams solving the same long-term problem compete within divisions that are determined by grade level and age of team members. Teams will compete in the lowest division for which they qualify.

- Division I — Grades K-5 Less than 12 years of age on May 1 of the year World Finals is held
- Division II — Grades 6-8 Less than 15 years of age on May 1 of the year World Finals is held
- Division III — Grades 9-12 Oldest team member does not qualify for Divisions I or II and is



attending regular school—not a college or university or anything similar

- Division IV — Collegiate for ALL TEAMS. All team members must have a high school diploma or its equivalent and be enrolled in at least one course at a two- or four-year college or university. (High school students taking accredited courses do not qualify for Division IV.)

### Coaches

- Teams must have at least one Coach of Record who is 18 years old or older.
- The Coach may have one official Assistant Coach, and the assistant may be younger than 18.
- All Coaches and Assistant Coaches must understand the specific program rules and guidelines. <https://www.odysseyofthemind.com/p/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/2019-program-guide.pdf>
- Assistant Coaches under the age of 18 may NOT accompany the team into team competition site.
- Coaches must attend a Coach training to receive support from AHISD.
- In accord with AHISD policy, all Coaches and Assistant Coaches **annually must complete Volunteer Clearance Form before forming a team.** This provision also applies to any parent or volunteers helping the Coach, such as regular practices or at out of town tournaments. The following [Criminal History Form](https://goo.gl/GspKRV) (<https://goo.gl/GspKRV>) must be completed.
- Coaches will familiarize themselves with the expenditure guidelines and share information accordingly with team members and parents. Team challenge expenses are the responsibility of the Coach.

### Student Registration and Regional Tournament Fees and Fundraising

- **February 15, 2020 at Heritage Middle School in San Antonio, Texas.**
- All AHISD competitive team members (grades 3-12) shall pay a \$75 participation fee and non-competitive team members (grades 1-2) shall pay a \$50 participation fee that will go towards the registration fee for regional competition/state competition. (Checks should be made payable to AHISD and be turned into Campus Program Sponsors by **October 1, 2019**).
- There will be various fundraising activities throughout the year such as, Sunday Funday team show-offs, Hats Off, Restaurant Nights, AHISD T-Shirt sponsorships.
- Scholarships are available for registration fees. See campus sponsors for details.

### State Registration and Tournament Fees and Fundraising

- **April 4, 2020 at West Briar Middle School in Houston, Texas**
- If a team qualifies for state competition, the team members must travel together to the competition site according to the district approved/ provided mode of transportation. This will all be determined based on the number of qualifying teams.
- **Parents will pay the hotel and meal costs for students.** Younger students will be in rooms with a Coach or parent volunteer, and older students will be in rooms together near rooms with adult Coach or parent volunteers. In general, students are in placed 3-4 in a room to defray the costs.
- AHISD will pay the hotel fees for Coaches and AHISD Campus Program Sponsors. In general, adults are placed two in a room to defray the costs.
- Parents wishing to attend the state competition and ride up with their student may pay the bus and hotel fees to AHISD.
- Scholarships are available for travel costs. See Campus Program Sponsors for details.

### World Finals Registration and Tournament Fees and Fundraising

- **May 27-30 at Iowa State University.**
- If a team qualifies for World Finals, the team members must travel together to the competition site according to the district approved/ provided mode of transportation. This will all be determined based on the number of qualifying teams.
- **Parents will pay the lodging, travel, and meal costs for students.** Younger students will be in rooms with a Coach or parent volunteer, and older students will be in rooms together near rooms with adult Coach or parent volunteers. In general, students are in placed 3-4 in a room to defray the costs.
- AHISD will pay the lodging fees for Coaches and AHISD Team Sponsors. In general, adults are placed two in a room to defray the costs. Adults are expected to pay their own meal expenses.
- Parents wishing to attend the national competition and ride up with their student may pay the bus and lodging fees to AHISD.
- There is an additional fee of \$15-\$20 for the national competition t-shirt.
- Because of the additional travel expense in traveling to a national competition, all participants are expected to participate in fund raising. The proceeds will be divided equally between all competing students.
- Scholarships are available for travel costs. See campus sponsors for details.

## 2020 Long Term Problems

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All problems have an 8-minute time limit.

### **Problem 1: Longshot Solution**

Divisions I, II & III

A group of “Longshots” believe a disastrous event that threatens the world is about to occur and must stop it. Because no one takes them seriously, it is up to the Longshots to solve the problem. To succeed they must send materials from all corners of the world using vehicles that overcome obstacles and travel simultaneously into and out of a Reaction Area. As time counts down the Longshots will use the components, including baking soda, to create a reaction that produces a very special effect and saves the day!

### **Problem 2: Net Working**

Divisions I, II, III & IV

Computers, satellites, and servers work continuously to allow people from all over the world to network with each other. These networks give us access to information including communications, messages, and videos. In this problem, the networked devices are characters who work to keep the world connected. During the performance, an image, a text message, an email and other information will be transmitted between locations in a team-made system. Pop-up advertisements appear and a malware character will infect the network and take it offline. An anti-virus hero comes to the rescue and team-made instruments will be used to present an original song that explains their jobs.

### **Problem 3: Classics... The Effective Detective**

Divisions I, II, III & IV

You will be introduced to one of the greatest detectives the world has ever known as they follow clues to uncover the truth behind some of history’s real-world mysteries. The detective will investigate different types of information, including a clue that is a “red herring” i.e. a distraction, and do intellectual battle with a supervillain who wants the detective to fail. Sounds will ring out and settings will creatively change to set the scene and highlight the action. The team will also be challenged to use the smallest space possible to store its solution.

### **Problem 4: Balsa Limbo**

Divisions I, II, III & IV

Teams will build balsa wood structures that are created by adjusting its interconnected parts. When the parts are not in the final form for weight testing, they must be able to pass under a limbo bar. Higher score



will be awarded for how low the bar is when the structure passes under it. However, the bar is not allowed to be lower than ½"! The limbo bar test and maneuvering the structure for testing will take place during the performance time. Testing of the structure will take place during a performance with a theme about dancing and movement.

### **Problem 5: Gibberish or Not**

Divisions I, II, III & IV

Genius or not so smart, statements change from Gibberish at the start. Do the thoughts shine or miss the mark? Masses think they're being led out of the dark. A Champion arranges meetings with those in power, and gibberish ideas bloom like a flower. The crowd replaces thoughts with wisdom, and a Child sees it is all just humdrum. Misinterpreted over and again, twisted words fly in the end. Music blares and the celebration is wild, and misunderstanding is accepted by the child. The performance will explain why the child does not reveal the truth that what they believe is wisdom was really just gibberish.

### **Primary: The Fashion Bug**

Grades K-2

The team's problem is to create and present a humorous performance that includes a fashion show for insects. An up-and-coming designer will be highlighted as a narrator describes the odd and curious fashions as they are modeled. A team-created song, a commercial, and a critic who reviews the Fashion Show are all part of the performance.

## Short-Term or Spontaneous Problems

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In competition, every team solves a spontaneous problem. This part of the competition is called “Spontaneous” because teams don’t know what they’ll have to do until they enter the competition room. Solving spontaneous problems teaches students to “think on their feet.”

Spontaneous problems are “top secret.” Teams participating in the same long-term problem and division will solve the same spontaneous problem, so, to ensure fairness, it is critical that no one discusses the problem outside of the room until all teams have competed. Even then, you may only discuss it within your group until competitions throughout the world are complete. Letting other teams know the problem they may receive could give them an advantage in a tournament. Anyone who reveals a spontaneous problem to others is subject to disqualification and/or disciplinary action taken against the entire team.

The nature of the spontaneous problems varies, with each having its own set of specific rules that are read to the team in the competition room. Teams will have to solve only one type of spontaneous problem in a competition. Teams that compete in a technical long-term problem may have to solve a verbal spontaneous problem and vice versa.

To prepare, teams should practice for the three common types of spontaneous problems as verbal, hands-on, or combination.

## Tournament Dates

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Tournament	Dates	Location
Regional	February 15, 2020	Heritage Middle School San Antonio, Texas
State	April 4, 2020	West Briar Middle School Houston, Texas
National	May 27-30 <i>*Week after school ends</i>	Iowa State University Ames, Iowa

## Financial Guidelines for Coaches

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### Expenditure Guidelines:

All AHISD campus PTOs are encouraged to support Odyssey of the Mind. Teams are primarily supported through fundraising and fees. Once a team advances to the State or World Finals level of competition, the AHISD Curriculum Office will support the teams according to the following guidelines:

### Reimbursement

**Official receipts are required for reimbursement** and must be submitted to the Central Office, attention Lori Garcia who can be reached at [lgarcia@ahisd.net](mailto:lgarcia@ahisd.net) or (210) 832-5954. **A list of campus team members, Coaches, and Campus Program Sponsors will need to be provided to Lori Garcia, at the contact information above, prior to submitting any requests.**

### Competition Travel Expenses

Once a team qualifies for the **State or World Finals competition level**, AHISD will determine transportation and travel arrangements. Parents are responsible to help defray the cost of travel to state and global competition.

- **Airfare:** If travel to a competition requires airfare, AHISD will make reservations and get reimbursement from family of students prior to securing registrations.
- **Bus Travel:** If it is determined that the travel to a competition will be provided by a bus, AHISD will make reservations and pay for the expense for the Coaches, and Campus Program Sponsors. Depending on distance, a school or charter bus may be used.
- **Food:** AHISD does not reimburse for food expenses for competitions.
- **Lodging:** AHISD will make reservations for lodging for all teams and will require checks for team members to secure reservations prior to state competition. AHISD will secure rooms for official Coaches and Campus Program Sponsors. Rooms will be reserved at full capacity.
- **Mileage:** Reimbursement will be based on the official state reimbursement rate (currently .58 cents per mile). Mileage is based on the distance between the two cities, not on actual miles driven. (Google or MapQuest documentation must be provided for miles traveled.)
- **Registration Fees:** AHISD Curriculum office will coordinate payment of the registration fee and Regional, State and World Finals competition registration fees through team fees and fundraising monies. AHISD Curriculum office will register all teams.
- **Rental Cars:** AHISD will pay expenses for a rental car at the State or World Finals competition, if approved prior to travel. Costs will only be covered for vehicles for the student team members, Coaches, and Campus Program Sponsors.

- **Other Guidelines:** The District cannot pay expenses for parents or any other individuals who are not official Coaches and or Campus Program Sponsors.

### Travel

Unless waived by the superintendent, students who participate in Odyssey of the Mind related trips shall be required to ride in transportation provided by AHISD to the event. Parents desiring their student to travel to **State and/or World Finals competition** in transportation other than that provided by AHISD must present a written request to the Executive Director of Curriculum **two weeks prior to the competition**. Students may return home with the parent or guardian when the parent or guardian presents a written request to the Executive Director of Curriculum or designee a week prior that the student be allowed to ride with parents or guardian. The District shall not be liable for any injuries that occur to students riding in vehicles that are not provided by AHISD.