September 16, 2016

Parents and students,

Thank you for your interest in Thomas Jefferson Science Olympiad (TJSO)! As TJ’s SciOly sponsor, I am always thrilled to see how many great students are interested in joining the team! It’s also my responsibility to ensure the year runs smoothly, so I like to start off by clarifying some expectations.

First, we expect the students that join TJSO to be hard-working, flexible, adaptable, and available for practices and tournaments. *Dedication to the team is an absolute necessity.*

**Friday A block meetings are mandatory,** and Wednesday B blocks provide extra time for practice. But students planning to compete should be willing and able to commit hours outside of school to study, work out strategies with partners, and/or build devices. Students in building events cover their own costs, and we rely on parents (and their homes) for access to tools and equipment. *This year, we want to begin transitioning to a team with more members willing to do both study and build events.* I encourage students to build relationships with other teacher mentors in the building that can sometimes provide unique materials and often have equipment available during 8th period.

Our team is primarily student led—I firmly believe an opportunity to build authentic leadership is far more valuable than any one 1st place medal or trophy. Our students plan, lead meetings, and make team decisions. My role is enthusiasm, coordination, mentorship, and perspective. Parent roles include chaperoning, driving students to tournaments, and volunteering to write or monitor testing. Our parent coach Beth Chung helps me coordinate parent volunteers.

The application process is anonymous. Students are identified by their ID numbers throughout the selection process, and my student officers drive team selection. I hope you will respect their decisions and mine—finalizing our team is always very difficult. *With only 45 spots on the three teams, we have to turn many wonderful students away.*

**As you consider application to TJSO, we ask that you seriously consider the amount of time, dedication, and effort you are willing to offer.** There are students that consider this team their top extracurricular activity—I want to make sure we respect their commitment—please only apply if you are serious about joining and dedicating your time to this club.

Looking forward to a wonderful year of hard work and learning!

Mrs. Aubrie Holman
TJSO Sponsor

Students, please write and sign the following:
*I am ready to support TJSO with my time, hard work, and dedication for the 2016-2017 school year.*

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<th>Student Name</th>
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Parents, please sign to show you have read the letter and will willingly offer help and respect team decisions without intervening via email, etc...

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