



[Please adjust letter and add details about specific expectations for students and/or families.]

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Our school will be participating in the Northern New England Young Inventor's Program (YIP) this year. This nationally recognized program is a K-12 project-based learning experience that provides hands-on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) 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. The invention program promotes analytical and creative thinking and problem solving. Each student will develop an original thought for an invention and take it from an idea to a completed design. We invite you to enjoy this project at home with your child by encouraging creative thought as they make models (working or non-working) of their inventions.

This program is valuable because it gives each student an opportunity to solve a real problem. Perhaps you are always complaining about a messy toothpaste tube top, or your child is tired of losing sneakers, pencils, or mittens. These are all problems solved by students.

In YIP, students will explore the steps of the Invention Process and then apply these steps as they problem solve, brainstorm, research and document their activities and then design, build, test and re-design their own invention. The program will conclude with a school-wide Invention Fair to showcase students' inventions as they present their projects to the school, family and friends.

[[OPTIONAL]] Students will be allowed to work on their invention projects at home and outside of class. Here are a few things you can do at home to help your child:

Set Criteria: A successful invention must meet several criteria. Students often have trouble verbalizing these. Ask your child to list all of the things that have to be true for the invention to be 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 to all of their questions, ask questions that focus on the problem. For example, if they ask, "What should I build it out of?" or "I don't know what to build it out of." you may respond with your own questions. Ask, "What do you think you could use?", "What materials are available to you?", "What do you know how to use?", "What do other people use to make inventions that do similar things?" Using 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. Each student should build their model on their own. At times this is not reasonable. If your child wants to build a model out of wood, but cannot safely cut the wood, you can do it for them. However, you should have them first decide the size of the piece and mark where it should be cut. Children should be involved in all parts of building.

Journaling: All students will keep a **YIP Inventor's Journal** to record their process. Not only is it a wise thing to do, it will prove that they had the idea first and will help plan the invention. For any work completed at home, you may be asked to sign your child's log as a witness to prove the work and ideas are their own.

Evaluation will be based on what the student does, not on how technical or flashy the model might be. All inventors will receive recognition for their efforts. Selected students from our Invention Fair will be invited to present their inventions at the Northern New England Invention Convention with an opportunity to present at the Invention Convention U.S. Nationals.

YIP is administered by The University of New Hampshire. You can learn more about it at www.fuelthepark.org. And you can find more information about Invention Convention Worldwide, a coalition of programs, including YIP, at www.inventionconvention.org.

Thank you,

Please return the bottom portion of this letter to the school indicating you have discussed the Young Inventors' Program with your child and that you understand the expectations. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me.

Sincerely,
[[YOUR NAME]]

✂ _____

Please sign and return to school.

I have discussed the Young Inventors' Program with my child and we understand the expectations.

Child's Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____ Date _____