

Team Spotlight: Paxton, Nebraska

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I had never heard about Science Olympiad until I took a Science Kicks class from Jim Woodland in 2007 and he had us try some events. I decided to give it a try with our kids. We are a K-12 school with about 250 kids. Creating a new program in such a small school is tough because my Science Olympiad kids are in every other activity in school. We have to schedule practices around all these other activities and make the best of a busy calendar. Every year, I am so proud of my kids for the hard work they put in during their limited time for Science Olympiad.



The first year of our program, I had 7 kids try Science Olympiad. The state tournament was an “eye opener” and we realized we needed to make drastic changes in our program to be competitive. The next 2 years we had about 17 kids sign up and we started to learn more about the events and just how to be competitive. Each year we improved a little more and finally in 2010 we earned our first medals at Regionals. In 2012, we earned our first state medals. 2013 was our best year yet, 12 of 13 students earned medals at Kearney regionals and also brought home the 3rd place trophy. At state in 2013, 11 of 12 students earned medals and we placed 10th overall. This year I have the most students I have ever had out for Science Olympiad with 36. This year, we are also starting a High School team. With 4 Division C members, we hope to see this program grow more in the coming years.

Last summer, I received a grant to attend the Coach's training in Arizona. It was a great experience and I learned so much. It was nice to have the fine points of the rules explained and tips for helping my kids learn the events.

Over the years, we have started to bring our Science Olympiad program into the public eye. We have an amazing school and community that supports us and contributes in many ways to our program. Paxton parents, school staff, and community members are always willing to take time to encourage and help these Science Olympiad members toward success.



This year, we decided to give back to our generous community and adopt 2 miles of highway on the edge of town to clean litter. It was a great day of working together as a team and learning more about everyone. We plan to continue our highway cleanup each fall as a jump-start to our Science Olympiad season.