



FAQ for Lakota's Program

Q - What do the kids actually do in this program?

A - There are two parts to the program - Central Challenge and Instant Challenge. Each team will choose their own STEAM-based Central Challenge where they will create a short skit that contains challenge requirements - such as building a structure that rolls down a hill or telling a tale about a trickster. Teams will also practice short 5-10 minute Instant Challenges throughout the season - like build a tower as tall as possible from spaghetti and mailing labels, or make up a commercial for a new candy. Teams present their Central Challenge skits and complete an Instant Challenge at a Regional tournament, with the opportunity to advance to State/Affiliate and Global Final tournaments. The team will not know what the actual Instant Challenge is until tournament time. [Click here for this year's central challenge previews.](#)

Q - What is the cost?

A - DI is a volunteer-run program. Depending on the number of members per team, the cost is typically between \$75-\$100 for the season. **Please note:** A parent/guardian of every participating student will be required to volunteer to assist the program in some capacity - by being a team manager, assistant team manager, tournament appraiser, or tournament volunteer.

Q - How are teams assigned?

A - DI has 4 competition levels - Early Learning/Rising Stars for grades K-2 (non-competitive, do not advance to state tournament), Elementary for grades 2-5, Middle for grades 6-8, and Secondary for grades 9-12. Teams are assigned based on school building and grade level. If a team is made of students from different schools, geographic locations of school zones are taken into consideration. Every effort is made to honor requests for siblings or friends/neighbors to be placed together, or separately. Team assignments largely vary depending on registration numbers.

Q - What is the time commitment?

A - This will vary for each team. Some teams start meeting right away, others wait until fall sports are over. Some teams do everything together at meetings, some send "homework" for the students to complete outside of team time. Typically, teams meet once or twice a week for 1-1.5 hours. Closer to tournament time, many teams have "build days" - longer meeting times on the weekend to make props, sets, costumes, etc. Team managers set the practice times and location, so the best way to make sure meetings fit into your schedule is to be a team manager!

Q - When and where is competition?

A - Regional Tournament is currently scheduled for Saturday, February 21, 2026 at Lakota East Freshman School. Qualifying teams will move on to State/Affiliate Tournament on Saturday, March 28, 2026 at Lakota East High School. Teams that qualify at State will be eligible for Global Finals in Kansas City, MO in May.

Q - What are the Team Manager duties?

A - The team managers will set team meetings, collect fees to purchase team membership and supplies, prepare instant challenges for practice, enforce student safety, and give lots of encouragement! Every attempt is made to have at least two managers for each team so no one feels overwhelmed and you have a “partner in crime”. It’s more fun with a friend! If you have a friend or neighbor with a student that would also be interested in DI, consider teaming up to be co-managers!

Q - How can I be a Team Manager if I’m not familiar with DI?

A - There is a regional team manager training session currently scheduled for the morning of October 18, 2025 at East Freshman. You will also have access to guidelines that will help walk you through the season with 12-16 team meetings. There are monthly Zoom meetings, YouTube videos, blogs, Facebook posts, and online training sessions. Lakota DI also hosts an Instant Challenge practice night and a dress rehearsal prior to Regional Tournament. These are great opportunities for extra practice and feedback from more experienced managers. Please consider signing up as a manager.

REMEMBER, WE CAN ONLY HAVE AS MANY TEAMS AS WE HAVE MANAGERS WILLING TO VOLUNTEER THEIR TIME FOR THE KIDS.

Q - How do I register my student(s)?

A - [Follow this link to the registration page.](#) Please complete a registration for each student separately. Deadline to register is Friday, September 12, 2025.

Still have questions? Please attend one of two Info/Q&A Meetings:

- Wednesday, August 27th at 7:30 at Union Elementary cafeteria
- Thursday, September 4th at 7:00 at Independence Elementary cafeteria

OR, email your questions to LakotaDI@yahoo.com