Regional Science Day - Role of Judges

Thank you for judging for the Regional Science Day. Science Day would not be possible without your enthusiastic support of inquiry-based research and technological design.

The Academy is partnering with Engineering.com's ProjectBoard as the platform for students to not only participate in the creative process of research, engineering design and entrepreneurial engagement, but to also host the competitions for these programs. We will now be able to archive student work for their future needs (scholarships, applications, interviews).

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND:

- Regional Science Day is an open event and did not require a local qualification – this means a lot of different levels of science.
- Only judge projects based on the judging criteria - **DO NOT JUDGE STUDENTS AGAINST OTHER STUDENTS.**
- Consider the student's grade level and be mindful of the curriculum that a typical elementary, junior high, and high school student has been exposed to.
- Projects are judged by two judges and the scores averaged to determine the final rating for the student.
- Judges should know all The Ohio Academy of Science's requirements and expectations for Science Day participants.
- Judges should introduce themselves when approaching a student and attempt to establish a friendly rapport to help reduce the participant's tension. Judges are expected to be exceptionally courteous to all students.
- The student should first be asked to give their oral presentation of the project while judges listen carefully to the complete presentation. Secondly, Students are expected to answer questions about their work on the specific problem. It is also proper for Judges to ask questions within the discipline or subject matter involved at the student's level of learning.
- Judges should feel free to question the participant on the materials and tools used, the methods of construction, the terms used, the sources of information, and the amount and type of assistance enlisted in the preparation of the project.
- Judges should actively participate in the evaluation; silence may be interpreted as disinterest or boredom, which can have a very discouraging effect on the participant.
- Judges are required to check through the abstract, the research plan, and the research report to determine their quality. A check of the references will assist in making a fair determination of the scope and depth of the literature search. The quality and quantity of the references should be considered when evaluating the student's research methodology.
- Judges should determine the span of sustained interest in the particular field of science and the approximate amount of time spent developing the project being evaluated. Some premium should be granted for considerable extended interest and effort to encourage this quality of persistence.
- Judges are to review the Project Data Book for the project. Note the number of entries, the dates, and the number of subjects or specimens used. Is the number adequate to generalize to the larger group the sample intends to represent?
- Please consider first placing the student into a rated category (good, excellent, superior) in your notes and then score them numerically
- For students who reach a numeric score of 35 (Excellent), either turn this into a 36 (Superior) if it is deserving or make it a 33 (Excellent). The 35 score is a complete heartbreaker for students.

STUDENTS NEED COMMENTS FROM JUDGES

- Be both constructive and specific. Avoid writing "Nice job!" as your only comment. It may be kind, but it is not helpful. Offer specific feedback to support your compliment. It is next to impossible to offer "too much feedback".
- Be balanced. If you find a project that fell short of a Superior, explain why. Also offer compliments along with constructive criticism. As you know, science and design are games of failure. Don't make it worse. It is The Ohio Academy of Science's sincere desire that students are left wanting more! Also, we want students to challenge their curiosities and remain enthusiastic about the process.

All students at Regional or State Science Days shall have an abstract and a written Final Report, which documents that the student has searched relevant literature, state a question and/or tested a hypothesis or technological design statement, collected and analyzed data, and drawn conclusions.

Judging Criteria for Individual and Team Projects

Individual and Team Projects will be judged on the following criteria:	**Max. Points**
Depth of Understanding (considering student's age and grade level)	10
Experimental or Engineering Design	15
Oral, Written & Visual Communication	10
Originality and Creativity	05

Each criterion is rated with cumulative of 40 points being the maximum

- Superior range is 36-40 points
- Excellent range is 24-35 points
- Good range is 0-23 points

Judging Ethics

Judges shall:

- return judging cards immediately to Science Day officials if (1) you know the student, (2) the project is out of your area of expertise, or (3) there are language issues that may impair communication
- keep in mind that the Mission of the Ohio Junior Academy of Science is to discover and foster interest in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics among students in grades 5-12
- have no prior involvement with the participant or project
- adhere to all Ohio Academy of Science Guidelines
- judge students against CRITERIA, not against other students
- listen carefully to the student's complete presentation
- be constantly attentive and courteous to students
- evaluate theoretical and applied projects without bias toward either
- provide written, constructive criticism and suggestions for improvement on the scorecard
- seek written permission from students to photograph them
- not photograph students or projects during judging
- avoid discussion of ratings with others before public release