PA Science Olympiad Policies

REGISTRATION:

Pennsylvania Science Olympiad Team Affiliation Policy:

- 1. A Team Endeavor
 - Pennsylvania Science Olympiad (PSO) requires all participants in Science Olympiad competitions to participate as members of a team, not as unaffiliated individuals. There are three identified affiliations: Public School, Private/Charter School, and Home School. Teams are comprised of from 1 to 15 students. Students may compete in a higher division than their grade level, but may not compete in a lower division than their grade level, with the exception identified by national Science Olympiad that 9th grade high school students may compete on the team from the middle school that they most recently attended. Once a declaration of school affiliation has been made for participation in a regional tournament, students must remain on a team associated with that school for the remainder of the competition season. The only exception for changing schools midseason is if the student's family moves to another school's/county's geographical boundaries.
 - a. Public School Students Public school students may participate in Science Olympiad only as members of a team that is formed in the local public school that they attend. Public school students may not opt to participate on another school's team, with two exceptions (1) Elementary school students may compete for the middle/junior high school they will attend; and (2) 9th grade high school students may compete for the middle school they formerly attended. Small schools should see the Science Olympiad National Policy on Small Schools for other options.
 - b. Private or Charter School Students
 Private schools and charter schools may create Science Olympiad teams from any students in
 their student body, regardless of where their homes of origin are located. They may not solicit
 nor enlist either public school or home-schooled students on their teams. Cyber schools may
 register one team for each hub of the Cyber School.
 - c. Home-Schooled Students
 - Home-schooled students are defined by their filing a signed declaration of intent to home school with the superintendant of the school district in which the student resides.
 - Home-schooled students may be enrolled PART-TIME in a public school (RCW 28A150.350)
 or a private/charter school, as long as they are not reported as a full-time student by the
 school.
 - Calendar age will be used to determine grade eligibility for Division B (grades 6-9) and Division C (grades 9-12). A student's equivalent grade will be determined by birth date as of September 1. Hence, a child who will be eleven years old on September 1 will be considered a 6th grader; a twelve year old is a 7th grader, and so forth).
 - Option 1 Participation through a Local Public School: Home-schooled students may compete on a public school team provided that the student lives within the geographical boundaries for that school and is NOT also a member of a home school team.
 - Option 2 Participation through a Home School Team: A home school team will consist only
 of home-schooled students that belong to the same home school consortium, or a home
 school team will consist only of home-schooled students who live within the boundaries
 of four contiguous geographic counties within Pennsylvania. *Note: If the home school

qualifies for the National Tournament, then they must follow the home school policy of National Science Olympiad as stated on their website sonic.org.

2. Registering and Qualifying Teams

PSO is responsible for registering and qualifying all Science Olympiad teams in the state of Pennsylvania. For a public or private/charter school Science Olympiad team, a roster signed by the principal of the school is considered proper validation of enrollment. For a home school team, a roster signed by the president of the home school association or the head of the independent home school is considered proper validation.

- 3. Investigation of Team Qualifications
 - If PSO suspects that a team is comprised of students who are not members of that school's student body or a home school team does not conform to PSO definitions, the State Director may ask the coach to provide verification of that team's qualifications as follows:
 - A public, private or charter school student's qualification may be verified by some form of school identification, school roster, recent report card, evidence of residence in the school district or other similar documents appropriate to the situation.
 - A home-schooled student's qualification may be verified by the student's annual notice of intent to home school and some proof of residency within the designated two contiguous counties.
 - The PSO State Director, tournament officials, or other PSO personnel will NOT contact
 individual students to determine school team validity. Team qualification complaints must be
 filed with the Tournament Director, All inquiries will be forwarded to the PSO State Director
 to reconcile with the registered team coach, school principal, president of the home school
 association, or the head of the independent home school.
- 4. Sanctions for Non-Qualified Participation

If, after investigation, the PSO State Director determines that a team or its members are not qualified, sanctions may be imposed that could include disqualification of a student team member, disqualification of a team coach, or disqualification of the team from a tournament. In the event of multiple cases of disqualification, the coach or team or school may be barred from future competition.

Effective July 1, 2011

Registration Deadline & Late Fee Policy:

- 1. The registration fee for each returning team is \$225.00. This includes both National and State fees.
- 2. If a team is new, meaning a school has not registered in the last 5 years, registration fee is \$200.00. This includes both National and State fees.
- 3. If a school takes a second or third team to an invitational tournament, each additional team must first be a registered member of the state and national Science Olympiad program. The registration fee for each additional team is \$60. This covers the National Registration fee which is currently \$60.00, but is subject to change.
- 4. Registration deadline is the Friday immediately before December 25th.
- 5. Late registration will be accepted until January 31st with an additional fee of \$65.00 (total \$290.00).
- 6. No registrations will be accepted after January 31st. If the registration fee has not been received by January 31st the team will not be permitted to compete at the regional or state tournaments.

Effective July 2012

Refund Policy:

If a team has paid their registration fee and notifies the State Director BEFORE January 31st, that they cannot attend, the registration fee will be credited to cover the registration fee for the following year. Any team notifying the State Director AFTER January 31st, will not be refunded or given credit toward the following year.

Effective July 2012

COMPETITION:

General Rules:

In all tournaments all officials, coaches, team members and spectators are expected to abide by the rules as stated in the Rules Manual. This includes rules specific to each event and the General Rules. Violations may include any of the following.

1. Interference:

Only the team members assigned to the event may enter the competition area along with those supervising and judging the event. All others are to remain out of the room or the competition area at all times.

If any student, coach, teacher, chaperone or parent interferes with or disrupts the conduct of the event, the team associated with the person will be penalized at the discretion of the event supervisor in conjunction with the appeals board. The team, coach and the site director will we notified of this action.

2. Cheating:

Any individual who cheats during an event will be penalized by disqualification. The team and the coach will be apprised of this action.

If an event team or team member deliberately takes an action that impairs the ability of another team to fairly compete, that team will be disqualified from that event. Depending on the severity of the action taken by the team members, further action by the appeals board may result that the team members are disqualified from other events. Upon reporting this action to the State Board, the team members may be barred from further tournaments.

3. Vandalism:

If a member of a team or a person associated with a team commits an act of vandalism, the team will be disqualified from the tournament. Vandalism means deliberate action that results in damage to property. This includes, but is not limited to, graffiti, damage to facility property, and damage to personal property of competitors, judges and supervisors.

The sponsoring school must agree to pay the cost of repairing the damage for any act of vandalism. A school must pay this restitution before it can register a team in future years.

<u>Appeal During Regional/State tournament Policy:</u>

1. Make an attempt to resolve the problem with the event supervisor before filing a written appeal.

- 2. The appeals form must be turned in to tournament headquarters within 1 hour after the completion of the event. If circumstances prevent filing within this time limit, the appeals committee may, at their discretion, accept a late appeal.
- 3. <u>Please be specific in your appeal</u>. Be sure to identify the exact rule/procedure that you feel was not followed. The appeals committee may reject appeals that are general in nature.
- 4. **Only coaches may file an appeal**, for their team only. The coach of the team must sign the appeal form.
- 5. The <u>event supervisor must also sign</u> the appeal form before it is submitted to the appeals committee. If time permits he/she may enter their response on this form, and if time does not permit he/she may initial the supervisor response field noting the time notified. The appeals form may then be submitted to the appeals committee.
- 6. The decision of the appeals committee is final.

General Scoring Policy:

- 1. All teams who participate and compete according to the rules must be scored and ranked.
- 2. Teams/devices that do not meet the requirements in the event rules will be allowed to compete if possible and are to be scored and ranked below those who met all of the specifications. They will be awarded event points in relation to their rank. Event Supervisors may, at their discretion, allow students to modify any device before it is impounded to bring it into compliance with the rules. That discretion, if extended, must be made available to all competitors equally. Any modification must be completed, and the device impounded, before the expiration of the impound period. Supervisors and Officials may not provide assistance regarding the type of modifications or how to accomplish them prior to, or at any time during the tournament day. If any team is Ranked Below Others, the event supervisor MUST inform the student (and remind the student to inform their coach) as soon as a problem occurs and be sure to list the reason on the score sheet.
- 3. Teams making an honest attempt to participate that cannot be assigned a raw score because of time, mechanical failure, wrong dimensions, etc., will be listed as a "P" for Participation for the raw score on the score sheet and will be awarded N points. "N" is equal to the number of teams registered for the tournament. (e.g. If 26 teams are registered then any team that cannot be assigned a raw score receives 26 pts.) Any device, which, in the judgment of the Event Supervisor, is a safety hazard to competitors, judges, or spectators, will not be allowed to compete and will be listed as a P (Participation) for the raw score on the score sheet and will be awarded N points.
- 4. If a <u>team does not show up or does not make an honest attempt to participate</u>, the team will be listed as a No Show or "NS" for the raw score on the score sheet and awarded <u>N+1 points</u>. This includes teams who may be present but display no preparation for the competition.
- 5. Teams should be Disqualified or "DQ" only for misbehavior (to include excessive use of improper or vulgar language or cheating). Put DQ as raw score and award N+2 points on the score sheet. Also, note on the score sheet the reason why teams were disqualified. Event Supervisors may remove from competition any student(s) whose personal or ethical behavior does not adhere to the Science Olympiad Code of Ethics. This action will disqualify the affected student(s) from

- participation and scoring in that event only. If any team is DQed the event supervisor MUST, inform the student as soon as a problem occurs and <u>notify the head coach</u>. If it occurs after students have left notify the team coach immediately.
- 6. Provide raw scores and any supporting documentation when turning in the score sheet (answer sheets, master answer key, etc.).

Tiebreaker Policy:

1. Individual Event Tiebreakers:

In any event ties will be broken by tiebreakers that are consistent with the rules and are announced by the event supervisor at the beginning of each session. Any tiebreaker must be announced to a team prior to their participation in the event.

2. Team Rank Tiebreakers:

In the event of a tie in the team standings, ties will be broken in the following manner.

- a. The team that has the most events in which they received a Gold Medal (finished in first place) will finish in the higher position.
- b. If there still is a tie, the team that has the most events in which they received a Silver Medal (finished in second place) will finish in the higher position.
- c. If there still is a tie, the team that has the most events in which they received a Bronze Medal (finished in third place) will finish in the higher position.
- d. If there still is a tie, the team that had the most events in which they finished in fourth place will finish in the higher position.
- e. In the case that the tie is still not broken, this process will continue for consecutive places until the tie is broken.

POST-COMPETITION:

Final Score Appeal Policy:

- 1. Date, time and place of official posting of scores must be announced on the day of the tournament.
- 2. Score appeals may be made by the team coach only, up to 48 hours after the official posting of the scores.
- 3. What can be appealed:
 - a. No show, Participation Points, Disqualification
 - If a coach believes that his/her team has been improperly placed in one of the above categories, an appeal can be made. The purpose of the appeal would be to have the site director verify the score. In the case of a
 - ii. disqualification, if the coach was not notified during the tournament the
 - iii. appeals committee may choose to review it;
 - b. Recording errors on or from the supervisor's score sheet.
- 4. What cannot be appealed:
 - a. Another school's score;
 - b. Any issues beyond recording errors.

- 5. The appeal should be submitted by email to the Regional Director and State Director (pascioly@cabrini.edu). The appeal should include specific details on the reason for the appeal and provide both email and phone contact information.
- 6. A response can be expected within 72 hours.
- 7. Final decision may be made by the State Board.

Effective June 2012

Switching Rank Policy:

All efforts are made to ensure that scores announced during the tournament award ceremony are accurate; however, occasionally changes may need to be made. Scores are not official until scores have been vetted following the tournament and officially posted.

- 1. Regional Tournament Level:
 - a. If there is a change in an individual event ranking, the student(s) originally receiving a medal will be allowed to keep that medal and a new medal will be awarded to the official recipient.
 - b. If there is a change in overall team ranking, all team coaches involved will be notified within 48 hours of the score vetting being completed.
 - Provisions will be arranged for the exchange of trophies in coordination with the Regional and State Director. In keeping with the Spirit of Science Olympiad, failure to comply may affect the team's eligibility to compete in future tournaments.
 - ii. Following the official posting of scores and any resulting appeals, if the change in ranking affects a team's eligibility to go to the state tournament, the final official ranking stands.

2. State Tournament Level:

- a. If there is a change in an individual event ranking, the student originally receiving a medal will be allowed to keep that medal and a new medal will be awarded to the official recipient.
- b. If there is a change in overall team ranking, all team coaches involved will be notified within 48 hours of the score vetting being completed.
 - Provisions will be arranged for the exchange of trophies in coordination with the State Tournament Director and State Director. In keeping with the Spirit of Science Olympiad, failure to comply may affect the team's eligibility to compete in future tournaments.
 - ii. Following the official posting of scores and any resulting appeals, if the change in ranking affects a team's eligibility to go to the national tournament, the final official ranking stands.

Effective June 2012