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 mid-season 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