

PARENT PARTICIPATION POLICY

Science Olympiad is an exciting program, and we know that parents are eager to help their child succeed. **Parents play an important role in ensuring that students have a rewarding experience in participating in Science Olympiad.** These guidelines are to **assist parents in appropriately helping their child without having a negative impact on students and volunteers at tournaments. Violations of these guidelines could incur penalties.**

What can & should parents do?

- Ensure that your child **attends** all events and team meetings.
- Fill out any required forms on time.
- Ask your team's head coach how you can be helpful for the team. Help may be needed with mentoring students in events, fundraising, travel, **snacks**, etc.
- Take your child shopping for materials. Help them find resources to learn about their events. Teach them to use tools. Help them understand the underlying principles for their event. Be a sounding board for their ideas, but do not control their ideas.
- Help your child pack up and transport their materials to tournaments.
- Volunteer to help at tournaments. Each team must contribute volunteers to make sure that tournaments are adequately staffed.
- Be a cheerleader and model good sportsmanship for your child. Focus more on the learning and teamwork rather than tournament results.
- Encourage student collaboration with teammates.

What things should parents NOT do?

- Construct anything on competition devices. If students cannot do something safely by themselves, they must find another way to accomplish the same objective or change their design. (At tournaments, students may be extensively questioned about device construction and functioning and will be disqualified if unable to answer satisfactorily.)
- Test, assemble, or calibrate competition devices at any time.
- Enter the competition area at tournaments, interfere with an event in any way, or offer advice or coaching from the sidelines, even if acting as a team mentor for the event. Appropriate penalties, **up to disqualification for their competitors**, will be assessed for interference.
- Touch or take pictures of another team's **work**.
- **Congregate outside closed tournament spaces, blocking access or creating distractions for Event Supervisors and competitors.**
- Contact the VA State organization directly with concerns or questions; these should be addressed by your team head coach who can seek further clarification with VASO if necessary.

A tournament is a long, intense day for everyone. We ask that you help competitors stay focused, be positive, and treat teammates and volunteers with respect.