

## **VASO CODE OF ETHICS**

The goal of competition is to give one's best effort while displaying honesty, integrity, and good sportsmanship. Students, coaches, parents and guests are expected to display courtesy and respect toward Virginia Science Olympiad officials, other teams, and guests of VASO. Teams are expected to make an honest effort to follow the rules and the spirit of the problem (not interpret the rules so they have an unfair advantage). Failure by a participant, coach, or guest to abide by these codes, accepted safety procedures, or rules below, may result in an assessment of penalty points or, in some cases, disqualification from the event, the tournament, or future tournaments.

*National General Rule 1* – Actions and items are permitted, unless they are explicitly excluded in the rules, are unsafe, or violate the spirit of the problem.

*Cheating* – Cheating (which can include impairing the ability of other teams to compete) by any individual – student, coach, or parent – is a disqualifiable offense. This disqualification may apply to one specific event or the entire tournament, based on the offense. In addition, the event team member(s) or team itself may be barred from future Science Olympiad competitions.

*Interference* –Interference encompasses spectator behavior toward event supervisors, coaching teams while they are competing, and any altering of students' constructed devices by anyone other than team members. In this context, a coach, parent, or member of a team who is not competing in an event may be considered a "spectator" during that event. Penalties will be assessed for a spectator entering a competition area, offering advice while a team is competing, or disrupting an event or judging. Rudeness or inappropriate behavior toward an event supervisor is considered an egregious interference infraction. Depending upon the offense, interference results in a minimum 10% penalty to the team's final ranking for that event up to a maximum penalty of disqualification.

*External Assistance*-- While competing in an event, participants may not leave without the event supervisor's approval and must not receive any external assistance. All electronic devices capable of external communication as well as calculator applications on multipurpose devices (e.g., laptop, phone, tablet) are not allowed unless expressly permitted in the event rules. Cell phones, if not permitted, must be turned off and left in a designated spot if requested.

### *COACH'S SO PLEDGE*

On behalf of the coaches and assistants at this tournament, I pledge to encourage honesty and respect for tournament personnel, our fellow coaches, and other team members. We want our efforts to bring honor to our community and school.