



TEACHER GUIDELINES

Part IV. Setting up a Local Science Day

This section briefly outlines the procedures a teacher/science day director may follow in setting up a local Science Day at their school.

Teacher Adherence to the Ohio Academy of Science Standards

Teachers promoting student research projects and conducting local science days leading to District and State Science Days, are expected to have their students follow the official Science Day Standards outlined in this document, and those offered on the website at <https://www.ohiosci.org/requirements>

Included in these Standards are the Judging Criteria for both individual and team projects that teachers should use locally and that must be used at all District Science Days. **The Ohio Academy of Science discourages the assignment or use of special points or a scoring rubric unique to local science days and does not permit their use by District or State Science Days.**

Responsibilities of THE LOCAL SCIENCE DAY DIRECTOR:

SET DATE AND LOCATION

Science Day Directors first must clear a date that coordinates with their own school's schedule, as well as the events in their District's schedule. When selecting the location it is necessary to keep in mind: a) the estimated number of students who will participate, b) the number of Judges required, c) the room needed for the Judges' meeting, d) the room for recording scores, rating and awards, e) the location for the Awards Ceremony.

COORDINATE VOLUNTEERS

Many volunteers are needed to implement a Science Day program in your school. Officers/coordinators of the school's PTA/PTO may be willing to assist. It is important to establish a contact person within the group that will coordinate with you and the group of volunteers. The contact person should be given a written list of the specific areas where volunteers are needed. It is suggested that you assist in the choosing of the volunteers appointed as coordinators of specific areas. Sometimes, it is to appoint teachers or staff personnel to be coordinators of areas such as: the Judges Room, the initial student set up of projects, and the room where the scores and ratings are calculated. The individual tasks to be accomplished in each area should be printed and posted. The directions for the tasks and procedures should be clearly stated to avoid any misunderstandings. You may want to establish a method and time with your coordinators/volunteers that you will be available to answer any questions or concerns.

ACQUIRE SUPPORT

The need for financial and/or in-kind support will depend on the size of your Science Day (number of participants and Judges) and what you choose to award student participants. Many PTA/PTO Organizations will have funds to provide most of the Science Day needs. Small grants within the school district may also be available.



TEACHER GUIDELINES

DETERMINE THE SCHEDULE

It is essential to have a manageable schedule for everyone participating in your Science Day. Obviously, the larger the number of participants, the longer the time needed for both Set Up and Judging. If it is a school day, students will need to be released from classes and monitors will be needed in the project location. The date and schedule will also be a determining factor for the number of professionals available to Judge. Consulting with your staff, administration, and other professionals should help you gain the support of colleagues to serve as Judges and/or coordinators.

RECRUITMENT AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR JUDGES

The need for the participation and support of the professionals in your community cannot be overstated. The date and location, as well as the actual judging time period assigned, will determine their availability and willingness to assist. When recruiting Judges keep in mind the number of projects entered in each science area, as well as the grade level of the students. Contact all school administrators; community doctors, dentists, veterinarians, optometrists; government officials, and professional business personnel. Fairness in the assessment of student projects is essential. Three factors are major contributors to a successful assessment: 1) the qualifications of each Judge (level of education, no connection to students, etc.) 2) the implementation of the Ohio Academy of Science criteria; 3) the explanation of the instructions given to the Judges prior to their interviewing students. The goal is to have every student depart knowing that they were judged by a professional that was both knowledgeable in their field of study, and responsible in the use of the established criteria to assess their score.

Provide all Judging material offered on our website to each Judge as they are recruited. Addressing all the Judges prior to the event is extremely important to assure that they both understand their responsibilities and implement the judging process using the Academy's criteria and rating numbers.

ASSEMBLE JUDGES FOLDERS

Even though you may have sent Judging Instructions with the letters to professionals when requesting their assistance in student project judging, often it is not read or studied. It is suggested that a folder be prepared for each judge to receive as they arrive at your Science Day event. The folders should be assembled prior to the event by volunteers. You will need to provide the documents that will be included: 1) print and copy the Ohio Academy of Science's Judging and Ethics Guidelines, 2) print a brief outline of the requirements issued to each student participant, 3) a sample scoring card with a place designated for Judges' Comments and Suggestions to the student, 5) a Thank You note for their participation. Name Tags identifying each Judge is also necessary. Every adult volunteer, judge, staff person, etc. must be identified to be present with students during the judging process.

DEVELOP ENTRY FORM

An Entry Form may seem unnecessary especially if your Science Day is small, but it is an official, written consent from the student that he/she will be prepared and intends to participate in the event. It becomes even more important when a misunderstanding occurs with a parent or the student as to their intention to participate. Knowing the number of participants and their topics will assist you when recruiting judges.



TEACHER GUIDELINES

CREATE A PROGRAM

An official program that lists each student participating with their specific Project Title, their Hypothesis, or their Design Statement provides parents, friends, and students with a keepsake/record of their participation. This information would be available when students submit their Entry Form.

DRAW FLOOR PLAN

Designate space assignments prior to the event. Volunteers may tape numbers to tables that will be used the day of the Science Day, but you should sketch a floor plan as soon as the entry forms have been received to ensure that the location size will be adequate. If students are bringing their own card tables, the spaces should be numbered and displayed on the floor.

PREPARE NAME TAGS

All Volunteers, Judges, Participants, and Administrators should have a name tag. Security is always important, so anyone working at the Science Day event needs to be identified. Anyone without a name tag should be asked for identification and their role at the event. Blank name tags and markers need to be available.

SET UP TALLY ROOM

The Tally Room is a designated area where the Judges submit their completed judging cards. The Ohio Academy of Science Standards and Judging Policies should be available in this location. Teachers, working with a few volunteers will calculate the scores, determine the Ratings, and prepare the Certificates. This area should be off limits to parents of participants, and participants themselves. Trusted professional individuals should be assigned to this area to assure scores are not debated or discussed. School staff personnel should be assigned to read the Judges' Comments before the judging cards are returned to the students. Student Scores are not to be revealed until the Awards Ceremony.

ACQUIRE SUPPLIES

Prepare a listing of the supplies that you will need throughout the event and make it available to a volunteer to acquire or purchase. Paper copying of documents, instructions, policies, etc. may be extensive and needs to be addressed when requesting support and funding.

ORDER AWARDS

Awards are personal preference when involved with Local Science Days. The Ohio Academy of Science awards each participant at District and State Science Day an official Certificate that includes the earned rating. Some schools prefer to present certificates of participation, ribbons and/or trophies similar to athletic awards. This should be discussed and coordinated with your school staff and administration.

AWARD CEREMONY

Receiving awards is another area of personal preference. Some schools want an evening event to allow parents and friends to attend and be able to highlight the students' accomplishments. Other schools prefer a shorter program that may take place soon after the scoring has been completed.



TEACHER GUIDELINES

SPONSORED AWARDS

Local Science Days may have community business members and/or professional organizations, or industries that are interested in recognizing student accomplishments their field of interest. These awards may consist of plaques, financial awards, internships, or something significant for the specific industry. The student participants earning the awards are chosen by the professional or community organization.

PUBLICITY

Initially, the teacher will want to announce the date and time of the Local Science Day early so that articles may be written by local reporters and appear in the community newspapers. TV Channels and radio or school newspapers may also announce your event. You may decide to include a phone number or email address where you can be contacted by individuals interested in judging student projects. However, it is recommended that the Science Day Director write any articles that discuss the Ohio Academy of Science Standards involving student requirements, project components, and the Judging criteria to ensure that these topics are addressed correctly. The results of the Local Science Day event to be distributed to reporters after the conclusion of the event should also be written by the Science Day Director. This practice will ensure that all students are recognized for their participation and accomplishments, and if additional awards were earned that those students' names are correct as well.

TIMELINE FOR LOCAL SCIENCE DAY DIRECTOR

-  **Four or more months prior**
 - Student project work in process
 - Ask for support from the PTA or PTO
 - (Need volunteers, awards, judges “snacks”)
 - Confirm date, location, and schedule
 - (Local science day minimum 2-3 weeks prior to the District Science Day)
 - Prepare Judges' source listing

-  **Two months prior**
 - Begin contact with judges
 - Order materials (judging cards, certificates, ribbons, plaques, etc.)
 - Acquire Supplies
 - (Name tags, pencils, pens, markers, a folder for each judge, masking tape, scissors, staplers, paper clips)
 - Record keeping strategies
 - Check facilities (all rooms to be used for student displays, judges' room, tally room, award presentation space and Public Address System)

-  **One month prior**
 - Collect all Entry Forms
 - Mail letters to Judges (include Judging Criteria, time, place, and age group of students)
 - Design a floor plan placing all registered students
 - Produce and assemble printed Program

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TEACHER GUIDELINES

- Make space assignments (projects in 36" sections)
- Complete Judging cards
- Display Awards for Student Motivation
- Contact media
- Print Certificates
- Complete name tags (for participants, judges, officials, other volunteers)
- Confirm list of Volunteers (time available and task)

-  **One week prior**
 - Review the entire schedule with student participants
 - Offer encouragement and support to student participants
 - Assign Judges to Individual Projects (if possible)
 - Assemble Judges' folders (OAS Mission, Standards, Judging Criteria, and Ethics)
 - Re-contact Media

-  **Science Day**
 - Meet with Volunteers
 - Issue Participant name tags
 - Project set up (36" space allowance)
 - Assemble students at their assigned space number
 - Judges' Briefing
 - Review the Judging Criteria, the procedures and the minimum number of points needed to earn a Superior Rating that may give the participant an opportunity to display at the District Science Day.
 - Discuss Judging Expectations and Ethics
 - Emphasize the need for Judges to write constructive comments and suggestions on the judging card that will be returned to the student participant.

-  **Tally Room**
 - Essential to have a responsible, professional in charge of this room to ensure that the two Judging cards for each student have been totaled and then averaged correctly. The ratings are not to be discussed.
 - Stamp or write the Rating on the certificates
 - Prepare lists of Awardees and all Superior Rated student Projects

-  **Awards Program**
 - Recognize all students individually when issuing the Certificates
 - Distribute special Awards as applicable
 - Name Superiors that are eligible for District Science Day
 - Thank all teachers, volunteers, and judges for their time and participation
 - Issue summary news release immediately for Media that are present and/or to send to local news papers