NORTH CAROLINA
SCIENCE OLYMPIAD

Parent Involvement and Conflict Resolution Policy

North Carolina Science Olympiad (NCSO) is committed to fair, safe, and equitable competition. All parents, guardians, coaches, competitors, volunteers, and tournament personnel are expected to respect competition boundaries and uphold the integrity of each event.

1. **Parent Involvement in Competition Areas**

Once students enter an official competition area, parents and guardians must step away and may not participate in, influence, or interfere with the event. This includes providing assistance, hints, instructions, or coaching; handling student devices or materials; or attempting to influence event procedures, scoring, or outcomes.

This restriction applies regardless of a parent's knowledge or experience with an event. Exceptions are permitted only when a parent has been formally assigned an authorized role in that competition area and is acting within the scope of that role.

Unauthorized parent involvement may result in penalties up to and including competitor or team disqualification, depending on the nature and severity of the violation.

2. **Communication with Tournament Personnel**

Only designated head coaches and competitors may communicate directly with event leaders, volunteers, and tournament personnel regarding competition matters. Parents and guardians may not approach, question, challenge, or attempt to influence event personnel regarding rules, scoring, rulings, procedures, penalties, or competitor performance.

Parents and guardians must direct all questions, concerns, and disputes to their team's head coach. Head coaches are responsible for communicating with the appropriate event leader or tournament director. Competitors may communicate with event leaders as necessary and as permitted by event rules and procedures.

All communication must remain respectful. Harassment, intimidation, confrontation, or disruption of competition will not be tolerated.

3. **Violations and Consequences**

Violations may result in corrective action, removal from a competition area, referral to the head coach or tournament director, penalties against a competitor or team, or disqualification when warranted. Consequences will be proportionate to the violation's nature and severity and consistent with applicable NCSO policies and tournament procedures. Serious or repeated violations may result in additional disciplinary action.

The tournament director and authorized NCSO personnel are responsible for addressing reported violations and determining appropriate action.

4. **Coach Responsibility**

Head coaches are responsible for communicating this policy to parents and guardians associated with their teams before tournament day. Compliance is required for participation in NCSO tournaments.

NCSO values family support while maintaining a competitive environment that prioritizes student independence, respect for volunteers, and fairness for all teams, in alignment with the NCSO mission.