INSTRUCTIONS & SUGGESTIONS FOR SCIENCE FAIR JUDGES

1. Before interviewing your assigned exhibitors, we suggest that you tour the exhibition hall to get a sense of the quality and scope of projects. The goal is to evaluate projects in this Fair, in part, in comparison to one another. For veteran judges, we ask that you do not base your assessments on projects that you may have judged at other fairs. **Before scoring the projects, please familiarize yourself with the descriptions and point values in the scoring categories shown on the back of the scorecard.**

2. **Scorecards --** White scorecards are for an "Individual Project" or "Team Project." In the case of a team, each member should be interviewed and clearly demonstrate how he/she helped to carry out the project.

3. Judges must work both independently and *sympathetically*. Judging should be a positive educational experience for both students and judge, keeping in mind that exhibitors are teenagers and their scientific experience is limited. Judges are encouraged to provide exhibitors with constructive comments, ideas and suggestions.

4. All exhibitors, including all team members, must be present at their project locations during the judging session. If an exhibitor is away from the project, he/she should leave an explanatory note. If an exhibitor is missing for a lengthy period, please notify an MSSEF representative at the Registration Table.

5. If a project is not set up at the assigned location and/or no information is provided about re-location, mark the scorecard as a "No Show" and return it immediately to the Registration Table. If a project has been moved to a new location, proceed to that location, *but please* **DO NOT** make any changes to the project number on the scorecard. An exhibitor's project number remains the same during the Fair.

6. Plan to spend a minimum of 20 minutes with each of your assigned exhibitors. If the nature of a project requires additional time, that is fine. If a project has been developed over a period of years, evaluate it based on the current year's work only. Students may do multi-year projects by dealing with different aspects of the same general topic.

7. An Original Notebook (logbook) is essential (*not just a final written report*) to project development. The Notebook represents 10% of the total score, and each team member should have his or her own logbook.

8. Each project is judged five (5) times. An exhibitor's final placement is based on the total number of points given by the five judges. Rate each category carefully, and then provide the final total of the points you awarded. We recommend a **MINIMUM SCORE of 50** to a project unless you strongly feel it is significantly inferior to others in the Fair. Please provide an explanation in the "Comment Section" of the scorecard if you give a score under 50.

9. After you have completed your interview with the exhibitor(s), please initial (*print*) one of the five spaces provided on the Exhibitor's Card located at the project site.

10. Fill out a scorecard for each project and **print** your name at the bottom. There is also a place to make constructive comments. **COMMENTS ARE WELCOME AND USEFUL TO THE STUDENT.** The comment portion will be detached and distributed to the student by the school's science department.

11. **IMPORTANT!** Many students conduct their projects in professional laboratories -- hospitals, corporate research facilities, universities, etc., while others are done at school or home. Do not be influenced by the setting. Base your judgment on a project's overall quality and how it meets the judging criteria. You are judging the scientific process, the creativity/ingenuity demonstrated, and what the student has learned. *The student should have designed his/her own project.* Students who worked in professional labs are required to visibly display Form "1C" at their project location.

12. If you wish, you may view a student's paperwork (e.g. the forms filled out by the mentor/scientist from a lab, etc.). For this and any other questions, please speak with an MSSEF rep at the Registration Table.

On behalf of the MSSEF, thank you for your volunteer service!
Massachusetts State Science & Engineering Fair, Inc. (MSSEF)