Judging Policy For Students, Teachers, Parents

Every effort is made to ensure that judging of the National History Day in Idaho contests are fair and accurate at all levels. We understand the time and hard work put into each project and while not placing can be disappointing, we do everything possible to fully prepare judges to provide a quality judging experience for students.

Please carefully read the information below to inform yourself about National History Day in Idaho’s policy regarding judging. It is also suggested that you familiarize yourself with the judging information found in the NHD rule book, which can be found on the National History Day website.

Notifying NHD in Idaho Staff During a Contest:
Below are situations that you should notify NHD staff about DURING a contest. Staff will determine the best course of action regarding the situation.

Immediately notify NHD in Idaho staff if:

- A judge does the following:
  - Asks a personal question of a student (i.e. Where are you from? What school do you go to?)
  - Bans spectators from the performance, website, or documentary rooms.
  - Indicates that they know the student in any way (i.e. they know their parents, are a relative, former teacher, etc.)
- Equipment problems occur during judging
  - To limit such issues, students should test their project on a variety of computers and formats. Our goal is to give every student entry a fair hearing.
  - If the issue is not resolved within five minutes, then the affected project will be pulled aside to allow the judges and other projects to continue on schedule. This will allow staff and the student(s) time to resolve the technical issue and they will be judged at the end of the judging period for that contest. This will not impact their evaluation.
  - If the issue cannot be resolved and the project is unable to be viewed during the contest, then unfortunately this means that the project is ineligible for advancement.

Reporting Comments and Concerns After a Contest:

Idaho State Historical Society staff, the State Coordinator, nor any official at the NHD national office has the authority to overrule, set aside, or otherwise undermine a judge's decision, and
under no circumstances shall a judge's decision be changed. This is true whether a complaint alleges scoring miscalculation, bias, prejudice, or any other error. **All judging is final.**

- If you have specific concerns about the process as you observed it, please follow the below procedure:
  - **Submit concerns in writing to:**
    - Idaho State Historical Society, National History Day in Idaho, 610 North Julia Davis Drive, Boise, ID 83702
    - Johanna Bringhurst, State Coordinator, via email: Johanna.bringhurst@ishs.idaho.gov
    - Please submit concerns within 7 days following a contest
  - Any response will be made in writing. No comment shall be made by telephone or through personal contact unless the State Coordinator deems it necessary, in which case they will initiate or invite the contact
  - Comments and concerns will be taken into account for the next contest cycle and used to improve the judging experience where necessary

**Spectator Basics:**

**What you should know about the judges:**

- Only judges are privy to all competitors’ bibliographies and process papers
- Judges receive the same instructions at all levels of contests
- Judges are provided with suggested questions to ask students, but *may* ask questions not on that list. They may also ask different questions for each project.
- Judges have **absolute** authority to remove disruptive individuals from the judging room, and to bar spectators entirely, if they deem it necessary to protect the integrity of the judging process.

**What you should know about spectating:**

- All judging interviews are open to spectators, except exhibits. The exhibit hall will be closed to spectators during judging. Exhibits can be viewed before or after judging interviews.
- **TURN OFF ALL CELL PHONES** while viewing any student projects.
- Refrain from cheering during documentaries and performances. Brief applause at the end is acceptable.
- While walking/waiting in the hallways to view student projects keep your voices down so as not to disturb the judging process.
- Please do not speak to the judges concerning the judging of your student’s project; contact contest officials with any concerns.
- While judging is in progress, stay in your seats and do not interject with your opinions.
- Do not enter a room while judging is in progress.
- Please do not eat in the judging rooms or hallways.

Thank you for your cooperation!
National History Day in Idaho staff