



# Reward the Best, Encourage the Rest

## Interview Guidance and Conduct Requirements for GSDSEF Judges

The GSDSEF Management Committee hopes that the morning judging session will be both productive and enjoyable for exhibitors and judges alike.

Interviews should be a positive and educational experience for every exhibitor.

Most judges participate in the Fair because they enjoy engaging with bright students. Share your experience, and appreciate the energy of their ideas and the unexpected directions they may take.

**Rewarding the best projects is important, but we also ask that you leave each student with words of encouragement.** The students you will be interviewing are among the relatively few who did a project at all, and who were then selected to advance to the GSDSEF.

Please introduce yourself appropriately, and expect the same from the students. Many younger participants may defer to adults, and may need varying degrees of encouragement to fully open up about their projects. Initiate the discussion, but encourage the students to take an active role, guided by your questions. While you may be an expert in the field, allow them to be the experts on their projects.

The exhibitors will have been reminded of the expectations of polite behavior during the pre-judging orientation. Similarly, **judges are expected to be polite, respectful, and constructive at all times**, even when pointing out flaws in a project. In particular:

- **Do not ask students about irrelevant topics** such as their ethnicity, family background, school, gender, siblings, etc.
- **Do not criticize schools, programs, teachers, the GSDSEF, etc to students, or in their presence** (Note: you are welcome to share any such concerns with the Judging Coordinator, but unless truly urgent, please wait until after the Fair).
- **Avoid emotional reactions** to provocative hypotheses or conclusions. When confronted with scientifically controversial material or incorrect information, **respond with scientific rigor**, and steer the conversation back to the fundamentals of the scientific method.
- Again, try hard to **leave each student with constructive words of encouragement**. We hope that every exhibitor in grade 11 or younger will return for next year's Fair.

We are truly grateful for your time and expertise!

- Vickie Driver, Judging Coordinator
- Earl Williams