October - 2011

Dear Science Fair Coordinator,

Another new school year has begun and that means it’s time to begin thinking about your science fair program! We wish to encourage you and your school to continue to provide STEM opportunities for your students. If your school is not planning to participate, please let students know that they may still compete at a regional level. Have them contact the regional office (507-389-3849) or email Science.Fair@mnsu.edu ormailto:mary.van-duynhoven@mnsu.edu.

This is a quick and easy instructional letter for the Science Fair Coordinator who has participated at the regional level before. If you are confused by any of the material, you may download the letter that explains nearly everything from our website at www.mnsu.edu/sciencefair. This letter is available on our homepage under “EXPERIENCED Science Fair School” or for more instructions “NEW Science Fair School”.

You will be able to download Important Dates from our homepage at www.mnsu.edu/sciencefair. Print and keep this sheet posted to check your deadline dates. Share it with students and/or educators.

NEW THIS YEAR: Since the International Science Fair as well as the State Science Fair have aligned Sixth Graders with the Middle School Programs, SC/SW MN Regional Science & Engineering Fair is following suite by allowing Sixth Graders to compete at the Middle School/Senior High Division. We understand that your school’s Sixth Graders may not be housed with the seventh and eighth grade students. So, our region is offering the opportunity for Sixth Graders to participate at either of our regional science fairs: Middle School/Senior High Division or the Elementary Division. If your school decides to send your Sixth Graders to the Middle School/Senior High fair, then these Sixth Graders will compete against seventh and eighth grade students. If your school decides to leave the Sixth Graders at the Elementary Division, then these Sixth Graders will compete against other Sixth Graders at the fair. This will be up to your school and families.

QUICK AND EASY STEPS
1. REGISTER ONLINE YOUR SCHOOL INFORMATION at www.mnsu.edu/sciencefair, under the first column with the white background, click on “Online School Registration”. Select your own username and password. Document it. Schools will receive (or should have received) confirmation of school registration. If in doubt, contact us. We ask that schools register each year so that we have the most updated contact information. You may select the same username and password as past years. Registering your school does not obligate you or your school; it does let the regional science fair office know that you have a student/family who may be interested.
3. REVIEW AND APPROVE APPROPRIATE PROJECTS. Complete any certifications forms which are needed PRIOR to start of experimenting. Forms are available on our website specific to Middle School/Senior High Division or Elementary Division. Click “Forms” in the yellow column. There are “Certification Forms” (which are the safety-type forms), “Regional Forms” (student registration forms, pre-order t-shirt forms) and “Judging Forms” (forms specific to division and event).
4. BE AWARE OF DEADLINES for Regional Science & Engineering Fair - registration of projects/research papers, payment of projects, and pre-order of t-shirts and mark the dates on your calendars. Middle School/Senior High students (Grades 6-12) wishing to compete in the Research Paper Competition will need to submit three (full color) copies of their paper to our office, postmarked with a date no later than Monday, January 9, 2012 or the research paper may be saved as a PDF and emailed to our office no later than Tuesday, January 10 by 9:00am or may be dropped off at the regional office.
5. BE AWARE OF other science-oriented events. See bottom of the 2012 Important Dates for details. Please check into the I-SWEEEP competition. The Middle School division of the I-SWEEEP event is being handled differently this year. Check it out on their website.
6. LATE PROJECTS WILL NEED PRIOR APPROVAL from our regional office. Contact us via email at science.fair@mnsu.edu or mary.van-duynhoven@mnsu.edu.
7. PROJECT/RESEARCH REGISTRATIONS DUE on Monday, January 9, 2012 for the Middle School/Senior High Division (Gr. 6-12) by 11:59pm and March 14, 2011 for the Elementary Division (Gr. 3-6) by 11:59pm. We prefer online registrations. Go to our regional website, http://www.mnsu.edu/sciencefair. See link in first column of our homepage of our website, titled “Online Student Registration”. Enter your school’s username and password. If login information is forgotten, contact our office. If we do not respond in a couple of days, then re-register your school with us and use the latter username and password.
8. NEED AN INVOICE? When all registrations are entered, let our office know. (We prefer the school enter all student registrations online/electronically.) If you need an invoice, let us know via email. Otherwise, request a check from your school to be sent to our office accounting for $20 per person per event in order for check to be received by deadline dates. There will be no refunds of fees paid on cancellation after dates given on the deadline sheet. Any cancellations after PAYMENT DEADLINE are expected to be paid by school/student whether student participates or not.
9. EXPECT EMAIL CONFIRMATION ON EACH STUDENT REGISTRATION to the designated Science Fair Coordinator/Contact. Expect an email summary of all registrations approximately one week after registration deadline for the Middle School/Senior High Division, and up to 2 weeks for the Elementary Division. Be sure to check the following: student name, project title, category, grade level, whether or not electricity or space is needed. Changing student information on fair day isn’t the “ideal situation” for student or for the judges. CONFIRM LIST with any changes or with approval back to our office ASAP, but within one week’s time of receiving it.

10. PAYMENT according to deadline. See deadline sheet. There is a fee of $20 per person per event. With team projects, each member is expected to pay the $20 fee. If a project starts out as a team project with research being done by a team, then the project needs to remain a team project for the entire year. This means that a team project at the local level will compete as a team at regionals, state or ISEF. Online payments made after the payment deadline dates will be charged an extra $5 per person per event. Payments may be in the form of cash, check or online CC payment link provided on the homepage “E-Commerce: Online Payments and T-Shirt Orders”. Once the school or individual creates an account at Minnesota State University, Mankato to pay by credit card, then it will be available forever. Be sure student registrations are done before payments. (In the past, some parents believe their child was registered, but in actuality, the student was only paid for and was not registered for the fair.) NEW – any late, but approved, registration must be accompanied with payment of $20 + $5 late fee.

11. T-SHIRT PRE-Orders and payment ($13 each) may be done either by paper copy accompanied with payment by individuals or schools according to deadline. See the “E-Commerce: Online Payments and T-Shirt Orders” link on our homepage. If you are interested to see what the T-Shirt looks like for your student division, go to http://www.mnsu.edu/sciencefair/school/tshirt.html and the site will have forms to download forms. Orders must be accompanied with payment. No late orders will be accepted. A limited amount of T-Shirts will be available for purchase on the day of the fair at a cost of $15 each.

12. SEND COPIES of certification forms approximately one month PRIOR to the regional fair. We will have time to review and check to see if students have all the proper paperwork. BRING ORIGINALS of certification forms on fair day to be signed.

13. SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS: The ISEF judging team have asked that the students have a regular version of their presentation, but also a short, compact version of their presentation. Students should not feel offended if asked to give the short version lasting 2-5 minutes maximum.

14. Science Fair Coordinator from school should expect to receive an electronic master list of all registrations with project numbers, letters for student participant, parents, and educators along with Minnesota State University, Mankato campus maps, approximately 6-12 days prior to the fair date. Students at the Elementary Division will need to bring a portable table, maximum size of 36” square with good tips on the legs to protect the gym floors and an extra folding chair for team members.

15. STATE SCIENCE FAIR & JSHS (research paper competition) has a REGISTRATION DEADLINE of 5 DAYS for the state-advanced students (Gr. 6-12/purple state ribbon winners for projects and/or for research papers) to Minnesota Academy of Science. Students will need to check their family’s schedule ahead of time, to know if they will be able to compete. If student knows that they will not be able to attend to compete at the State Science Fair, then they or their educator should let our office know within two days after the fair. A quick response to our office will enable other students on the alternate list to have the opportunity to compete at State. Student registrations will need to go the following link to register: http://www.mnmas.org/mnmas/Home.asp (Cost does not include hotel.) We encourage students to attend all the events at State to get the “entire fair experience”.

16. Intel ISEF FINALISTS (chosen from Gr. 9-12) will have a deadline of twelve days (March 1) to REGISTER AND SUBMIT CERTIFICATION FORMS to Society for Science & the Public website, http://www.societyforscience.org/isef. Only finalists will need to do this. Finalist will receive information of a link to register. Our regional office will register sponsors, alternates and any parents who may wish to join our group.

17. Contact our regional office with questions.

Thank you! We will see you at the fair!

Sincerely, Bill and Mary

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