

# About the 2017 Ayers Science Fair

## Judging Change



Hi Everyone,

There are a lot of questions and confusion regarding the 2017 Ayers Science Fair judging process. First, I apologize if this is a disappointment to your student(s), but I hope you can understand why we made this change.

This year, we continue to have students present their projects, but we do not intend to “place” projects (first, second and third place). There were a few reasons that lead up to this decision.

First, in order to fairly judge projects, we really must have students present their projects to multiple judges. This is the standard for science fairs and it ensures that students are fairly judged. This is a challenge with so many students participating in the fair, and a limited number of volunteer judges. I believe that our judges need this as well -- most years the negotiation between judges to select the winner is an agonizing and stressful process. Giving the students feedback took a back-seat to the placing process.

Second, we wanted to try some new things this year to get more students participating:

One change was to bring back allowing partner projects. One reason for eliminating this in the past was because it adds additional complexity to the judging process.

Another change we introduced was “engineering projects”. This is a new category for us, and we expected that it may be difficult to judge these projects. However, we see a decline in science fair participation as students get older, so this was seen as a way to give students more options.

And finally, we know that “winning” motivates some students, but “losing” also demotivates some. We want all students to get the experience of researching, experiment, and engineering with support and encouragement by their family and Ayers community. We hope this is fun for the students, and good practice for their future science fair endeavours.

We will provide a survey for all students (and parents) looking for feedback on how to improve the science fair and to find parent volunteers to organize next year's event. You will be able to find this at [www.AyersScienceFair.org](http://www.AyersScienceFair.org) immediate after the event.

We will recognize all students participating in the science fair at the evening event, and we look forward to seeing you there along with these amazing projects!

Best Regards,

Josh Abell  
Ayers Science Fair Parent Coordinator