



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

July 24, 2006

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael Flanagan, Chairman 

SUBJECT: Approval of Criteria for the High School Robotics Competition For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology Grant, (F.I.R.S.T)

The Michigan Legislature with the 2007 State School Aid Act, Section 99H, appropriated \$150,000 for competitive grants to high schools that will provide expanded opportunities to improve mathematics, science, and technology skills by participating in a robotics competition.

Eligible grantees are high schools that have not previously participated in a F.I.R.S.T. competition. Awards will not exceed \$6,000.

Grantees will establish a partnership with a minimum of one sponsor, business entity, higher education institution, or technical school. In addition, each grantee will secure a local match from other private or local funds equal to 50% of the costs of participating in the event.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the criteria for the High School Robotics Competition, as attached to the Superintendent's memorandum dated July 24, 2006.

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**MICHIGAN
STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION**

**Criteria for The High School Robotics Competition For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and
Technology, (F.I.R.S.T.)**

The State Board of Education has adopted as its Strategic Goal "Attain substantial and meaningful improvement in academic achievement for all students/children with primary emphasis on high priority schools and students." In addition, the State Board has adopted the following five Strategic Initiatives to implement the goal:

Ensuring Excellent Educators
Elevating Educational Leadership
Embracing the Information Age

Ensuring Early Childhood Literacy
Integrating Communities and Schools

To the extent possible, all grant criteria and grant awards will include priority consideration of the Strategic Goal and the Strategic Initiatives.

BACKGROUND/PURPOSE OF GRANT

Competitive Formula New Continuation *(check all that apply)*

The Michigan Legislature has directed \$150,000 be made available for competitive grants to high schools to improve mathematics, science, and technology skills by participating in a robotics competition. The high school robotics grant is intended to expand Michigan's participation in the F.I.R.S.T robotics competition. Last year, Michigan took top honors in the F.I.R.S.T robotics finals in Atlanta, GA. Michigan fielded 48 of the 344 teams (five from the city of Detroit). A study by Brandeis University cited participating students for increasing their interest in science, technology, and science oriented careers. In addition, students indicated participation in the robotics competition increased self-confidence and motivation to do well in school.

LEGISLATION

The 2007 State School Aid Act, Section 99H, appropriates \$150,000 for grants to high schools for expanded opportunities to improve mathematics, science, and technology skills by participating in a robotics competition.

RATIONALE FOR CRITERIA

This grant is intended to provide an opportunity for students to participate in an activity that will have a positive impact on their attitudes towards teamwork, interest in science and technology, and how they see themselves.

CRITERIA

Defined in Legislation Defined in Department's Grant Proposed by Staff

Successful applicants must:

- Be a first time participant in the F.I.R.S.T robotics competition.
- Use the grant award and matching funds to participate in the F.I.R.S.T. robotics competition.
- Establish a partnership for the purposes of the program with at least one other sponsor, business entity, higher education institution, or technological school.

Receive a local match from other private or local funds at least equal to the grant award. The amount of the match shall be at a minimum 50% of the cost of participating in the event.

- Grant funds may be used for registrations, materials, travel costs, and other expenses associated with the preparation for and attendance at F.I.R.S.T robotics competitions.
- Applicants will define the role of F.I.R.S.T. mentors to include recruitment, science and engineering expertise, and delineation of responsibilities.
- Grant applications will include the following program details:

A statement of support from local school administrators.

Strategies for working with and including team sponsors.

How teams will be recruited and organized

Access to meeting space and equipment and storage.

Transportation of students and mentors to and from team meetings and competition locations.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS/TARGET POPULATION TO BE SERVED BY GRANT

Eligible grantees are high schools that have not previously participated in a F.I.R.S.T. competition.

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE

Approximately \$150,000 is available for the High School Robotics Competition (F.I.R.S.T.). Funding will not exceed \$6,000 each.

OFFICE ADMINISTERING GRANT/PROGRAM CONTACT

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