



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

BRIAN J. WHISTON
STATE SUPERINTENDENT

MEMORANDUM

DATE: August 30, 2016

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Brian Whiston, Chairman

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Brian Whiston".

SUBJECT: Approval of Criteria for Section 99h: Competitive FIRST Robotics Grants

From the appropriation made under Section 99h of the 2016 School Aid Act, \$2,500,000 has been appropriated for competitive grants that expand opportunities to improve mathematics, science and technology skills by participating in FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics. Criteria have been proposed by staff. The grant applications are scheduled to be available September 26, 2016, with a November 7, 2016 due date.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the criteria for the Section 99h: Competitive FIRST Robotics Grants as attached to the State Superintendent's memorandum dated August 30, 2016.

MICHIGAN STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Criteria for Section 99h: Competitive FIRST Robotics Grants

The State Board of Education has adopted guiding principles and strategic goals for developing Michigan into a top 10 education state in 10 years.

To the extent possible, all grant criteria and grant awards will serve to further attain the above goals.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIC GOALS THIS CRITERIA SUPPORT

This grant supports the guiding principles and strategic goals of the State Board of Education (SBE) and Michigan Department of Education (MDE) for goals two, three, four, and six through several key activities. The FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) Robotics Program supports goal two, strategy 2.6 and 2.7 by engaging students in well-rounded learning experiences in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM), language, business, culture, and creativity, as well as providing access to personalized learning technologies that support and enhance those learning experiences. The FIRST Robotics Program supports goal three by providing coaches and mentors with opportunities to receive additional professional development and access to State Continuing Education Clock-Hours. The FIRST Robotics Program supports goal four by providing funding to districts with high-risk factors to ensure access to equitable resources. Finally, the FIRST Robotics Program supports goal six by requiring the establishment of partnerships between teams and job providers, community colleges, and higher education to assure a prepared and quality future workforce.

PURPOSE / BACKGROUND OF GRANT

Type of Grant Program:

- New Continuing Formula
 Competitive Designated in Legislation or MDE Proposal

The 2016 School Aid Act appropriates \$2,500,000 for the 2016-17 fiscal year for competitive grants to districts that provide pupils in grades K-12 with expanded opportunities to improve mathematics, science and technology skills by participating in events hosted by a science and technology development program known as FIRST Robotics, including JR FIRST Lego League, FIRST Lego League, FIRST Tech Challenge, and FIRST Robotics Competition.

The grant funding, as outlined in legislation, will be used for the specific purpose of providing Coach Stipend Awards, Support Awards, and Advancement Awards. The Coach Stipend Awards will provide funds to coaches for their dedicated time to the program. The Support Awards provide funds for teams to register for FIRST Robotics events, purchase supplies and materials, and support the team overall.

The Advancement Awards provide funds for the team to cover expenses related to advancing to state and/or world competitions.

Grants funded under this section are intended to increase the number of pupils demonstrating proficiency in science and mathematics on the state assessment and to increase the number of pupils who are college and career ready upon high school graduation.

CRITERIA

Date criteria were last approved: October 8, 2013

Source of Criteria:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Federal Law, Rules or Regulation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Proposed by Staff |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State Law or Rules | <input type="checkbox"/> Defined in MDE's Approved Grant Proposal to the Funder |

The main criteria upon which grantees will be selected are the following:

Defined in Statute:

To be eligible for a grant, a district will demonstrate that it has:

- Established a partnership for the purpose of the FIRST Robotics program with at least one sponsor, business entity, higher education institution, or technical school.
- Submitted a spending plan.
- Agreed to pay at least 25 percent of the cost of the FIRST Robotics program.
- Agreed to provide matching funds for the Support Award from private or local sources equal to at least 50 percent of the costs of participation in an event.

Proposed by Staff:

Each applicant must:

- Register their team with www.usfirst.org.
- Provide MDE with an electronic roster, which includes student Unique Identification Code (UIC).
- Have a current FIRST Robotics program, team number, and coach in place.
- Be willing to offer elective high school credits for students who have successfully logged 60 hours, provided the team attends a minimum of two district competitions.
- Be willing to participate in the digital badging program established by the statewide FIRST Robotics team of coaches.

In support of legislative intent, all awards will be distributed to districts in a competitive and equitable manner that will maximize the number of teams that will be able to receive funding. Preference will be given to applicants that support under-represented areas by prioritizing:

- High economically disadvantaged populations (focus and priority based schools).
- Schools that serve a high percentage of low income families (based on Free and Reduced Lunch count data).
- First time teams participating in the FIRST Robotics.
- Districts that establish feeder teams (teams that generate student populations that will potentially move up to high school or middle school programs).
- Districts in a broad geographical distribution.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS AND TARGET POPULATION SERVED

Eligible applicants are districts that provide pupils with expanded opportunities to improve mathematics, science and technology skills by participating in events hosted by FIRST.

The target population is students in grades K-12.

TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE

\$2,500,000

The MDE understands the Legislature intends for these funds to be carried forward through a work project in the event that any funds are unallocated.

STATUTE

P.A. 249 of 2016, School Aid, Section 99h

OFFICE ADMINISTERING GRANT / PROGRAM CONTACT

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