EOM Robotics Team 7476

FRC Application - Parent/Guardian Form

The intention of this form is to ensure that parents and guardians are aware of their child's application to our *FIRST®* Robotics Competition (FRC) team, and have access to key information. Once students have been selected for the team, we will have an in-person parent meeting to answer additional questions more fully.

Please detach and return the last page of this form in support of your child's application to the team.

FIRST® Robotics Competition ("FRC")

FIRST® - an acronym for "**F**or **I**nspiration and **R**ecognition of **S**cience and **T**echnology" - is a not-for-profit organization founded by Dean Kamen in 1989. The FIRST® Robotics Competition ("FRC") represents a unique partnership between industry and academia, resulting in an environment that fosters a deeper appreciation for engineering, science, and business. Students work side by side with knowledgeable mentors in a supportive learn-by-doing environment.

Gracious Professionalism, A *FIRST®* Credo

The late Dr. Woodie Flowers, professor of mechanical engineering at MIT and co-founder of FRC, elaborates on Gracious Professionalism, a term that he originated, and its significance in *FIRST®*

"FIRST® celebrates high-quality, well-informed work, done in a manner that leaves everyone feeling valued. Gracious Professionalism seems to be a good descriptor for a big part of the ethos of *FIRST®*. It is one of the things that makes *FIRST®* different and wonderful.

Gracious attitudes and behaviours are win-win. Gracious folks respect others and let that respect show in their actions. Professionals possess special knowledge and are trusted by society to use that knowledge responsibly. Thus, gracious professionals make a valued contribution in a manner pleasing to others and to themselves.

It's a way of doing things that encourages high-quality work, emphasizes the value of others, and respects individuals and the community. With Gracious Professionalism, fierce competition and mutual gain are not separate notions. Gracious professionals learn and compete like crazy, but treat one another with respect and kindness in the process. They avoid treating anyone like losers. No chest thumping tough talk, but no sticky-sweet platitudes either. Knowledge, competition, and empathy are comfortably blended."

The Challenge

FRC challenges teams to design and build robots in a very short timeframe.

"FIRST® is a microcosm of the real engineering experience because it's a problem too big, in a time too short, with a budget too small, and a team too large." - *Dr. Woodie Flowers*

The team must analyze the game and strategize what type of robot would perform best. Teams meet months in advance of the building period to learn basic skills so they are better prepared. The goal isn't simply to build a robot; the robot is a vehicle for learning much more.

EOM Robotics & Team 7476

We're a passionate and dedicated group of students, mentors, and parents united by an appreciation for hands-on education in engineering, business, and leadership through robotics. We are beginning our fourth year back since the pandemic, and have reconfigured several times in that short time period. EOM Robotics includes a number of teams that operate in the school, including both FTC robotics (for students in grades 7 - 12) and FRC robotics (grades 9 - 12). For the past 3 years we have run two FRC teams, and have steadily increased our involvement in FTC. This year, for a number of reasons, we are reducing our registration to one FRC team.

This is the first year in our history where we have some students with 3 years of prior FRC experience, and we look forward to having our veterans' help in training for the challenge of creating a mini-fridge-sized robot from scratch in about seven weeks. Students on the team will strategize, design, create, code, test, and project-manage, all the while developing critical skills in teamwork, leadership, and communication. We aim to inspire the next generation of engineers and scientists within a community that adheres to the FIRST ethos of Gracious Professionalism. We also aim to have FUN along the way!!

Supporting our Students

Our team runs at Earl of March Secondary School, and is led by two teacher-volunteers from the school's tech department, Ms. O'Connor and Mr. Roller, both holding engineering degrees. We are joined by 6+ other adult mentor-volunteers with a variety of technical, business, and logistical expertise, some of whom are parents of students at the school, and some of whom are not. Each year we also look to parent volunteers to help us out in a variety of ways, including communication with parents, chaperoning / providing logistical support at competitions, providing snacks at long meetings, and helping to control costs by coordinating in-kind donations and/or other forms of team sponsorship. We are always looking for new parents to join this effort!

Building Expertise

Students on our team begin by learning some 'essentials' of FRC, and then begin to deepen their skills in particular areas of interest: BOP (business, operations, & project management), controls (sensors, software & vision), hardware (electrical & mechanical), and strategy (tournament strategy, match strategy, scouting, & strategic design). Students can prioritize their area of interest on their application form, but are encouraged to be flexible and understanding as we build a team with the necessary mix of expertise. Students can also switch their focus area in subsequent years as their interests change and develop.

Safety

All team members will be trained in safe practices and procedures; teachers, students, mentors, & volunteers alike will be expected to operate at all times with a 'safety mindset'. This includes bringing their safety glasses to meetings, wearing PPE at appropriate times, acting in a safe manner, being sure to only undertake work with tools when there is adequate supervision, and promptly reporting unsafe situations.

Code of Conduct

In addition to all of the school and OCDSB rules, the team is expected to abide by the *FIRST* Code of Conduct. Mentors, coaches, volunteers, team members, affiliate partners, contractors, staff, and other participants should adhere to the following basic behaviours while participating in *FIRST* activities.

- Exhibit Gracious Professionalism® at all times.
- Ensure the safety of all participants in *FIRST* activities.
- Not engage in any form of bullying, harassment, use of profane or insulting language, or any actual or threatened violence.
- Adhere to all *FIRST* Youth Protection Program (YPP) policies.
- Report any unsafe behavior to event or local *FIRST* leadership.

Persons who do not comply with this Code of Conduct may be barred from participating in *FIRST* activities.

Cost

The Application form that your child is filling out has an explanation of costs, reproduced below:

> *Our team is centered around participation in FIRST Robotics Competition (FRC) events that take place in March & April each year. Competition locations can change from year to year, but there are no FRC options in the Ottawa area for this season. We therefore arrange group travel within Ontario for both regional qualification events (typically two weekends of Friday - Sunday) and the provincial competition (Thurs, April 16 - Sunday April 19, 2026 in Niagara Falls, ON).*
>
> *We make an effort to keep participation costs as affordable as possible, but the need to travel for competitions contributes heavily to our costs (hotel, transportation, food). Team members are expected to participate actively in fundraising to reduce costs.*
>
> *We dedicate a portion of the funds that we raise to providing extra bursaries for students for whom the cost of the team is prohibitive. Fundraising is also used to reduce everyone's costs equally (ex. pay for the bus to provincials, or buy a team meal at competition), and to purchase tools, material, and equipment for team use.*
>
> *The following cost estimates are subject to change, as they are based on our experience of the past 3 years of travel, and based on sharing the costs among 60 students.*
>
> ***The 2025-2026 cost estimate is ~$1800 per student, which includes everything required for full team participation, as detailed below. If your child requires a bursary in order to participate, please have them indicate this on their application form and/or fill in the appropriate sections at the bottom of this form.***
>
> - *registration fee for three competitions (Payable to FIRST® Canada for two regional competitions and the provincial competition)*
> - *all tools and materials needed to build the robot*
> - *materials to build game-specific practice field elements*
> - *competition t-shirts for all students and mentors*
> - *"shared" portion of costs to attend all three competitions (ex robot transportation, hotel for bus driver, supply teacher costs)*

- *transportation by coach between the school and competition venue for all three competitions, and for all coach transfers between the hotel and competition venues.*
- *hotel accommodation for all 3 competitions, priced for 4 students per room*
- *meals and snacks at competition (3 meals per full day away, supper on our departure day)*
- *~75 hours of pre-season preparation & training meetings supervised by teachers and mentors (all volunteers)*
- *~76+ hours of build season meetings, mentored by volunteers*
- *10 days of chaperoned 'field trip' at the three competitions*

If a student is unable to attend a particular competition and is able to let us know with sufficient notice, their fees will be reduced by their own cost for hotel and food.

Our current estimates for fee reductions are

$ 230 reduction for an individual student who misses a regional competition (Fri - Sun travel)

$ 340 reduction for an individual student who misses provincial competition (Thurs - Sun travel)

$ 640 reduction if the team does not qualify for provincials

Payment:

In the event that your child is selected for the team, their team fee will be payable with the following options offered:

Option 1: single lump sum payment of $1800 due on or before Oct 15, 2025

Option 2: three installments as follows:

- $735 due Oct 15, 2025
- $735 due Dec 15, 2025
- $330 due March 1, 2026

Payments can be made in the following ways:

- through School Cash Online (https://ocdsb.schoolcashonline.com/)
- by cheque payable to Earl of March Secondary School, with “robotics” written in the memo line

Meeting Schedule

Students are expected to organize their time so that they can attend 80% or more of the meetings. They should be accountable to the team if they miss a meeting by informing affected teammates and making sure they aren't in possession of key parts or information that will hold up progress. They should give as much notice as reasonably possible.

Preseason: From October - December we meet 6 hours per week to build the skills required to run the team and build a competitive robot.

Tuesdays & Thursdays from 6pm - 9pm

Build Season: From January 6 until competition season has finished, we double our time commitment to 12 hours per week by adding a 6-hour regular meeting time on the weekend. The longer meeting format is normally our best opportunity to get major things done!

Tuesdays & Thursdays from 6pm - 9pm, Saturdays from 10:30 - 4:30 pm.

Competition Season: We continue to meet for 12 hours per week until competitions begin. This year the competitions could be any two weekends from March 13 through to April 12, 2026, and we should learn the schedule by early November. If the team does well in those two events then we will qualify to compete at the provincials, held in Niagara Falls this year, from Thurs, April 16 - Sun, April 19, 2026.

Post Season: After the last competition we reduce our schedule substantially, immediately removing the weekend meeting and possibly reducing others depending on outstanding tasks. We need to clean up, thank sponsors, celebrate our year, and recognize our graduating students. We typically also do some outreach in the form of robotics demonstrations to youth and the general public around the region. We aim to finish regular meetings with the full team this year by the beginning of May.

Attendance at Competitions

Going to competition is one of the most exciting parts of the year! The expectation is that all team members should attend all of our competition events. Some key roles on the team can only be filled by students who will be attending all competitions. We consistently find that students learn a huge amount at these competitions where they make presentations to judges, work closely with other teams, and spend time absorbing the many different strategies and designs undertaken by other teams. We realize, however, that 100% attendance is not always possible, especially given that out of town travel is involved. We have therefore calculated options for reductions in fees for students who are unable to attend a particular event, if adequate notice is given.

We do not yet know which competition events we will be attending, but you can see all of the possible dates and locations on the FIRST website:
https://frc-events.firstinspires.org/2026/Events/EventList?filter=ONT

Complete and Return this Page

Parents, please detach and complete this form for your child to submit with their application to the robotics team for this 2025-2026 school year.

Student Name (please print): _____

Parent/Guardian Name (please print): _____

Relation to student : _____

Check the following boxes to indicate agreement:

☐ I have read and understood the time required and believe that my child can fulfil this commitment

☐ I have read and understood the description of travel to as many as 3 competitions out of town, and am supportive of my child participating in these, schedule permitting.

☐ I am aware that my child will be close to and/or using tools, and will be around robots with moving parts.

☐ I am aware that, if my child is selected for the team, there is an $1800 cost associated with participation. I can apply for a bursary (full or partial) below, but know that there are limited funds available.

☐ I understand that my child's participation in this FRC team requires a commitment to attending meetings, working with their teammates, and following all team rules and safety guidelines.

I _____ approve / do NOT approve of my child's application to the
(parent - print name)

EOM Robotics FRC team for the 2025-2026 school year. _____
(Signature)

Special Circumstances

Does your child require a bursary in order to participate on the team? If so, please indicate the amount requested.

Does your child require special accommodations in order to fully participate on the robotics team, including meetings and competitions? If so, please explain in the space below.