

SENATE, No. 2204

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED MARCH 16, 2020

Sponsored by:

Senator LINDA R. GREENSTEIN

District 14 (Mercer and Middlesex)

Senator STEVEN V. OROHO

District 24 (Morris, Sussex and Warren)

Co-Sponsored by:

Senators Pou and Thompson

SYNOPSIS

Establishes pilot program in DOE to support FIRST Robotics Programs in school districts.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/13/2021)

1 **AN ACT** establishing a robotics competition pilot program in the
2 Department of Education.

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4 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
5 *of New Jersey:*

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7 1. a. The Commissioner of Education shall establish a three-
8 year pilot program that provides grant funding to school districts to
9 participate in FIRST Robotics Competitions. The purpose of the
10 pilot program shall be to:

11 (1) increase opportunities for students to participate in FIRST
12 Robotics Competitions;

13 (2) motivate students to pursue education and career
14 opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics;
15 and

16 (3) improve students' knowledge in the fields of science,
17 technology, engineering, and mathematics.

18 b. A school district that wants to participate in the pilot
19 program shall submit an application to the commissioner in such
20 form as required by the commissioner. The school district shall
21 select no more than one school serving students from grades nine
22 through 12 to participate in the pilot program.

23 c. The commissioner shall select up to 12 school districts for
24 participation in the pilot program. The commissioner shall select
25 districts in the northern, central, and southern regions of the State
26 and shall seek a cross section of school districts from urban,
27 suburban, and rural areas of the State. The commissioner shall
28 award grants, within the limit of available State appropriations, to
29 selected school districts to be used to support the development and
30 implementation of a FIRST Robotics Program in the selected
31 schools. The commissioner shall determine the amount of each
32 grant awarded under the program and may award multi-year grants.
33 Grants awarded pursuant to this subsection shall be used by school
34 districts to provide coaching stipends, purchase materials for
35 competitions, finance competition travel expenses, and register for
36 events. School districts selected by the commissioner to participate
37 in the pilot program may apply for additional funding as teams in
38 the school district become eligible to participate in FIRST Robotics
39 Program's district, district championship, and world championship
40 events.

41 d. Three years following the establishment of the pilot
42 program, the commissioner shall submit a report to the Governor,
43 and to the Legislature pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164
44 (C.52:14-19.1). The report shall contain information on the
45 implementation of the pilot program, the number of students
46 participating in the program, and the recommendations of the
47 commissioner on continuing, expanding, or modifying the program.

1 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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6 This bill establishes a three-year pilot program in the Department
7 of Education to establish FIRST Robotics Teams in school districts.
8 The purpose of the pilot program will be to (1) increase
9 opportunities for students to participate in FIRST Robotics
10 Competitions; (2) motivate students to pursue education and career
11 opportunities in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics;
12 and (3) improve students' knowledge in the fields of science,
13 technology, engineering, and mathematics.

14 A school district that wants to participate in the pilot program
15 will submit an application to the commissioner. The school district
16 will select no more than one school serving students from grades
17 nine through 12 to participate in the pilot program. The
18 commissioner will select up to 12 school districts for participation
19 in the pilot program. The commissioner will award grants, within
20 the limit of available State appropriations, to selected school
21 districts to be used to support the development and implementation
22 of a FIRST Robotics program in the selected schools. The
23 commissioner will determine the amount of each grant awarded
24 under the program and may award multi-year grants. Grants may be
25 used by school districts to provide coaching stipends, purchase
26 materials for competitions, finance competition travel expenses, and
27 register for events. School districts selected to participate in the
28 pilot program may apply for additional funding as teams in the
29 school district become eligible to participate in FIRST Robotics
30 Program's district, district championship, and world championship
31 events.

32 At the conclusion of the pilot program, the commissioner will
33 submit a report to the Governor and the Legislature. The report will
34 contain information on the implementation of the pilot program, the
35 number of students participating in the program, and the
36 recommendations of the commissioner on continuing, expanding, or
37 modifying the program.