



# Coach Packet

East Texas Area Qualifier  
Stephen F. Austin State University  
January 24, 2026

*Updated 1/15/26*



## Table of Contents

Venue Details .....	2
Tournament Schedule .....	2
Directions and Parking .....	3
Food .....	3
Dress .....	4
Team Size .....	4
Team Check-in Process .....	4
Pit Area .....	5
Coaches' Meeting .....	6
Judging .....	6
Opening Ceremony .....	8
Spectators .....	8
Robot Game .....	8
Awards .....	9
Championship Advancement .....	9
What is Gracious Professionalism®? .....	9
Tournament Cancellation Policy .....	9
Competition Day Checklist .....	10
Coach Notes .....	11

# East Texas Qualifier at Stephen F. Austin State University

## FIRST® LEGO® League Challenge Qualifier

### Venue Details

**Date:** January 24, 2026

**Time:** 7:30 AM to 3:00 PM

**Location:** Cole STEM Building, 1720 Clark Blvd., Nacogdoches, TX 75962

**Tournament Contact:** Corina Rivera, [corina.rivera@sfasu.edu](mailto:corina.rivera@sfasu.edu), 936.468.5884

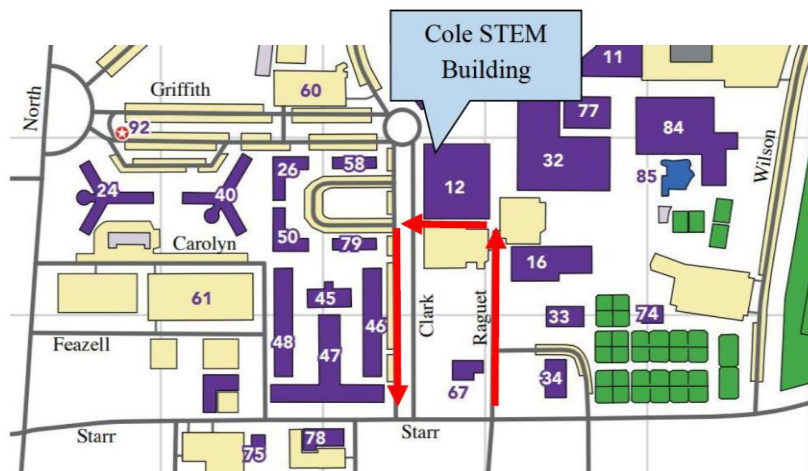
### Tournament Schedule

Time	Activity
7:30 AM	Team Registration & Pits Open
8:00 AM	Coaches Meeting
8:30 AM	Opening Ceremony
9:00 AM	Practice Rounds Begins
10:30 AM	Official Robot Game Rounds Begin
11:20 PM	Lunch Break
12:00 PM	Robot Games Continue
1:50 PM	Robot Games End Award Allocations
2:30PM	Closing Ceremony

## Directions and Parking

Address: Cole STEM Building, 1720 Clark Blvd., Nacogdoches, TX 75962. The main entrance is located on the west side of the building.

For school buses, please follow the below marked route to drop off students. Bus parking is available at the Coliseum Parking lot, 2600 N University Dr. Nacogdoches, TC 75965. Personal vehicles may stop at the Visitor Booth, located on Griffith Blvd (marked as 92 on the map) for parking directions.



## Food

Per SFA policy, lunch meals from restaurants are not permitted to be delivered or catered on campus. Teams may obtain lunch via any of the following options:

- Pineywoods Dining Hall
  - Location: 610 E. College St., Nacogdoches, TX 75965
  - Hours: 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM
  - Cost: \$11.50 per person
  - Self-serve buffet conveniently located on SFA campus. Limited parking available.
- Twiggy's Burgers
  - Location: 222 Vista Dr., Nacogdoches, TX 75965
  - Hours: 10:30 AM – 5:00 PM
  - Cost: Varies
  - Located inside the Baker Pattillo Student Center Food Court, on the North side of the 1<sup>st</sup> floor.
- Nearby restaurants
  - There are many fast-food restaurants located near campus that your team may wish to visit.
- Sack lunches

We will have concessions available, but they will primarily be snacks and drinks, including coffee. As this is an academic building, the pit areas will be most held in classrooms and labs. Extreme care should be exercised regarding food and drinks.

There will be some seating available in open areas and outdoors, which may serve as better locations for any sack lunches or potential messy snacks.

## **Dress**

Dress for all teams is casual. We encourage your team to adopt a fun and unique team identity, which allows others to understand something about your team, your engineering experience, or your Innovation Project. Remember to **HAVE FUN!**

## **Team Size**

A competitive team consists of a minimum of two (2) and a maximum of ten (10) children. Team members must be in grades 4 – 8.

## **Team Check-in Process**

Team check-in will run from 7:30 AM – 8:10 AM.

### **Before the event:**

1. Verify your roster on *FIRST*inspires.org
2. Verify your roster on *FIRST* in Texas Coach Portal at [www.firstintexas.org](http://www.firstintexas.org)

The *FIRST* in Texas Event Roster can be found in the Events area of your Team Dashboard next to the event your team is assigned to. Click the “Roster” button.

Events			
Name	League	Date	Status
Sample Qualifier #3		2025-11-15	<span>Available</span> <a href="#">View/Select</a>
Robot Qualifier Event		2017-12-15	<span>Approved</span> <a href="#">View/Select</a> <a href="#">Roster</a>
2025 Manor District Event		0000-00-00	<span>Approved</span> <a href="#">View/Select</a> <a href="#">Roster</a>

For more help on navigating the roster, reach out to your PDP or go to [www.firstintexas.org/fll-resources](http://www.firstintexas.org/fll-resources)

### **On the day of the event:**

1. Bring a copy of your Roster from *FIRST*inspires.org
2. Bring a copy of your *FIRST* in Texas Roster. Circle Yes or No for each person listed to indicate attendance
3. Submit both forms at check-in

### **Your team will receive the following at Team Registration:**

- **Wristband:** One wristband for each team member and two coaches. Your team will only receive two coach badges, even if your team works with more than two coaches and mentors. Your team will need to decide what two adults will be



spending the day with the students. ***NOTE: At least one adult coach is required to supervise the team at all times during the tournament.***

- **Schedule of Events**
- **Additional Information:** The opening and closing ceremony as well as the robot game matches will take place in the Barry Nelson Atrium, located on the first floor of the Cole STEM Building. The lower portion of the Social Stairs steps will be reserved for team members and coaches. The upper portion of the steps, as well as the second-floor balconies will be for visitors. You will receive a copy of the practice table schedule.

## **Pit Area**

The Pit is where your team will spend most of the time. This is where you will work on your robot and programming. This is also the area where you can enjoy downtime with your team, get to know other teams, see their robots, and find out about their Innovations Projects. Your team will have access to:

- One standard-sized table or large collaborative classroom desk
- At least two (2) chairs
- Electricity – Bring an extension cord and a power strip, as your access point may consist of a single outlet/plug. A power strip will allow you to charge your robot and your laptop at the same time.

We recommend that you bring the following for your team to have in the Pit Area:

- A bin or large bags (like trash bags) to store personal belongings, like coats, under your table
- Your robot and all your robot supplies (attachments and additional building pieces)
- Your laptop computer and power cord
- An extension cord and power strip
- A box or small bin to carry your robot and attachments to and from the competition area. You must unload all your equipment onto the table at official matches.
- Games (there will be long periods of downtime – bring some small games that the team can play when things are slow)

Some Pit Area Rules for you to keep in mind:

- Coaches should refrain from handling the robot, attachments, or the computer.  
***NOTE: If your team encounters technical difficulty, let someone at the tournament know so that the officials at the event understand why a coach might need to handle a robot or work on the computer.***
- Remember to be gracious professionals when using a Practice Table:
  - Teams will be assigned Practice Table times
  - Be mindful of your time and other teams' needs. Please be courteous and allow a team facing a crisis to use your practice time.



- Reset the Practice Table for the next team.
- Make sure you check that you do not take a mission model from the Practice Table
- Offer help to teams that may need it!

## **Coaches' Meeting**

The Coaches' Meeting will be held in the **Competition Area at 8:00 AM**. At least one team coach should attend this meeting. Make sure that another coach or mentor is assisting the team to set up their pit area during this time. At this meeting, your team's coach will have the opportunity to:

- Meet the Tournament Director
- Meet the Head Referee
- Understand the flow pattern through the competition area
- Ask judging-related questions
- Ask Robot Game questions
- Ask any other tournament-related questions

## **Judging**

Team judging is taking place virtually during the afternoons and evenings of January 19<sup>th</sup> through January 22<sup>nd</sup>.

During judging, team members will present their innovation project and robot design work. Judges will ask questions to help them score the team's progress according to the rubrics, then give positive and constructive feedback to the team. Teams should demonstrate FIRST® Core Values in everything they do. Judges will be excited to see how teams used teamwork, discovery, inclusion, innovation, impact, and fun in all aspects of their work

Each team will be judged within a single judging session. Your team will spend thirty (30) minutes with your assigned judging panel.

Teams should arrive join the online meeting approximately 5 minutes before their judging round.

- Sticking to the schedule is extremely important
- Each team will have one – 30 minute judging round
- All cell phones must be turned off during the judging.
- Only team members will be allowed into the judging rooms.

Please make sure to review [the rubrics](#) with your team prior to coming to the event. The following outlines what you can expect in each of the judging session:





## **Opening Ceremony**

At **8:30 AM** just prior to the start of the Robot Performance rounds, join us for the Opening Ceremony! This is a fun celebration to open the spectator portion of the event and will occur after your judging sessions are complete. The ceremony will begin with a Parade of Teams – bring your team banners or signs (if you have them) and your team spirit! After this ceremony, you will be ready to tackle the Robot Game!

## **Spectators**

The Robot Game is free and open to the public, starting at 10:30 AM. Please remember to respect the team-only areas – the competition floor area (the area where teams queue and compete) and the pit area.

## **Robot Game**

Your team is responsible for knowing and understanding the *FIRST* LEGO League Challenge Robot Game. All the game documents can be found on the [\*\*FIRST LEGO League website\*\*](#).

You are required to know the following for the robot competition: Field Setup, Rules, Missions, and Robot Game Updates.

**Coaches:** Two coaches will be permitted to join the team on the competition floor, but you must stay behind the line with the team and refrain from actively directing the team during the game. Please do not touch or handle the robot or attachments during this time.

Your team will participate four (4) times at the Tournament Tables – the Robot Game will begin with a Practice Round. The purpose of the Practice Round is to give your team the opportunity to experience the queuing process, competition timing, and of course, to get rid of some of those nerves. This Practice Round is just that – a practice – and it does not count, even if this is the best score your team has at this tournament. Your Robot Performance score is the highest score your team achieves out of the three official rounds.

***NOTE: Remote controls are not allowed anywhere at this tournament (This includes Smartphone applications that enable you to control your robot remotely). Bluetooth may not be used. Your team could be disqualified if you are found remotely controlling your robot anywhere during the competition or if your Bluetooth is enabled in the competition area!***

Make sure you are ready to compete at least ten (10) minutes prior to your scheduled robot round. Remember to respect the referees and the other teams – and **HAVE FUN!**



## **Awards**

Descriptions of *FIRST* LEGO League Challenge awards can be found [here](#). The following awards will be presented at this tournament:

- Champion's Award
- Core Values Award
- Innovation Project Award
- Robot Design Award
- Robot Performance Award
- Coach/Mentor Award
- Engineering Excellence Award
- Breakthrough Award
- Rising All-Star Award
- Motivate Award

### **Championship Advancement**

1/3 of teams from the Qualifier will be invited to advance to the Regional Tournament. A percentage of teams will then advance to the State Tournament.

### **What is Gracious Professionalism®?**

*Gracious Professionalism*® is part of the ethos of *FIRST*®. The idea and phrase are found throughout *FIRST*, but no one has been a stronger champion than *FIRST* Executive Advisory Board Co-Chair & Distinguished Advisor, Dr. Woodie Flowers. “*Gracious Professionalism* is 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.”

We expect all team members, volunteers, coaches, and families to behave as Gracious Professionals.

### **Tournament Cancellation Policy**

The Stephen F. Austin State University qualifying tournament will be canceled or delayed due to causes and conditions beyond the tournament organizers' control, including, but not limited to inclement weather, acts of nature, government restrictions, and/or any other cause beyond the tournament organizers' control. Please refer to local news and radio for current county advisories. If the event must be canceled, we will make every effort to reschedule the event.



## Competition Day Checklist

	FIRST Inspires Roster
	FIRST in Texas Roster
	Robot, attachments, extra parts
	Fresh batteries/spare batteries/rechargeable battery charger
	Computer and battery (if available) and power cord ( <i>Bluetooth use is NOT permitted at the tournament</i> )
	USB download cable ( <i>Bluetooth use is NOT permitted at the tournament</i> )
	Extension cord and power strip
	Box to carry robot and attachments to competition field
	Provisions for lunch (check with tournament director for options)
	Bin to hold personal and team items (coats, games, etc.) to fit under pit table
	Loose mission pieces for use at the practice table (see Coach Notes)
	Team games or activities for downtimes (optional)
	Team banner or poster to carry for ceremonies or for pit space (optional)
	Team giveaways (optional)

## **Coach Notes**

1. Any robot used in competition must be built and programmed by the team members
  2. Coaches are not allowed to interfere with the team equipment or laptops
  3. Know your team #
  4. Match queuing
    - a. Report to the queue area **5 minutes** before match time
  5. Inspection & Match Setup Limits – Inspection and match setup will be limited and timed:
    - a. Inspection Setup: **2 minutes**/Match Setup: **2 minutes**Exceeding the Inspection Setup limit may result in the team having to place some of their equipment in both inspection areas, and result in not earning the Inspection Bonus
  6. Inspection Reminders
    - a. 4 - Motors maximum (attached or unattached, functional or not functional)
    - b. All equipment must be presented for inspection
    - c. No duplicate mission models allowed
    - d. No non-LEGO parts
    - e. 12" maximum height for inspection purposes only
    - f. Equipment all in one launch area & less than or equal to 12" = Inspection Bonus
  7. No computers in Competition Area - All programs downloaded to the controller before the match
  8. One notebook per Home
  9. Pre-match field visual inspection – Do not touch the field mission models
    - a. Referees will only make adjustments for misaligned mats, improper model resets, loose or damaged models, or models obviously out of mounting alignment.
    - b. Referee will not check every model's operation or adjust models for exact, perfect alignment in the mounting location.
    - c. Must be performed during Inspection & Match Setup Periods
  10. No off-field storage –
    - a. All equipment must be stored on the field or held by technicians
    - b. No carts allowed in the competition area
  11. Two technicians per Home – Technician swapping allowed per Technician swapping rule
  12. Designated area for non-technicians, coaches, and spectators
  13. Proper launches – nothing can be kept from moving; everything must fit in the Launch Area
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14. No handing anything between Home Areas during match – Completely Outside Home Interruption is the only exception
15. **DO NOT LEAN OR PUSH ON TABLES** – May affect safety and match scoring
- a. Once the team launches their robot, have them take a step back.
16. Post-match scoring
- a. Leave all equipment and mission models in place at the end of the match
  - b. Combined mission models and/or equipment – Must be able to be freed in a single motion
  - c. Score challenge – Head Referee if needed
    - i. Scoring challenges are made by kids, not coaches.
    - ii. Scoring challenges based on Rulebook and Challenge Updates
    - iii. Scoring challenges made before finalizing/confirming the scoresheet.
    - iv. Head Referee's scoring decisions are final
  - d. Review scoresheet - Team confirms/initials scoresheet
17. Mission Specific - To be addressed as needed.

Coach will need to bring the following loose mission pieces to the Qualifier for use on the *practice table* only:

- ☐ Brush (Mission 01)
- ☐ Topsoil sections (Mission 02)
- ☐ Minecart (Mission 03)
- ☐ Precious Artifact (Mission 04)
- ☐ Ore Blocks (Mission 06)
- ☐ Millstone (Mission 07)
- ☐ Preserved Pieces (Mission 08)
- ☐ Scale Pan (Mission 10)
- ☐ Flags (Mission 15)
- ☐ Precision Tokens