

**THE STATE SCHOOL AID ACT OF 1979 (EXCERPT)**  
**Act 94 of 1979**

**388.1699h FIRST Robotics program; eligibility..**

Sec. 99h. (1) From the state school aid fund money appropriated in section 11, there is allocated an amount not to exceed \$4,723,200.00 for 2024-2025 for competitive grants to districts and intermediate districts, and from the general fund money appropriated in section 11, there is allocated \$600,000.00 for 2024-2025 for competitive grants to nonpublic schools, that provide pupils in grades pre-K to 12 with expanded opportunities to improve mathematics, science, computer science, and technology skills by participating in robotics competition programs hosted by program providers including, but not limited to, FIRST (for inspiration and recognition of science and technology) Robotics, including FIRST Lego League - Discover, Explore, and Challenge, FIRST Tech challenge, and FIRST Robotics competition, LTU Robofest, MATE (Marine Advanced Technical Education), REC (Robotics Education Competition) Foundation, Square One Education Network, VEX, and other providers approved by the department. All approved providers shall make all programs available to students in this state regardless of geographical location. Programs funded under this section are intended to increase the number of pupils demonstrating proficiency in science and mathematics on the state assessments and to increase the number of pupils who are college- and career-ready upon high school graduation. Notwithstanding section 17b, the department shall make grant payments to districts, nonpublic schools, and intermediate districts under this section on a schedule determined by the department. The department shall set maximum grant awards for each different level of programming and competition in a manner that both maximizes the number of teams that will be able to receive funds and expands the geographical distribution of teams. Districts and intermediate districts that receive funds under this section must provide relevant student participation information, as determined by the department, to program and competition providers described in this section. For a district or intermediate district to count a program competition provider for purposes of payments under this section, the program and competition providers must agree to aggregate data received by districts and intermediate districts and provide this information to the department in a form and manner determined by the department.

(2) The department shall do all of the following for purposes of this section:

(a) Both of the following by not later than 60 days after the state school aid appropriations bill for the current fiscal year is enacted into law or October 1 of the current fiscal year, whichever is later:

(i) Open applications for funding under this section to all districts, nonpublic schools, and intermediate districts.

(ii) Publish a list of approved programs and vendors for purposes of this section in a manner that is accessible to all applicants. To obtain approval under this subparagraph, a program or vendor must submit to the department registration information, including any fees; pledge that it will post this information on its website; and, by not later than January 1 of the current fiscal year, submit this information to the department for publication on the department's website.

(b) By not later than 60 days after applications are opened as described in subdivision (a), close applications under this section.

(c) By not later than 60 days after applications are closed as described in subdivision (b), make all determinations concerning funding under this section.

(d) By not later than July 1 of the current fiscal year, publish a document listing the requirements for becoming an approved program or vendor under subdivision (a).

(3) Except as otherwise provided under this subsection, if funding under this section is insufficient to fulfill all funding requests by qualified applicants under this section, the department shall prorate the total funding allocated under this section equally among all qualified applicants. However, for funding under this section toward grants under subsection (5)(b), in its proration under this subsection, the department shall ensure that each district is paid in an amount equal to the percentage the department would have paid the district in grant funding under subsection (5)(b), but for proration under this subsection, with no district receiving a grant under subsection (5)(b) in an amount that is greater than the district's total accrued costs under subsection (5)(b).

(4) A district, nonpublic school, or intermediate district applying for a grant under this section must submit an application in a form and manner prescribed by the department. To be eligible for a grant, a district, nonpublic school, or intermediate district must demonstrate in its application that the district, nonpublic school, or intermediate district has established a partnership for the purposes of the robotics program with at least 1 sponsor, business entity, higher education institution, technical school, or individual, must submit a budget, and must provide a local in-kind or cash match from other private or local funds of at least 25% of the cost of the robotics program award.

(5) The department shall distribute the grant funding under this section for the following purposes:

(a) Grants to districts, nonpublic schools, or intermediate districts to pay for stipends not to exceed \$1,500.00 per building for coaching.

(b) Grants to districts, nonpublic schools, or intermediate districts for event registrations, materials, travel costs, and other expenses associated with the preparation for and attendance at robotics events and competitions.

(c) Grants to districts, nonpublic schools, or intermediate districts for awards to teams that advance to the next levels of competition as determined by the department. The department shall determine an equal amount per team for those teams that advance.

(6) A nonpublic school that receives a grant under this section may use the funds for either robotics or Science Olympiad programs.

(7) To be eligible to receive funds under this section, a nonpublic school must be a nonpublic school registered with the department and must meet all applicable state reporting requirements for nonpublic schools.

(8) To be eligible to receive a grant under this section, a district, nonpublic school, or intermediate district must do all of the following:

(a) If the district, nonpublic school, or intermediate district is requesting funding for more than 1 team for a building, meet the minimum requirements for team size as determined by the approved program provider.

(b) Participate in at least the minimum number of competitions as determined by the approved program provider.

(c) Participate in at least 1 in-person competition.

(9) For purposes of this section, an approved program or vendor under this section that provides a program under this section shall not work with the department to set prices or policies for the program.

(10) As used in this section, "current fiscal year" means the fiscal year for which an allocation is made under this section.

**History:** Add. 2013, Act 60, Eff. Oct. 1, 2013;—Am. 2014, Act 116, Imd. Eff. Apr. 11, 2014;—Am. 2014, Act 196, Eff. Oct. 1, 2014;—Am. 2015, Act 85, Eff. Oct. 1, 2015;—Am. 2016, Act 249, Eff. Oct. 1, 2016;—Am. 2016, Act 313, Eff. Oct. 6, 2016;—Am. 2017, Act 108, Eff. Oct. 1, 2017;—Am. 2017, Act 143, Imd. Eff. Nov. 2, 2017;—Am. 2018, Act 265, Imd. Eff. June 28, 2018;—Am. 2018, Act 586, Imd. Eff. Dec. 28, 2018;—Am. 2019, Act 58, Eff. Oct. 1, 2019;—Am. 2020, Act 146, Imd. Eff. July 31, 2020;—Am. 2020, Act 165, Eff. Oct. 1, 2020;—Am. 2021, Act 48, Eff. Oct. 1, 2021;—Am. 2022, Act 144, Eff. Oct. 1, 2022;—Am. 2023, Act 103, Eff. Oct. 1, 2023;—Am. 2024, Act 120, Eff. Oct. 1, 2024.

**Compiler's note:** Former MCL 388.1699h, which pertained to FIRST robotics competitions, was repealed by Act 137 of 2007, Imd. Eff. Nov. 8, 2007.

In subsection (1), as amended by Act 58 of 2019, the following phrase "and from the general fund appropriation in section 11, there is allocated an amount not to exceed \$300,000.00 for 2019-2020 for competitive grants to nonpublic schools" and the phrase "nonpublic schools," was vetoed by the governor on September 30, 2019.

In subsections (2) and (3)(a), (b), and (c), as amended by Act 58 of 2019, the phrase "nonpublic schools," was vetoed by the governor on September 30, 2019.

Subsections (4) and (5), as amended by Act 58 of 2019, were vetoed by the governor on September 30, 2019.