



Mentor Expectations and Code of Conduct

Overview

The success and growth of Broomfield STEM and the Broomfield Robotics Club depends on the wisdom, talent and energy of its adult mentors, and their contributions are valued and greatly appreciated.

The role of the mentor is to not only provide essential technical expertise, but to also instruct students in collaboration, teamwork, and work ethic. Mentors teach these valuable lessons both directly, and by modeling professional behavior themselves. Although building robots and winning competitions is great fun, it really is much “more than robots”.

Mentor Requirements and Expectations

Being identified as a mentor carries a variety of responsibilities. Official classification as a mentor is subject to the approval of the Broomfield STEM Board of Directors (BoD) or a designated sub-committee. There are four mentor classifications, each with specific requirements and expectations:

Technical Mentor

Requirements:

- Be a high school graduate and at least 21 years old (18 years old if a FIRST alumnus)
- Attend at least 50% of all official meetings and team specific events each month
- Update Program Mentor Availability spreadsheet regularly to ensure adequate mentor coverage at each meeting or event
- Notify Lead Mentors when you will be absent as far in advance as possible to ensure adequate mentor coverage at each meeting or event
- While attending team meetings, directly interact with two or more students in an obvious mentor-student relationship
- Complete the Broomfield STEM Adult Volunteer application process, including reference check
- Agree to this Mentor Expectations and Code of Conduct Agreement on the Volunteer Application Form
- Attend at least 75% of the Mentor Training Sessions and Planning Meetings
- Be fully registered with FIRST as a team mentor with a passed background check
- Submit a fully executed FIRST Consent & Release Agreement

- Understand, and abide by the [FIRST Mentor and Coach Training](#) and [FIRST Youth Protection Program](#)

Expectations:

- Model Gracious Professionalism at all times, and encourage students to do the same
- Foster a safe, inclusive culture where everyone can be authentic, contribute to the team, make mistakes, take (reasonable) risks, learn, and grow
- Guide students through the Engineering Design Process as they design, build, code, test, and iterate
- Collaborate with students and other mentors to address challenges and opportunities as they arise
- Observe the strengths and interests of each student and then determine next steps to help each student learn, grow, and develop new skills
- Ensure students are safely and properly using tools and equipment
- Accompany students on field trips, outreach events, and to competitions whenever work schedules allow
- Teach students time and program management, technical documentation, and presentation skills
- Assist students in applicable research and data collection, directing them towards helpful resources and tools as needed
- Provide intentional opportunities for students to develop teamwork and leadership skills
- Model and reinforce the *FIRST* Core Values of Innovation, Discovery, Inclusiveness, Teamwork, Impact and Fun

Junior Mentor

Requirements:

- Be 13 to 17 years old
- Attend at least 50% of all official meetings and team sponsored events each month
- Notify Lead Mentors when you will be absent as far in advance as possible to ensure adequate mentor coverage at each meeting or event
- While attending team meetings, directly interact with two or more students in an obvious mentor-student relationship
- Sign this Mentor Expectations and Code of Conduct Agreement
- Complete all Broomfield STEM student registration forms
- Attend all Mentor Training Sessions and Planning Meetings as appropriate
- Be fully registered with FIRST as a youth mentor
- Parent must submit a fully executed FIRST Consent & Release Agreement for student
- Understand, and abide by the [FIRST Mentor and Coach Training](#) and [FIRST Youth Protection Program](#)

Expectations:

- Model Gracious Professionalism at all times, and encourage students to do the same
- Foster a safe, inclusive culture where everyone can be authentic, contribute to the team, make mistakes, take (reasonable) risks, learn, and grow
- Guide students through the Engineering Design Process as they design, build, code, test, and iterate
- Collaborate with students and other mentors to address challenges and opportunities as they arise
- Ensure students are safely and properly using tools and equipment
- Teach students time and program management, technical documentation, and presentation skills
- Assist students in applicable research and data collection, directing them towards helpful resources and tools as needed
- Provide intentional opportunities for students to develop teamwork and leadership skills
- Model and reinforce the FIRST Core Values of Innovation, Discovery, Inclusiveness, Teamwork, Impact and Fun

Team Coordinator/Administrative Team Member

- Be a high school graduate and at least 23 years old
- Attend official meetings and team sponsored events as needed to insure smooth team operations
- Notify Lead Mentors when you will be absent as far in advance as possible to ensure adequate mentor coverage at each meeting or event
- Complete the Broomfield STEM Adult Volunteer application process, including reference check
- Sign the Mentor Expectations and Code of Conduct Agreement
- Attend all Mentor Training Sessions and Planning Meetings
- Be fully registered with FIRST as a team mentor with a passed background check
- Submit a fully executed FIRST Consent & Release Agreement
- Understand, and abide by the [FIRST Mentor and Coach Training](#) and [FIRST Youth Protection Program](#)
- Read and agree to the [FIRST Data and Privacy Protection Policy](#)

Lead Mentor

- Meet all requirements of Technical Mentor and Team Coordinator
- Attend all team and club planning meetings
- Attend at least 75% off all official meetings and team sponsored events each month
- Responsible for maintaining the build/development schedule, and mentor and student assignments
- Responsible for maintaining part and tool inventories, procuring additional items when needed

- Responsible for monitoring the team budget and notifying the Program Director and Treasurer if any line item of the budget may be exceeded
- Choose competitions for the team with consultation from other team mentors and the Program Director
- Communicate all non-routine events/plans with the Administrative team for planning assistance and approval as far in advance as possible
- Mediate any student or mentor disputes, seeking help from the Program Director when needed
- Address any conduct or safety concerns with students or mentors promptly, and quickly notify the Program Director of any ongoing problems or serious violations
- Maintain building and roster access, safeguarding both

Unless otherwise indicated, in this document the term “mentor” is used to refer to Technical Mentor, Junior Mentor, Team Coordinator, and Lead Mentors.

Gracious Professionalism

Ultimately, mentors should be guided by the practice of [Gracious Professionalism](#):

Gracious Professionalism is part of the ethos of FIRST. 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.

In the long run, Gracious Professionalism is part of pursuing a meaningful life. One can add to society and enjoy the satisfaction of knowing one has acted with integrity and sensitivity.

Rapport

One important tenet in education is that if instruction is to be effective, students must first have a connection and positive relationship with the instructor. Students must feel safe, respected and valued before they can begin to learn. It is the responsibility of the mentor to initiate and form these relationships, memorize each student’s name, find something about them that provides for common connections, greet them, and provide for their safety.

As a student-centered organization, it is a mentor's role to create leadership and learning opportunities for students. Students must be allowed to make decisions, try new things and fail, even in the context of competitions. Our goal is not to produce the best machines, but rather to produce the best students that we are able.

Culture

Mentors are both teachers and collaborators both with students and other mentors. Everyone should be treated with respect at all times. Behavior should model professional work environments, while ensuring that adult/student boundaries are not blurred.

While some professional work environments are quite negative, competitive, and often filled with coarse or obscene language; this is not the behavior mentors should model, even if it can exist in the “real world”. The goals of Broomfield STEM include building a future world the way we hope it can be, and the Broomfield STEM facility (and all locations where there are Broomfield STEM or FIRST-related events) will be open, welcoming, accepting, comforting, friendly, non-intimidating, and non-threatening. Safety is paramount at all times, and mentors must model safe behavior and ensure others do the same.

Mentor Engagement With Students

The following outlines how mentors are expected to engage and teach students:

- Foster an environment of learning and teaching by actively engaging students, and not doing the work without students or on their behalf
- Provide students developmentally appropriate assignments/opportunities with sufficient instruction and detail, including due dates where applicable, to help them be successful
- Make a concerted effort to involve students in each team-related task according to their ability
- Guide and direct students to perform tasks without “ordering” them or using a raised voice
- Refraining from building, fixing, or otherwise working on the robot **except** in the following situations:
 - Showing (i.e., teaching) one or more students how to perform the task when no students present are able to do so themselves
 - An action to be performed may not be safely performed by a student
 - After one or more students attempt to perform an action and still cannot complete the action (e.g., a part is stuck)
 - Assisting with a student-led step, such as holding a part in place while the student works. Whenever possible, encourage students to help each other.
 - Any time a threat to person or property requires immediate action or attention
- Recognize that socialization is part of what makes the team, and ultimately a STEM career, seem attractive to students. Be patient with age-appropriate “silly” behavior if it is safe and helps students form connections with each other.
- When meeting with students offsite in the context of a team-related activity, the location should be safe, public, and family-friendly (erring on the conservative side). For instance, a bowling alley or restaurant would be acceptable, while a bar or other location that primarily serves alcohol would not. Situations which could

have even the appearance of impropriety, such as inviting a student to a mentor's personal residence, are to be avoided.

- Offer appropriate physical expressions of care, which may include high fives and fist bumps, hand-holding while walking with small children, brief touching of shoulders, hands, or arms, brief hugs or pats on the back.
- Under no circumstances may mentors:
 - Provide children or youth alcohol, marijuana, drugs, cigarettes, tobacco products, e-cigarettes, vapes, or pornography;
 - Engage in illegal behavior or permit other adults or children or youth to engage in illegal behavior;
 - Engage in any sexual, romantic, illicit, or secretive relationship or conduct with any child or youth; or discuss their own sexual activities, fantasies, or their own use, or abuse of drugs or alcohol or illegal activities with children or youth

Mentor Behavior

Mentors are role models within the team and team ambassadors in the community and beyond. As such, mentors must:

- Represent the team in a positive and professional manner.
- Be a good example for appropriate student behavior.
- Treat all students fairly according to each student's abilities and needs
- Not have "favorites" when assigning work to students.
- Look for opportunities for growth in less skilled students and encourage highly skilled students to lead and teach.
- Respect others during meetings, including not talking when others are.
- Not use profanity, obscene gestures, or offensive language at any FIRST event, the Broomfield STEM facility, any Broomfield STEM event or activity, or in the presence of any student or parent.
- Not tell or share inappropriate jokes, stories or comments with students (also, do not "highlight" an inappropriate interpretation of a comment).
- Not touch a student, parent or mentor in an inappropriate way.
- Honor the commitment of parents by being welcoming, communicating frequently, honoring curfews, and releasing students on-time.
- Recognize that conflicts between mentors are inevitable and a valuable part of organization growth. Assume "positive intent" from fellow mentors and strive to respectfully resolve any conflicts that may arise, but not in the presence of students.
- Protect and respect the team's facility, tools, and equipment resources, including keeping them clean and organized.
- Be a good steward of team funds.
- Not consume alcohol or be inebriated in the presence of students.

- Not smoke, vape, or consume drugs (or be impaired by them) in the presence of students or at or in the immediate vicinity of any team-managed facility at any time.

Mentor Communication With Students

The following refers to anything related to the team (“team business”). Mentors are certainly free to communicate with students about non-team business on their own, but it is not in the context of Broomfield STEM and not in the context of a mentor/student relationship.

Mentors should communicate with students face to face only:

- During team meeting hours.
- At a Broomfield STEM facility or on site at a team-sanctioned activity.
- At competitions (including tangentially related facilities such as hotels and restaurants).
- At community service events.
- At any other team-sanctioned event.

Non-face-to-face written communication must only be via the team Slack account or team-owned email accounts between 7:00 am and 10:00 pm, and if a student initiates contact with a mentor outside the above times and/or methods, the mentor can indicate to the student that subsequent responses will come during one of the above times and/or methods. Exceptions:

- Bona fide emergencies.
- Slack/email is clearly not available.
- Time is of the essence.

Open Slack communication is encouraged, with channels and group (≥ 3 people) direct messages (DM) being the primary routes. 1:1 DMs should be minimized, but may be the appropriate route for certain communication, such as working on very specific tasks/questions or providing guidance/correction. All Slack content/data, including all communications via all channels, both public and private, and DMs, is subject to review by the Broomfield STEM Board. Mentors and participants should not assume privacy when using Broomfield STEM communication channels.

For in-person communication between mentors and students, mentors must never be one-on-one with a student in a location where other people can not make visual contact. Likewise, virtual audio and/or video communication (Zoom, phone call, etc.) must never be one-on-one between a mentor and student where they are the only two people participating. Specifically, one of the following minimum conditions must be met for the communication to occur:

- 1 student + 1 Mentor + 1 Junior Mentor
- 1 student + 1 Mentor + 1 adult
- 2 students + 1 Mentor

The above minimum conditions apply when in a vehicle, as well, unless explicit permission has been granted by the student’s parent and the Program Director.

The aforementioned in-person communication rule is for everyone's safety and protection, and violating that rule has serious consequences:

- First time: mentor issued a written warning.
- Second time: mentor is referred to the board for possible dismissal.

All data/content in communication systems managed by the team are subject to review by the Broomfield STEM Board. Example systems include, but are not limited to,

- Team Google accounts, including Gmail and Drive
- Team Slack accounts, including private channels and direct messages
- Team social media (e.g. Instagram, Twitter, Facebook) accounts, including private images
- Team forms, including written documents and online sign-ups

Student Supervision

See in-person communication guidelines above.

In addition, minimum ratios of adult to child/youth shall be in accordance with American Camp Association (ACA) guidelines as follows:

- 5 years & younger — 1 adult for each 5 overnight-participants and 1 adult for each 6 day-participants
- 6–8 years — 1:6 for overnight and 1:8 for day
- 9–14 years — 1:8 for overnight and 1:10 for day
- 15–18 years — 1:10 for overnight and 1:12 for day

If there are students from multiple age ranges present, the lower adult to student ratio should be adhered to.

Mandating Student Activities

The following are currently the only mandatory activities for a student in Broomfield Robotics:

FTC

- Sign Consent & Release Agreement
- Pay Student Dues
- Attend season kickoff and competitions

FLL

- Sign Consent & Release Agreement
- Pay Student Dues
- Attend team competitions

Early Engineers

- Sign Consent & Release Agreement
- Pay Student Dues

Any other activity that will be designated as Mandatory must:

- Be approved by the Program Director (or a Broomfield STEM board designated sub-committee)
- Be announced at least 4 weeks in advance. Additionally:
 - Include the details, including dates, if applicable.
 - Include the consequences for missing the activity. The consequences should be relevant and appropriate for the activity being missed.

Team Activities

Team members getting together can occur in a variety of manners, both in location (Broomfield STEM facility, competition venues, restaurants, etc.) and activity (training, fundraisers, community service, social events, etc.). They are considered either

- Team-related
- Team-unrelated

Team-related activity requirements

- Primarily occur at the Broomfield STEM facility
- Comply with the policies of Broomfield STEM (including this Mentor Conduct Policy)
- Not conflict with the Consent & Release Agreement or any other season-specific agreements that all participants must have already signed during the current season the activity is to occur in
- Be attended by at least two Broomfield STEM adult mentors if outside the Broomfield STEM workshop
- Activity purpose is consistent with the team's priorities and goals, and may range from working on team-related matters to participating in team-building activities
- Must not be political or religious in nature

Team-unrelated activity requirements

- No relationship to Broomfield STEM, not organized or sponsored by Broomfield STEM, and not held in a Broomfield STEM facility
- Can be advertised or announced via a Broomfield STEM official channel (email, meeting, Slack, etc.), but must not be posted on the team calendar
- Any announcement communicated via a Broomfield STEM-related channel must indicate that the event is not team-related

Security

The security of the team members, property, and the Holy Comforter/Broomfield STEM facility is imperative, and mentors are expected to:

- Consent to periodic background checks.
- Not let anyone borrow or otherwise use their personal key to access Holy Comforter/Broomfield STEM facility.
- Immediately notify the Program Director if a key is lost.
- Ensure all Holy Comforter/Broomfield STEM facility entrances are closed/locked and all non-automatic lights are turned off if you are the last mentor to leave.
- Not wedge or prop open any external doors at Holy Comforter/Broomfield STEM facility.
- Let at least one other mentor know when leaving the Broomfield STEM facility.

Transporting Students in Mentor Vehicles

Mentors may transport students in personal vehicles if a student's attendance at a team event would not be possible without mentor transportation. Parents should be encouraged or required to transport their students whenever possible. If transporting students, mentors must:

- Be completely sober and not under the influence of alcohol, drugs, marijuana, or any prescription or over the counter medication that might impair their ability to operate a motor vehicle safely. If you are unsure if you can safely drive, please err on the side of caution and ask someone else to transport you and the students.
- Keep their vehicle in safe working condition, which includes enough properly functioning seat belts for each student being transported. Under no circumstances may a student ride in a vehicle without wearing a seat belt.
- Require that students under the age of 13 are seated in the backseat, and are secured in a proper car seat or booster seat as required by Colorado law.
- Maintain adequate and current auto insurance, vehicle registration and driver's license.
- Transport students directly from one site to another, making only necessary stops along the way. (i.e. pick up students, get gas, take a restroom break) Mentors should refrain from making personal stops with students in the vehicle unless permission has been given by the parents, or approval has been given by the Program Director

The above Mentor Conduct Policy describes what is expected of a mentor for Broomfield STEM. By signing below, you are agreeing to abide by the policy described herein.

Signature

Date

Printed Name