



# 2021/22 Travel Handbook

# WildStang Robotics Program

## Competition Season

Traveling with the program to competitions is a very exciting and rewarding experience. It is often the highlight of a student's time with the program. A great deal of planning and organization is required to coordinate travel, lodging and all the associated activities. A strong effort is made to make travel an educational/cultural experience along with a competition experience. Safety of the students is always the top priority of the Teachers, Coaches and Mentors.

The teams in the program typically travel to two FRC events:

- One local qualifying event
- One travel qualifying event

Team 111, WildStang, competes at both the Local and Travel event. Team 112, Plus One, travels to both events, and competes at the Local event.

If either team qualifies to advance to compete at the FRC World Championship, both teams will travel to this event.

All WildStang Robotics Program members are required to attend the local qualifying event. All students are eligible (based on meeting the criteria below) to travel to the travel qualifying event and if either team advances, the World Championship.

### **Travel Team Positions**

The Travel team consists of 3 major subteams for both teams 111 & 112: Drive Team, Pit Crew and Support Team. Members of these three sub teams are required to attend all competition days (including set up days) for all competitions attended by the team.

Responsibilities of these subteams include:

- Drive Team
  - Separate Team for teams 111 and 112
  - Drive and Manipulate the robot
  - Work with the strategy team to develop and execute the team strategy in every match.
    - Consists of Driver, Backup Driver, Manipulator, Back Up Manipulator, Human Player(s) & Backup Human Player(s)
- Pit Crew
  - Separate Team for teams 111 and 112
  - Maintains robot to ensure best working condition for every match.
    - Has members from mechanical, electrical & software subteams

- Pit crew size determination is made each year based on robot design, team size and FIRST pit guidelines.
- Support Team
  - Support team members work with both teams 111 & 112
  - The Support team includes Strategy, Scouting, Media, Communications & Spirit.
  - Students from all sub teams are assigned to one (or more) of the support team categories.

Travel Team members may be asked to fill positions on multiple subteams. For example, Drive Team Members may also be assigned a position on the Support Team, or Pit Crew Members may also be asked to do Scouting.

Drive Team is one of the most visible and high profile positions on the team. Drive team positions are filled through tryouts held in the late fall/early winter. More information on Drive Team Selection can be found in the “Drive Team Selection and Criteria” section of this document.

## **Travel Team**

Early in the build season, parents are asked to complete a survey, detailing their child's availability & willingness to travel with the team, for each of the 3 competitions. The costs vary year to year, however, range in cost from \$125 for the Travel Qualifying Event to \$400-430 for the FRC Championship Event, if either team qualifies. These fees cover the cost of overnight hotel accommodations and some meals, typically breakfast & most dinners. Students should bring cash for any meals not included and incidentals, such as souvenirs and snacks.

### **Travel Team Eligibility**

Members must maintain academic eligibility per school policy. To remain academically eligible for the travel team, a student must be passing all of their classes with a grade of 'C' or better.

Build Season attendance - Students must participate in a minimum of 6 hours per week in build season activities (not including Monday class times) and meet travel requirements from Semester 1 (academics, outreach hours, attendance).

Typically, students must participate in a minimum of one WildStang outreach event during the Fall semester. This requirement has been waived for 2021-22.

Fall Attendance - cannot exceed more than 3 unexcused absences during the Fall semester.

WildStang WRSA student fee - must be paid in full prior to FRC Kickoff.

### Forms/Paperwork

Students travelling will miss multiple days of school and are required to complete a school field trip form for all competition dates. In order to travel, each WildStang team member must have completed medical, indemnification release, and all FIRST consent forms on record with the team. These forms are duplicated and taken by the lead teacher to all events.

### Hotel Accommodations

All hotel room assignments are made by the teachers. There is no switching of rooms without a teacher's consent. Students are organized into room groups of one student per bed. There are no co-ed rooms. Under no circumstances are students of the opposite sex allowed in each others room for any reason. Each room is assigned a chaperone(s) to monitor and coordinate activities, including room inspections.

Prior to final day check out, all student rooms are inspected by the teachers/chaperones. Before inspection, the room should be picked up; towels, sheets, and/or bed linens piled on the floor is unacceptable. Anything broken or missing will be paid for by the students in the room. Any room damage will be reported to the school deans and the students parents.

### Health

Students taking any medications while traveling need to provide the medicine to the lead teacher prior to departure. The teacher is responsible for distributing as directed.

It is important that a student does not travel if they are ill.

### Chaperones/Mentors

While the program is on trips, chaperones are responsible for the students. Misbehavior towards any of these adults will result in district outlined consequences.

If a student has any concerns with the activities of an adult or their behavior toward themselves or others, the student should talk to one of the coaches/teachers first. If the situation is not resolved, the next step is talking to the school administration.

On a yearly basis, all adult mentors and volunteers associated with the WildStang team and who help for more than one day must meet with the teachers to review guidelines for working with and interacting with students. All mentors and chaperones are asked to sign a form indicating acknowledgement and understanding of the guidelines.

### Team Uniform

Students are to wear their competition t-shirt and dark blue jeans every day of competition. On non-competition days, students can wear previous years' team issued shirts. . No leggings, sweat, joggers or jeans with holes.

### Team Member Role

Students **must** be in groups at all times while traveling. All students practice a buddy system and are not to roam anywhere individually.

Students are to communicate with chaperones their whereabouts if they are not assigned to pits, drive team or scouting responsibilities.

It is the students' responsibility to know when the teams' matches are throughout each day and be in the stands to cheer on the WildStang Robotics Program Teams.

Throughout competition days, students are expected to become familiar with other teams by watching other practice matches, talking with other teams and trading team spirit wear, while always displaying **FIRST** Core Values.

### Parent Role

Parents are an integral part of our program and are very important to our continued success. Parents are also a key factor in the motivation and dedication of their student. Supporting their son/daughter in all aspects of their team involvement is key to a student getting the most out of the program.

Parents have several responsibilities.

- The teams often depart for a competition very early in the morning to facilitate transportation. Parents are expected to provide timely transportation ensuring their student is at the required travel events on time and ready to participate. Transportation is not delayed due to late students.
- Upon return from an event, parents are expected to provide transportation at the designated arrival time. Late pick ups cause an inconvenience to all involved.
- Parents are expected to provide accurate medical information and to keep teachers informed of all changes.

Parents are welcome and encouraged to join WildStang on trips. Parents pay their own travel expenses and are on their own for much of the trip. When possible the team may offer any additional hotel rooms at the team hotel on a first come, pay on own basis.

## **Competitions Attended**

For the 2022 Rapid React season, Wildstang Robotics Program teams are attending:

- Travel Event - Central Illinois Regional - Wednesday, March 16th - Saturday, March 19th, Peoria, Illinois
- Local Event - Midwest Regional - Friday, April 8th - Saturday, April 9th, Chicago, Illinois
- *If team(s) qualify to advance: FIRST Championship (Houston) - Wednesday, April 29th - Sunday, May 3rd*
- Rock River Off Season Tournament - July 2022

### **Regional Competitions**

A regional event may be close or a distance away. The program always attends the Midwest Regional and one additional Regional tournament. Which additional Regional event is attended is dependent upon location and timing of the events. Regional set up and practice takes place on Wednesday-Thursday and competition is Friday and Saturday.

### **FRC Champions Competitions**

The Championship (national) event is similar to a Regional event in many ways but on a larger scale. There are teams from all over the United States and the world competing at all four levels of *FIRST*® programs. Attendance at Championship is earned by winning a Regional qualifying event or having been awarded an automatic invitation as a recent Hall of Fame team. Champions set up and practice takes place on Wednesday, with competitions on Thursday, Friday and Saturday.

### **Off Season Competitions**

The team typically participates in one off season event during the summer. All team members are eligible to attend this competition. Off season events are typically one day only.

## **Competition Daily Schedule - What to Expect**

### **Regional Events**

Most Regional events follow a set pattern:

### **Wednesday**

Except for the Midwest Regional, this is our travel day. The team meets at and leaves from Forest View Educational Center in the afternoon. Some evening activities may be planned depending on the location and time of arrival.

### **Thursday**

The drive teams and the pit crews arrive at the event to set up the pits, unpack the robot and start the robot inspection process. The rest of the team should secure a location in the stands where the team can sit as a full group.

Usually the robot will practice 2-3 times during the afternoon. Practice sessions typically end around 5:00 PM. The drive team and the pit crew may be required to stay and work on the robot until the pit closes, which may be an hour or two later.

WildStang eats dinner as a team. There is an all teams meeting every evening. Curfew is typically at 10:00 or at a chaperone-agreed upon time. After curfew, nobody is to be out of their room for any reason.

### **Friday**

After breakfast, the entire team arrives at the competition as soon as the venue is open, typically 8:00 A.M. The teams secure seats for the entire team in the stands. All students are to be present at the teams' seating location for each match. After the last seeding match is done for the day the team will leave for dinner. The pit crew may have to stay until the pit closes. The team meeting at the end of the evening will take place and there will be an agreed upon curfew. After curfew, nobody is out of their room for any reason.

### **Saturday**

Pits open at 8:00 AM. Upon entering, the teams locate seating in the stands. Opening ceremonies start at 9:00 AM. Qualifying matches continue during the morning. Alliance selections start around noon followed by a one hour break before the final elimination rounds. The format of the finals varies from year to year.

At the conclusion of the final matches, the final award ceremony takes place. At the conclusion, the pit crew and drive team pack up the robot for transporting. This is usually around 6:00 PM. In the event WildStang is not in the finals the robot will be packed earlier. All team members help as needed and ensure no personal or team items are left behind (from pits or stands). WildStang Robotics Program students always stay through the award ceremony and departs for home following the conclusion of the competition.

## FRC CHAMPIONSHIPS

The National event is similar to a Regional event in many ways but on a larger scale. Teams from all over the United States and the world participate.

### **Tuesday evening or Wednesday**

Travel day/time is determined based on when Pits open on Wednesday (morning or afternoon). Depending on hotel proximity to the competition venue luggage may be unloaded at the hotel before the team arrives at the competition venue. Team meetings will be held at the hotel after check-in at a predetermined time.

The pit crew and driver teams set up the pit and prepare the robot for inspection. Scouting, button/t-shirt trading, pictures and video, and other specific events occur throughout the day. Teams will have several practice matches spread out during the day. All team members are expected to be at the practice rounds and stay with the team until released by the chaperones.

If the practice rounds finish early enough students will be released to go to local activities. All team members will be required to be back at the hotel at the predetermined time. There will be a team meeting in the evening at a specific time and location. The day's events and a preview the next day will take place.

### **Thursday/Friday - Competition Days**

The day starts with team breakfast and then traveling to the venue to secure seating for the opening ceremony in the main arena. The seeding matches follow opening ceremonies and last all day long. All team members are expected to know when team matches are and be present in the stands. All team members are assigned scouting times at competition.

On competition days judges make their rounds to visit with each team. All team members (whether in the pits or stands) need to be on their best, most gracious behavior. This is the last opportunity to showcase and share all the great things the team has done throughout the year.

The team will travel back to the hotel as a group each day. There will be a team meeting at a specified time and location as well as a group dinner.

### **Saturday**

After breakfast as a group, the team proceeds to the competition as soon as the pits open. Opening ceremony is at 8:00 AM. All team members sit together as a team. Divisional awards and alliance selections take place all morning into early afternoon. Finals are held in the afternoon.



Throughout the finals, closing ceremonies and awards occur, lasting 1 ½ -2 hours. The team sits together for the duration of the finals/ceremonies.

The team will travel back to the hotel at a predetermined time. There will be a team meeting at a specified location and time.

### **Sunday**

Check out and travel home. Times may vary, and the team will arrive back at Forest View Educational Center in the afternoon.

## **Behavior at Competitions**

There are certain practices found to be very successful and have earned WildStang Robotics Program the respect of the *FIRST*® community.

### **Cheering**

Cheering is more than yelling at the top of your lungs. True cheering is enjoying the event and celebrating the excitement of the moment. Organization is the key to this being a powerful tool. Travel team members are expected to cheer for all team matches and their alliance partners. Sitting in the stands looking bored, carrying on personal conversations while others are cheering is not good for the team image and is not permitted. During the Awards ceremony all students applaud all the teams winning awards.

### **Clean Up**

If you see a mess (paper or trash) make an effort to pick it up whether around the arena or in the area where you are sitting.

### **Things WildStang Robotics Program Students Do Not Do At An Event:**

- Wearing of personal music devices while in uniform or at an event.
- Playing games (handheld or laptop) during competitions. Get up and talk to other teams.
- Playing cards or other games at an event.
- Engaging in negative behavior toward another team, team member, mentor or volunteer.
- Displaying displeasure over any decision by a referee or judge.

## **Drive Team Selection Criteria and Procedure**

FRC drive teams typically consist of 4-5 team members(game dependent) who operate the robot and execute gameplay strategies during matches at competitions. A mentor or teacher will fill the role of drive coach, with the remaining 3-4 positions being held by students of the team. These members have a measurable impact on an FRC team's success at competitions.

The dedication and involvement required is significant, and these positions should be respected and viewed as an honor to those who are chosen. Consider these positions equal to being chosen as the starting quarterback for the football team.

As such, the selection of these members is a challenging endeavor for all teams.

This document outlines the criteria against which WildStang will select drive team members for the FRC season.

### Drive Team Selection Criteria

In order of importance:

#### **1 - Academic Eligibility**

- Must maintain academic eligibility throughout the build and competition season
- School first, robotics second

#### **2 - Maturity**

- Must be responsible and reliable
- Team-oriented mindset
  - If you can't handle NOT being on drive team, then you shouldn't be on drive team.

#### **3 - Respectful & Cooperative**

- Must respect the competition and the teams you are competing with and against
- Must cooperate with co-driver, coaches, mentors, pit-crew and Strategy team
- Must coordinate effectively with the co-driver and coach, no second guessing

#### **4 - Communication Ability**

- Must be able to listen, comprehend and obey instructions from mentors, coaches, and other drive team members
- Can effectively communicate robot issues and malfunctions in a clear and concise manner to pit crew, drive team and strategy members

#### **5 - Humble & Accommodating**

- Receptive to constructive criticism, open to coaching and development
- Humble and gracious in their role
- Can adapt rapidly to changes in strategy, robot design, and gameplay

#### **6 - Dedication, Availability and Work Ethic**

- Willingness and availability to practice 4-6 days per week, 2-3 hours per day.
  - 9-week period between bag day and championships, excluding school holidays.
- Must attend all 10 competition days

- Desire for being better

## **7 - Competition Experience**

- Previous years driving in FRC, FTC, VEX, and/or BattleBots
- Time spent in front of large crowds, under pressure, with a team relying on you
  - Varsity sports, speech & debate, scholastic bowl participation are all considered pluses
- Understanding of WildStang's AND other teams' performance, capabilities, and strategies
- Understanding of the interpretations, definitions, and limits of the game rules.

## **8 - Skill & Motivation**

- Excellent hand-eye coordination
- Understanding of physics and spatial relations
- Intuition and Instinct
- Self-motivated

## **9 - Robot Maintenance Ability**

- While the drive team has doubled as additional pit crew members in the past, this is not a major requirement for the available positions.

## Available Positions

This changes year to year, but drive team roles available typically consist of the following:

- **Driver**
  - Responsible for getting the robot around the field, and occasionally other subsystems such as game piece intakes
- **Manipulator**
  - Controls every mechanism on the robot (except drive train), game piece systems
- **Human Player 1**
  - FRC games often involve an element of direct human-robot interaction. This is our team's human.
- **Human Player 2 (Depending on game)**
  - Same as Human Player 1, but FRC games are not guaranteed to have 2 human players

A second drive team is also created out of the runners-up for these positions. These students are the backup-drive team, and will fill in for primary drive team members in times of illness or if a primary team member is removed from their position by the mentor/teacher panel.