
RE: Texas Cup Cancellation Announcement

Lucia Sevcik (FRC) <lucia.sevcik@firstintexas.org>
To: "Lucia Sevcik (FRC)" <lucia.sevcik@firstintexas.org>
Cc: "Juan Salinas (Ops)" <juan.salinas@firstintexas.org>

Wed, Jun 29, 2022 at 2:03 PM

Good morning *FIRST*® in Texas teams –

Over the last two years, ***FIRST*® in Texas** has been working hard to reach more teams in more communities across the state and provide those teams with more opportunities to participate in *FIRST*® programs at a lower cost - all while recovering from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. Off-season events are an important part of those efforts, as we aim to provide teams with a year-round experience.

After a highly successful 2021/2022 competition season in which we delivered more than 140 events in 25 cities across the state (with greater than 90% participant satisfaction based on survey responses – our highest ever!), we worked with select teams and delivery partners to put together a plan to ensure there would be opportunities for *FIRST*® Robotics Competition, *FIRST*® Tech Challenge, and *FIRST*® LEGO League teams to keep the momentum going through off-season events in select metro areas of the State. We completed our first off-season event for *FIRST*® Tech Challenge in May – Buc Days in Corpus Christi and have another exciting event coming up in August. In addition to planning support for smaller *FIRST*® Robotics Competition events in Houston (TRI) and Dallas (NTX), the Texas Cup was an important part of our off-season strategy in that it provided a large event that brought together teams from all three programs.

However, as the spring and summer progressed, we heard from more and more teams that the ever-increasing cost of transportation, accommodation, and other travel-related expenses was making it more difficult for them to participate in off-season events. We did our best to help teams defray these costs by reducing event registration fees for the Texas Cup by more than 60% from the year prior. However, despite these efforts we have seen a steep decline in the number of teams prepared to commit to participating in off-season events this year.

As a result, ***FIRST*® in Texas** is cancelling the Texas Cup 2022 event scheduled for August. We will, of course, be issuing full refunds to teams that have already paid. Instead, we will shift our focus to supporting local partners deliver smaller, program-specific events in the Summer and Fall.

The Texas Cup will remain a key element in our strategy to make *FIRST*® robotics programs a year-round experience for Texas teams and we are committed to finding new and creative ways to make it more accessible to more teams. To that end, we look forward to seeing all of our teams join us at the 2023 Texas Cup!

In closing, please know that we are actively listening to your feedback and continuously looking to improve the quality and frequency of the events we produce, as well as find new ways for students to engage in high-quality STEM education outside of events. As we get closer to the start of the season, please remember to follow us on social media, join our official ***FIRST*® in Texas** official Slack server and check our website often for event / grant and training information in the coming months.

We build stronger in Texas together!

Jason Arms, Executive Director
FIRST in Texas

512.720.5545 Office
726.582.4002 Mobile