Getting Started?

There is some work to be done but don’t worry – FIRST has great resources thanks to the folks who have already completed the process. Let’s get started…

**Step 1:**

- Assign your team a faculty advisor; i.e., someone willing to support the efforts of the team in pursuit of varsity lettering recognition;
- Schedule a meeting with your high school administrator(s) to request support and approval and let others at your school know of your efforts; i.e., faculty and staff;
- Contact your State’s High School Interscholastic League to review current rules/eligibility requirements: [https://www.nfhs.org/resources/state-association-listing](https://www.nfhs.org/resources/state-association-listing)
- Create a team-generated, formal:
  - Code of Conduct; and
  - Team Handbook;

*Note:* Apply the same rules to your FIRST Team’s eligibility requirements and Code of Conduct as those outlined for your school’s current Varsity (lettered) Sports/Activities. Directory can be found on your state’s website.

- Present your program to the school PTA and the School Board to gather additional support.

**Ok, what’s next……?**
Step 2:

- Gather and assemble program information and metrics (information may be available via FIRST HQ and/or your state Regional Directors) including:
  - # of students
  - Demographics
  - Success metrics (college-going rates, etc...)
  - Program costs (a minimum costs overview is recommended)

- Identify and engage FIRST champions in your state; for example:
  - Elected officials, board members, business partners, event sponsors, Regional Directors, Coaches and Mentors;
    - Let them know what the call to action is;
    - Is it active (for example; make phone calls to elected officials, etc...) or
    - Is it passive (for example; attend meetings when needed, etc...)

- Develop key collateral (written material) highlighting the impact of FIRST in your state:
  - Talking points - public-ready statements that could be leveraged in a news release, speech, etc...
  - One-page of key bullet points or a brochure; PowerPoint presentation (if warranted);

- Engage FIRST membership statewide;
  - Provide regular progress updates via email to keep momentum;
  - Consider sharing relevant resources, etc...;
  - Leverage regional events to foster support and positive conversation

- Connect with your state’s scholastic governing body and key leadership;
  - Identify their planning cycle and key milestones/deadlines to coordinate deliverables and check-in opportunities as applicable;

- Ensure regular communication between FIRST champions and the scholastic governing body;
  - Share collateral with them as needed;
  - E-mail and phone communication should be leveraged by multiple FIRST champions;

- Consider media opportunities to highlight FIRST impact; for example,
  - Regional events;
  - Off season events;
  - Student/team appearances at national tradeshows; and
  - Student success stories.