



Cyber Blue – FRC 234

Business Plan and Team Sustainability Plan

“Triple Bottom Line”

People, Prosperity, Planet

2025-2026 Season

October 2025

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1. INTRODUCTION:

Cyber Blue, the *FIRST* Robotics Team from Perry Meridian High School, began our *FIRST* journey in late 1998, with the first competition season in 1999 with the game “*FIRST* Double Trouble”.

Since that start, the team has impacted hundreds of student team members, our local community and the global *FIRST* community. The team has received multiple Chairman’s and Impact awards, plus other robot attribute and team attribute awards and event wins. The team has traveled to several regional and championship locations, further enhancing the experience of team members.

In the mid-2000’s, we began to develop formal Business Plans and developed a Team Continuity Plan where we identified risks to the program and mitigation actions to reduce the likelihood and/or impact of those risks. These documents and presentations about them have been openly shared across the *FIRST* community, providing a solid starting point for many *FIRST* Teams.

This 2025-2026 document is a major revision, reflecting changes to the team and the *FIRST* landscape.

We are embracing the “triple bottom line” philosophy as a team and have incorporated this into this update.

2. MISSION STATEMENT

Cyber Blue’s mission is to cultivate interest, understanding, and skill in the fields of engineering and technology. We seek to encourage creativity of thought, perseverance in the face of obstacles, and cooperation and compromise as individuals who are part of a team. We seek to develop life skills in students through team membership, community outreach, public speaking, critical thinking, and unique experiences. We operate like a small business and encourage full participation of all students in every aspect of the team.

Such a mission is never fully accomplished – the accomplishment is in the actions and plans that the team undertakes to move closer to accomplishment. Our **Business Plan** and **Team Sustainability Plan** is a living document that defines and guides our actions to achieve our mission in an ever-changing environment and helps ensure our viability in the future.

3. PEOPLE INITIATIVES

Cyber Blue is focused on developing technical, business, community and life skills for our students and mentors. This is accomplished in multiple ways:

- A. Recruitment – Students are recruited through multiple events at the school, including club nights and back to school nights. The team hosts information sessions and open house events at the beginning of the school year.
- B. Pipeline – Cyber Blue supports several initiatives at the elementary school level, where students are first introduced to robotics and STEM fields. This support includes demo events and support of competitions.
- C. Pipeline – Cyber Blue students are mentors of our middle school FTC team, providing guidance to those students as they design, build and compete. A significant portion of the FTC students become members of Cyber Blue when they reach high school.
- D. Membership – Students must apply, create a resume, and complete an interview as part of the team membership process. Returning students have this same requirement, with the expectation that the resume continues to grow from year to year and the students continue to develop their interviewing skills. Multiple alumni have shared the value of this process as they graduated and entered the workforce.
- E. Training – Student training is a mix of mentor based and student to student, depending on the skills of the returning students. Students receive training on machines and safe operations, programming, CAD and 3D printing, design, website, writing and speaking.
- F. Training – Lead mentors complete mandatory training from the school and from *FIRST*. For 2026, the goal is for 100% of team mentors to complete the *FIRST* “Mentor Ready” training.
- G. Training – in 2025, Cyber Blue funded formal First Aid / CPR training certification for any interested students and mentors. 4 Students and 1 mentor completed this training. (The team made “CPR Trained” buttons and gave them to teams at competitions, so that any mentors or students who were trained could be easily identified.)
- H. Retention – Student retention is a key focus of the team. Students are encouraged to participate in multiple functional areas and are given significant freedom in those areas while they develop skills and learn. The team continues to meet at a lower level through the summer and fall to help maintain interest and provide opportunities for students at special events.
- I. Retention – The financial impact of team membership can be a significant burden to some students and families. The team works to maintain a low, all-inclusive fee

through cost management, grants, sponsors and special fund raising events. We will work with students to address financial constraints so they can be a part of the team.

- J. Retention – Mentor retention is critical for the long term sustainability of FIRST Teams. Mentors are encouraged to find their place on the team where they can learn, teach and have an impact. Multiple mentors allow for flexible schedules. The team works to minimize the financial costs to mentors.
- K. Retention and Recruiting – Cyber Blue has a mix of long term mentors (20+ years) and newer mentors. Two mentors are FIRST alumni (one from Cyber Blue). The team has added 3 new mentors in the last 2 years.

4. STUDENT SAFETY

Student safety is a priority for the team and the school. In addition to machine and shop safety, the team has implemented several other actions.

- A. School Code of Conduct - is in effect for all team related activities, in and out of the school.
- B. Travel Guidelines – Specific travel rules are in place and signed by the student and their parent. These rules include group sizes, access to hotel rooms and other personal safety measures.
- C. Special Code – The team has a special code, that any student can use at any time to indicate an uncomfortable or unsafe situation. Team members and leaders will respond immediately.
- D. Communications – All team communication is through public channels of a chat tool. If a student needs to contact a mentor, or a mentor needs to contact a students, these communications must include 2 mentors at a minimum.
- E. Meeting spaces – There are no 1:1 mentor / student meetings unless they are in an open space where they can be seen, but possibly not heard.

5. PROSPERITY INITIATIVES

Since beginning in 1998, Cyber Blue has maintained strong financial management practices to create a balance between current and future needs and financial resources. Over the course of the team's existence, there has been a continuing evolution as the financial environment has changed.

- A. Budgeting – Each fall, a team budget is developed, starting with the actual expenses and income from the previous year. This budget includes:
 - a. Income from student fees, sponsors, grants and fundraising
 - b. Expenses for the robot build, tools and machines
 - c. Expenses for travel and travel related expenses
 - d. Expenses for team gear (t-shirts, jackets)
- B. Budgeting – The budget is built with a target of a positive end of year balance of \$5000. This is an outcome of our Risk planning, and would allow the team to register for one more year in the unlikely, but possible, event that all sponsors and grants were lost.
- C. Budgeting – The budget is tracked as the fall and season activities continue. The team leader responsible for the budget remains in close contact with the school treasurer to confirm expenses and account balances (all funds flow through the school treasurer and financial systems).
- D. Grants – The team works to apply for and receive grants from multiple sources, including supporting school district wide grant applications from the Indiana DOE and other sources. Once received, we assure that the funds are used as intended and reporting requirements are met. Recent grants have included Bayer, HAAS Foundation, FIRST Indiana Robotics, and INMaC.
- E. Sponsorship – The team has been successful in obtaining materials sponsorships from specific FIRST providers. These sponsorships are application based and have included REV robotics and West Coast Products. We have maintained a strong materials sponsorship with RULAND for several years, which provides us with high quality clamps, bushings and adapters.
- F. Sponsorship – The team has maintained long term financial sponsorship with Allison Transmission. A team mentor is working closely with Rolls-Royce to re-establish their sponsorship of multiple teams and FIRST Indiana Robotics.
- G. Sponsorship - The team has created an information flyer which is used to recruit new sponsors. In the past two years, this has resulted in a significant materials donation from one company and a significant financial donation from another.
- H. Risk – Financial risk is managed by the creation of a historical based budget that has flexibility in case of changes to revenue of expenses.
- I. Risk – Financial risk is also managed by the utilization of the school treasurer and school financial standards. All money flows through a special account within the school accounts. All expenses are paid by PO or school credit card for tracking. Expenses are approved by the school principal for appropriateness and large expenditures are approved in advance.

- J. Risk – Grant funds may require special tracking and reporting. Where necessary, these grants are managed through a specific office in the school system that places all orders and tracks that spending is in line with the grant requirements.
- K. Fundraising – The primary fundraiser for the team is an off-season event, the IRI. Cyber Blue is one of three “host teams” for this event and receives a donation once all expenses are covered. (Note: A charity auction and other community fundraising activity is completely separated from event finances.)
- L. Fundraising – The team has held “dining for dollars” and other type of events. In 2025, the team added a work day for the Indianapolis 500, working to rent and then collect seat backs (cushions). Funds raised from this optional work day were split between the team and students who worked, to help reduce their membership fee.

6. INVENTORY MANAGEMENT

Inventory management is a key part of our financial planning. Inventory awareness and strategic purchasing have shown significant benefits to the team.

- A. Inventory – Tracking of high value parts and materials improves availability, avoids wasted purchases and can guide the design teams to design to materials readily available. The inventory is tracked for items such as motors, gearboxes, structure hardware, bearings and collars.
- B. Inventory – Purchases of high-probability of use and high use items are purchased during the off-season and in larger quantities. By doing this, availability is usually better, and shipping costs can be reduced with a larger volume and no need for expediting.
- C. Tools – The team identifies small tool needs (drills and drill bits, drivers, wrenches, etc.) during the fall, and makes those purchases during the major holiday sales in December.

7. MEETING SPACE / SCHOOL SUPPORT

Cyber Blue receives a high level of support from our school and school district. This includes our build space, transportation and coach stipends. We recognize this level of support is important and not afforded to many teams. To acknowledge this and maintain this support, we take several actions.

- A. Follow Building Rules – We follow all building rules for access times, door use and safety.

- B. Location – Students stay in the Robotic Room or PLTW classroom during all meeting times.
- C. Safety – We maintain an environment for physical, emotional and personal safety.

8. PLANET INITIATIVES

Cyber Blue undertakes several measures to minimize the impact on the environment and improve it. Many initiatives provide multiple benefits. These initiatives support the environment and provide financial benefits to the team, improving team sustainability.

- A. Purchasing – By working to place fewer, larger orders, packaging is reduced and fewer deliveries are required.
- B. Purchasing – By having most deliveries made to the school, which is a regular stop for FEDEX and UPS, special deliveries to other locations are avoided.
- C. Recycle – All packaging materials are recycled through the school recycling program.
- D. Recycle – Aluminum and steel scraps and parts from old robots are recycled through a local recycling center. This also provides a small financial benefit to the team.
- E. Recycle – All batteries are given to a facility for recycling. Some of these facilities are also employers of people in recovery, providing a financial benefit to those people through their work.
- F. Power use – Most of the room lights in our meeting space are action activated, allowing for auto-shut off when everyone leaves.
- G. Power use – At the end of meetings, machines, computers and lights are turned off to conserve energy.
- H. Reuse – Many items that can't be easily recycled are placed in a special location outside the school where they are collected for re-use (chairs, wood materials, aluminum or steel structures).
- I. Reuse – Many robot parts can be saved and reused in the following year for prototypes or the competitive robot. These parts are removed and labeled with the year and use so they can be reused.

9. SUMMARY

Since 1998, Cyber Blue has been through multiple challenges when there were changes to mentors, teachers and school administrations. The team has managed through seasons with 10 students and 45 students and faced challenges with the loss of major sponsors

and the cancellation of our major fundraising event for two years during COVID. Solid financial management, a great relationship and support from the school, and a solid mentor base has allowed the team to persevere and even thrive through these changes.

10. SAMPLE BUDGET FORMAT

Below is an example from our Budget Template, identifying the categories for potential use.

Cyber Blue Budget / Plan for 2026 Comp Season			
	Value		Value
Total Income - Funds			
Total Income - Vouchers / Credits			
Total Robot and Entry Expense			
Total Travel and Team Expense			
Balance			
Target Ending	\$5,000		
Income and Cash		Expenses	
Current Balance		Initial Entry Fee	
Sponsor 1		Entry Fee - Regional	
Sponsor 2		Entry Fee - IN CHP	
Student Fees (15x250)		Robot Misc Hardware (McMaster, Etc.)	
Initial Grant		Basic Robot Build	
State CHP Grant		Tools, Other Materials	
DOE / Perry Schools Material Grant (REMAIN)		Robot Materials On Hand	
Banquet - Parent Pay		Welding Gas	
		Boiler Battle	
		Field Elements	
		Scholarship	
Total Funds		Total Robot and Entry	
Sponsor / Supplier Credits		Travel and Team	
AM - KOP Chassis Opt-Out		Team Lunch - Saturdays	
AM - KOP Box 2 Opt-Out			
Rev - KOP Box 2 Opt-Out		Bus - District	
Rev - All Teams Sponsor		Hotel - District	
Team XX Sponsor		Meal - One Team Meal at Event	
Team XX Sponsor		Bus - District 2	
Total In-Kind		Hotel - District 2	
		Bus - IN CHP	
		Hotel - IN CHP	
		Meal - One Team Meal at Event	
		Misc - Mentor Fuel for Travel	
		Shirts - Team Competition	
		Team Special	
		Banquet	
		Total Travel and Team	
Total Funds and In-Kind	\$0	Total Expenses	

11. RESULTS OF TEAM RISK MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION

This section will be updated following our fall 2025 Risk Review.