Chairman's Questions
Due: February 8, 2018
Reference this for Definitions:
https://www.firstinspires.org/sites/default/files/uploads/resource_library/frc/game-and-season-info/awards/2017/chairmans-definitions.pdf

1. Briefly describe the impact of the FIRST program on team participants with special emphasis on the current season and the preceding 2-5 years. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

   Team 203 creates leaders. We motivate our members to explore opportunities in fields of science, technology, engineering, art, and math through FIRST in hopes of inspiring our students to find their passion in STEAM. Our team provides after-school workshops where students can gain hands on experiences, training sessions, and self-confidence. We are proud to have many successful alumni, many of which graduate and go on to further their education, pursue a military career, or join the workforce.

2. Describe the impact of the FIRST program on your community with special emphasis on the current season and the preceding two to five years. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

   Since 2014, we have hosted middle school summer camps and workshops for students to learn about STEAM and real life skills. Student members and mentors present at schools, statewide conferences, and community events to spread the word of STEAM. Our team puts emphasis on closing the gap for women in technical fields by partnering with the local Girl Scouts Councils. These ongoing activities, relationships and partnerships demonstrate how FIRST can influence future generations.

3. Team's innovative or creative method to spread the FIRST message. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

   We host events engaging thousands each year including: Our Summer Camp teaching students STEAM skills through a friendly robotics competition. Our team provides scholarships for disadvantaged students to participate in the camp. We engage Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts in STEAM activities by hosting workshops for them to earn badges. Our Tech Challenge excites students with a STEAM competition each year from flying hot dogs to STEAM Wars. We represent FIRST at the statewide School Boards Conference.

4. Describe examples of how your team members act as role models and inspire other FIRST team members to emulate. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

   The team is engaged twelve months a year with a program of continuous development and peer mentoring. Each summer weekly clinics are held to provide ongoing

development of skills needed for FIRST success. Also, during the school year daily training sessions are held and led by upperclassmen to assist in prototyping and off-season competition participation. During the FRC season, the team deploys a project management system led by students and encourages the development of team leaders.

5. Describe the team's initiatives to help start or form other FRC teams. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

   Since 2015, we have represented FIRST/MAR, at the annual statewide NJ School Boards Conference in Atlantic City. At this event, we engage nearly 10,000 school board members and administrators on the exhibit floor with our mentors, students, and robots as the feature STEAM exhibit. As a result, 3 of the 5 new MAR FRC teams: Team 6921, Team 7024, and Team 7110 were started this year who we continue to assist and mentor. We also conduct numerous school level presentations throughout our county.

6. Describe the team's initiatives to help start or form other FIRST teams (including Jr.FLL, FLL, & FTC). (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

   Our team is partnering with three elementary schools in Camden County to start FLL programs in Magnolia, Clementon, and Gibbsboro. In addition, we serve as a mentor for the FLL program in Evesham Township. Our team also volunteered at the Glassboro, NJ Jr.FLL and FLL competition in 2018. Our school has volunteered to host an FLL competition for the 2018-2019 season in partnership with Rowan University. In addition to events, our school hosts FLL teams for workshops throughout the year.

7. Describe the team's initiatives on assisting other FIRST teams (including Jr.FLL, FLL, FTC, & FRC) with progressing through the FIRST program. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

   As a twenty year veteran of the FIRST program, we prides ourselves as being a resource for other FIRST programs in the South Jersey region. We have facilitated workshops and outreach activities to allow our members to serve as valued resources for Jr.FLL, FLL, FTC, and FRC teams. Aside from mentoring new Rookie teams in our area, our team members frequently have been consulted by other teams on programming, mechanical designs, and other technical needs.

8. Describe how your team works with other FIRST teams to serve as mentors to younger or less experienced FIRST teams (includes Jr.FLL, FLL, FTC, & FRC teams). (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

   One of our primary missions is serving as a resource for Rookie teams through many means. Along with FRC teams 6921 and 7024, our team has recently started working with Rookie team 7110. Our team strives to hold a friendly relationship with younger teams with ongoing assistance. Continued communications and visits to our program

provides both technical and administrative support. Also, a recently authored Team 203 handbook for C++ programming of FRC robots is available on our website.

9. Describe your Corporate/University Sponsors. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

   Our primary and original sponsor, Campbell's Soup provides through their global engineering department, mentors and financial contributions. Recently Lockheed Martin provided the team with mentors and as of 2018, has become a major financial sponsor. The U.S. Army is also a significant financial sponsor. Our Family Booster 501(c)3 Organization, conducts ongoing fundraising and volunteer staffing. In addition, there are numerous local sponsors providing financial, mentoring, and in-kind support.

10. Describe the strength of your partnership with your sponsors with special emphasis on the current season and the preceding two to five years. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

    Continually over the last twenty years we have conducted ongoing presentations and robot demonstrations at Lockheed Martin, Campbell's Soup, and our other sponsors. In addition, students and mentors meet regularly with the CEO and Vice President of Engineering at Campbell's Soup. Our team also has a committed family boosters that organizes all of our fundraising events. Sponsors provide regular mentoring to team members throughout the year including technical, academic, and career guidance.

11. Describe how your team would explain what FIRST is to someone who has never heard of it. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

    As is well known and frequently stated, 'FIRST is more than just robots.' This organization does not just revolve around STEAM skills, but the life lessons you learn with teammates that eventually become family. Those who may assume FIRST as an engineer's only world is sadly mistaken, as any profession can join and find success in this program. FIRST is about highlighting everyone's abilities and promoting change in our culture by making students contributors to the world around them.

12. Briefly describe other matters of interest to the FIRST judges, if any. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

    Through the success of our FRC team from its start and 20 years later, our school created new STEAM academies. FIRST provided the catalysts and drove interest for these programs including Pre-Engineering, Medical Arts, and Information Technology complimenting the traditional vocational careers. As a county school of choice FIRST has been one of the critical communication vehicles for families to consider our programs when choosing a high school for their children from the 200 sending middle schools.

13. For FRC teams older than 5 years, briefly describe your team's broader impact from its inception. (500 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation)

Over the last 20 years, we have served as a messenger to our County and NJ about the value of STEAM education and the mission of FIRST. With our evolving list of partnerships, outreach programs, and other initiatives, the team is often the first call that educators and business people make when looking for a resource for explaining how students can engage themselves in a future STEAM career. As a technical school, robotics is a natural outlet for all of our programs to get hands-on experience.

14. Judges encourage creativity of expression, but the essay must clearly deliver information and facts describing what the team is all about. The essay should draw attention to the strengths of the team. This essay, along with other information, will serve as the basis for the judges to make the decision on which team earns the Chairman's Award. (10,000 characters allowed, including spaces and punctuation, or approximately 1500 words)

Founded twenty years ago in 1998, as part of an outreach initiative of Campbell's Soup and Siemens International, with two mentors and ten student members, Team #203 has grown from its humble beginnings. In 2018, we have multiple school based and volunteer mentors, over seventy student participants, an active family booster organization, are mentoring three rookie FRC teams, and have an outreach program that connects throughout Camden County, the State of NJ and beyond. A generation later, we rely heavily on our past through an active alumni base and experience, we stand firmly on the present with very engaged family members, mentors and students, and we are in touch with the future through outreach programs promoting FIRST's mission of spreading the word of STEAM.

We have always been a school based team at the Gloucester Township Campus of Camden County Technical Schools (CCTS). Established in 1928, CCTS is the county vocational-technical school district for Camden County, NJ, with the primary mission of providing Career and Technical Education to its citizens. The district, in 1998, had the foresight to work with its industry partners to get involved with what was still a new concept in education - a FIRST Robotics Team. We were originally made up of students who were from traditional vocational trade programs in the school, creating early success with their mechanical capabilities. As a direct result of our early successes in promoting the need for a strong STEAM workforce and skills throughout the county, the school district met this increasing demand by starting a Pre-Engineering Career Academy in 2002, followed by an Information Technology Academy in 2010, and a Medical Arts Academy in 2012. The district strongly embraced the message of FIRST, and utilized our students and robot to reach out to middle schools in the county to promote these new programs and recruit eighth grade students to attend CCTS as their high school of choice. Through our team's efforts, the demand from county middle school students and their parents to participate in the high-end STEAM programs, have continued to outpace the available slots in the programs within the county. This increasing demand has allowed the district to

increase the number of STEAM instructors and student slots. The need for additional STEAM educational opportunities has been met through the establishment of Pre-Engineering and Information Technology Career Programs at our district's sister school at the Pennsauken Campus.

Through the ongoing and expanding presence of our team, FIRST Robotics now permeates the culture of Camden County Technical Schools. Through this embracement of the value and need for FIRST as a central focus of STEAM program expansion, CCTS has established for the 2018 season, under the mentorship of our team, FRC Team #6921 – PennTech Tornadoes Robotics at our Pennsauken Campus. This team will also compliment the outreach of our team in spreading the word of FIRST and the value of STEAM throughout Camden County and our state. This new team has been staffed by two school based instructors/mentors, and is supported via district funds and a NASA rookie grant.

We continue to contribute to the expansion of FIRST programs in a number of different ways. In addition to Team #6921, we have helped establish and are actively mentoring FRC Team #7024, The Enforcers of the Police Athletic League of Egg Harbor Township, NJ. For the last year, students and mentors have been collaborating with our counterparts by assisting them in all aspects of the FIRST Robotics experience, including technical support, administrative guidance, and peer to peer dialogue. Recently, our team was contacted by another local rookie FRC team, team #7110, Haddon Heights High School for our assistance. Students and mentors have visited their program providing guidance, loaned them material/supplies, and other support. We will continue throughout the build and competition seasons to support these three new rookie teams to ensure their initial success and provide them the framework for sustainability.

In January, our team members volunteered and supported the FIRST Lego League competition at Glassboro Intermediate School. As the only FRC team to attend, we showed the FLL and Jr.FLL teams about FIRST Robotics and allowed them to drive our 2017 Steamworks robot. Additionally, we mentor and support four newly started Lego programs at sending elementary schools in our county. Through several onsite activities throughout the year, we will continue to host FLL teams from throughout the area for STEAM and robotics workshops.

We reach out into the community in many innovative ways. Every spring, we sponsor our school district's Technology Challenge program for middle school students in our county. Through this event, teams of middle school students compete in a design/build technology challenge, a STEAM knowledge bowl, an essay and presentation, and other related competitive elements. This program, allows students to be engaged in a STEAM

competition that encourages their appetite for our STEAM career programs in our district, and our FIRST Robotics programs. Starting in 2017, the team began offering regular workshops for Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts aligned with their STEAM programs, providing an opportunity to earn badges. Every summer since 2014, we host annual Summer STEAM Camps that allow middle school students in the county to gain hands on experiences and learn about Robotics programs. For disadvantaged students, our team provides scholarships to our Summer Campers. In December, we hosted a robotics competition at our school, allowing over fifty teams from all across New Jersey to participate. Additionally, in June 2, 2018, we will be hosting an off-season FRC event called the SOUPer Bowl.

With the positive impact robotics has left in our school and district as a whole, we have made it a priority to spread the word of FIRST. In 2017, we gave a presentation to middle schoolers at Lockheed Martin in Moorestown, NJ during Engineers Week. We demonstrated our prototype robot, inspiring students to take part in STEAM. From this experience, our team was able to create a partnership with Lockheed Martin and became one of their sponsored FRC teams able to influence and demonstrate what FIRST Robotics is all about.

For the last four years in a row, we have been invited to the New Jersey School Boards Association Conference in Atlantic City, NJ, where we are the only FRC team to represent FIRST. We present to nearly 10,000 school board members and administrators from all over the state to encourage them to start a FIRST program in their school. Through this opportunity, we have impacted many school districts understanding of the FIRST family of programs throughout our state. As the featured STEAM exhibitor of the conference, we continue to serve as the invited ambassador of FIRST/MAR to the NJ School Boards Association annually.

Our students can gain various skill sets that benefit them in the future. The family environment that our team brings makes it easier for students to come out of their shell, and meet new people. Our members gain substantial experience early on in their STEAM education journey, as the build season and competitions provide many valuable lessons. Our team is proud to have many successful alumni, many of which graduate and go on to further their education, pursue a military career, or join the workforce. One of our proudest accomplishments is seeing alumni return as mentors for our and other FRC teams, demonstrating the culmination of our mission as a FIRST program.

In 2018, our team has been rebranded as the SOUPer Bots honoring our longtime primary sponsor Campbell's Soup, but still holding true to our origins as One TUFF Team

- One Team United For FIRST. As we move into our third decade of FIRST Competition, it is our well-known spirit as a team, our pride as a competitor, our commitment to FIRST, and our dedication to STEAM that will sustain us well into the future. From our humble beginnings, to now a substantial contributor to STEAM education, Team #203 remembers FIRST's idea that it is indeed, 'More Than Robots.' When looking at the past, present, and future of the team, it is evident that we must continue our ideals and our commitment to 'Cooperation' and 'Gracious Professionalism' as the core beliefs leading to the ultimate success of our and all FIRST teams.

As we continue to evolve as a FIRST team and reflect on the last twenty years, we find it challenging to adequately measure the impact that Team #203 has had. When considering nearly the one thousand alumni of Team #203, the thousands of middle schoolers served, the thousands of family members involved, the measurable increase of STEAM programs in our county, and the new FIRST programs started, we take pride in the significant impact on our school, community, county, and state. As a contributing member of the FIRST family, we believe firmly in the ideals of FIRST and strive every day to live up to the expectations of spreading the message of FIRST and the value of STEAM education.