Dear Parents and Students,

The Holy Ghost Prep VEX ROBOTICS team is preparing for another exciting season, and we are hoping that you will be a part of it! We are **Team #242: The Firebirds**. We currently consist of HGP students from all grades, and have also invited students to join us from *Villa Joseph Marie* and *Nazareth Academy*. If you are interested in learning the engineering design process, and learning how to apply that skill to the creation/programming of a competitive robot, then this club is for you! You do not need any prior robotics experience (although that always helps) -- we are simply looking for individuals who are excited to learn this skill and to be a part of the team.

The following are answers to a few frequently asked questions:

What does it look like to be on the team?

Students form teams of up to 5 members, and work together during the season to design/build/program a robot. It is a fair amount of 'learning the ropes' through trial and error, which is highlighted in the engineering design process. The team meets on Monday-Wednesday-Thursdays in Founders room F301 at HGP, from 2:30 to 5 PM. Students from other schools typically need to find transportation to and from the lab after school. This year we are also recommending the 3-week *Summer VEX Robotics* class at HGP, for any students who want a more academic environment to start learning the VEX system. All team members are encouraged to take that course if they can, which can be found at https://www.holyghostprep.org/academics/ghostsummer .

What does a season look like?

The season is broken up into two halves, the early season (Aug-Sept-Oct), and late season (Jan-Feb). The late season would extend into March if the team qualifies for the state championship, and into April if they qualify for the US Open or World Championship. Each student/team needs to be available to build 2-3 times a week through September and October. This will culminate in our HOME opener at the end of October. Any students/teams who want to continue their season after that point, would pick up again in January. As a side note, all competitions throughout the season are held on Saturdays, and dates for those will not be known until October.

What are the requirements for being on the team?

Before the school year begins, students will be sent an availability questionnaire to fill out – they need to make themselves available for Sept/Oct, and be present at the HOME opener. There is also a $150 club participation fee for all club members. This covers all expenses for the *entire regular season*, including transportation and registration fees, all robot parts and tools that the team will use, and also a team jersey (that the student gets to keep). Additional fees are only accrued if an individual team qualifies for a competition out of state. This fee is due in September.

What can I do now?

Visit http://*cs.holyghostprep.org/robotics* to join the HGP Robotics email list (see the 'Subscribe' link). This will provide you with monthly updates from the team. Locate this letter on that site as well, and most importantly, FILL OUT THE GOOGLE FORM under the 'Join' tab at the top.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to the head coach directly, Mr. Brandon Petcaugh (bpetcaugh@holyghostprep.org). We look forward to hearing from you!