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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### **Sierra Expeditionary Learning School Heads to Regional Robotics Championship**

Truckee, CA (January 11, 2016) – Two *FIRST* LEGO Robotics teams were formed at Sierra Expeditionary Learning School after students were inspired by a demonstration at the STEAM (Science Technology, Engineering, Arts and Math) Fair last spring at Truckee High School. Robotics is the branch of mechanical and electrical engineering that deals with the design, construction, operation, and application of robots, as well as computer systems for their control, sensory feedback, and information processing.

From inception, middle school students were responsible for finding coaches, recruiting friends, and establishing team names.

*The Rolling Bots* have been meeting up to two times per week since May 2015 and received funding from local organizations including two Truckee Rotary Groups, TTSD, Optimist Club of Truckee, and Plumas Bank. On December 12, their hard work paid off at the Regional Qualifying Competition in Carson City where they placed first out of 22 teams. The three-part competition includes Robotics, Core Values, and Project Presentation. This year, the theme was Trash Trek and team missions were to make less trash or improve the way people handle the trash we make.

Visiting the Truckee Landfill Materials Recovery Station, *The Rolling Bots* focused on eliminating Styrofoam take-out boxes from Truckee restaurants, ultimately banning such containers. The team, consisting of eight SELS students, moves on to the Regional Championship on Jan. 23 at UNR.

*Truckee Blue Bear Tech* was formed this fall and is comprised of four SELS students. They also participated in the Regional Qualifying Competition (in Reno, NV) with an idea to eliminate 6-pack aluminum can plastic yokes. The team received the Rising Star award, thus gaining a spot to compete in the Regional Championship alongside their counterparts. The Rising Star Award recognizes a team that judges expect great things from in the future.

Competitions are part of *FIRST* LEGO League where tomorrow's innovators practice imaginative thinking and teamwork. Teams research a real-world problem and are challenged to develop a solution. Applying science, technology, engineering, and math concepts, students develop critical thinking and team-building skills, basic STEAM applications, and presentation skills, as they must present their solutions to local judges. In total, there are over 233,000 participants across 80 countries. Other local participants included teams from ACMS and North Tahoe Middle School.

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**About Sierra Expeditionary Learning School**

Sierra Expeditionary Learning School (SELS) is a K-8 public charter within the Tahoe Truckee Unified School District. SELS inspires a diverse group of learners to achieve academic excellence and develop a strong sense of character and community. Curriculum is implemented through project-based expeditions and fieldwork that challenge students to think critically while also fostering their natural curiosity and love of learning.

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