Q&A

VIQC 2021-2022: Pitching In

Tagged: G8

Welcome to the official VEX IQ Challenge Question & Answer system, where all registered teams have the opportunity to ask for official rules interpretations and clarifications. This Q&A system is the only source for official VIQC **Pitching In** rules clarifications, and the clarifications made here from the Game Design Committee (GDC) are considered as official and binding as the written Game Manual itself.

Please review the Q&A Usage Guidelines before posting. This system is only intended for specific VIQC Pitching In rules questions.

- For event, registration, or other competition support questions, please contact your REC Foundation Manager.
- For VEX technical support, contact support@vex.com or sales@vex.com.
- For game questions, suggestions, or concerns outside of specific and official rules questions, contact GDC@vex.com

Index

870: Enforcement of the blue box under <G8>b

27-Sep-2021
G8

What should Event Partners or Head Refs do to make sure that this rule isn't being exploited for strategic gain, especially if a team only show up with one team member?

<G8> Drivers switch Controllers midway through the Match. ... b. For the 2021-2022 season, Teams may elect to have one Driver in the Driver Station, instead of two. If only one Driver is present in the Driver Station, they may drive for the full Match, and a controller switch is not required. It is at the Team's discretion whether they wish to have one Driver or two. If two Drivers are present in the Driver Station, the controller switch rules in <G8a> would then apply. ... Blue Box: The intent of point "b" in this rule is to provide flexibility for Teams who are unable to meet in a traditional capacity due to local health guidelines. As noted in the definition of "Team", teamwork is a core tenet of the VEX IQ Challenge, and the two-Student drive team is intended to be a fundamental application of this skill. If a Team has the capacity to include multiple Students, it should also be expected that they will not take advantage of this single-Driver exception for strategic gain.

Answered by committee

Throughout the Game Manual, "blue box" clarifications are included to provide additional "intent of the rule" context for both Teams and Head Referees beyond the "black-and-white" verbiage of the rules themselves.

Rule G8-b was intentionally written such that the only black-and-white requirement is as follows: *"It is at the Team's discretion whether they wish to have one Driver or two."*

As noted in the blue box, the intent of this is *"to provide flexibility for Teams who are unable to meet in a traditional capacity due to local health guidelines"*. It would be impossible to expect an Event Partner to have an in-depth knowledge of all health guidelines imposed on all Teams at their event, whether they are governmental, school-specific, club-specific, or at the request of a Student's parents. With this in mind, we would strongly advise Event Partners and coaches to be cautious about making any assumptions regarding a Team's circumstances when G8-b has been utilized in a tournament. We will not be implementing, requiring, or endorsing any specific "validation tests", as it is ultimately at the Team's discretion whether they wish to have one Driver or two.

With that in mind, as noted in the last line of the blue box, *"it should also be expected that they will not take advantage of this single-Driver exception for strategic gain."* This intention should be regarded similarly to rules like G1, G2, G6, R1-a, R1-b, and R1-c. That is to say - whether it is "caught" during an event or not, a Team who has exploited this rule for strategic gain has knowingly violated violated several points of the Code of Conduct and/or the Student-Centered Policy. These violations are addressed through an official COC resolution process; Event Partners who have questions about this process should contact their REC Foundation Event Engagement Manager for more information.

- Act with integrity, honesty, and reliability

- Behave in a respectful and professional manner with event staff, volunteers, and fellow competitors

- Exhibit maturity and class when dealing with difficult and stressful situations

- Respect individual differences

- Follow all rules as listed in the current game manual(s)

- Student-centered teams with limited adult assistance

- Safety as a top priority

- Good sportsmanship, which includes supporting your alliance partners

1930: Match load positions outside of field

4-Feb-2024
G8

[<G8><G8>](#)I am not addressing a specific rule as much as clarification on where the match loads are supposed to be placed before and during a match.

In the game description it shows the team match loads positioned inside the alliance drive stations. As an EP we have trained our field setters to place the baskets holding the match loads in the drivers station.

My students along with many other teams have been moving the baskets outside the drivers station in order to keep their bodies in the driver station while match loading. This is to make it easier to reach the robots as they are touching the match load bar.

My concern is that the students body partially leaves the drivers station to retrieve a triball to match load. Is this a violation? i do not want the students to continue to practice match loading in this manner and then suddenly go to state or World's and be told it is a violation.

Can we get clarification please?

> **Answered by committee**
>
> We believe our responses to [Q&A 1550](#) and [Q&A 1858](#) apply to your question. In general, if the Team, Match Load Triballs, and anything provided by the Event Partner to contain those Triballs remain along the field wall in front of their Alliance Station and not around the corner, this is likely legal. At many events, referees are positioned at those corners, and Teams may have to adapt slightly to provide space for them alongside the field.

1905: Headset for Non-Communication Purposes

28-Jan-2024
G8

<G8> States that Only Drivers, and only in the Alliance Station. During a Match, each Team may have up to three (3) Drive Team Members in their Alliance Station, and all Drive Team Members must remain in their Alliance Station for the duration of the Match.

a. Drive Team Members are prohibited from any of the following actions during a Match:

b. Bringing/using any sort of communication devices into the Alliance Station. Devices with communication features turned off (e.g., a phone in airplane mode) are allowed.

We would like clarification on what devices are actually allowed as we have come across discrepancies in its interpretation at different events. Below are a few device options we would like to confirm if they are legal for the drive team to use during matches:

1. Cell phone with airplane mode engaged paired with a wireless headset (e.g. airpods)

2. Cell phone with airplane mode engaged paired with a wired headset

3. MP3 player without communication functions connected to a wireless headset

4. MP3 player without communication functions connected to a wired headset

Our intention is not to use it as a communication device but a way to play music softly (still hear referees and team members, one ear only) as a personal calming measure that's very important for some.

Thank you.

1887: Switch control of controller between drive team members

22-Jan-2024
G8

<u>\<G8\></u>\<G8\> defined that drive team members can have 3 members during a game or skill. Suppose the drive team only uses one controller, can this controller pass to different person who is in the drive team members during the game or skill challenge?

1858: Further clarification of QA 1150 - where can drivers legally introduce match loads.

7-Jan-2024
S1 G8 SG6

<u>\<S1\>\<G8\>\<SG6\></u>

In Q&A 1150 as to whether or not teams could leave their driver stations (which is diagrammed in figure 2) to do match loads, the answer left teams to believe that they could be outside of the drive station as long as they were in front of the field wall by the alliance station. Here is the quote they showed me from Q&A:

> For the purposes of Match Load entry in Over Under Matches, Drive Team Members may introduce Match Load Triballs from any position along the field wall in front of their Alliance Station, but should not move around a corner of the field to access the area beyond the Match Load Zone. Teams should consider this limitation a constraint of the game, and should identify designs and strategies that allow them to safely introduce Match Loads within reach of their Alliance Station if placing them onto Robots.

Up to that point, I believed they had to stay in their alliance station and could reach over the wall in front of Alliance Station to match load.

Which is correct - allowed to step outside Alliance Station or not? (illustration using Figure 2 from Game Manual - at our events we leave a foot on each side of alliance station as Game Manual depicts in every illustration of Alliance Station so referee can safely see match loads)
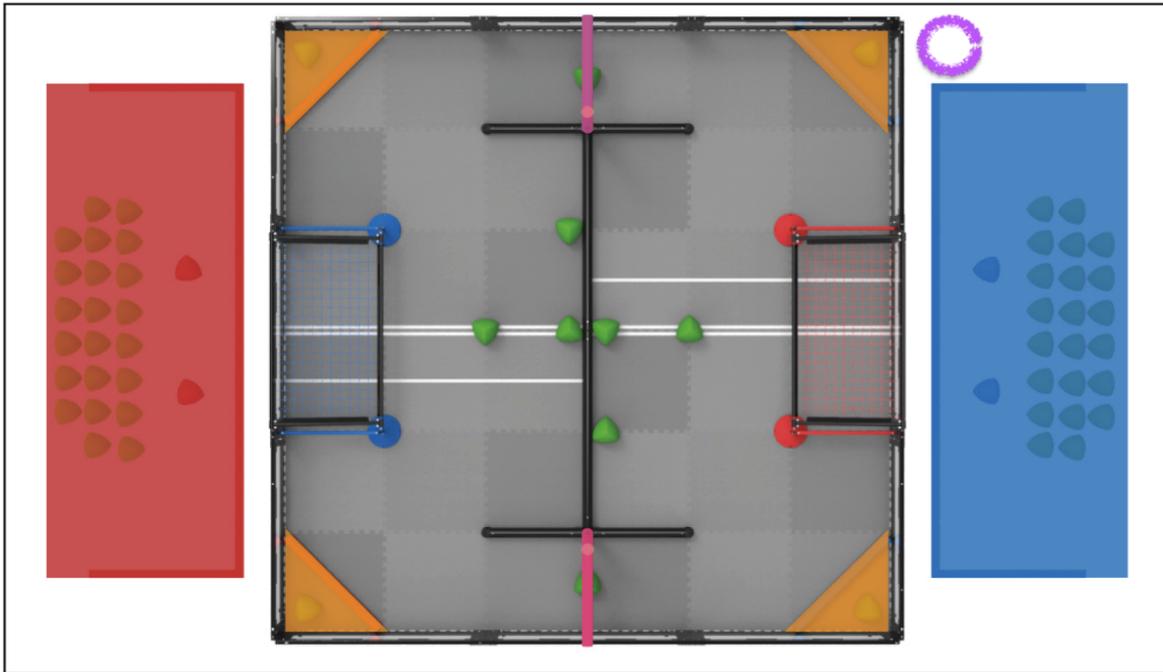

Figure 2: Top view of the field with highlighted Elevation Bars (pink), Match Load Zones (orange), Red Alliance Station (red) and Blue Alliance Station (blue).

Answered by committee

First - just to be clear / for future reference, we believe you are referring to Q&A 1550, not 1150.

> In Q&A 1150 as to whether or not teams could leave their driver stations (which is diagrammed in figure 2) to do match loads, the answer left teams to believe that they could be outside of the drive station as long as they were in front of the field wall by the alliance station.

Yes - that is a correct interpration of the answer that was posted.

> Which is correct - allowed to step outside Alliance Station or not? (illustration using Figure 2 from Game Manual - at our events we leave a foot on each side of alliance station as Game Manual depicts in every illustration of Alliance Station so referee can safely see match loads)

As noted in the answer to Q&A 1550, the game manual does not specify the exact size and position of the Alliance Stations, and we acknowledge that some events do not even mark any boundaries (e.g. venues with restrictions regarding tape on floors).

In most games / contexts, abiding by the intent of <G8> and <G9> is sufficient. Referees are not expected to be watching for every time a toe steps past a taped line on the ground, as long as Teams are generally in the correct location (i.e. not hovering over the wall, interfering with field controls, or sprawling past their side of the field).

However, due to the unique nature of Match Loading in Over Under, paired with the known leniency/inconsistency of taped Alliance Station lines, we found it necessary to provide a more explicit clarification for the intended boundaries of those specific Drive Team Members.

1841: Alliance zone borders during Skills

23-Dec-2023

S1 G8

In Q&A 1550, it was stated that Drive Team Members were permitted to "introduce Match Load Triballs from any position along the field wall in front of their Alliance Station, but should not move around a corner of the field to access the area beyond the Match Load Zone" in "Over Under Matches".

However, there are some points for which we would like to seek clarification:

1. Does the ability to introduce triballs from any point along the field wall in front of the Alliance Station extend to Skills runs?
2. As long as the triball is being introduced along the field wall in front of the Alliance Station (crosses the plane over said field wall), can body parts of Drive Team Members such as legs be outside of the space directly behind the field wall as long as they do not go "around a corner"? For example, if a Drive Team Member is introducing triballs over the field wall in front of the Alliance Station but they are kneeling on the ground such that their legs extend horizontally past the edge of the field, would this be legal?
3. Since the Game Manual does not specify the exact position or size of the Alliance Stations, are events able to freely decide where the boundaries are?

Image for point #2: img

Purple dashed line is the extension of the side field wall, marking the edge of the space directly behind the field wall
Green lines are legs of a hypothetical Drive Team Member

> **Answered by committee**
>
> 1. Yes.
> 2. This decision should be made by a Head Referee and/or Event Partner, primarily based on safety and the location of the field.
> 3. Figures 1 & 2 in the game manual--as well as sheets 1, 2, & 3 of 15 in Appendix A-- show the intended positions and general size of the Alliance Stations. While specific measurements are not provided, it is expected that those general locations and sizes are used at all events.

1739: Driving the Robot while one team member ("non-active driver") is outside of the Driver Station

1-Nov-2023
G8 G10 SG3

<G10><G8><G10> Allows for driver interaction with ("rescuing") the robot under certain circumstances. To do so, they must signal the Referee by placing their Vex IQ Controller on the ground. If the non-active driver is the one who leaves the Driver Station to "rescue" the robot, once the robot has been "rescued" and prior to the non-active driver returning to the Driver Station is the active driver allowed to pick up the Controller and start driving the robot? If not, when Blocks leave the field <SG3>, if the non-driver leaves the Driver Station to place a block that has left the field into the Supply Zone, is the active driver allowed to continue to drive the robot?

> **Answered by committee**
>
> Thank you for your questions! Based on the requirements in rule <G10> the active Driver can resume driving once their Robot has been returned to a legal starting position, providing the Driver switch is correctly made as described in rule <G11>.
>
> The active Driver may continue operating the Robot while the non-active Driver returns a Block to the field. Rule <G8> will be revised in an upcoming game manual update to correctly reflect that Drivers may leave the Driver Station to return a Block to the Supply Zone as per rule <SG3>.

1710: Drivers returning blocks outside of the field to the supply zone

19-Oct-2023
G8   SG3

[<SG3><G8>](#)

SG3 states "Blocks that leave the Field during a match may be returned to the Supply Zone by a Driver or Referee." G8 states "Drivers must remain in their Driver Station, except when legally interacting with their Robot per <G10>." May a Driver leave their Driver Station to return a block to the Supply Zone? If yes, what actions do they need to take prior to leaving their Driver Station (i.e., signaling the Head Referee by placing their controller on the ground)?

> **Answered by committee**
>
> Please review the [Q&A Usage Guidelines](#) before posting, specifically point 2, "Read and search existing Q&As before posting." We believe that that our response to [Q&A 1704](#) answers your question. If it does not, please feel free to rephrase and resubmit.

1704: Clarification on Rule SG3

16-Oct-2023
G8   SG3

[<SG3>](#)

The update of Rule SG3 clears up my original question; however, I do have a follow up question. The rule currently says that if a Block leaves the Field, either the Driver or Referee can return it to the Supply Zone. I assume common sense applies, but for clarification, if the Driver is not allowed to leave the Driver's Station (Rule G8) and the Block falls out of the field on the opposite side of the field (out of reach), then the Referee would get the Block and either hand the Block to the Driver or place it back in the Supply Zone himself/herself?

> **Answered by committee**
>
> In this scenario, the Head Referee could permit the non-active Driver to leave the Driver Station and return a Block to the Supply Zone.

1703: Translator at Event and use of Translating apps

16-Oct-2023
G8   T17

Hello

I have a team that does not speak English. We have a translator lined up for them for when they are interacting with others out side of a match. During a match could the translator be near the team to translate? This would mean they are near the driver box. Also can students use an app on their phone to translate as long as it is in airplane mode? I see the translator their to help the students and adults to be able to communicate. As for student to student communication this would be done using a translation app or white board of some sort.

[<G8><T17>](#)

> **Answered by committee**
>

Teams in need of accommodations should reach out to their REC Foundation regional managers via email. To identify your region's managers, visit https://www.robotevents.com/support. Clause A of rule <G8> allows Team members to use devices in airplane mode during a Match.

1698: Where is the Driver Station

13-Oct-2023
G8

Figure 2 has a orange colored line outside of the field but it is not labeled. Is this supposed to be the Drivers Station (DS). I was at an event where the DS was behind the perimeter where the robots start (between goals I and II). Is this a safe assumption?

[https://content.vexrobotics.com/docs/23-24/viqrc-fullvolume/online-manual/image/TopView-DS.png]

(https://content.vexrobotics.com/docs/23-24/viqrc-fullvolume/online-manual/image/TopView-DS.png)

<G8>

> **Answered by committee**
>
> Yes, the orange line in Figure 2 is the Driver Station.

1588: Regarding gloves on G8C

15-Jul-2023
G8

In rule <G8>, clause C states that you may not bring materials that simplify the game challenge, although the note right under clause c states that personal belongings such as gloves or earplugs are allowed. With that being said, would it be legal to wear gloves that enhance grip when loading the match load triballs onto a robot? Thank you for your time, 1239E

> **Answered by committee**
>
> As stated in your question, clause C of rule <G8> specifically makes gloves legal for use during a Match. Per rule <S1>, you should ensure that your actions don't damage Triballs. If a Head Referee determines that you've damaged a Triball (e.g., leaving residue, markings, or dents) you may receive a Disablement or Disqualification for the Match.

1550: Exception to <G8> during match-loading

15-Jun-2023
S1 G8

<G8> prevents leaving the alliance station during gameplay. However it would seem that encouraging leaning over an area of a field prone to defense would , and over lengths longer than the average arm length of a competitor would offer a contradiction via <S1>. Given this does <S1> take priority over <G8>, allowing teams to temporarily leave the alliance station to match load. Thank you for your time. 334V

> **Answered by committee**

Thank you for your question. As specified in rule <G8>, Drive Team Members are required to remain in the Alliance Station during a Match (except in situations permitted by the rules or by the season's official Q&A; for example, Q&A 1520, which allows a Drive Team Member to leave the Alliance Station to interact with a Robot that has not moved during the Match). However, the game manual does not specify the exact size and position of the Alliance Stations, and events are not required to mark the boundaries of the Alliance Station.

For the purposes of Match Load entry in Over Under Matches, Drive Team Members may introduce Match Load Triballs from any position along the field wall in front of their Alliance Station, but should not move around a corner of the field to access the area beyond the Match Load Zone. Teams should consider this limitation a constraint of the game, and should identify designs and strategies that allow them to safely introduce Match Loads within reach of their Alliance Station if placing them onto Robots.

1547: Clarification on G8c

15-Jun-2023
G8

<G8c> prohibits use of any devices that "simplify[s] the game challenge during a match", with the exception of strategic aids, or personal accessories. This phrase is unclear. The following are two example devices with the intent to clarify whether they meet the GDC definition of "simplify the game challenge".

A simple mechanical mechanism, such as a ramp, that allows drive team members to legally load their robot more rapidly. Is this ever legal, if so in what situations is it not? Could this use legal vex electronics, could this use non-legal electronics?

A simple mechanism for teams to organize the match the loads amongst the alliance members, and for further storage, additional to any provided by the event. Is this ever legal, if so in what situations is it not?

Thank you for your time, 334V

Answered by committee

Thank you for your question. We believe our response to Q&A 1538 addresses your question.

1538: G8C and Match load assistance

11-Jun-2023
G8

<G8> ...Drive Team Members are prohibited from any of the following actions during a Match: c. Bringing/using additional materials to simplify the game challenge during a Match.

Previously devices have been permitted in the act of aiding in match loading specifically in tipping point with this Q&A https://www.robotevents.com/VRC/2021-2022/QA/1019. This appears to be outlawed in G8 C. However with match loading this season especially in the case of raised fields it is time consuming to pick up and load triballs one or two at a time from the floor.

Is there any openness to utilizing anything to assist in holding and placing match loads?

Provided no other rules are violated, examples such as the following are not considered violations of <G8> - Materials used before or after a Match, such as a pre-Match alignment aid, or a carrying case for Robots/Controllers

Could the carrying case for the robot be utilized as a table for preloads during a match to ease the usage of match loads specifically on raised fields?

146: Forgot to turn on the Robot, but my alliance partner bumped me.

17-Nov-2018
G8

Rule G8 states, "During the Driver Controlled Period, Drive Team Members may only touch their own Robot if the Robot has not moved at all during the Match." If a robot moved due to a push or bump from an alliance partner robot, can the team touch the robot to perform the permitted tasks? Technically the robot moved, but not under its own power.

Thank you.

> **Answered by committee**
>
> This would be legal, as long as the Head Referee acknowledges that it is safe to do so. For example, if the Robot has moved a few feet away from the field perimeter and would require stepping into the field to reach it, this would not be permissible.
>
> This ruling only applies to situations where the Robot has not moved under its own power. Motion as a result of stored energy, regardless of whether the microcontroller is powered on or not, would still be considered motion, and this would not be permissible.

1452: <G8><T7> Cable Error Issue

12-Feb-2023
G8 T7

At an event today, SF1-1 started off the Autonomous Period as usual and both Blue Robots moved and scored for their alliance. At the end of the Autonomous Period, as I was starting Driver Control, one of the Blue teams stopped me due to them saying that their robot lost connection to the field. *We were running the V5 Brains.* I verified that I had a connection to the controller on the brain screen and started Driver Control. When it started, the Blue controller in question was unable to reestablish the link to the robot. *They were not permitted to touch the robot as they moved and scored during the Autonomous Period.* At this point, the only orange text showing under their tab on the V5 Brain was "No Robot" and "No Program".

As the match was progressing, they unplugged and plugged in the V5 cable to their controller multiple times, without being instructed by the Head Referee or one of the Scoring Referees. Once this occurred, the V5 Brain began displaying "Cable Error on the team's tab.

What is the proper course of action in this scenario?

1. Replay the match due to a field connection issue < T7 >.
2. Let the final score stand due to it being a "Robot Issue" rather than a field issue and give the team a warning per < G8 >.

Thank you,

Cowboy Chris

1413: <G8> Intentionally Disconnecting From the Field or Turning Off the Controller

25-Jan-2023
G8

[<G8>](#)

It has been noted that a decent amount of teams appear to be firing their endgame as the buzzer goes off, which leads to the actual mechanism firing after the match has ended and the robots have been disabled. It was brought to my attention that some teams have a section in their code that when their controller is turned off or goes into the disabled state it can trigger their pneumatics to fire their endgame mechanism. This was tested by two people I know from across the state and it does work.

For example: A team had a radio drop at my previous event multiple qualification matches, and each time it occurred their endgame immediately fired.

Yes, this was due to a radio drop causing the robot to lose connection, but it follows the same logic as turning off the controller after the match to cause the pneumatics to fire. (If robot loses radio signal, robot shoots)

How should instances like this be looked at by the referees? From my perspective, it is a violation of < G8 > due to the violation notes talking about how it is meant to ensure that the robots abide by the commands sent by the field controller.

When using the V5 brains to run the fields, there is nothing that shows how long a controller has been connected to the field or if it was turned off or on. We can view radio drops, which is how I made note of my example above, but what action should be taken on this, if any? It appears as if some teams are trying to find a way to launch their endgame after the match so that they have more time to work on rollers or play defense.

Thank you for your time,

Cowboy Chris

1007: G8B to G6B Clarification

19-Jan-2022
G6   G8

Teams that exhibit the following behaviors may be in violation of <G8b>, and/or the RECF Code of Conduct, and should be prepared to share relevant health guidelines with RECF staff upon request:

Utilizing two drivers in Qualification matches, but utilizing only one Driver in Finals Matches or Robot Skills Matches. Utilizing only one Driver in Matches, but permitting interactions in the pit area between multiple Students similar in nature to interactions that would occur between two Drivers in the Driver Station. Meeting outside of the event setting in a manner consistent with interactions that occur between two Drivers in the Driver Station, yet only utilizing one Driver in Matches.

If I attend an event with multiple teams from my organization where 1 team has a single driver following the rules laid out in G8. Can the EP/Head referee give the option of G6B or a mandated 35 second single driver (G8A) if the organization does not accept G6B?

G6B-If a Team attends an event with only one driver in attendance, then that team is granted an a

Would the team need to find another person with in the organization or a team outside the organiz

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Answered by committee

> If I attend an event with multiple teams from my organization where 1 team has a single driver following the rules laid out in G8. Can the EP/Head referee give the option of G6B or a mandated 35 second single driver (G8A) if the organization does not accept G6B?

It is difficult to provide a direct answer to this question as it is currently worded.

If a Team has only one Driver at an event, then that means they are doing so for one of two reasons.

1. The Team usually has two Drivers, but one of them was unable to make it to the event due to illness or other reasons (i.e. G6-B). Yes, in this situation, Teams have the option to choose whether they drive for 0:35 or find a qualified Driver from another Team.

2. The Team is operating under health and safety guidelines that prohibit them from allowing two Students to stand next to each other in the Driver Station (i.e. G8-B). It would stand to reason that a Team who is in this situation, and stating that their Driver is unable to stand next to a teammate in the Driver Station, would also not be able to exercise G6-B and stand next to a Student from another Team.

Teams do not really get to make a "choice" between these two scenarios, as these are both situations that are outside of a Team's control.

If the Team is utilizing a single Driver but doing so for strategic reasons, not health reasons, then they would not be operating under G8-B. The blue box in G8 provides some guidelines / examples for behaviors which would indicate this situation.

> Would the team need to find another person with in the organization or a team outside the organization at the event?

In the context of the Game Manual, Teams from the same multi-Team organization are still considered separate Teams. In other words, the fact that two Teams come from the same multi-Team organization has no bearing on how to apply Team-related rules such as G6, G8, R1, or R2. To answer this specific question - yes, a Student from another Team within the same organization could be used to fulfill G6-b, provided that the rule is followed in its entirety.

> Within a single event, a Driver may only drive for one (1) Team. If a Team attends an event with only one (1) Driver in attendance, then that Team is granted an allowance to use another qualified Driver from the Event. This substitute Driver is given an exemption for this event and may only Drive for this one Team at that event. Once the event is over, the substitute Driver will go back to his or her original Team. This exception is only granted if a Team has one (1) Driver in attendance due to reasons outside of the Team's control, such as illness.