FBLA

2025-2026 Competitive Events Playbook

Start Here

This is a **step-by-step playbook** for State Leaders when navigating FBLA competitive events. These resources have been shared in the [State Leader Vault](#) (Password: Welcome2FBLA) since August 2024 and can be copied at the district and state level **to save you time and energy.** Most links are Microsoft Office documents for you to download and make state specific changes.

Click on each step below for further details.

STEP 1 Review National Level Documents	**STEP 2** Establish Competitive Events Team & Volunteers	**STEP 3** Create Competitive Events Schedule
STEP 4 Prepare Equipment & Supplies	**STEP 5** Communicate with the Team	**STEP 6** Recruit & Prepare Judges

Have ideas of what to add? Or add your own resources for other State Leaders?
Reach out to the National FBLA Competitive Events Staff!

STEP 7 Scoring & Tabulations	**STEP 8** Onsite at Conference	**STEP 9** Post-Conference

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Step 1: Review National Level Documents

- ✓ [Competitive Events Policy & Procedures Manual](#)
- ✓ [Competitive Events Guidelines](#) (Word Documents)
- ✓ [Competitive Events Resource Materials](#)
    - o Click on each division's folder to find specific materials.
- ✓ [Competitor ID Alternate Form](#)
- ✓ [Volunteer Management Policies](#)
- ✓ **Develop a strategy for updating and communicating these documents to district/region/state levels.** Key considerations:
    - o How many entries per chapter per event?
    - o How many students can participate?
    - o How many events can a student compete in?
    - o What events will be offered and at what levels?
    - o Qualification criteria for district, state, and national levels.
    - o Substitution policy.
- ✓ **Competitive Events Resources for State Leaders**
    - o [2025–2026 Competitive Events Slide Deck](#)
    - o 2025–2026 CE Release Information
        - ▪ October 20: District Competitive Events Materials (Objective tests, Production tests, Role plays)
        - ▪ December 1: State Competitive Events Materials (Objective tests, Production tests, Role plays)
        - ▪ December 15: Collegiate Case Competition Guidelines & Rating Sheets
        - ▪ January 15: Policy & Procedures Manual Update
    - o 2025–2026 List of Competitions: [Excel](#) * [Word](#)

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Step 2: Establish Competitive Events Team & Volunteers

✓ **Assemble Competitive Events Team** – Listed below are sample roles for volunteers or paid staff members.
   - Competitive Events Committee
   - Competitive Events Director
   - Judge Coordinator
   - Tabulations Coordinator
   - Competitive Events Support Coordinator
   - Competitive Events Testing Administrator

✓ **Recruit Competitive Events Volunteers (determine the schedule/process first)**
   - Define volunteer needs and recruitment process
      - Sample volunteer need spreadsheet
   - National Volunteer Roles
      - Event Administrator: Job Description * Orientation Slide Deck * Recap Email Message * Checkout Process: Collegiate
      - Judge Manager: Job Description * Orientation Slide Deck * Recap Email Message
      - Section Leader: Job Description * Orientation Slide Deck * Video
      - Timer: Job Description * Orientation Slide Deck* Video
      - Section Leader/Timer: Combined Job Description
      - Event Check-in: Job Description * Orientation Slide Deck * Video
      - Test Proctor: Job Description * Orientation Slide Deck * Video * Production Test Proctor Information
      - Welcoming Committee: Job Description * Orientation Slide Deck * Welcoming Committee Plan * Recap Email Message
      - Prep Room Attendant: <mark>Job Description</mark>

✓ **Prepare Competitive Events Team**
   - Conduct Event Administrator Orientation
   - Conduct Judge Manager Orientation
   - Provide Judge Manager Talking Points for Judge Orientation
   - Conduct On-site Event Administrator/Judge Manager Training

✓ **Create folders with volunteer information**
   - Volunteer Folder Contents
   - Files for Volunteer Folders
   - Additional Judge Information (Job Interview, Future Business Leader, Future Business Executive, Data Analysis, Sales Presentation, Financial Statement Analysis)
   - Folder Labels

✓ **Engage with External Partners & Vendors**
   - Online conference management system
   - Online testing
   - Online rating sheets
   - Hotel/meeting space provider
   - Internet provider
   - A/V provider
   - Production company (awards session)
   - Recognition item provider (trophy, medal, plaque, etc.)

Step 3: Create Competitive Events Schedule

- ✓ Estimate the number of competitors per event using previous years' data.
  - ○ Define the qualifying process for district, state, and national levels.
- ✓ Determine the number of sections per event, competition intervals, and overall time needed.
  - ○ Assess available rooms and determine event groupings (large room vs. individual rooms vs. hybrid).
- ✓ Develop a Room Chart detailing event locations and schedules.
  - ○ Plan room setup and scheduling to minimize turnaround time.
  - ○ Establish competition flow (all-at-once, separate rooms, etc.).
- ✓ Define online and on-site testing processes:
  - ○ Login Information/Wi-Fi Instructions
    - ▪ These are sample online testing tickets that each member will receive with the Wi-Fi information.
    - ▪ These could also be used for Wi-Fi information for events where Wi-Fi is provided.
- ✓ Communicate deadlines, event modifications, and scheduling details.
- ✓ Review the Competitive Events At-A-Glance documents for timing: Middle School * High School * Collegiate
  - ○ Example Blue Panda Schedule Profile (Template)
  - ○ Example Blue Panda Scoring Profile (Template)
  - ○ Example Blue Panda Conference Guide – *thanks to Manuel, CA FBLA, for sharing!*
  - ○ Schedule Title Page
  - ○ Finalist Posting Schedule Page
  - ○ Finalists Schedule Title Page
- ✓ **Best Practice:** Schedule a short break after the first competitor to allow judges time to adjust to rating sheets.

Step 4: Prepare Equipment & Supplies

- ✓ Review the Supply List: Middle School * High School * Collegiate
- ✓ Assess existing inventory and plan for additional needs.
- ✓ Organize supplies for easy access and distribution.
- ✓ Develop an Internet Plan *(included in the supply list)* and ensure connectivity needs are met.
- ✓ Manage printing and copying needs:
  - ○ Copy/print template
- ✓ Determine awards format (trophies, medals, plaques, banners) and place orders:
  - ○ Award Order spreadsheet template
  - ○ Awards Labels: Middle School * High School * Collegiate

Step 5: Communicate with the Team

- ✓ Establish a clear communication plan for volunteers and staff:
  - o [Event Information Sheet Template](#)
- ✓ **Develop a structured approach for event evaluations.**
  - o Gather feedback from competitors, volunteers, and judges for continuous improvement.
- ✓ Develop an **accommodations plan**:
  - o Gather accommodation information through conference registration
  - o Communicate with students
    - ▪ [Accommodation Email Communication](#)
    - ▪ [Accommodation Letter for Competitor](#)
  - o Communicate with the team

Step 6: Recruit & Prepare Judges

- ✓ Estimate the number of judges needed:
  - o [Judge Planning Chart](#)
  - o Develop a judge recruitment and sign-up process using flyers, invitation letters, email campaigns, social media posts.
- ✓ Provide timely communication to judges:
  - o [Judge Confirmation Letter](#)
- ✓ Prepare judge orientation room.
  - o Check-in Sheet
  - o Table Tents: [Middle School](#) * [High School](#) * [Collegiate](#)
- ✓ Organize essential judging materials:
  - o [Handshake/No-Handshake Signs](#)
  - o Judge Placemat: [PDF](#) * [Link to Canva file](#)
  - o [Volunteer Gift Ticket](#)
- ✓ Set up the judging system:
  - o If using judge codes, do it in one click with this tip!
    - ▪ [Blue Panda Judge Codes](#)
- ✓ Conduct judge orientation sessions:
  - o Judge Orientation Outline: [Middle School/High School](#) * [Collegiate](#)
  - o Judge Orientation: [Virtual (Prior to conference)](#) * [On-site Slide Deck](#)
  - o [Blue Panda Online Judging Work Flow Document](#)

Step 7: Scoring & Tabulations
- ✓ Choose a scoring method (Paper or Electronic)
- ✓ Review the Scoring Guide: Middle School * High School * Collegiate
  - o Tie Breaker Guidelines: Middle School * High School * Collegiate
  - o Example Blue Panda Scoring Profile (Template)
- ✓ Create a detailed Tabulations Guide to ensure that everyone working in the competitive events area is on the same page.
- ✓ Establish a process for reporting no-shows and rule violations (such as late arrival and dress code penalties) to the Tabulations room:
  - o Section Summary Form
  - o Event Summary Form
- ✓ Finalize awards presentation procedures.
  - o Determine if results are automatically pulled or manually entered.
  - o Confirm production company responsibilities.

Step 8: Onsite at Conference
- ✓ Empower volunteers with clear responsibilities and training.
- ✓ Prepare and place signage throughout the venue.
- ✓ Develop an appeals form for event disputes.
  - o Link to the National Improvement & Appeals/Inquiry Form as a reference.
    - ▪ If utilizing Jotform, you can easily make a copy of this form by pasting the URL in your own form. This can also be recreated in other platforms like Wufoo or Google by copy/pasting the questions.
- ✓ Create a sharable document for real-time feedback from leadership.
- ✓ Verify room set-ups (tables, chairs, A/V)
- ✓ Establish a communication plan for key conference partners:
  - o Hotel/Meeting Conference Manager
  - o Online Testing System
  - o Online Rating System
  - o Internet Provider
  - o A/V Provider
  - o Production Company
  - o Plaque Provider

Step 9: Post-Conference
- ✓ Send thank you notes to judges and volunteers.
  - o Volunteer Verification Letter
- ✓ Release competition results and rating sheets.
- ✓ Gather evaluation feedback and identify improvement areas.
  - o Information from National FBLA, including Competitive Events Reports: Competitive Events History – National
- ✓ Schedule a post-conference debriefing of competitive events.
- ✓ Plan for the next level of competition
  - o Define and communicate the "bump-up" process for advancing competitors.