2026-2027 Competitive Events Guidelines

Introduction to Public Speaking

Future Business Leaders of America

Introduction to Public Speaking gives members the opportunity to develop and deliver a speech on a designated topic. This event helps members build confidence, organize ideas, and strengthen their verbal communication skills through a live presentation.

Educational Alignments

Event Overview	
Division	High School (9th and 10th grades only)
Event Type	Individual
Event Category	Presentation
Event Elements	Speech

Event Information:

National Leadership Conference:

Timing Structure:

- **Presentation: Maximum of 5 minutes**
  - *one-minute warning*
- **Question & Answer (Q&A): 2 minutes**

Important: Time allocations are exclusive. Time may not be shifted between segments.

Important Notes:

- **Internet Access:** Not Provided
- **Event Schedule Notes**:
  - Some events may begin before the Opening Session.
  - All schedules are posted in local time for the NLC host city.
  - Schedule changes are not permitted.

State/District:

Check with your State Leader for state-specific competition information and deadlines.

***** Event specifics are continued below. Review the document in its entirety.**

2026-2027 Topic

Where Leaders Begin: Serving Others

Deliver a speech explaining how serving others helps individuals develop leadership skills, build stronger communities, and create meaningful change. Support your ideas with examples from school, business, or everyday life.

How does serving others prepare individuals to become effective leaders?

District/Region/Section

Check with your District/Region/Section leadership for District/Region/Section-specific competition information and deadlines.

State

Check with your State Leader for state-specific competition information and deadlines.

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National

Required Competition Items

Items Competitor Must Provide	Items FBLA Provides
• Conference-provided nametag • Photo identification • Attire that meets the FBLA Dress Code	• N/A

Eligibility Requirements

To participate in FBLA competitive events at the National Leadership Conference (NLC), the following criteria must be met:

- **Membership Deadline**: FBLA national membership dues must be paid to the specific division by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on March 1 of the current school year.
- **Repeat Competitors**: Members may only compete in an event at the NLC more than once if they have not previously placed in the top 10 of that event at the NLC. If a member places in the top 10 of an event at the NLC, they are no longer eligible to compete in that event at future NLCs, unless the event has been modified beyond a name change. Chapter events are exempt from this procedure.
- **Conference Registration**: Members must be officially registered for the NLC and must pay the national conference registration fee to participate.
- **Official Hotel Requirement**: To be eligible to compete, competitors must stay within the official FBLA housing block.
- **State Entry Limits**: Each state may submit up to four entries per event.
- **Event Participation Limits**: Each member may participate in:
  - One individual or team event, and
  - One chapter event (e.g., *Community Service Project* or *Local Chapter Annual Business Report*).
- **Competitor Responsibility**: Only registered competitors are permitted to plan, research, prepare, and set up their presentations. Advisers and others may not assist.
- **Participation Requirement**: To be eligible for an award, each competitor must complete all components of the event at the National Leadership Conference.
- **Identification at Check-in**: Competitors must present valid photo identification (physical or digital) that matches the name on their conference name badge. Acceptable forms include a driver's license, passport, state-issued ID, or school ID.
- **Late Arrivals**: Competitors will be allowed to compete until such time that the results are finalized, or participation would impact the fairness and integrity of the event, as determined by Competitive Events staff. If judges have left the competitive event area, it is no longer possible to compete. Five penalty points will be assessed for late arrivals in any competitive event.

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Event Administration

This event consists of two phases: a preliminary presentation and a final presentation.

Preliminary Presentation Details

Timing Structure

- **Equipment Set-Up:** 0 minutes
- **Presentation:** Maximum of 5 minutes (one-minute warning)
- **Question & Answer (Q&A):** 2 minutes
- **Important:** Time allocations are exclusive. Time may not be shifted between segments.

Venue & Format

- Presentations occur in-person at the National Leadership Conference (NLC).
- Competitors are randomly assigned to presentation sections.
- Presentations will take place in a large, open area with a designated space of approximately 10' x 10', which includes a table and chairs for the judges.
- The preliminary round is closed to conference attendees and audience.

Restricted Items

- Animals, except for authorized service animals.
- Reference materials such as visual aids, props, handouts or electronic devices.

Copyright Compliance

- All competitors must comply with state and federal copyright laws.
- Facts and data must be cited using credible sources.

Event Specific Information

- The speech must be developed around the topic.
- When delivering the speech, competitors may use notes prepared before the event.

Final Presentation Details

The presentation guidelines outlined above will apply to the final presentation.

Advancement to Finals

- The top-scoring competitors from each preliminary section will advance to the final round in equal numbers.
- The number of competitors advancing to the final round depends on the number of preliminary sections:
  - 2 sections: Top 6 from each section advance
  - 3 sections: Top 4 from each section advance
  - 4 sections: Top 3 from each section advance
  - 5 sections: Top 3 from each section advance
  - More than 5 sections: Top 2 from each section advance

Audience & Viewing Rules

- **Final presentations may be open to conference attendees, depending on space availability.**
- **Finalists may not** view other presentations in their own event.

Scoring

- Preliminary round scores are used to determine which competitors advance to the final round from each section.
- Final round scores determine the final rankings and top award winners.

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- Judges are responsible for breaking all ties in both preliminary and final rounds.
- All judging decisions are final. Results announced at the National Leadership Conference are considered official and will not be changed after the conclusion of the National Leadership Conference.

Penalty Points

- Competitors may be disqualified if they violate the Code of Conduct or the Honor Code.
- Five points are deducted if competitors do not follow the Dress Code or are late to their assigned presentation time.

Recognition

- A maximum of 10 entries (individuals or teams) may be recognized per event.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- FBLA complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing reasonable accommodations for competitors. Accommodation requests must be submitted through the conference registration system by the official registration deadline. All requests will be reviewed, and additional documentation may be required to determine eligibility and appropriate support.

Recording of Presentations

- Unauthorized audio or video recording is strictly prohibited in all competitive events.
- FBLA reserves the right to record presentations for educational, training, or archival purposes. Competitors should be aware that their presentations may be recorded by FBLA-authorized personnel.

Important FBLA Documents

- *Competitors should be familiar with the Competitive Events Operations Manual, Honor Code, Code of Conduct, and Dress Code.*

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Introduction to Public Speaking Presentation Rating Sheet

Expectation Item	Not Demonstrated	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Points Earned
Topic & Theme *Incorporates provided topic and executes a consistent theme*	*Provided topic is not mentioned in speech*	*Topic is not clearly incorporated into speech*	*Topic was clearly incorporated into speech*	*Topic was clearly incorporated and expanded thoroughly throughout the speech, using personal stories*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Introduction *Introduce the speech*	*Speech had no introduction*	*Introduction was not clearly presented*	*Introduction was clearly presented, and topic was defined*	*Introduction was clearly presented, and topic was defined with an effective transition into the speech body*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Supporting Information (Body) *Include accurate and appropriate supporting information*	*Speech did not have a topic*	*Multiple topics presented without clear connections*	*Central topics were identified, connected, and supported throughout the speech*	*Central topics were identified, connected, and supported throughout the speech with smooth transitions effectively utilized to support the central topic*	
	0 points	1-9 points	10-16 points	17-20 points	
Conclusion *Provide effective conclusion connected to the topic & theme*	*Speech did not have a conclusion*	*Conclusion was not clearly presented*	*Effective conclusion was presented*	*Conclusion provides connection to entire presentation*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Speech Delivery – Pace & Fluency *Deliver speech with appropriate pace & lack of filler words*	*Maintained an inconsistent pace that was either too fast or slow, paired with excessive use of filler words*	*Displayed a distracting and uneven pace, accompanied by noticeable use of filler words*	*Maintained an appropriate pace with minimal use of filler words*	*Maintained a well-varied pace and eliminated filler words*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Speech Delivery – Engagement *Deliver speech with varied facial expressions, excellent eye contact with judges, good posture*	*Does not make eye contact or have varied facial expressions*	*Minimal varied facial expressions and/or eye contact*	*Appropriate facial expressions and eye contact*	*Appropriate eye contact, facial expressions, fully engaging the audience and didn't use notecards*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Speech Delivery – Vocal Clarity *Deliver speech with appropriate voice projection*	*Does not have voice projection*	*Minimal voice projection*	*Appropriate voice projection*	*Appropriate voice projection and diction*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Speech Delivery – Poise & Presence *Deliver speech with self-confidence, and poise*	*Did not demonstrate self-confidence, poise, or good posture*	*Demonstrated self-confidence, poise, or good posture*	*Demonstrated elevated self-confidence, poise, and good posture*	*Demonstrated elevated self-confidence, poise, posture, and assertiveness*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Demonstrates the ability to effectively answer questions	*Does not respond to questions or responses are completely off-topic.*	*Provides incomplete or unclear answers that show limited understanding.*	*Responds accurately and clearly to most questions, showing adequate understanding.*	*Responds confidently with clear, accurate, and thoughtful answers that enhance the overall presentation.*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Presentation Protocols					
Adherence to Competitive Events Guidelines	*Competitor(s) Did Not Follow Guidelines*	***Execution Aligned with Guidelines:*** ✓ *Presentation aligned with the assigned topic* ✓ *Did not leave materials behind after the presentation* ✓ *Avoided use of food, live animals, technology, visuals, props*			
	0 points	1-10 points			
Staff Only: Penalty Points (5 points for dress code penalty and/or 5 points for late arrival penalty)					
Presentation Total (110 points)					

Name(s):		
School:	Section:	
Judge Signature:	Date:	

Comments:

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