

2025–2026 Competitive Events Guidelines

Career Research



Career Research gives members the opportunity to explore and present their findings on a career of personal interest. Members deliver a presentation highlighting key aspects of the chosen career, such as required education, job responsibilities, and future outlook.

Event Overview

Division	Middle School
Event Type	Individual
Event Category	Presentation
Event Elements	Presentation

Educational Alignments

Career Cluster Framework Connection	Career Ready Practice
NACE Competency Alignment	Career & Self-Development, Communication, Critical Thinking, Professionalism, Technology

State

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

National

Required Competition Items

<u>Items Competitor Must Provide</u>	<u>Items FBLA Provides</u>
- Technology and presentation items - Conference-provided nametag - Attire that meets the FBLA Dress Code	Table

Important FBLA Documents

- Competitors should be familiar with the Competitive Events [Policy & Procedures Manual](#), [Honor Code](#), [Code of Conduct](#), and [Dress Code](#).

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.

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- **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., *Annual Chapter Activities Presentation* or *Community Service Presentation*).
- **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.
- **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.
- **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.

Event Administration

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

Preliminary Presentation Details

Timing Structure

- **Equipment Set-Up:** 3 minutes
- **Presentation:** 7 minutes (a one-minute warning will be provided)
- **Question & Answer (Q&A):** 3 minutes
- **Important:** Time allocations are exclusive. The presentation must begin immediately after the 3-minute set-up time concludes. Time may not be shifted between segments. Competitors will not interact with judges during the set-up period.

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.
- Presentations are closed to all audience and attendee observation.

Technology Guidelines

- **Internet Access:** Not provided
- Presentations must be delivered using one or two personal devices (laptop, tablet, mobile phone, or monitor approximately laptop-sized).
- If using two devices, one must face the judges and the other must face the presenters.
- Projectors and projector screens are not permitted, and competitors may not bring their own.
- Wireless slide advancers (e.g., presentation clickers or mice) are allowed.

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- External speakers are not allowed; audio must come directly from the presenting device(s).
- Electricity will not be available.

Non-Technology Items

- Visual aids, samples, notes, and other physical materials related to the project may be used.
- Items may be placed on the provided table or on the judges table, if space allows.
- No items may be left with the judges following the presentation.

Restricted Items

- Animals, except for authorized service animals.
- Food, which may be used for display only and may not be consumed by judges.
- Links and QR codes, which may be shown but may not be scanned or clicked by judges at any time.

Research

- Information must be supported by credible, well-documented sources.
- Any use of copyrighted material, images, logos, or trademarks must be properly documented.

Event Specific Information

- Competitors identify a career of interest and conduct research for the presentation. The presentation must include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - Career interest survey
 - General description of selected career
 - Education, certifications and training needed (*include plans for high school courses to take*)
 - Career outlook and advancement opportunities
 - Average starting salary and benefits
 - A description of a “typical” day in the life of a person in that career

Final Presentation Details

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

Advancement to Finals

- The top-scoring competitors or teams 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

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.
- Judges are responsible for breaking all ties in both preliminary and final rounds.

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- 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.

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Career Research Presentation Rating Sheet

Expectation Item	Not Demonstrated	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Points Earned
Career Research: Career Interest Survey	<i>Career interest survey not included</i>	<i>Career interest survey identified and taken, but no results shared</i>	<i>Career interest survey identified and explains career choice from results</i>	<i>Career interest survey identified, explains career choice from results, and correlates personal interest to this career</i>	
	0 points	1–6 points	7–8 points	9–10 points	
Career Research: Career Description	<i>Career description not included</i>	<i>Career description included, but is vague</i>	<i>Career description is included</i>	<i>Detailed career description included</i>	
	0 points	1–2 points	3–4 points	5 points	
Career Research: Education & Training	<i>Education & training not included</i>	<i>Education for career included but not training</i>	<i>Education & training is included, with suggested high school courses included</i>	<i>Detailed information about education, training, and certifications needed, including high school and post high school</i>	
	0 points	1–6 points	7–8 points	9–10 points	
Career Research: Career Outlook	<i>Career outlook not included</i>	<i>Career outlook included, but source is not listed or explained</i>	<i>Career outlook cites source and explains</i>	<i>Career outlook is cited and explained from different sources</i>	
	0 points	1–2 points	3–4 points	5 points	
Career Research: Salary & Benefits	<i>Salary not included</i>	<i>Salary is included but not explained</i>	<i>Salary and benefits are included and explained</i>	<i>Salary and benefits are included and detailed</i>	
	0 points	1–2 points	3–4 points	5 points	
Career Research: Typical Day	<i>Typical day not included</i>	<i>Typical day included, but is vague</i>	<i>Typical day is included</i>	<i>Detailed typical day included</i>	
	0 points	1–2 points	3–4 points	5 points	
Quality of presentation design is professional; design elements are appropriate –e.g., color choice, font style, font size	<i>Design lacks professionalism and appropriate design elements</i>	<i>Some elements of professionalism and appropriate design are present</i>	<i>Design quality is professional and appropriate design elements contribute to visual appeal</i>	<i>Design quality is exceptional, a polished appearance, and appropriate design elements enhance visual appeal</i>	
	0 points	1–6 points	7–8 points	9–10 points	
Effectively uses a variety of formatting and visual effects in presentation	<i>Does not effectively use formatting and visual effects causing confusion or distraction</i>	<i>Some visual consistency and relevant effects are present</i>	<i>Visuals and formatting are consistently relevant and enhance the presentation</i>	<i>Visuals and formatting are exceptionally consistent, and significantly elevate the overall presentation</i>	
	0 points	1–6 points	7–8 points	9–10 points	
Substantiates and cites sources used while conducting research	<i>Sources are not cited</i>	<i>Sources/References are seldom cited to support statements</i>	<i>Professionally legitimate sources & resources that support statements are generally present</i>	<i>Compelling evidence from professionally legitimate sources & resources is given to support statements</i>	
	0 points	1–6 points	7–8 points	9–10 points	

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Expectation Item	Not Demonstrated	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Points Earned			
Statements are well-organized and clearly stated	<i>Competitor did not appear prepared</i>	<i>Competitor were prepared, but flow was not logical</i>	<i>Presentation flowed in logical sequence</i>	<i>Presentation flowed in a logical sequence; statements were well organized</i>				
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points				
Consistently displays confidence, poised body language, engaging eye contact, and effective voice projection.	<i>Did not demonstrate any of the listed skills</i>	<i>Demonstrated 1-2 of the listed skills (confidence, body language, eye contact, or voice projection)</i>	<i>Demonstrated 3 of the listed skills (confidence, body language, eye contact, or voice projection)</i>	<i>Demonstrated all skills, enhancing the overall presentation</i>				
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points				
Demonstrates the ability to effectively answer questions	<i>Does not respond to questions or responses are completely off-topic.</i>	<i>Provides incomplete or unclear answers that show limited understanding.</i>	<i>Responds accurately and clearly to most questions, showing adequate understanding.</i>	<i>Responds confidently with clear, accurate, and thoughtful answers that enhance the overall presentation.</i>				
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points				
Presentation Protocols								
Adherence to Competitive Events Guidelines	<i>Competitor(s) Did Not Follow Guidelines</i>	Execution Aligned with Guidelines: (All criteria must be met) ✓ Used only allowable technology devices (sizing specs followed; maximum of two, with only one facing judges at a time) ✓ Maintained professional boundaries during set-up time (no interaction with judges) ✓ Did not leave materials behind after the presentation ✓ Links or QR codes were displayed appropriately (not clicked or scanned by judges) ✓ Audio was presented without external speakers ✓ Avoided use of food or live animals						
	0 points	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:								