

2024-25 Competitive Events Guidelines

Business Plan



Business plans are an effective tool for evaluating, organizing, and selling a new business concept. A well-developed business plan can be a key component of a successful business start-up. Business Plan provides members with the opportunity to prepare a business plan. This competitive event consists of a pre-judged report and presentation component.

Event Overview

Division: High School

Event Type: Team of 1, 2 or 3 members

Event Category: Presentation

Event Elements: Pre-judged Report & Presentation

Pre-judged Component: 17-page report due May 13, 2025

Presentation Time: 3-minute set-up time, 7-minute presentation time, 3-minute question & answer time

NACE Connections: Career & Self-Development, Critical Thinking, Communication, Leadership, Professionalism, Teamwork

Items Competitor Must Provide: Technology and presentation items for preliminary and final round presentation, conference-provided nametag, [photo identification](#), attire that meets the [FBLA Dress Code](#)

Items FBLA Provides: Table for preliminary round presentation; table, power, projector & screen for final round presentation

The business must not have been in operation more than 12 months.

District/Region/Section

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

State

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

National

Required Competition Items

	Items Competitor Must Provide	Items FBLA Provides
Preliminary Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Technology and presentation itemsConference-provided nametagPhoto identificationAttire that meets the FBLA Dress Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Table
Final Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Technology and presentation itemsConference-provided nametagPhoto identificationAttire that meets the FBLA Dress Code	<ul style="list-style-type: none">TablePowerProjector with HDMI cordProjector screen

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Important FBLA Documents

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

Eligibility

- FBLA membership dues are paid by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on March 1 of the current school year.
- Members may compete in an event at NLC more than once if they have not previously placed in the top ten of that event at NLC. If a member places in the top ten of an event at NLC, they are no longer eligible to compete in that event.
- Members must be registered for the NLC and pay the national conference registration fee to participate in competitive events.
- Members must stay in an official FBLA hotel block to compete.
- Each state may submit four entries.
- Each competitor can only compete in one individual/team event and one chapter event (American Enterprise Project, Community Service Project, Local Chapter Annual Business Report, Partnership with Business Project).
- Only competitors are allowed to plan, research, prepare their pre-judged component. They must also set up their presentation by themselves.
- Each competitor must compete in all parts of an event for award eligibility.
- All members of a team must consist of individuals from the same chapter.
- Picture identification (physical or digital: driver's license, passport, state-issued identification, or school-issued identification) matching the conference nametag is required when checking in for competitive events.
- If competitors are late for their assigned presentation time, they will be allowed to compete with a five-point penalty until such time that results are finalized, or the accommodation would impact the fairness and integrity of the event.
- Some competitive events start in the morning before the Opening Session of NLC. The schedules for competitive events are displayed in the local time of the NLC location. Competitive event schedules cannot be changed.

Recognition

- The number of competitors will determine the number of winners. The maximum number of winners for each competitive event is 10.

Event Administration

- This event has three parts: pre-judged report, preliminary presentation, and final presentation
- The business must not have been in operation more than 12 months.
- Pre-judged Report: The Business Plan
 - **Submission Deadline:** A PDF of the report must be uploaded in the conference registration system by May 13, 2025.
 - **Number of Pages:** The report will be no more than seventeen (17) pages.
 - The first page (front cover) should include the name of school, competitor names, state, name of the event, and school year (2024-25) on the cover.

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- The second page must include a table of contents and each page must be numbered.
- Divider pages and appendices are optional and must be included in the page count.
- Competitors must prepare reports. Advisers and others are not permitted to write reports. Reports must be original, current, and not submitted for a previous NLC.
- Pages must be formatted to fit on 8 ½" x 11" paper.
- The report is judged before the NLC.
- Pre-judged materials will not be returned. Reports submitted for competition become the property of FBLA. These reports may be used for publication and/or reproduced for sale by FBLA.
- Research: Facts and data must be cited and secured from quality sources.
- Restricted Items: QR codes and links cannot be included in the report.
- Reports will follow this sequence, mirroring the rating sheet:
 - *Executive Summary*: Provides a brief synopsis of the key points and strengths included in the plan.
 - *Company Profile*: Includes basic details of the business, including an overview, mission statement, location, legal structure and governance, organization and goals.
 - *Industry Analysis*: Provides an analysis of the larger industry in which the business will belong, analyzes key trends and strategic opportunities in the industry, demonstrates an understanding and awareness of external business decisions.
 - *Target Market*: Provides a brief overview of the nature and accessibility of the targeted audience. Analyzes the market's potential, current patterns, and sensitivities.
 - *Competitive Analysis*: Includes an honest and complete analysis of the business' competition and demonstrates an understanding of the business' relative strengths and weaknesses.
 - *Marketing Plan and Sales Strategy*: Demonstrates how the business' product or service will be marketed and sold, includes both strategic and tactical elements of the marketing and sales approach.
 - *Operations*: Provides an overview of business operations on a day-to-day basis, including production processes, physical facility reviews, use of technology, and processes followed to ensure delivery of products or services.
 - *Management and Organization*: Describes the key participants in the new business venture and identifies human resources the business can draw upon as part of the management team, employee pool, consultants, directors, or advisers. It also portrays the role each will play in the business' development and discusses compensation and incentives.
 - *Long-Term Development*: Gives a clear vision of where the business will be in three (3), five (5) or more years. It offers an honest and complete evaluation of the business' potential for success and failure and identifies priorities for directing future business activities.

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- *Financials*: Indicate the accounting methodology to be used by the business. Discuss any assumptions made in projecting future financial results. Present projections honestly and conservatively.
- *Appendix*: Includes copies of key supporting documents (e.g., certifications, licenses, tax requirements, codes, letters of intent or advance contract, endorsements, etc.).
- Preliminary Presentation
 - **Equipment Set-up Time**: 3 minutes
 - **Presentation Time**: 7 minutes (one-minute warning)
 - **Question & Answer Time**: 3 minutes
 - **Internet Access**: Not provided
 - **The business must not have been in operation more than 12 months.**
 - The presentation is judged at the NLC. Preliminary presentations are not open to conference attendees. The presentation will take place in a large, open area, with a booth size of approximately 12' x 12'.
 - Competitors/teams are randomly assigned to sections.
 - Timing: The presentation time is exclusive to the allotted times. Once the set-up time has been reached, the presentation time automatically begins. The presentation time shall not exceed the stated time, meaning that the set-up and Q&A time cannot be used as presentation time.
 - Technology
 - Competitors present directly from a device which includes a laptop, tablet, mobile phone, or external monitor (approximately the size of a laptop screen). Competitors can present with one or two devices. If presenting with two devices, one device must face the judges and one device must face the competitors.
 - Projectors and projector screens are not allowed for use, and competitors are not allowed to bring their own.
 - Wireless slide advancers (such as a presentation clicker or mouse) are allowed.
 - External speakers are not allowed. Only device audio can be used.
 - Power is not available.
 - Non-technology Items: Pre-judged reports, materials, notecards, visual aids, and samples related to the project may be used during the presentation; however, no items may be left with the judges or audience.
 - Restricted Items: Animals (except authorized service animals), Food (for display only; may not be consumed by judges during the presentation), Links and QR codes (for display only; cannot be clicked or scanned by judges before, during, or after the presentation)
 - Teamwork: If performing as a team, all team members are expected to actively participate in the presentation.
 - Research: Facts and data must be cited and secured from quality sources.
 - Presentation should cover:
 - Business Concept and Company Profile
 - Marketing Aspects
 - Operations and Management Plans

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- Financial Documents & Projections
 - Risks & Adverse Results
 - Long-Term Goals
- Final Presentation
 - **Equipment Set-up Time:** 3 minutes
 - **Presentation Time:** 7 minutes (one-minute warning)
 - **Question & Answer Time:** 3 minutes
 - **Internet Access:** Not provided
 - An equal number of top scoring competitors/teams from each section in the preliminary round will advance to the final round. When there are more than five sections of preliminary presentations for an event, two competitors/teams from each section will advance to the final round.
 - Final presentations may be open to conference attendees, space permitting. Finalists may not view other competitors' presentation in their event.
 - Timing: The presentation time is exclusive to the allotted times. Once the set-up time has been reached, the presentation time automatically begins. The presentation time shall not exceed the stated time, meaning that the set-up and Q&A time cannot be used as presentation time.
 - Technology
 - Competitors can present with one or two devices which includes a laptop, tablet, mobile phone, or external monitor (approximately the size of a laptop screen). If presenting with two devices, one device must be connected to the projector or facing the judges and one device must face the competitors.
 - The following will be provided for the final round if it occurs in a conference room: Projector, projector screen, power, and table.
 - Competitors using laptops or other devices that do not have an HDMI port will need to provide their own adapters.
 - It is up to final-round competitors to determine if they wish to use the technology provided.
 - Wireless slide advancers (such as a presentation clicker or mouse) are allowed.
 - Non-technology Items: Pre-judged reports, materials, notecards, visual aids, and samples related to the project may be used during the presentation; however, no items may be left with the judges or audience.
 - Restricted Items: Animals (except authorized service animals), Food (for display only; may not be consumed by judges during the presentation), Links and QR codes (for display only; cannot be clicked or scanned by judges before, during, or after the presentation)
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 - Financial Documents & Projections

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- Risks & Adverse Results
- Long-Term Goals

Scoring

- The report score will be added to the preliminary presentation score to determine the finalists.
- The normalized report score (using standard deviation) will be added to the final presentation score to determine the top winners.
- The report score will be used to break a tie.
- All announced results are final upon the conclusion of the National Leadership Conference.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

- FBLA meets the criteria specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act for all competitors with accommodations submitted through the conference registration system by the registration deadline.

Recording of Presentations

- No unauthorized audio or video recording devices will be allowed in any competitive event.
- Competitors in the events should be aware FBLA reserves the right to record any presentation for use in study or training materials.

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.

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Business Plan Pre-Judged Report Rating Sheet

Expectation Item	Not Demonstrated	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Points Earned
Executive Summary Provide brief and concise Executive Summary. Convince reader that business concept is sound and has a reasonable chance of success	No Executive Summary 0 points	<i>Executive Summary is provided but does not show evidence of sound business concept OR reasonable chance of success</i> 1-8 points	<i>Executive Summary is proved AND show evidence of sound business concept and reasonable chance of success</i> 9-12 points	<i>Executive Summary serves as a strong introduction and transitions into the remainder of the report</i> 13-15 points	
Develop Company Profile Legal form of business Effective date of business Company mission statement/vision Company governance Company location(s) Immediate development goals Overview of company's financial status	More than one of the components listed is not addressed 0 points	<i>Description of one or more components is limited OR one or more components is not described</i> 1-8 points	<i>All components are described adequately</i> 9-12 points	<i>All components are described adequately with supporting documentation</i> 13-15 points	
Present Industry Analysis Description of industry (size, growth rates, history) Trends and strategic opportunities with industry	More than one of the components listed is not addressed 0 points	<i>Description of one or more components is limited OR one or more components is not described</i> 1-8 points	<i>All components are described adequately</i> 9-12 points	<i>All components are described adequately with supporting documentation</i> 13-15 points	
Present Target Market Target market defined (size, growth, potential, needs) Effective analysis of market's potential, current patterns, and sensitivities	More than one of the components listed is not addressed 0 points	<i>Description of one or more components is limited OR one or more components is not described</i> 1-8 points	<i>All components are described adequately</i> 9-12 points	<i>All components are described adequately with supporting documentation</i> 13-15 points	
Discuss Competition Key competitors identified Effective analysis of competitors' strengths and weaknesses Potential future competitors Barriers to entry for new competitors identified	More than one of the components listed is not addressed 0 points	<i>Description of one or more components is limited OR one or more components is not described</i> 1-8 points	<i>All components are described adequately</i> 9-12 points	<i>All components are described adequately with supporting documentation</i> 13-15 points	
Marketing Plan & Sales Strategy Key message to be communicated identified Options for message delivery identified and analyzed including Web process Sales procedures and methods defined	More than one of the components listed is not addressed 0 points	<i>Description of one or more components is limited OR one or more components is not described</i> 1-8 points	<i>All components are described adequately</i> 9-12 points	<i>All components are described adequately with supporting documentation</i> 13-15 points	
Operations Business facilities described Production plan defined and analyzed Workforce plan defined and analyzed Impact of Technology	More than one of the components listed is not addressed 0 points	<i>Description of one or more components is limited OR one or more components is not described</i> 1-8 points	<i>All components are described adequately</i> 9-12 points	<i>All components are described adequately with supporting documentation</i> 13-15 points	

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Expectation Item	Not Demonstrated	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Points Earned
Management & Organization Key employees/principals identified and described Board of Directors, advisory committee, consultants, and other human resources identified and described Plan for identifying, recruiting, and securing key participants described Compensation and incentives plan	<i>More than one of the components listed is not addressed</i>	<i>Description of one or more components is limited OR one or more components is not described</i>	<i>All components are described adequately</i>	<i>All components are described adequately with supporting documentation</i>	
	0 points	1-8 points	9-12 points	13-15 points	
Provide Long-term Development Goals for three, five, or more years are identified and documented Risks and potential adverse results identified and analyzed Strategy in place to take business toward long-term goals	<i>More than one of the components listed is not addressed</i>	<i>Description of one or more components is limited OR one or more components is not described</i>	<i>All components are described adequately</i>	<i>All components are described adequately with supporting documentation</i>	
	0 points	1-9 points	10-16 points	17-20 points	
Financials Type of accounting system to be used is identified Financial projections are included and reasonable <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year 1 monthly cash flow • Year 1 monthly income statement • Yearly income statements for Years 1, 3 and 5 	<i>More than one of the components listed is not addressed</i>	<i>Description of one or more components is limited OR one or more components is not described</i>	<i>All components are described adequately</i>	<i>All components are described adequately with supporting documentation</i>	
	0 points	1-9 points	10-16 points	17-20 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	1-8 points	9-12 points	13-15 points	
Report Format					
Guidelines followed and report arranged according to rating sheet (See above Expectation Items)	<i>Had more than specified page count, missing one or more sections and/or does not follow rating sheet</i>	<i>All information presented, but order inconsistent with rating sheet</i>	<i>Information arranged according to rating sheet</i>	<i>Presented in the correct order, correct page count, and includes written transitions between sections</i>	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Format and design a business report	<i>Does not format document</i>	<i>Inconsistent formatting, excessive white space, and/or unrelated graphics and/or photos</i>	<i>Consistent formatting throughout the report</i>	<i>Utilizes full bleed, effective use of space, related defined graphics, and consistent formatting</i>	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Include correct grammar, punctuation, and spelling	<i>More than 5 grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors</i>	<i>3-4 grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors</i>	<i>No spelling errors, and not more than 2 grammar or punctuation errors</i>	<i>No spelling error, and not more than 1 grammar or punctuation error</i>	
	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points	
Report Total (200 points)					
Name(s):					
School:					
Judge Signature:					Date:
Comments:					

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Business Plan Presentation Rating Sheet

Expectation Item	Not Demonstrated	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Points Earned
Describes business concept and company profile	No evidence of business concept or company profile OR doesn't meet guidelines	Business concept OR company profile described	Business concept AND company profile explained	Business concept and company profile explained including how the concept matches the profile	
	0 points	1-8 points	9-12 points	13-15 points	
Explains marketing aspects of business	No marketing evident	One aspect of marketing explained	Two aspects of marketing explained	Three or more aspects of marketing to increase company presentation explained	
	0 points	1-8 points	9-12 points	13-15 points	
Describes operations and management plans	No evidence of company, operations plan, or management plan	Description of operations OR management plan	Description of operations AND management plan	Detailed description of operations and management with plan for future growth	
	0 points	1-8 points	9-12 points	13-15 points	
Provides information on financial documents and projections	No evidence of financial documents or company projections	Provides information on at least one financial document OR one projection	Provides information on two financial documents and at least one projection	Provides information on at least three financial documents and at least three projections	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Identifies and analyzes risks and adverse results and provides plan to avoid adverse results	No evidence of risks or adverse results	One risk OR adverse result is given: no evidence of planning	Two risks and at least one adverse result identified; includes a plan with at least one step to avoid adverse results	Three risks and at least one adverse result identified; includes a plan with at least two steps to avoid adverse results	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Identifies long-term goals	No goals identified	Only one goal identified	Two goals identified	Three or more goals identified with specific plan to achieve the goals	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Presentation Delivery					
Statements are well-organized and clearly stated	Competitor(s) did not appear prepared	Competitor(s) were prepared, but flow was not logical	Presentation flowed in logical sequence	Presentation flowed in a logical sequence; statements were well organized	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Demonstrates self-confidence, poise, assertiveness, and good voice projection	Competitor(s) did not demonstrate self-confidence	Competitor(s) demonstrated self-confidence and poise	Competitor(s) demonstrated self-confidence, poise, and good voice projection	Competitor(s) demonstrated self-confidence, poise, good voice projection, and assertiveness	
	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points	
Demonstrates the ability to effectively answer questions	Unable to answer questions	Does not completely answer questions	Completely answers questions	Interacted with the judges in the process of completely answering questions	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Staff Only: Penalty Points (5 points for dress code penalty and/or 5 points for late arrival penalty)					
Presentation Total (100 max)					
Name(s):					
School:					
Judge Signature:					Date:
Comments:					