

Maryland State Leadership Conference (SLC) Guidebook

Middle School &
High School 2026



2026 SLC At A Glance

- Chapter event quota: schools may submit two (2) Community Service Project reports, but only one Local Chapter Annual Business Report.
- Schools may only submit two (2) entries into each State-only event
- The top 4 qualifying winners from the Regional Leadership Conference (RLC) events will be allowed to participate in the SLC.
- Student quotas for SLC allowed: one (1) objective test (if qualified in more than one, the student must pick which one they will compete in at SLC), one (1) live presentation event/role-play/production event/straight to state, and one (1) chapter event.
- The top 4 High School entries from SLC will advance to the National Leadership Conference (NLC).
- The top 4 Middle School entries from SLC will advance to NLC.
- All objective testing will take place **ONSITE** during SLC.
- Role-play RLC scores will carry over to the SLC final score, and students **WILL NOT RE-TEST AT SLC!**
- The computer application production students will create their deliverables on-site at SLC.
- ALL chapters must stay in conference hotels to participate.
- Chapters will be able to utilize Ocean City Public Transportation for free with a conference badge.
- The adviser will submit the conference adviser assurance, verifying that all members have agreed to the conference code of conduct/honor code. This will get uploaded to Blue Panda.
- **Voting Delegates and Advisers must attend the Q&A and voting session. Attendance will be taken. For chapters that do not attend, non-attendance will be considered a risk of disqualification.**
- **All advisers will be assigned duty during SLC's competitive events and evening entertainment/enrichment time. This event can not happen without volunteer assistance—it is not optional!**

Please read this entire document to better understand everything related to the State Leadership Conference.

All questions should be directed to conferences@mdfbla.org, and they will be answered within three business days by a member of the Maryland FBLA Staff.

Checklist

A recommended checklist for local advisers preparing for the State Leadership Conference.

- Review the State Leadership Guide
- Print the State Leadership Conference guide for future reference
- Set chapter deadlines for registration, payment, parent meetings, and other relevant tasks.
- Submit school paperwork information (request for travel, sub requests, permission slips, etc.)
- Provide members with the necessary conference information, including registration cost and dates.
- Send a letter or have a meeting with parents to share event details
- Discuss dress code requirements with attendees
- Register all attendees (members, advisers, and chaperones) for the conference in Blue Panda by the state deadline.
- Collect member payment before the registration deadline
- Print conference invoice- check, double-check, triple-check for accuracy
- Submit the invoice to the business office/secretary for payment
- Mail conference payment to Maryland FBLA-Address in the payment section
- Follow the essential dates checklist for the State Leadership Conference
- Review the State Leadership Conference tentative agenda with attendees
- Ensure all forms are completed before the State Leadership Conference
- Submit pre-judged materials by the deadline
- Submit the adviser assurance form by the deadline
- Follow Maryland FBLA on Instagram @mdfbla for essential event updates
- Join the adviser GroupMe for SLC communication
- Download the Sched App
- Ensure that no students are in single rooms
- Ensure that room shares are approved and do not cross divisions (middle school students cannot share with high school students).
- Enter voting delegates and state officer candidates into the “competitive event” under that name. This allows us to tailor schedules specifically for events.

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Roadmap for SLC

Before Registration Opens (November)

- Confirm chapter membership in FBLA Connect.
- Hold an interest meeting to explain SLC and event options.
- Meet with administration for travel, substitutes, and approvals.
- Collect district rooming/chaperone rules.

December 1 – Registration Opens

- Begin Blue Panda registration.
- Enter attendee info (name, grade, event, etc.).
- Select the top three hotel choices.
- Decide if Maryland Express Transportation is needed (under 20 members).

December–January

- Collect student payments (**DO NOT** pay yet).
- Submit district-required forms.
- Ensure your chapter's two (2) voting delegates are registered in that event.
- Ensure that any state officer candidates are listed in that competitive event.
- Help students prepare for competitive events.

January 10 – Early-Bird Window Closes

- Stop**—wait for the invoice to update with Early Bird discounts and hotel charges before you submit for payment.

Early Bird Hotel Assignment Week

- Watch for your hotel assignment email.
- Complete the Room List Spreadsheet within one week.

January 23 – Final Registration Deadline

- All attendees must be registered and paid in full.
- No refunds after this date.
- Changes Jan 24–28 incur \$50 fee.
- Stop**—wait for the invoice to update with hotel charges before you submit for payment.

Regular Registration Hotel Assignment Week

- Watch for your hotel assignment email.
- Complete the Room List Spreadsheet within one week.

February 13 – Major Deadline Day

- Submit all prejudged materials via Blue Panda.
- Submit Adviser Assurance Form.
- Submit recognition nominations.
- Final invoice must be paid in full**
- A 10% late fee applies after this date.

Week Before SLC

- Hold a mandatory parent/student meeting.
- Review schedules, dress code, safety, and expectations.

SLC Conference (March 11–13)

- Supervise students at all times.
- Attend adviser meetings.
- Complete assigned volunteer duties.
- Manage student issues and keep consent forms.

After the Conference

- Review results and feedback.
- Celebrate student achievements.
- Begin NLC planning if needed.

Important Dates

A recommended list of important dates and actions needed for the State Leadership Conference.
You will be responsible for the entire invoice as of the registration deadline.

Date	Item	Notes
December 1, 2025	Early Bird Registration Opens	Blue Panda
December 20, 2025	State Officer Application Deadline	5 PM, FBLA Connect
January 10, 2026	Early Bird Registration Closes	5 PM, Blue Panda-DO NOT PAY IMMEDIATELY as credit has to be applied.
January 12-14, 2026	State Officer Candidate Interviews	Via Google Meet
January 16, 2026	State Officer Candidate Approval	Via email
January 23, 2026	Registration & Housing Deadline	5 PM, Blue Panda
January 24-28, 2026	Registration/Modification Window A cost of \$50 per change will be added to the invoice	Email updates needed with Region, chapter, student name, and needs to jconnor@mdfbla.org
February 13, 2026	Pre-judged Materials Due (Asset Collection)	Upload in Blue Panda 5:00 PM
February 13, 2026	Pre-Conference Forms Due (Adviser of the Year, Business Person of the Year, Who's Who)	FBLA Connect, 5:00 PM
February 13, 2026	Adviser Assurance Form Due	Upload in Blue Panda 5:00 PM
February 13, 2026	Payment Due	Must be RECEIVED by this date. Any outstanding balance MUST be paid in full before the registration materials will be released for SLC!
March 11-13, 2026	State Leadership Conference	Ocean City Convention Center Ocean City, Maryland

SLC Workflow Chart

STEP 1: Register Your Chapter in Blue Panda

- Only students with paid dues in FBLA Connect will sync into Blue Panda.
- Enter attendee information, competitive events, and adviser/chaperone details.

The Membership deadline for the 2025-2026 membership year is December 19, 2025.



STEP 2: Select Your Top 3 Hotel Preferences

- Preferences are requests, not guarantees.
- Placement is based on availability, group size, accessibility needs, and safety requirements.



STEP 3: Early-Bird Credit Applied (After January 10)

- Do NOT pay yet—Maryland FBLA will apply credits after the early-bird window closes.
- Your invoice will automatically update in Blue Panda.



STEP 4: Maryland FBLA Assigns Your Hotel

- Assignments are released within one week of each registration window closing.
- Adviser receives:
 - Assigned hotel
 - Number of rooms allocated
 - Room List Spreadsheet



STEP 5: Submit Room List Within One Week

- This deadline is mandatory.
- If the room list is not submitted within one week, assigned rooms will be released back into the hotel pool.
- Follow district policies for rooming and chaperone placement.



STEP 6: Invoice Updates With Final Costs

- Hotel room totals are added to the chapter's invoice.
- Transportation selections (Maryland Express) appear here as well.
- Review the invoice for accuracy before submitting payment.



STEP 7: Final Payment Due February 13

- All conference payments must be RECEIVED by February 13.
- After February 13:
 - A 10% late fee will apply.
 - Conference materials will NOT be released at SLC check-in if a balance remains.

General Information

The Maryland Future Business Leaders of America's State Leadership Conference is designed as an educational conference that includes competitive events, leadership development activities, career awareness programs, business meetings, and general sessions.

Conference Mobile Application

The conference schedules, activities, and workshop descriptions will be available on the Maryland FBLA website and a mobile application. All conference attendees are encouraged to download the mobile application on their devices and plan their conference schedule. This will provide the most up-to-date information on event times, locations, and workshops. The official conference application is Sched. You can download SCHED from the App Store or Google Play. Once in the app, you will search for the 2026 Maryland FBLA State Leadership Conference. This will open the week before the conference.

Registration

Conference registration is open from December 1, 2025, to January 23, 2026.

Early bird registrations December 1st - January 10th.

These attendees will receive a \$50 credit per registered **STUDENT** attendee after the early bird registration period closes. Please wait to make payment until this is done. Any hotel room choices made after the January 10th deadline will forfeit the discount and their room registration and will be moved into the regular registration rooming blocks.

Regular registration closes on January 23, 2026.

Attendee	Rate
High School Member	\$150.00
Middle School Member	\$150.00
Adviser/Chaperone	\$75.00

The registration fee for the Maryland FBLA State Leadership Conference helps cover the many costs that make this event possible. This includes one boxed lunch, two snack breaks, an official conference T-shirt, event production such as audio, visual, and staging, awards and recognition materials, and overall event management and staffing. The fee also supports venue coordination and other behind-the-scenes expenses that ensure a professional, engaging, and inspiring experience for all attendees.

Due to space availability, there are no outside guests allowed for the awards this year.

Information needed for Registration

Attendee Name, Gender, Email, Grade(members only), Competitive Event (members only), phone number (adults only).

To be eligible to register, members must have paid their dues in FBLA Connect by January 23, 2026. Members will auto-populate in the chapter attendee list. Paid records will auto-sync from FBLA Connect to the Blue Panda Conference Management System. Please note that synchronization occurs at irregular intervals, taking up to 24 hours to complete.

Payments

All payments are due by January 23, 2026. Maryland FBLA's W-9 is available at www.mdfbla.org/slc. Many business offices request a copy of the W-9 before processing checks and credit card payments.

Checks

Checks should be made out to Maryland FBLA and mailed to:

Maryland FBLA
1013 Beards Hill Road
Suite 101-M #143
Aberdeen, MD 21010

Credit Card Payments

A 3% credit card processing fee will be reflected on the invoices generated by the Blue Planda Conference Management System. After the registration deadline, a credit card payment link and instructions will be emailed to the adviser.

Late Fee

A 10% late fee will be added to all invoices if payment is not RECEIVED by March 1, 2026. After this date, chapters must pay the balance using a credit card or have a check printed to submit at registration. Nothing will be released to the adviser at check-in for any reason for chapters with an outstanding balance!

Registration, Additions, Modifications, and Refunds



Please note that after the conference registration deadline on January 23, 2026, you must contact Maryland FBLA to make any changes or edits. **Any changes or edits completed between January 24, 2026, and January 28, 2026, will incur an additional \$50 per change or edit, in addition to any conference fees.**

This includes, but is not limited to, adding an attendee, modifying competitive event registration, substituting attendees, and other similar actions.

Dropping an attendee from registration will NOT result in a charge of the \$50 fee; however, **no refunds will be granted after the registration deadline on January 23, 2026, regardless of actual conference attendance and reason for cancellation.**

No changes will be made after January 28, 2026.

Maryland Express Transportation-Purchase in the Store

Maryland FBLA will provide charter bus transportation for chapters with fewer than 20 members to help them attend the conference. These buses will depart from designated regional pickup locations and transport participants directly to their assigned hotels. The round-trip cost is \$100 per person, payable online during registration. This option is available **only during early-bird registration, allowing the state to confirm arrangements with charter** bus companies. Pickup locations will be offered in all regions. Depending on the total number purchased, the pick-up location will be communicated to schools within 2 weeks of registration closing. It is the attendee's responsibility to arrive at the pick-up location on time. The bus driver will stay at the location until their reported departure time. If you miss your pick-up window, no refunds or alternative transportation will be provided.

Chaperone Ratios and Requirements

A minimum ratio of one adult for every twenty (20) student members is **required**. If your school district has a stricter chaperone policy, please follow your district's guidelines.

When attending Maryland FBLA conferences and events, advisers must ensure proper supervision of their student members at all times. All advisers, chaperones, and guests are expected to follow the **Maryland FBLA Code of Conduct**. Advisers are required to accompany their students to all conference activities.

If an adviser is unable to attend, the chapter must designate at least one school representative as the **acting adviser**. Parents may serve as chaperones if they meet all requirements outlined in their school district's chaperone approval process. Districts may share chaperones between schools; however, one school must select the **duplicate chaperone** option during registration to indicate that supervision is shared.

Conference Housing & Rooming Procedures

Maryland FBLA manages all hotel arrangements for chapters attending the State Leadership Conference. This consolidated housing section outlines the process for making hotel assignments, the information that advisers must submit, and the billing procedure. All chapters must follow these procedures to ensure safe, consistent housing for student members.

How Hotel Assignment Works

- Maryland FBLA uses a hybrid placement system to assign chapters to one of seven approved hotel properties.
- During registration, advisers select their top three hotel preferences. Preferences are considered but not guaranteed.
- Assignments are based on room availability, total chapter size, accessibility needs, and safety/supervision requirements.
- Chapters may not contact hotels directly; all communication and reservations must go through Maryland FBLA.
- Hotel assignment notices are released within one week after each registration window closes (early-bird and regular).

Room Lists

- Once a chapter's registration is approved, advisers will receive a Room List Spreadsheet via email.
- Room lists must be submitted within ONE WEEK of the hotel assignment notification.
- If a room list is not received within one week, the assigned rooms will be released back into the hotel pool.
- Advisers must follow all district policies regarding gender-based rooming, chaperone placement, and supervision.
- Maryland FBLA does not override district rules; advisers are responsible for ensuring compliance.

Billing & Room Costs

- All hotel charges are added directly to the chapter's Blue Panda invoice as one consolidated total for all rooms.
 - Example: 10 rooms \times \$384 per night = \$3,840 added to the chapter invoice.
- Invoices are updated within one week of submitting the room list.
- Chapters must **NOT** submit payment until Maryland FBLA confirms that the invoice is final.
- Using unapproved hotels or third-party booking services will disqualify students from participating in the competition.
- Hotel room pricing is based on the room, not the number of students staying in the room. It will be up to the advisers to determine their per-person pricing.**

Room Sharing Between Chapters

- Because hotels charge per room, not per student, one chapter must assume full financial responsibility for each shared room.
- One adviser must submit the shared room under their own chapter in Blue Panda.
- The full cost will appear on that chapter's invoice, and advisers are responsible for arranging reimbursement privately.
- Maryland FBLA cannot split room charges between chapters.
- If chapters cannot agree on billing responsibility, the room-sharing request will be denied.
- Middle school chapter members can not share with high school members.

Official Hotel Properties

Chapters must stay at an approved partner property to be eligible to attend and participate in the competition. Maryland FBLA has secured guaranteed rates at the following hotels, all of which are booked through Blue Panda.

Room Occupancy Guidelines

- Advisers must follow all district policies regarding room occupancy and supervision.
- Maryland FBLA does not require a specific number of students per room; district rules apply.
- Rooms must be assigned by gender unless district policy states otherwise.
- Students may not switch rooms or invite guests into rooms not assigned to them.
- Chaperones must be placed according to district requirements.

Official Hotel Properties

Each school may choose any hotel below for this conference. MDFBLA has secured guaranteed rates at the following hotels. They will be booked through Blue Panda. **YOU MUST STAY AT ONE OF THESE HOTELS TO BE ELIGIBLE TO ATTEND AND COMPETE.**

****All rooms are double Queen's with a sofa bed, except the Courtyard by Marriott Oceanfront.****

3-Night Check-in on Tuesday

2-Night Check-in on Wednesday

Convention Center Address: 4001 Coastal Hwy, Ocean City, MD 21842

Property	Address	# of Rooms	Total Cost Per Room
Doubletree **Middle School ONLY**	3301 Atlantic Ave Ocean City, MD 21842	20 Rooms - 3 Nights	\$384.00
		25 Rooms - 2 Nights	\$256.00
Holiday Inn Oceanfront	6600 Coastal Hwy Ocean City, MD 21842	25 Oceanfront (OF) Rooms- 3 Nights	\$321.00
		45 Oceanfront (OF) Rooms-2 Nights	\$214.00
		20 Oceanview (OV) Rooms -3 Nights	\$270.00
		45 Oceanview (OV) Rooms - 2 Nights	\$180.00
Dunes Suites	2709 Baltimore Ave. Ocean City, MD 21842	25 Rooms - 3 Nights	\$300.00
		50 Rooms - 2 Nights	\$200.00
Hilton Suites Ocean City Oceanfront	3200 N. Baltimore Ave Ocean City, MD 21842	75 Rooms - 3 Nights	\$435.00
		120 Rooms - 2 Nights	\$290.00
Holiday Inn & Suites	1701 Atlantic Ave Ocean City, MD 21842	25 Rooms - 3 Nights	\$375.00
		50 Rooms - 2 Nights	\$250.00
Courtyard by Marriott **2 beds ONLY**	Two 15th Street Ocean City, MD 21842	15 Rooms - 3 Nights	\$369.00
		50 Rooms 2-Nights	\$246.00
Quality Inn Oceanfront	5400 Coastal Highway Ocean City, MD 21842	20 Rooms - 3 Nights	\$300.00
		90 Rooms 2 Nights	\$200.00

Bus Drop off/Parking

- Bus parking is the responsibility of the individual chapter/school district. Maryland FBLA will not offset the cost of bus transportation or parking.
- You may drop off at the front of the hotel/convention center. Buses will not be allowed to park there overnight.

Competitive Events

Maryland FBLA's Competitive Events Program allows students to demonstrate their skills in leadership, business knowledge, communication, critical thinking, and career readiness. Events are organized into categories with different requirements, formats, and deadlines. This section provides advisers with a clear, structured guide to understanding event types, qualification rules, submission procedures, and expectations at the State Leadership Conference (SLC).

Event Types and Requirements

Objective Tests

- Students complete a multiple-choice online test during SLC.
- The top 4 scorers advance to the final standings and qualify for NLC.

Presentation Events (Individual or Team)

- Students present live to judges at SLC.
- Most events require business attire following the FBLA National Dress Code.
- Some events allow the use of visual aids, technology, or pre-prepared slides.
- Some events were pre-qualified from the Regional Leadership Conference (RLC)

Performance/Role-Play Events

- Students receive a case prompt and prepare a scenario-based performance.
- Preparation time and performance time are strictly enforced.
- Judges evaluate communication, analysis, and problem-solving.

Production Event

- Students complete skill-based tasks onsite at SLC.

Speaking Events

- Students deliver memorized or prepared speeches live.
- Notes are not allowed unless specified in the national guidelines.
- Time penalties apply for exceeding limits.

Straight-to-State Events

- Students do not compete at RLC; instead, they begin competing at SLC.
- These events follow the same national rules but start directly at SLC.
- Common examples include Middle School events and specific national-only events.

What Happens at the State Leadership Conference

- Objective tests are administered during designated testing sessions.
- Performance and presentation events take place during scheduled time blocks.
- Students are required to arrive at least 15 minutes before all events.
- Judging panels evaluate students using national FBLA rating sheets.
- Time limits are strictly enforced for presentations, role-plays, and speaking events.
- Students must follow the FBLA National Dress Code for all performance and award events.
- Disqualification may occur for missing events, improper attire, or rule infractions.

Quotas/Limits

Quotas: Chapters and individual students are limited in the type and number of events they can compete in during the membership year.

- Individual Students may compete in a total of 3 events per membership year at the State Leadership Conference (SLC)
 - One (1) chapter event
 - One (1) qualifying/role-play/presentation event/State only event
 - One (1) test-only event
 - If a student qualifies for multiple test events at the regional level, they must select the one in which they will compete at SLC.
- Each **chapter** may only submit:
 - Three (3) entries in each qualifying event
 - Two (2) entries in **each** straight-to-state event
 - Two (2) Community Service Project Chapter Events
 - One (1) Local Chapter Annual Business Report

Photo Identification

All participants in competitive events must present photo identification before entering the competition area. For performance competitors, the member must show a photo ID to the event facilitator before entering the event competition. For objective testing, the member will present their photo ID to a facilitator when picking up their testing card at the objective test registration.

Requesting competitors to show photo identification helps increase the fidelity and integrity of FBLA's competitive events program. We encourage the presentation of government-issued identification or school identification. The competitor must present an original, valid photo ID issued by a government agency or the competitor's school. The photo must be current and recognizable.

Some examples:

- Driver's permit or license.
- Official school-produced student ID from the school the competitor currently attends.
- Passport, passport card, or U.S. Global Entry identification card
- Government-issued military or national identification cards.

If the student still needs the above forms of identification, they can have the adviser come to conference headquarters to complete the Competitor Identification Verification form.

Objective Test Only Events

The top four (4) entries in each qualifying event from each Regional will advance to the State Leadership Conference.

- Online objective testing is completed in person on the first and second days of the SLC.
- You are expected to have members bring their **fully charged** computers to the testing session.
- Chargers and computers are not provided to members. Students are not permitted to use cell phones or tablets during the testing period.
- As with all standardized testing, no external devices, including headphones, smartwatches, or cell phones, are permitted during testing.

Schools will want to consult with their IT department to determine how students will access the internet through an external network. Maryland FBLA does not provide technical support for personal devices during the conference.

Performance Events

The top four (4) entries in each qualifying event from each Regional will advance to the State Leadership Conference. Some events are only competed at during SLC. Members will follow the National FBLA Guidelines and Preliminary Rating Sheets. The member's prejudged materials will be reviewed before and/or during their performance event. Events that start with 'Introduction to...' are open only to 9th and 10th-grade student members.

- Broadcast Journalism
- Coding & Programming
- Computer Game & Simulation
- Programming
- Data Analysis
- Graphic Design
- Impromptu Speaking
- Introduction to Business Presentation
- Introduction to Programming
- Introduction to Public Speaking
- Introduction to Social Media Strategy
- Job Interview
- Public Service Announcement
- Public Speaking
- Sales Presentation
- Social Media Strategies
- Visual Design
- Website Coding & Development
- Website Design

State Only Events

- Business Plan
- Career Portfolio
- Digital Animation
- Digital Video Production
- Event Planning
- Financial Planning
- Financial Statement Analysis
- Future Business Educator
- Future Business Leader
- Mobile Application Development
- Supply Chain Management

Presentation event times will be listed on the tentative conference schedule. Members will be assigned a presentation time before the conference date. The actual event presentation time will be sent to advisers after all registrations have been entered. Presentation times can not be adjusted or modified to accommodate individuals leaving the conference early or arriving late.

All competitors present directly from their laptops or devices. Screens and projectors are not permitted during the competition, and competitors are not allowed to bring their own. Power will not be available. Presentation events will be closed and not open to the public or general attendees.

Chapter Events

A chapter event is completed throughout the year by the entire FBLA chapter. A pre-judged report is submitted in advance, and a presentation is given on-site at the SLC.

- Two (2) Community Service Project Chapter Events
- One (1) Local Chapter Annual Business Report

Production Event

Computer Applications challenges members to demonstrate their proficiency in using a variety of software applications to manage and communicate business information. Through a production test, members apply skills in word processing, spreadsheets, and presentation tools to complete real-world business tasks efficiently and accurately.

Production Test Time: 2 hours

- This event consists of a proctored production test, which is completed on-site at the State Leadership Conference (SLC).
- Competitors will complete a set of tasks aligned to the event knowledge areas and competencies.
- The Production Test Reference Guide, available on the Competitive Events section of the FBLA website (www.fbla.org), may be used during the test.

Role-Play Events

Role-play events are a prerequisite for the member to be placed in the top four (4) at their Regional Leadership Conference (RLC). The following events are qualifying role-play events. Members' scores from RLC will be added to their SLC scores for use in the final calculation and as a tie-breaker.

- The top four (4) entries in each qualifying event from RLC will advance to the SLC.
- Members will follow the National FBLA Guidelines and Preliminary Rating Sheets.
- Students participating in these events will **NOT TEST AGAIN AT SLC!**
- Events that start with 'Introduction to...' are open only to 9th and 10th-grade student members. The Regional Leadership Conference Qualifying Role Play Events are:
 - Banking & Financial Systems
 - Business Ethics
 - Business Management
 - Customer Service
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Hospitality & Event Management
 - International Business
 - Management Information Systems
 - Marketing
 - Network Design
 - Parliamentary Procedure
 - Sports & Entertainment Management
 - Technology Support & Services

Judges

Maryland FBLA relies on volunteers to run and support various activities and programs within the organization. If you know of an individual who would be interested in serving as a judge, please have them complete the [Judge Form](#). All judge scores are final. There is no protesting of scores after the event has concluded.

Accommodations Requests

Maryland FBLA meets the criteria specified in the Americans with Disabilities Act for all participants who submit a request through Blue Panda. FBLA will provide reasonable accommodations for competitors to enable equitable access to the competitive events program. The Accommodations Policy is in place to:

- Provide reasonable accommodations to competitors to enable safe and reasonable access to the program.
- Recognize and facilitate the learning accommodation of students, including those with IEPs and Section 504 accommodations.

FBLA recognizes the need to provide students whose first language is not English with equitable access to the competitive events program. **FBLA will provide reasonable accommodation, which may include translation services and interpreters, to those who submit a request through Blue Panda.**

Prejudged Materials – Asset Collection

*****Due by February 13, 2026, by 5 PM**

All prejudged materials submitted to Maryland FBLA become the property of Maryland FBLA. Prejudged materials are submitted through the Asset Collection process in Blue Panda. To see what files must be uploaded, please log in to Blue Panda and click on the 'Action Items' box. Files should be submitted using a publicly accessible URL, such as a link to a Google Drive, Dropbox, or OneDrive account. YouTube public or unlisted videos can also be used to submit a video URL.

Event Name	Submission	File Type
Business Ethics	Report	PDF URL
Business Plan	Report	PDF URL
Community Service Project	Report	PDF URL
Digital Animation	VIDEO	VIDEO URL
Digital Video Production	VIDEO	VIDEO URL
Future Business Educator	Lesson Plan	PDF URL
Future Business Leader	Interview Materials (Cover Letter, Resume)	PDF URL
Job Interview	Interview Materials (Cover Letter, Resume)	PDF URL
Local Chapter Annual Business Report	Report	PDF URL

Dress Code

Projecting a professional image is vital for business leaders to demonstrate respect for clients, colleagues, and others. This policy applies to all conference attendees, including students, advisers, and guests. Professional business attire is required at all general sessions, competitive events, exhibits, meetings, workshops, and other activities unless indicated in conference materials. Conference name badges are part of the dress code and must be worn at all conference functions. For safety reasons, do not wear conference badges outside the conference area. The dress code is gender-neutral. The National FBLA dress code can be found at www.fbla.org/dresscode

State Only Events

NLC T-Shirt Design Challenge (Due by January 15, 2026)...Submit in FBLA Connect

Design and promotion are essential in today's business world; therefore, preparing art is paramount to producing quality copy for promotion purposes. This event measures the team's ability to develop the concept design for the Maryland FBLA T-shirt for the National Leadership Conference. Students are to use the current year's theme. Students should create this ahead of time and submit it in FBLA Connect. The top 10 designs will be displayed at the SLC for members to vote on. The winner will be announced at the closing ceremony. Each school can submit as many designs as it would like.

NLC Pin Design Challenge (Due by January 15, 2026)...Submit in FBLA Connect

Design and promotion are essential in today's business world; therefore, preparing art is paramount to producing quality copy for promotion purposes. This event assesses the team's ability to develop a concept design for the Maryland Pin at the National Leadership Conference. Students are to use the current year's theme. Students should create this ahead of time and submit it in FBLA Connect. Members will vote during the conference, and the winner will be announced at the closing ceremony. Each school can submit as many designs as it would like.

Food & Meal Recommendations

Wednesday

- Concession Stand open from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM
- **Mid-Day Snack Provided to all attendees- 4:00-5:00 PM**
- Dinner on your own

Thursday

- Concession Stand open from 8:00 AM - 6:00 PM
- Silver Social (open to Chapters Earning Silver in FBLAOPOLY)-10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
- Gold Reception(open to Chapters Earning Gold in FBLAOPOLY)-8:00 AM-9:00 AM
- **Grab and Go Lunch Provided to all attendees - 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM**
- **Ice Cream Social for all attendees- 4:00 PM - 5:00 PM**

Cash and Card Payments

The Convention Center is cashless. Card payment will be required for the concession stand. Cash will be accepted at the FBLA Swag shop along with card payments.

Outside Food and Beverage

Outside food and beverages are not permitted within the convention complex or in public areas. Meal delivery services are not allowed, including both courier services such as DoorDash or Grubhub, as well as direct delivery services like Jimmy John's or Domino's. If we are found to violate this policy, Maryland FBLA will incur additional fees.

Conference Activities

Bingo for Brains

Join Maryland FBLA for a night of fun and fundraising at Bingo for Brains on Thursday, March 12, from 5:00–7:00 PM during the State Leadership Conference!

Play bingo, win exciting prizes, and help support a great cause. 

 Tickets are \$5 per card or \$10 for three cards and can be pre-purchased during registration or bought at the door.

 All money raised will go directly to the Alzheimer's Association to support research, care, and awareness.

Have fun, connect with other members, and make a difference!

Leadership Lounge

The Leadership Lounge serves as the heartbeat of the conference, providing an innovative and interactive space where attendees can converge for various events. This dynamic hub hosts a range of conference activities, from networking receptions to the bustling Business and Career Fair. Creating an environment for attendees to engage, connect, and advance their FBLA and high school careers. The Leadership Lounge becomes a focal point for fostering meaningful connections, exchanging insights, and exploring career opportunities. The Leadership Lounge embodies the spirit of collaboration, providing attendees with a unique platform to navigate their professional journeys and contribute to the collective growth and success of the FBLA community.

Workshops

Maryland FBLA has curated an educational workshop series for the conference, allowing attendees to learn and experience new opportunities. Workshop topics include financial literacy, college preparation, teamwork skills, career advice, and other related issues for student attendees. Check the conference schedule for workshop titles and descriptions. Workshops are required for all conference attendees, except during competitive events.

Tentative Schedule

The tentative schedule for the SLC and all other information can be found on the SLC page of the website, www.mdfbla.org/slc

Recognition Events

Maryland FBLA recognizes individuals and chapters for their hard work and dedication to FBLA. Individual recognition is awarded to members, advisers, schools, and business representatives. Chapter recognition is awarded to the local FBLA chapter for their participation in FBLA-Opoly, Adviser of the Year, Businessperson of the Year, and Who's Who in FBLA. These individuals will also receive recognition at the National Leadership Conference.

Recognition Event Submission Process

The following Recognition Events require a nomination form to be completed by the deadline outlined in the deadline checklist and pre-conference submission form checklist. The recognition events below should be submitted by February 13, 2026, using the link in the [Pre-Conference Submission forms](#).

Adviser Length of Service

Advisers are recognized for years of service to the FBLA association. Recognition is given for the first year and then for five-year service intervals.

Adviser of the Year

Advisers are recognized for being outstanding leaders for their local chapter. All active advisers with three years of service or greater who have not received the Adviser of the Year award in the past three years are eligible. A student-member may nominate their adviser by submitting a nomination through the pre-conference form deadline.

Adviser Retirement

Advisers who plan to retire in the current academic year are recognized for years of service to the FBLA association at any level of service.

Businessperson of the Year

This event recognizes outstanding Maryland business leaders who have contributed to the success of FBLA at the local level. Each active local chapter may enter one person in the Businessperson of the Year event. The nominees must be members of the business and industry sectors. Persons who are full-time employees of educational institutions or departments of education shall not be nominated for the award. A chapter may nominate a Businessperson by submitting a nomination through the pre-conference form deadline.

Who's Who in FBLA

This event honors FBLA members who have made outstanding contributions to the local, state, and national levels. Each chapter may nominate one member; state and national officers do not count toward the chapter entry limit. Nominees must complete the Contributor Level of the Business Achievement Awards to be eligible for Who's Who in FBLA. Applicants must submit a form by the pre-conference form deadline.

Pre-Conference Forms

When preparing for the State Leadership Conference, several pre-conference forms should be completed to support the registration submitted in the conference management system, Blue Panda. The local chapter adviser or member can complete the forms.

Deadline	Pre-Conference Form	Link
January 15, 2026	Workshop Proposal Request Form	Form
February 13, 2026	Conference Nomination Form • Adviser of the Year • Businessperson of the Year • Who's Who in FBLA • Adviser Retirement	Form
Rolling Deadline	College Fair	Form
Rolling Deadline	FBLA Competitive Event Sponsorship	Form
February 13, 2026	Prejudged Materials	See Prejudged Materials Section
February 13, 2026	Adviser Assurance Form	Upload a scanned copy to Blue Panda.

Health and Safety

While participating in State Leadership Conference functions, attendees understand the risk of exposure to infectious diseases. Attendees are always encouraged to practice health and safety measures, including monitoring themselves for symptoms, practicing good hygiene, and limiting person-to-person contact. By registering, all attendees agree to acknowledge that Maryland FBLA cannot guarantee that its attendees and other participants will not be exposed to infectious diseases.

Conference Results & National Qualifiers

Official Results

The Official Results of the State Leadership Conference will be certified and posted on www.mdfbla.org within 48 hours of the conference. Results and scores cannot be appealed or challenged; all judge scores are final. Results will be provided electronically after the event, including rating sheets, individual and team scores, and performance standards. Electronic communications on how to access these reports will be sent to advisers.

National Qualifiers

Competitors who participated in National Qualifying Events and placed in the top four (4) of the state qualify to advance in that competitive event at the National Leadership Conference. Competitors are only eligible to compete in one national competitive event at the National Leadership Conference. If placing in the top four of more than one National Qualifying Event, the competitor must determine in which event they'll compete.

Bump-Up's

Maryland FBLA allows “bump-ups” in all National Qualifying Events. If a top-four qualifier declines the invitation to compete, Maryland FBLA will reach out to the 5th-place winner and extend an invitation to the National Leadership Conference. Invitations will be extended to winners starting in 5th place and continuing up to 8th place, until a maximum of four entries have been accepted to advance to the National Leadership Conference.

State Officer Elections and Voting

Local Chapter Delegates

Each chapter registered for the State Leadership Conference is awarded two chapter delegates. Voting delegates are indicated through the registration process and will receive electronic communication relating to their official duties. Please ensure they have an accurate & valid email address in FBLA Connect.

Advisers will add the competitive event, Voting Delegate, for these two students.

State Officer Candidate and Campaigns

The deadline to complete the state officer application is December 20, 2025. The application and handbook are online. All candidates must complete all activities in the Handbook. Campaigning will take place during the State Leadership Conference.

Elections and Voting

Voting Delegates and their advisers must attend a Q&A session with the candidates on day 2. Voting will take place immediately following the Q&A Session.

Policies and Release Forms

Maryland FBLA has adopted the following forms, policies, and procedures to create a safe and meaningful educational environment and experience for all attendees.

Statement of Respect

Maryland FBLA is committed to creating and maintaining a healthy and respectful environment for each attendee. Our philosophy is to ensure that each attendee, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or socio-economic status, is treated equally and respectfully. Any behavior, including discrimination, harassment, or bullying, will not be tolerated. Each attendee is responsible for upholding and contributing to this climate.

Conflict of Interest Policy

Maryland FBLA requires all board members, officers, volunteers, and key employees to act in the best interest of Maryland FBLA at all times.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Maryland FBLA will not discriminate based on race, creed, color, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, sex, disability, religion, age, political party affiliation, or actual or potential parental, family, or marital status in its programs, activities, or employment practices.

Comprehensive Consent Form

The conference attendee must sign a form, and a parent or legal guardian must acknowledge and understand the Personal Liability, Code of Conduct, FERPA Directory Information, and the Photography, Video, and Sound Release agreements.

Adviser Assurance Form

A form must be signed by the local adviser and the school administration and submitted upon arrival at the event. The form assures the supervising local adviser will carry and maintain all attendees' Comprehensive Consent Forms during the event.

Appendix A: Adviser Assurance Form (Adviser Form)

Maryland FBLA 2026 SLC Adviser Assurance Form

Submit one form in Blue Panda for each chapter.

I, _____, Chapter Adviser for _____,
Name of Adviser FBLA Chapter

Verify that:

- All conference-registered school representatives (including but not limited to students, instructors, advisers, and observers) participating in Maryland FBLA-sponsored conferences have completed the Comprehensive Consent Form.
- I will always possess the Comprehensive Consent Forms of all conference-registered school representatives (including but not limited to instructors, advisers, and observers) during any Maryland FBLA-sanctioned conference.
- I understand that I may only leave the conference premises for part of the conference duration under any circumstances (other than those approved by the State Adviser and State Chair). I agree to be responsible for my students' actions.
- I recognize and understand that Maryland FBLA **will NOT** collect the Comprehensive Consent Forms of my conference-registered school representatives (including, but not limited to, students, instructors, advisers, and observers). I have also communicated the complete contents of this signed Assurance page with all Conference-registered school representatives (including, but not limited to, students, instructors, advisers, and observers).

Signature of School Adviser

Date

E-mail

Appendix B: Comprehensive Consent Form (Student Form)

This is to certify that the named **Member/Participant** listed below has my permission to attend all Maryland FBLA-sponsored State Leadership Conference activities. I also release Maryland FBLA, the school officials, the chapter advisers, conference staff, and Maryland FBLA staff and volunteers from any claims for personal injuries/damages that might be sustained while he is traveling to and from an event or during a Maryland FBLA-sponsored activity.

I authorize the named **Educator/Adviser** or Maryland FBLA staff to secure the services of a doctor or hospital for the named **Member/Participant**. I will pay the expenses for necessary services in the event of an accident or illness.

Member Information		Name: Age: DOB: Gender:
Local Chapter (School) Name		
Name of Educator/Adviser/Supervising Member		
Parent(s)/Guardian Name(s) & Phone		Name: Phone Number:
Emergency Contact Name/Phone Number		
Member/Participant Home Address		
Swimming Permission		<input type="radio"/> Yes, my child can/may swim <input type="radio"/> No, my child cannot swim/isn't permitted to swim
Medical Information		
Known Allergies, Current Medication, Chronic Conditions, Physical Restrictions		

I have read and understand entirely the **Personal Liability**, the **Code of Conduct**, **FERPA Directory Information**, and the **Photography, Video**, and **Sound Release** agreements, and by signing, do hereby agree to abide by these in their entirety, accept the conditions of the agreements, and release entirely Maryland FBLA's national, state, regional, and local associations. **NOTE:** All participants must sign this form.

Member/Participant Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Appendix C: Conference Code of Conduct & Consequences

The Code of Conduct ensures that every participant has a safe, positive, and professional experience at the State Leadership Conference. These expectations help advisers provide appropriate supervision, support the safety policies required by school districts and Maryland FBLA, and preserve the integrity of competitive events. By clearly outlining behavioral standards and consequences, the Code of Conduct allows students to focus on learning, leadership, and competition while representing their schools and chapters with professionalism.

To ensure that everyone receives the maximum benefits from their participation, the “Code of Conduct,” as established by the Maryland FBLA Board, must be followed at all times. Note that attendance is not mandatory. By voluntarily participating, you agree to follow the official conference rules and regulations and forfeit your participation rights if you fail to do so. We are proud of our students and know that by signing this “Code of Conduct,’ you reaffirm your dedication to being the best representative of your school and chapter.

Maryland FBLA Code of Conduct

1. I will always respect all public and private property, including the hotel or motel I am housed in.
2. I will spend each night in the room of the hotel or motel to which I am assigned.
3. I will strictly abide by the established curfew and respect the rights of others by remaining as quiet as possible after it.
4. I will not be in the sleeping room of the opposite sex.
5. I will not use alcoholic beverages. I will not use drugs unless I have been ordered to take certain prescription medications by a licensed physician. If I am required to take medication, I will, at all times, have the orders of the physician on my person.
6. I will only leave the hotel or motel with the express permission of my local chapter adviser.
7. My conduct shall always be exemplary.
8. I will keep my adviser informed of my whereabouts at all times.
9. I will wear my official identification badge when required.
10. I will adhere to the official FBLA dress code.
11. I will attend and be on time for all general sessions and activities for which I am assigned and registered.
12. I will adhere to the dress code at all required times.

Top 10 Honor Code Violations and Consequences

All Maryland FBLA members and advisers are expected to uphold the FBLA Honor Code and represent their schools, chapters, and state with professionalism. The following list highlights the Top 10 Behavior Issues that violate the Honor Code, along with the consequences if they occur at conferences.

1. Possession or use of alcohol or illegal/controlled substances (**Major violation**)
 - a. The police will be contacted.
 - b. The student will be immediately disqualified and removed from the competition.
 - c. The student will be sent home at their own expense.
 - d. The parents/school will be notified
 - e. The chapter delegation/candidates may be unseated.
 - f. The member is suspended from the following membership year
 - g. If the member is a graduate, a letter of reprimand will be issued to their school and college
2. Violation of curfew, not in assigned room at designated time. (**Major violation**)
 - a. The member will be immediately removed from activities and sent home at their owner's expense.
 - b. Notifications will be made to parents and the school.
3. Opposite-sex room visitation (**Major violation**)
 - a. This will be treated as grounds for immediate disqualification and removal.
4. Leaving the hotel/venue without the adviser's permission/supervision. (**Major violation**)
 - a. This will result in immediate removal from the conference, and the individual will be sent home at their own expense.
5. Property damage, unsafe conduct, or disrespect of hotel/venue rules (**Major violation**)
 - a. This will result in immediate removal from the conference, and the individual will be sent home at their own expense.
 - b. The responsible party is responsible for paying for damages.
 - c. In severe cases, law enforcement may be contacted.
6. Academic dishonesty (cheating, sharing test materials, unauthorized assistance)
 - a. Disqualification from event(s)
 - b. Further discipline as deemed necessary by FBLA staff.
7. Dress Code violations or failure to wear conference ID/nametag
 - a. Warning issued
 - b. Repeated violations can result in penalties, disqualification, or removal from sessions.
8. Skipping required sessions or being late to events
 - a. Warning or penalty
 - b. Repeated violations may result in disqualification from competition.
9. Disrespectful, disruptive, harassing behavior, or unprofessional behavior
 - a. Warning or removal from conference activities
 - b. Adviser and parents notified
 - c. Potential removal from conference for severe cases.
10. Failure to keep the adviser informed (accidents, illness, location changes)
 - a. Warning/reprimand
 - b. Repeated or safety-related incidents may result in removal from activities.

Consequence Levels

Major Violations (Items 1–5): Immediate disqualification and removal; student sent home at their own expense; parents and school notified; chapter delegation may be unseated.

Other Violations (Items 6–10): A warning or reprimand will be issued, accompanied by notification to the adviser/parents/school. Repeat or severe violations may result in removal from the conference.

Law Violations: Will be referred to hotel security, local authorities, or law enforcement.

Remember: Attending FBLA conferences is a privilege. By following the Honor Code, members ensure a safe, professional, and rewarding experience for all.

For questions about this policy, please contact:

Maryland FBLA State Director

Email: jconnor@mdfbla.org

By signing my name on this page, I agree to these rules of conduct in the spirit of being a proud and meaningful member of FBLA.

Member/Participant Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Adviser Signature

Principal Signature

Photography, Video, and Sound Release

I hereby grant the Maryland FBLA permission to make still or motion pictures and sound recordings, separately or in combination, and also give a production company approved by the Maryland FBLA permission to use the finished silent or sound pictures and/or sound recordings as deemed necessary. Further, I do hereby relinquish to the Maryland FBLA all rights, title, interest in, and income from the finished sound or silent motion pictures, still pictures and/or sound recordings, negatives, prints, reproductions, and copies of the originals, negatives, recording duplicates and prints and further grant the Maryland FBLA the right to give, sell, transfer and/or exhibit the same to any individual, business firm, publication, television station, radio station or network or governmental agency or any of their assignees, without payment or other consideration to me.

My agreement to perform under camera, lighting, and stated conditions is voluntary, and I do hereby waive all personal claims, causes of action, or damages against the Maryland FBLA and its employees arising from a performance or appearance.

I authorize Maryland FBLA to display my picture, school information (address and telephone number), and e-mail address on the Maryland FBLA website.

Maryland FBLA Personal Liability

I hereby agree to release FBLA Inc. and Maryland FBLA, its representatives, agents, servants, and employees from liability for any injury to the named person resulting from any cause whatsoever occurring to the named person at any time while attending the Maryland FBLA event indicated on the other side of this page, including travel to and from the conference, excepting only such injury or damage resulting from willful acts of representatives, agents, servants, and employees.

Having read and understood the "Code of Conduct" of Maryland FBLA completely, I hereby agree to follow the procedures and practices described. I fully understand that this is an educational activity, and I will, to the best of my ability, apply myself to learning and uphold at all times the finest qualities of a person representing Maryland FBLA.

NOTE: All individuals under the legal age must have a parent or guardian sign this form (see the other side). Otherwise, it will be returned for a parent or guardian's signature. All participants must sign this form.

Appendix D: FERPA Waiver

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Maryland Future Business Leaders of America

The *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA), a Federal law, requires that **Maryland Future Business Leaders of America**, with certain exceptions, obtain your written consent before the disclosure of personally identifiable information from your child's education records. However, **Maryland Future Business Leaders of America** may disclose appropriately designated "directory information" without written consent, unless you have advised **Maryland Future Business Leaders of America** to the contrary in accordance with **Maryland Future Business Leaders of America** procedures. The primary purpose of directory information is to allow the **Maryland Future Business Leaders of America** to include information from your child's education records to higher education institutions, the military, and Maryland FBLA partners.

Who may receive directory information?	What is the purpose for which directory information may be used?
Higher Education Institutions	Scholarship opportunities, open house events, Collegiate communications, admissions contact
Military Recruiters	Military opportunities, scholarship opportunities, ROTC programs
Additional Maryland FBLA Partners	Internship, apprenticeship, and job opportunities

Directory information, which is generally not considered harmful or an invasion of privacy if released, can also be disclosed to outside organizations without a parent's prior written consent. Outside organizations include, but are not limited to, companies that partner with **Maryland Future Business Leaders of America** to promote college and career readiness. In addition, two federal laws require local educational agencies (LEAs) receiving assistance under the

Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended (ESEA) to provide military recruiters, upon request, with the following information – names, addresses, and telephone listings – unless parents have advised the LEA that they do not want their student's information disclosed without their prior written consent. **[These laws are Section 9528 of the ESEA (20 U.S.C. § 7908) and 10 U.S.C. § 503(c).]**

Suppose you do not want the Maryland Future Business Leaders of America to disclose any or all of the types of information designated below as directory information from your child's education records without your prior written consent. In that case, you must notify the **Maryland Future Business Leaders of America** in writing 30 days before the event. **Maryland Future Business Leaders of America** has designated the following information as directory information.

- Student's name
- Photograph
- Grade Level
- Student membership number used to communicate in the electronic system