2025-2026 Competitive Events Guidelines
Coding & Programming

Coding & Programming challenges members to design and develop a standalone application that solves a specific problem or accomplishes a defined task. Members present their completed program to a panel of judges, demonstrating technical skills, logic, and creativity in software development.

Event Overview

Division	High School
Event Type	Team of 1, 2, or 3 members
Event Category	Presentation
Event Elements	Presentation with a Topic

Educational Alignments

Career Cluster Framework Connection	Digital Technology
NACE Competency Alignment	Career & Self-Development, Critical Thinking, Communication, Leadership, Professionalism, Technology
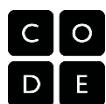
2025-2026 Topic

Byte-Sized Business Boost

Use your programming skills to build a tool that helps users discover and support small, local businesses in their community. Your program can be a command-line tool, desktop application, or interactive interface. You choose what best fits your coding approach.

Your program should include features such as:
- Sorting businesses by category (e.g., food, retail, services)
- Allowing users to leave reviews or ratings
- Sorting businesses by reviews or ratings
- Saving or bookmarking favorite businesses
- Include a way to display special deals or coupons
- Implementing a verification step to prevent bot activity

This topic was created in partnership with code.org. Learn more about code.org, resources available, and expanding computer science in your school or district at *this link*.

District/Region/Section

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

State

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

Required Competition Items

	Items Competitor Must Provide	Items FBLA Provides
Preliminary Presentation	• Conference-provided nametag • Photo identification • Attire that meets the FBLA Dress Code • Technology and presentation items	• Table • Internet Access
Final Presentation	• Conference-provided nametag • Photo identification • Attire that meets the FBLA Dress Code • Technology and presentation items, including any adapter or cord needed beyond an HDMI connection	• Table • Power • Projector with HDMI cord • Projector screen • Internet Access

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.
- **Official Hotel Requirement**: To be eligible to compete, competitors must stay within the official FBLA housing block.
- **State Entry Limits**: Each state may submit up to four entries per event.
- **Event Participation Limits**: Each member may participate in:
  - One individual or team event, and
  - One chapter event (e.g., *Community Service Project* or *Local Chapter Annual Business Report*).
- **Competitor Responsibility**: Only registered competitors are permitted to plan, research, prepare, and set up their presentations. Advisers and others may not assist.
- **Participation Requirement**: To be eligible for an award, each competitor must complete all components of the event at the National Leadership Conference.
- **Team Composition**: All members of a team must be from the same local chapter.

- **Identification at Check-in**: Competitors must present valid photo identification (physical or digital) that matches the name on their conference name badge. Acceptable forms include a driver's license, passport, state-issued ID, or school ID.
- **Late Arrivals**: Competitors will be allowed to compete until such time that the results are finalized, or participation would impact the fairness and integrity of the event, as determined by Competitive Events staff. If judges have left the competitive event area, it is no longer possible to compete. Five penalty points will be assessed for late arrivals in any competitive event.
- **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/teams are randomly assigned to presentation sections.
- Presentations will take place in a large, open area with a designated space of approximately 10' x 10', which includes a table and chairs for the judges.
- The preliminary round is closed to conference attendees and audience.

Technology Guidelines
- **Internet Access:** Provided (*Please be aware that internet access at conference venues may be unreliable. Always prepare a backup plan in case the connection is lost or does not work with your device.*)
- Presentations must be delivered using no more than three personal devices (laptop, tablet, mobile phone, or monitor approximately laptop-sized).
- 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.
- 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.

Team Expectations
- In team presentations, all members must actively participate in the delivery of the presentation.

Event Specific Information: Competitors should incorporate the following aspects in response to the topic
- The development, usability and functionality of the program must be demonstrated and explained to the judges.
- Solution must run standalone with no programming errors.
- Data must be free of viruses/malware.
- Competitors must provide comprehensive documentation including a readme file, source code, templates/libraries used, and documentation of any copyrighted or open-source material used.
- The presentation should follow the rating sheet and include the following:
  o **Language Selection:** Language choice is explained using industry terms and reflects the project's needs.
  o **Code Comments:** Comments are complete, logical, and enhance readability.
  o **Programming Knowledge:** Follows best practices and demonstrates advanced skills: modular design, clean logic, effective use of data types.
  o **User Experience (UX):** Includes clear design rationale and user flow, accessibility features are present.
  o **Program Intuitiveness:** Interface is easy to navigate and instructions are clear and well-integrated.
  o **Intelligent Feature:** Includes advanced functionality (e.g., Q&A, recommendations, smart filters).
  o **Input Validation:** Validates both format and meaning, Prevents crashes and provides helpful error messages.
  o **Functionality & Relevance:** Fully meets prompt requirements, instructions explain how the program addresses the topic.
  o **Output & Data Analysis:** Customizable reports or output allow for meaningful data analysis.
  o **Data Structures & Scope:** Uses arrays/lists appropriately and variable scope is logical and efficient.

Final 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
- **Note**: Each time segment is exclusive. Once the 3-minute set-up period ends, the 7-minute presentation time begins automatically. Competitors may not shift time

between segments. Competitors will not interact with judges during the set-up period.

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 or teams advancing to the final round depends on the number of preliminary sections:
  - 2 sections: Top 6 from each section advance
  - 3 sections: Top 4 from each section advance
  - 4 sections: Top 3 from each section advance
  - 5 sections: Top 3 from each section advance
  - More than 5 sections: Top 2 from each section advance

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

Technology Guidelines
- **Internet Access:** Provided (*Please be aware that internet access at conference venues may be unreliable. Always prepare a backup plan in case the connection is lost or does not work with your device.*)
- Presentations must be delivered using no more than three personal devices (laptop, tablet, mobile phone, or monitor approximately laptop-sized).
- If the final round takes place in a conference room, the following equipment will be provided: a projector, projector screen, power access, and a table.
- Competitors using laptops or devices without an HDMI port must bring their own compatible adapters.
- It is the responsibility of final-round competitors to decide whether or not to use the provided technology.
- Wireless slide advancers (e.g., presentation clickers or mice) are allowed.
- 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.

Team Expectations
- In team presentations, all members must actively participate in the delivery of the presentation.

Event Specific Information: Competitors should incorporate the following aspects in response to the topic

- The development, usability and functionality of the program must be demonstrated and explained to the judges.
- Solution must run standalone with no programming errors.
- Data must be free of viruses/malware.
- Competitors must provide comprehensive documentation including a readme file, source code, templates/libraries used, and documentation of any copyrighted or open-source material used.
- The presentation should follow the rating sheet and include the following:
  - **Language Selection:** Language choice is explained using industry terms and reflects the project's needs.
  - **Code Comments:** Comments are complete, logical, and enhance readability.
  - **Programming Knowledge:** Follows best practices and demonstrates advanced skills: modular design, clean logic, effective use of data types.
  - **User Experience (UX):** Includes clear design rationale and user flow, accessibility features are present.
  - **Program Intuitiveness:** Interface is easy to navigate and instructions are clear and well-integrated.
  - **Intelligent Feature:** Includes advanced functionality (e.g., Q&A, recommendations, smart filters).
  - **Input Validation:** Validates both format and meaning, Prevents crashes and provides helpful error messages.
  - **Functionality & Relevance:** Fully meets prompt requirements, instructions explain how the program addresses the topic.
  - **Output & Data Analysis:** Customizable reports or output allow for meaningful data analysis.
  - **Data Structures & Scope:** Uses arrays/lists appropriately and variable scope is logical and efficient.

Scoring

- Preliminary round scores are used to determine which competitors or teams 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.
- 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.

2025-2026 Competitive Events Guidelines
Coding & Programming

Coding & Programming Presentation Rating Sheet

Expectation Item	Not Demonstrated	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Points Earned
Code Quality					
Coding language selection	*No language selected or presented*	*Language presented, without explanation*	*Language presented, with details missing*	*Language presented, with detailed explanation of selection process using industry terminology*	
	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points	
Appropriate use of comments, naming conventions, and proper formatting	*No comments provided*	*Comments provided but are not logical*	*Comments provided assist judges throughout the demonstration*	*Comments provided are logical, useful, and complete*	
	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points	
The program is modular in a way that makes logical, readable sense	*Program does not make logical, readable sense*	*Program is either logical or readable, but not both*	*Program is logical and readable*	*Program exhibits an advanced knowledge of programming*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
User Experience					
UX Design: User Journey, Design Rationale, Accessibility Features	*No UX design presented*	*Some elements of UX design are presented*	*UX design presented, with details missing*	*UX design presented, with details about the design rationale, user journey, and accessibility features highlighted*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
User interface is intuitive or clear instructions are provided	*No instructions provided and is not intuitive*	*Instructions provided are not intuitive*	*Appropriate & clear instructions are provided*	*Program is intuitive and clear instructions are provided*	
	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points	
Users can easily navigate between pages	*No help menu or navigation system incorporated*	*Includes basic help menu and usable navigation*	*Interface contains no spelling errors, has interactive help menu, and has no navigation errors*	*Program use also includes an intelligent feature such as an interactive Q&A*	
	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points	
User input is validated	*User input isn't validated*	*User input validation attempted, but does not catch important edge cases or is not done correctly*	*User input is validated*	*Input validation applied on both syntactical and semantic levels*	
	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points	
Functionality					
Program addresses all parts of the prompt	*Program does not address the topic/problem*	*Program addresses the topic/problem at a minimal level*	*Program fully addresses the topic/problem*	*Program fully addresses the topic/problem, and the correlation is explained in the instructions*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	

2025-2026 Competitive Events Guidelines
Coding & Programming

FBLA
Future Business Leaders of America

Expectation Item	Not Demonstrated	Below Expectations	Meets Expectations	Exceeds Expectations	Points Earned
Program generates a presentable report	*Output reports are not accurate or not available*	*Output reports are not sufficient to analyze data*	*Output reports are error free and provide all necessary information to analyze data*	*Output reports allow user to customize and analyze information*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Data storage	*There is no storage of data*	*Variables are used inconsistently, or in a way that is unclear*	*Variable name and usage is clear. Variables store data that updates when necessary. Each variable performs only one job, and the correct data type is used*	*More complex data storage such as arrays and lists are used where appropriate and variable scope makes sense*	
	0 points	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 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	
Consistently displays confidence, poised body language, engaging eye contact, and effective voice projection.	*Did not demonstrate any of the listed skills*	*Demonstrated 1-2 of the listed skills (confidence, body language, eye contact, or voice projection)*	*Demonstrated 3 of the listed skills (confidence, body language, eye contact, or voice projection)*	*Demonstrated all skills, enhancing the overall presentation*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Demonstrates the ability to effectively answer questions	*Does not respond to questions or responses are completely off-topic.*	*Provides incomplete or unclear answers that show limited understanding.*	*Responds accurately and clearly to most questions, showing adequate understanding.*	*Responds confidently with clear, accurate, and thoughtful answers that enhance the overall presentation.*	
	0 points	1-6 points	7-8 points	9-10 points	
Presentation Protocols					
Adherence to Competitive Events Guidelines	*Competitor(s) Did Not Follow Guidelines*	*Execution Aligned with Guidelines: (All criteria must be met)* ✓ Used only allowable technology devices (sizing specs followed; maximum of three) ✓ Presentation aligned with the assigned topic ✓ 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 (preliminary round) ✓ 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: