



Student State Executive Board Meeting Minutes

August 20, 2026

Call to Order

A meeting of the Student State Executive Board of the California State Chapter of Future Business Leaders of America was held on **August 20, 2026, at 5:30 PM**, the president being in the chair and the secretary being present.

Opening Ceremony

The FBLA pledge was recited, led by the Secretary, **Arhan Chakravarthy**

Roll Call

Mara Grepo, President

Arhan Chakravarthy, Secretary

Jolene Luong, Public Relations

Sravika Nemani, Vice President representing the **Bay** Section

Sehrish Hirani, Vice President representing the **Central** Section

Brielle Levesque, Vice President representing the **Gold Coast** Section

Emma Lim, Vice President representing the **Inland** Section

Elliot Johnson, Vice President representing the **Northern** Section

Vanessa Xu, Vice President representing the **Southern** Section

Ava George, Ex-Officio

Dr. Looker, State Officers' Adviser

Mr. Graeme Logie, State Director

Ms. Maria Perez-Mendiola, Assistant State Director

Ms. Sue Christensen, Communications Manager

Ms. Alyssa Gonzalez, State Adviser, CA Department of Education

A quorum was established.

- a. **Ms. Maria Perez-Mendiola** was **absent** at roll call.
- b. **Ms. Alyssa Gonzalez** arrived at **5:36pm** during the meeting.

Meeting Minute Approval/Changes for **May 27th, 2026:**

- a. The minutes of the **May 27th, 2026** board meeting were approved as distributed.

Introduction of new state staff

a. Mr. Graeme Logie, State Director

- a. CA FBLA is operating with a lean state staff
- b. Mr. Rapada will be handling all competitions and will begin sending out competition-related information between September 1st and mid-September
- c. The full transition from Team Tri to CA FBLA management took place July 1st at nationals in San Antonio

b. Ms. Maria Perez-Mendiola, Assistant State Director

c. Ms. Sue Christensen, Communications Manager

- a. Handles website and CA FBLA emails
- b. Email aliases: president@cafbla.org, secretary@cafbla.org, ...
 - i. **Easier if aliases are shared instead of names**
- c. Will ensure all website updates are done in a timely manner
 - i. Any content posted must be sent to both Dr. Looker and Ms. Christensen
- d. Under “Resources” > “Calendar”, we can directly add the google calendar from the website

d. Ms. Alyssa Gonzalez, State Adviser, CA Department of Education (Prev. State Director)

- a. Previously served as State Director until January/February
 - i. Resigned to take a position at the CA Department of Education
- b. Manages the \$225,000 in annual state funding allocated to CA FBLA and oversees how the board allocates it
- c. Approves chapter affiliations; every chapter must affiliate every year
- d. Chapters that submit their affiliation paperwork by October 1st are eligible for a share of \$100,000 set aside specifically for on time affiliates
- e. New chapters must have a CTE-credentialed teacher with qualifying business/ICT courses to affiliate
- f. Students interested in starting a chapter should direct their adult advisor to start the process, not the students themselves

Board of Directors Meeting Report

- a. Mara was unable to attend but voted on July 11

Section Reports

The Bay Section President, [Sravika Nemani](#), reported:

- a. Working toward prepping for OAT Day and Presidents Webinar (Aug 30th)
- b. Section officers creating slideshows, gathering materials for their workshops
- c. Setting up Google Classroom and marketing OAT Day to the Bay chapter officers

The Central Section President, [Sehrish Hirani](#), reported:

- a. Met with section officers to discuss POW
- b. Bringing back the Central Section newsletter
- c. Starting a leadership ambassador program
- d. Planning conference feedback form for OAT Day and Section conference
 - a. Ensuring that OAT Day is a technology free day to help attendees stay away from distractions
 - i. Created a one-pager with all necessary resources will be sent or printed for attendees beforehand so no devices are needed on the day
- e. Date finalized for 9/26 at Madera High School, 9 AM - 2 PM

The Gold Coast Section President, [Brielle Levesque](#), reported:

- a. Section officers working on ideas for POW which was finalized in June
- b. Also creating a Google Classroom similar to what state is doing for chapters
- c. Might change OAT Day to a week earlier
- d. Three Workshops at OAT Day
 - a. Covering topics such as officer role training, creating strong POW, recruiting, fundraising, etc.
- e. Next section meeting on Monday to finalize all workshop presentations

The Inland Section President, [Emma Lim](#), reported:

- a. Monthly meeting for on August 19th
- b. Working on OAT Day Planning and workshops
 - a. Champion Chapter
 - b. Leadership Development
 - c. Roundtables
- c. Publishing Inland newsletter next week
- d. Creating a Section slack
- e. OAT Day: September 27th (Sunday) at Diamond Bar High School, 8 AM - 1 PM

The Northern Section President, [Elliot Johnson](#), reported:

- a. Committees met over zoom to start POW initiatives
- b. OAT Day is October 19th
 - a. Workshops will cover FBLA basics (BAAs, FBLA Connect, state projects, champion chapter) to support the section's large number of new chapters
 - b. Location: Chico
 - c. Next Zoom meeting on Monday; in-person planning meeting to be scheduled for September

The Southern Section President, **Vanessa Xu**, reported:

- a. Held zoom meeting in August to discuss OAT Day
- b. Officers are actively working to finalize workshop slides
- c. Working on filming informational videos to market OAT Days as well as setting up for the actual OAT Day
- d. OAT Day: August 29th at Orange Coast College, Costa Mesa
- e. In-person meeting on August 28th to finalize decorations and any last details
- f. This Sunday: touring the new OAT Day location and filming informational videos

Committee Reports

a. The **Outreach & Engagement Committee** reported:

- a. Google Classroom
 - i. Form sent to all State VPs to distribute to chapter presidents in section as soon as possible
 - ii. Goal: have as many chapters enrolled as possible by each section's respective O-Day to begin promoting LDI and other upcoming events
- b. Spotlight
 - i. Follows the champion chapter schedule
 - Summer Starter task is due the first week of September; promote this to chapters soon
 - ii. Chapters post an Instagram story tagging CA FBLA; state officers select winners each cycle
- c. Informational Videos
 - i. Details and timeline will be sent to all state officers next week
 - Submit anything your committee wants included in the first video
 - ii. First video will focus on OAT Day and champion chapter
 - iii. Videos will be distributed via Instagram, the CA FBLA website, and Google Classroom

b. The **Chapter Development Committee** reported:

- a. Guide to FBLA
 - i. Guide completed this month by Vanessa
 - ii. Available as a Google Doc/PDF that chapters can copy and adapt to their own needs
 - iii. Will be introduced at OAT Days, starting with Southern; feedback collected there will be used to refine it before wider distribution
 - iv. Jolene will create an Instagram post to promote it; section officers will introduce it at their respective OAT Days'
- b. Introduction Webinar - tentatively Thursday, September 10th

- i. Topics: CA FBLA overview, key dates, navigating the website, FBLA Connect, champion chapter, and affiliation
 - ii. Survey at the end for member feedback
- c. LDI Webinar – tentatively, October 7th
 - i. Will cover what LDI is and how to register
 - ii. Date may shift depending on when LDI registration officially opens
- d. Mock Competitions
 - i. Actual mock competition will be held in the new year, before SLC, for practice on state projects and roleplay events
 - ii. Judge recruitment will begin in October: pull top 8-10 placers from the 2026 CA FBLA winners list on the website and contact via LinkedIn
 - iii. The CA FBLA alumni LinkedIn group is also available as an outreach resource
- c. The **Career Readiness Committee** reported:
 - a. Working on getting workshop presenters for LDI
 - i. Reaching out to the Chamber of Commerce in the Universal City area
 - ii. Reaching out to local colleges for speakers on the college admissions and application process
 - b. Beyond the Blazer
 - i. Survey was posted on CA FBLA Instagram stories asking members what professional fields they want to hear from
 - Results: highest interest in the medical/biotech field; also strong interest in law, government, and politics
 - ii. Survey results will guide the first podcast episode
 - Currently working on scheduling the first interview

Unfinished Business

- a) Californian publication dates
 - a. Joint responsibility of Arhan and Jolene
 - b. 3 editions total: fall, winter, and spring
 - c. Fall edition draft due for approval by October 5th; final publication by October 9th
 - d. Fall edition content assignments:
 - i. Each section president: OAT Day recap and section/officer introduction
 - Northern section write what the section can expect at their upcoming OAT Day instead of a recap
 - ii. Mara: president's message

- iii. Ava: LDI promotional piece
- iv. Fall edition will also promote LDI

b) State Theme and Logo

- a. State theme: “Driven by Vision”
- b. Jolene will send to all state officers and section directors immediately
- c. Theme and logo must appear on all OAT Day marketing materials and all subsequent event materials (LDI, section conferences, SLC)

New Business

- a. National Councils
 - a. How to apply/approval process
 - i. Email Mr. Logie and inform him of what council you want to apply for, why, and what makes you a good applicant
 - ii. Only can apply for **one position**
- b. September meeting changed to online, not in person
 - a. In-person September meeting canceled due to budget constraints following the transition from Team Tri
 - b. Regular Zoom meeting will proceed on September 17th at 5:30 PM
 - c. The 4 hour LDI prep block for workshop rehearsal and scripting is pushed to tentatively to October 15-17
- c. State Officer Community hosted by National officer team
 - a. State officer community
 - b. Register as a state officer and state our position
- d. LDI Preparation-Universal City Hilton November 6-8
 - a. Ask if chapter is planning on going to Fall NLC
 - b. Registration
 - i. If your chapter is attending, you and your adviser register with your chapter
 - ii. If your chapter is not attending, you and your adviser will register as the only two from your chapter
- c. Travel
 - i. Officers must travel with an approved CA FBLA local chapter adviser.
 - ii. Officers should travel with their local chapter.
 - State budget cannot cover travel and hotels anymore due to budget
- d. Schedule

- i. Friday: Hotel rooms available at 4 PM; Mr. Ropata runs a competitive events practice test session 5-7:30 PM in the main room; students receive scores
 - ii. Saturday:
 - 9 AM opening session
 - Keynote: Shireen Jaffer (Skillify) returning CA FBLA speaker; will also run 3 workshop sessions throughout the day
 - 4 workshop blocks (45 min each), 7 rooms per block; no tracks; all sessions open to all attendees
 - Boxed lunch
 - Battle of the Sections: each section selects 3 members to compete
 - 8-10 PM: Saturday night social hosted by state officers
 - iii. Sunday:
 - Alumni keynote: Amber Afzali (former CA FBLA State President)
 - Finals of the Battle of the Sections
- e. Workshops
 - i. Section officers can submit a workshop proposal to present a workshop. The deadline to submit proposals is September 11. The proposal form will be distributed next week.
 - ii. State officers will work in pairs to present workshops
 - iii. Each pair will present one 45-minute workshop twice
 - iv. Section presidents should personally invite section officers they think would be strong presenters
 - Pairs are permitted for proposals
- f. Keynote speaker
 - i. Shareen Jaffer (Skillify)
 - ii. Amber Afzali (former CA FBLA State President)

Action Items

- a. **Mara Grepo:**
 - a. Message old team for social information
 - b. Talk to new officers about meeting change
- b. **Arhan Chakravarthy:**
 - a. Finalizing and sending out the meeting notes
 - b. Finish setting up the google classroom
- c. **Jolene Luong:**
 - a. Send State logo to state officer and directors

- b. Prepare information for engagement committee videos
- d. **Stravika Nemani:**
 - a. Advertise LDI to the Bay Section
 - b. Start state ambassador program for LDI
- e. **Sehrish Hirani:**
 - a. Regarding engagement committee: add google form to central section connection newsletter
 - b. Closing reflection for OAT Day & promoting LDI
- f. **Brielle Levesque:**
 - a. Continue reaching out to people in biotech industries for Beyond the Blazer interviews
 - b. Finalize OAT Day planning with section team
- g. **Emma Lim:**
 - a. Promote the webinar
 - b. Finalize OAT Day Planning
- h. **Elliot Johnson:**
 - a. Email Northern section officers for doing workshops
 - b. Email Ms. Christensen for something about the website
- i. **Vanessa Xu:**
 - a. Encourage section officers for LDI
 - b. Finalize OAT Day Planning and promote LDI
- j. **Ava George**
 - a. Draft ideas for LDI
 - b. Talk to section advisors for LDI

Announcements/Questions

- a. Review the information from this meeting with your advisers and forward the meeting minutes to your adviser when you receive them
- b. Next meeting **September 17 at 5:30 pm** via Zoom

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at **7:03 PM** on **August 20th, 2026**, by President **Mara Grepo**.

Submitted by

Arhan Chakravarthy, State Secretary

August 20th, 2026 - Board Meeting Minutes