

HISTORY OF ARKANSAS FBLA

On May 1, 1954, Arkansas held its first state conference at the Marion Hotel in Little Rock, Arkansas, to adopt a constitution, elect state officers, and petition for a state charter. Miss Dorothy Frazier of Little Rock was elected the first state president. The Arkansas Chapter of FBLA was chartered June 14, 1954, with 18 local chapters. In 1958, Mr. Frederick Basco was named State Chairman of FBLA and an extensive campaign was launched to increase the number of chapters in the state.

Fort Smith High School was the first known Arkansas chapter to receive a national charter and was assigned the number 222. Arkansas Polytechnic College (now Arkansas Tech University) was the first college in Arkansas to affiliate with the FBLA national organization and was assigned charter number 1417.

In 1958, the national office approved separate divisions for high school and college members, and the collegiate division was officially designated as Phi Beta Lambda. In 1959, Arkansas State Teacher's College (now the University of Central Arkansas) was the first Arkansas chapter to receive its new name of Phi Beta Lambda. However, the two groups continued to hold their state conferences together.

At the 1962 FBLA State Conference, the college chapters voted to hold their conference for the following year separately from the high school chapters. Under the leadership of William Hopper, Phi Beta Lambda State President from the College of the Ozarks (now University of the Ozarks), plans were made for the first Phi Beta Lambda State Conference which was held March 22-23, 1963.

In 1970, State Departments of Education staff members were appointed as state advisers. The state advisers were assigned to work with the state officers to help plan and direct activities of the FBLA and PBL state chapters. The state advisers are on the State Board of Directors along with the president of FBLA and the president of PBL and one district coordinator. State Department of Career Education staff members who have served as state advisers and state chair are

FBLA STATE ADVISERS

| | |
|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1971-1976 | Tommie Butler |
| 1976-1977 | Linda Beene |
| 1978-1979 | Jean McEntire |
| 1979-1985 | Marsha Brown |
| 1986-1987 | Carolyn Osborne |
| 1988-1994 | Hettie Lou Martin |
| 1994-1995 | Renee Perry |
| 1995-1996 | Bill Wooley |
| 1997-2006 | Hettie Lou Martin |
| 2006-2008 | Jim Brock |
| 2008-Present..... | Peggy Wakefield |

FBLA STATE CHAIR

| | |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| 1965-1972 | Mildred Brading |
| 1973-1976 | Amanda Copeland |
| 1977-1996 | Tommie Butler |
| 1996-2000 | Kay Baker |
| 2000-2003 | Linda Shock |
| 2004-2008 | Sandra Porter |
| 2008-Present..... | Jim Brock |

District Divisions

By 1971, the state membership had grown to the point that it was necessary to divide into districts just as the nation is divided into regions. Five districts were originally created. District workshops and conferences were then held to elect officers and enable students to participate in competitive events. The top five winners in each district event would then be eligible to compete on the state level. An officer was elected from each district to serve as a district president as well as a vice president on the state level. The state vice presidents for each district are elected at their District Spring Leadership Conferences prior to the State Leadership Conference. The state president, secretary, treasurer, and reporter are then elected at the State Conference. The underclassman filing an application and scoring the highest on the Parliamentary Procedure written test is also appointed state parliamentarian at the State Leadership Conference.

During the 1983-1984 school year, the districts were expanded to allow for further growth of the state chapter. The boundaries of the districts were adjusted to create a sixth district.

In the 1988-1989 school year, the district boundaries were once again adjusted to accommodate growth in membership. The new district officers for Districts VII and VIII were elected at the State Leadership Conference in April 1989 so that the officers would be able to take advantage of the training opportunities offered at the state and national levels. The addition of the new districts increased the number of state officers from 11 to 13.

With the consolidation of numerous schools in the early 2000s, the decision was made in 2006 to return to six districts.

In addition to the six senior high districts, there are five junior high districts in the state organization. The first junior high district was established in 1978 for junior high business programs in the central part of the state. Then in 1990, another district was added in northwest Arkansas to accommodate the growth of junior high business education programs. In 1991, two additional junior high districts were established--one in south Arkansas and one in northeast Arkansas. In 1998, a fifth district was added in the southeast to accommodate the growth of FBLA in that area of the state.

Senior High Districts by Counties

District I – Benton, Crawford, Franklin, Johnson, Logan, Polk, Scott, Sebastian, and Washington.

District II – Clay, Craighead, Crittenden, Cross, Greene, Independence, Jackson, Lawrence, Mississippi, Poinsett, Randolph, Sharp, and St. Francis.

District III – Arkansas, Ashley, Bradley, Calhoun, Chicot, Cleveland, Dallas, Desha, Drew, Grant, Jefferson, Lee, Lincoln, Monroe, Ouachita, Phillips, and Union.

District IV – Clark, Columbia, Garland, Hempstead, Hot Spring, Howard, Lafayette, Little River, Miller, Montgomery, Nevada, Pike, Saline, and Sevier.

District V – Cleburne, Conway, Faulkner, Lonoke, Perry, Pope, Prairie, Pulaski, White, Woodruff, and Yell.

District VI – Baxter, Boone, Carroll, Fulton, Izard, Madison, Marion, Newton, Searcy, Sharp, Stone, and Van Buren.

National Officers and Board Members

In addition to a strong state chapter, Arkansas has been represented on the national level by national FBLA officers and members of the Board of Directors.

The first Arkansan elected to serve on the FBLA-PBL National Board of Directors was Ms. Tommie Butler, FBLA-PBL State Chairman. She was followed by Dr. Dean Clayton, PBL Adviser at the University of Arkansas, Fayetteville. The third Arkansan to serve on the National Board of Directors was Dr. David Rankin, PBL Adviser from Southern Arkansas University. Ms. Hettie Lou Martin, FBLA State Adviser, also served on the Board. Ms. Tommie Butler served a second term. Ms. Bobbie Timmermann of Nettleton High School was elected to the National Board of Directors in 1998, becoming the first local FBLA adviser from Arkansas to serve on the Board. Additionally, Mr. Joey Jones, Wal-Mart, Bentonville, and Mr. Ron Erwin, Jonesboro, have also served as Business and Industry members of the Board.

Mr. Shawn Copeland of Nettleton was the first Arkansan to be elected as National FBLA President. National presidents of each of the three divisions serve as members of the National Board of Directors. Shawn served during the 1987-1988 school year. A list of Arkansas FBLA members who have served as national officers follows.

FBLA National Officers

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|--|--|
| 1971-72 Vice President, Southern Region | Pat Morrison Parkview High School |
| 1974-75 Vice President, Southern Region | Les Baledge Flippin High School |
| 1977-78 Vice President, Southern Region | Tim Collier Hot Springs High School |
| 1979-80 Secretary | Prema Abraham Mountain Home High School |
| 1980-81 Vice President, Southern Region | Mark McGough Nettleton High School |
| 1986-87 Vice President, Southern Region | Wil Johnson Conway High School |
| 1987-88 President | Shawn Copeland Nettleton High School |
| 1988-89 Treasurer | Darren Irby Mountain Home High School |
| 1989-90 Vice President, Southern Region | Brent Ford Lonoke High School |
| 1994-95 Secretary | Samantha Bryd El Dorado High School |
| 2001-2002 Secretary | Natalie Bennett Lonoke High School |