Local Competition Guide

PURPOSE

This resource provides a detailed guide for hosting a local SkillsUSA competition. Students may participate in these events to qualify for a future state association event (check with the respective state association director to verify eligibility requirements). This resource is designed to guide the planning of local competitions and events. These events are managed by local chapters or state associations, not by the national office.

PLANNING

NOTE: The recommended time may be adjusted based on school and program needs.

Task / Timeline	Description / Resources
Determine which competition(s) will be held. *6 to 12 months before the event.*	Review the Competition Categories and Competition Descriptions at https://www.skillsusa.org/competitions/skillsusa-championships/categories-and-descriptions/ A local competition can serve as an effective method to implement SkillsUSA technical standards within the classroom. These competitions can be structured to align with curriculum objectives and often require little to no budget, making them an accessible and practical way to enhance student engagement and skill development. • Review the list of the competitions offered by your state association to align your local events to foster preparation and student success.
School/district meeting *6 to 12 months before the event*	Meet with the school or district administration to gain approval for the event to ensure you are aware of all school/district guidelines. Consider the following: • Why host a SkillsUSA competition? ○ Involve a greater number of students in SkillsUSA and leadership development ○ Collaborate with business and industry ○ Develop SkillsUSA Framework skills ○ Serve as an assessment of leadership skills and career readiness • Logistical details ○ Date and time *(school day or after-school event)* ○ Location ○ Facility and equipment requirements • Potential funding sources ○ Program budget ○ Business and industry sponsorships ○ Community donations • What other approval(s) and paperwork will be required? ○ Insurance/liability waivers ○ Facility/maintenance requests ○ Guest approval ○ Parking passes
School/district paperwork *6 to 12 months before the event*	Schools/districts may require paperwork to be completed and submitted to host such an event. This might include, but is not limited to insurance, liability, waivers, facility requests, maintenance orders, and on-campus guests' approval. If the event will include a meal, ensure to submit a maintenance request for extra trash cans and cleaning supplies or cleanup assistance.

Notes:

Task / Timeline	Description / Resources
Advisory Committee *6 to 12 months before the event*	Meet with the program advisory committee(s) to gain approval and seek guidance for the planning and coordination of the competition. Consider the following: • Why host a SkillsUSA competition? ○ Involve a greater number of students in SkillsUSA and leadership development ○ Collaborate with business and industry ○ Develop SkillsUSA Framework skills ○ Serve as an assessment of leadership skills and career readiness • Logistical details ○ Date and time *(school day or after-school event)* ○ Location ○ Facility and equipment requirements • How can the committee help? ○ Identify partners and sponsors ○ Promotion ○ Judge ○ Provide meals, snacks, prizes, and required competition resources
SkillsUSA General Regulations *6 to 12 months before the event*	Carefully review the SkillsUSA General Regulations to learn the general regulations relating to all competitions. Available on SkillsUSA national website: https://www.skillsusa.org/competitions/skillsusa-championships/
Technical Standards *6 to 12 months before the event*	Carefully review the Technical Standards to learn the specific rules and procedures about the competition(s). To access the Technical Standards, visit: https://www.skillsusa.org/competitions/skillsusa-championships/technical-standards/. Take special note of facility, time, and volunteer requirements. Also, review Competition Updates for clarifications and resources: https://www.skillsusa.org/competitions/skillsusa-championships/competition-updates/
Budget *6 to 12 months before the event*	A local competition often requires little to no budget, making it an accessible and practical way to enhance student engagement and skill development. If planning a larger event create a budget for anticipated event expenses. Expenditures will vary greatly depending on the number of competitions, participants, and guests. ***Sample Expense* budget** Event meal (100 people) $1,500.00 Awards, medals, etc. (top 5 places) 500.00 Recognition banner 100.00 Gifts for volunteers, judges, etc. 300.00 Materials 500.00 **Total $3,000.00**
Sponsors/donors *6 to 12 months before the event*	When the community hears students will have this unique competition experience, they may want to contribute. Contact local businesses, community organizations, and program supporters to seek sponsorships. Reach out to other SkillsUSA chapters in your area who may be interested in collaborating on a local event. Use a variety of communication methods. Start with a phone call or in-person visit and follow up with an email or letter. **See the Appendix for a sample letter/email.**

Notes:

Task / Timeline	Description / Resources
Promotional campaign *6 months before the event*	The goal is to create a wide-reaching promotional campaign to inform students, parents, teachers, administrators, business and industry, and local news media about the event. This is not just a competition; it is an opportunity for students to apply what they have learned through the program and be recognized for it. The power of effective promotion should not be overlooked. Make sure the message is consistent and clear. Ensure all the necessary details are included. • Flyers or posters on campus • School or parent newsletter • Announcement at staff meeting • Social media • Discussion at the advisory committee meeting • Email to all business and industry supporters • Email to parents • Contact local newspapers, TV, and radio
Facilities *4 to 6 months before the event*	Check each competition's Technical Standards to determine how many rooms will be needed. Do not forget to include assembly areas, testing room, preparation room, and presentation areas, as needed, as well as break and meal areas.
Materials *4 to 6 months before the event*	Check each competition's Technical Standards to determine what supplies and materials will be needed. Check with local advisory committees, business partners, and others for donations.
Judges/Volunteers *4 to 6 months before the event*	Securing qualified judges is one of the most critical parts of hosting a competition. Check each competition's Technical Standards to determine how many personnel will be needed for each event. Potential judge candidates should have a working knowledge of the respective competition area. Do not forget to include extra scorekeepers, timers, and runners. Ideally, judges are familiar with SkillsUSA as well. Contact local advisory committee members, business representatives, community leaders, and educators concerning judging the competition. Multiple forms of communication are ideal. Start with in-person visits or phone calls, followed by an email or letter. Two weeks before the event, follow up to ensure judges are still available to serve. Don't forget about the awards ceremony committee. For many chapters, the chapter officers can facilitate the awards ceremony but if the officers are not available or are competitors, you will need three to four volunteers to organize and facilitate the awards ceremony. Consider a keynote speaker if time allows. **See the Appendix for a sample letter/email.**
Meals/refreshments *4 to 6 months before the event*	Depending on the budget and size of the event, you may plan to serve a meal or refreshments to competitors, judges, and guests. Providing a meal as a part of the event is about taking care of people. In addition, it provides competitors, judges, and guests with something to do during downtime and while waiting for the awards ceremony. Options include: • Prepare the meal or refreshments in-house • Hire a caterer or use the school culinary program • Ask a sponsor to provide the meal or refreshments

Notes:

Task / Timeline	Description / Resources
Awards and gifts *2 to 3 months before the event*	Depending on the event budget, there are several award options: • Pins or Small Medallions • Plaques • Ribbons • Certificates It is a nice gesture to present the sponsors, judges, and volunteers with a small token of appreciation. If the program is involved in manufacturing this is a good place to have students create and build gifts using their skills. • SkillsUSA logo items • School spirit wear (T-shirt, hoodie, or hat) • Custom coffee cup or mug SkillsUSA Store awards and gifts can be found at www.skillsusastore.org.
Banners *2 to 3 months before the event*	At least six weeks out, finalize sponsorships from local business and industry. Contact a local sign company and have a sponsor banner made. There is the potential for business and industry to contribute sizeable donations to the event and they should be publicly recognized for their contribution.
Competitive event packets *1 to 2 months before the event*	For the competitive event team to effectively complete their responsibilities, they will need specific materials. Contents of the event packets should include: • Judge instructions • Technical Standards • Some competitions may need extra items ○ Copies of the topic, including the SkillsUSA theme, posted on the SkillsUSA website at: https://www.skillsusa.org/resources/member-resources/theme/ ○ Assembly Room Monitor Packet: Assembly room monitor instructions ○ Timer Packet: Stopwatch or timer, timer instructions, timecards ○ Runner Packet: runner instructions and order numbers • Scoring rubric ○ Many SkillsUSA competitions have Excel scoring rubrics. Contact the state director for more information.
Make signs *1 to 2 weeks before the event*	Create directional/informational signage for the day of the competition. Where should they park? Do they have to check into the office? What room do they need to report to? This information should also be sent out before the competition. Include a campus map and directions.
Volunteer Meeting *1 to 2 weeks before the event*	***Sample*** **Agenda** • Welcome • Competition purpose • Competition schedule ○ 8:30 a.m. Competition begins ○ 12:00 p.m. Lunch ○ 12:30 p.m. Finals (if needed) ○ 3:00 p.m. Awards Ceremony • Specific roles/responsibilities ○ Judges ○ Timers ○ Runners ○ Assembly room monitors • Meals/refreshments • Questions

Notes:

Task / Timeline	Description / Resources
Chapter officer/committee training *1 to 2 weeks before the event*	Hold one or more trainings for the chapter officers or committee in charge of facilitating the Awards Ceremony. Plan out the entire Awards Ceremony so everyone knows who is doing what and when. • Have awards/gifts set up in the order in which they will be presented. • Know how to properly pronounce every name that will be announced at the Awards Ceremony. (Write names down phonetically and practice; ask students how to say names if unsure.) • Begin with a short introduction, including congratulating competitors, and recognizing sponsors, judges, and volunteers. • Announce finalists in reverse order ranking. • Don't rush awards. ○ The purpose of the Awards Ceremony is to recognize student success. Allow time for competitors to walk the awards area and be recognized. Celebrate every student. • At the conclusion of the Awards Ceremony, thank those in attendance.

IMPLEMENTATION

This will help maximize clarity for competitors, judges, and volunteers and ensure efficient use of time.

Task / Timeline	Description / Resources
Facility set-up *1 day before the event*	If possible, complete all the set-up for the event the day or evening before the event.
Event Meeting *1 hour before the event*	Hold a brief meeting approximately one hour before the event. This meeting is designed to hand out packets and answer any last-minute questions.
Competition orientation meeting(s) *Event start time*	Hold orientation meetings for all competitors, judges, volunteers, and guests. This meeting is designed to welcome those in attendance, review the schedule for the competition, and inform judges and guests of the location of important facilities (bathrooms, meals/refreshments, competition area, etc.). During this meeting, the following may be covered: • Welcome • Review the competition schedule ○ Competitors may need to draw for competition times • Review SkillsUSA General Regulations and Technical Standards ○ Important reminders and announcements, may include the following: ○ Observer policy • Questions
Be involved *During event*	Don't forget to document the event. Take pictures and conduct interviews. This will pay dividends when promoting after the event is complete.
Meals/refreshments *During event*	Eating is a great distraction before the Awards Ceremony and serving food gives judges time to calculate scores and determine winners.
Coordinate scoring *After competition*	Once the last competitor is finished, judges will need to add scores. Make sure to check all scorecards and rankings to ensure tabulations are correct. If judges are using an Excel scoring rubric, this process will be fast and simple.

Notes:

Task / Timeline	Description / Resources
Awards Ceremony *After scores are finalized*	Once tabulations are finalized, it's time to celebrate the great work done by the students. Hold an Awards Ceremony to recognize and highlight student achievement. Either the chapter officers or awards committee have been trained and are ready to go. ***Sample* program** • Opening remarks • Congratulate competitors • Recognize and thank sponsors, judges, and volunteers • Competition results • Concluding remarks
Clean up *After event*	Clean and rearrange all rooms. Leave the rooms/campus looking *better* than you found them.

EVALUATION

What must be accomplished to improve the local competition event in the future?

Task / Timeline	Description / Resources
Thank-you notes *No later than 1 week after the event*	A sound practice is to follow up the event with thank you notes to judges, sponsors, and volunteers. Ideally, these would be written by competitors or the officer team. Remember, you are building relationships that will last a long time. **See the Appendix for a sample thank you note.**
Report results *No later than 1 week after the event*	The community would love to read about the great event and the impact it had on the students. Using the same promotion and awareness methods employed before the event to promote the achievement of the students – not just the winners. Recognize and thank sponsors, judges, and volunteers. Post photos on the school or SkillsUSA social media channels and submit a story and photos to the local newspaper.
Financial report *No later than 1 week after the event*	After the event, collect all receipts, invoices, and total expenses. Compare the draft budget to what was spent. Include sponsorships and donations. ***Sample* financial report** **ITEM** — **BUDGET** — **ACTUAL** Event meal (100 people) — $1,500.00 — $2,000.00 Awards, medals, etc. (top 5 places) — 500.00 — 600.00 Recognition banner — 100.00 — *(donated)* 0.00 Gifts for volunteers, judges, etc. — 300.00 — 500.00 Materials — 500.00 — 1,000.00 **Total** — **$3,000.00** — **$4,100.00** **Sponsorship / Donations / Registration Fees** — **ACTUAL** Registration Fees — $2,000.00 Organization Name — 1,500.00 **Total Donations** — **$3,500.00** **Final event expense** — **$600.00**
Post-event meeting *No later than 1 week after the event*	Hold a post-event meeting for advisors, competitors, sponsors, judges, and volunteers to gain feedback and discuss areas of improvement.

Notes:

APPENDIX

Sample Sponsorship Letter or Email

Dear Mr. Slimmer and Harbor Freight,

We have exciting news! The Liberty High School SkillsUSA chapter will be hosting a local competition on March 27. The goal of this event is to provide all SkillsUSA students the opportunity to develop and strengthen their technical and leadership skills. We are excited about this learning opportunity for our students, and we need your help.

To make this opportunity possible for our students, we will need to provide resources and lunch for the competitors, judges, volunteers, and guests. If you are able, we would be so appreciative if you would serve as a sponsor for the event. We expect the competition event to cost around $3,000.00. Anything that you are willing and able to contribute is appreciated. We would also like to invite you to attend the event. Below are the specific event details:

Date: Saturday, March 27
Time: 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Location: Liberty High School Campus

If you can help, please respond by October 15. If you have any further questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Moriah Vasquez, President
Liberty High School
SkillsUSA Chapter

Sample Judges Letter or Email

Dear Ms. Garner and City Toyota,

We have exciting news! The Liberty High School SkillsUSA chapter will be hosting a local competition on March 27. The goal of this event is to provide all SkillsUSA students the opportunity to develop and strengthen their technical and leadership skills. We are excited about this learning opportunity for our students, and we need your help.

To make this opportunity possible for our students, we need qualified judges for the *(insert competition name)* competition. We greatly admire your experience and expertise in public speaking and believe you would be an outstanding judge and resource for our students. We would be honored if you would be willing and available to serve as a judge! Below are the details for the event:

Date: Saturday, March 27
Time: 8 a.m. – 1 p.m.
Location: Liberty High School Campus

If you can help, please respond by October 15. I have attached a copy of the (*insert competition name)* Technical Standards and scorecard for your reference. If you have any further questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me. Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to hearing from you!

Sincerely,

Moriah Vasquez, President

Liberty High School
SkillsUSA Chapter

Sample Thank You Note

Dear Mr. Garner,

On behalf of the Liberty High School SkillsUSA chapter, thank you for taking time out of your schedule to serve as a judge for the *(insert competition name)* competition. Our goal is to recognize the technical and leadership development and achievement of our students, and that they will use these skills to better the workforce and our community.

Our students have been working diligently to prepare for this competition, and your thoughtful support makes this opportunity possible. We appreciate your contribution beyond words and hope to continue to build a mutually beneficial relationship with you and *(insert organization name)*. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Moriah Vasquez, President
Liberty High School
SkillsUSA Chapter