

## History

Wisconsin's first chapter was formed in 1942 at West Bend High School and was issued national chapter #39. More and more schools formed FBLA chapters as the years progressed.

Wisconsin FBLA was organized after the first ten chapters were formed. Ray Ruppel, adviser at Waukesha High School, and his wife Murl assisted in this organization through their continuous support and enthusiasm.

The first state leadership conference was held at Waukesha High School during the 1953-54 school year. Seven chapters were represented by a total of 135 delegates.

Later in 1954 the first executive board meeting was hosted by the Beaver Dam FBLA chapter, also the site of the second annual state conference. Nine of the ten chartered chapters attended this conference.

Lorraine Missling, adviser at Nicolet High School, became the first state adviser for FBLA in 1959. Ray Ruppel continued as the state chairperson.

Attendance at Wisconsin leadership conferences continued to increase, as did the number of competitive events and other special activities. The ninth annual leadership conference was held in a larger facility at Green Lake Center, Green Lake, Wisconsin. The ninth through the twenty-fourth annual leadership conferences were held in Green Lake.

Bill Dregler from Shawano High School, state president in 1968, became Wisconsin's first national president. In 1970, Preston Smeltzer became the state adviser and Ruel Falk was appointed state chairperson. They were employed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

In 1978, 1,200 FBLA members and advisers celebrated the 25th annual state leadership conference in Green Bay. The theme was: "Silver Standards with Golden Ideals."

The Brown County Arena was the home of the Wisconsin State Leadership Conference until 1985. From 1985 to 2007, the FBLA SLCs have been held at the Regency Suites Convention Center in Green Bay. Since then, the SLCs have been held in different locations around the state.

An important reason for the success we share is that we all believe in our organization and in each other. We believe in our Creed, our goals, and our personal commitments to our national student organization for business education.