

Pennsylvania FFA Association Board of Directors

Meeting May 14th, 2025

The meeting was called to order by President Chloe Bomgardner at 12:55 PM and the State Officer Team conducted opening ceremonies. In attendance were Chloe Bomgardner, Nathan Lesh, Sydney Albright, Emily Kerstetter, Evan Espenshade, Kennady Laird, Jaclyn Martin, Mike Brammer, Doug Masser, Michael Clark, Renee Cambuzzi, Chris Davis, Nathan Schanbacher, Ron Fredrick, Katie Ranck, Sarah Sparks, Krista Pontius, Sherisa Nailor, Natalie Barkley, Melanie Berndtson, Anthony Honeycutt, Neil Fellenbaum, Kevin Curry, Brandon Witmer, Alex Barzydlo, and Jodie Hoover.

Kerstetter/Martin moved to accept the minutes presented from the March meeting. Motion passed. Clark/Cambuzzi moved to concur. Motion passed.

Reports of Officers/Staff

Executive Director Report: Brammer presented the financial report for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The financial report will be filed for audit.

State Officer Team Report: The State Officer team gave an oral and visual presentation reviewing what the team has been doing since the March Board of Directors meeting and what they are looking forward to for the rest of this year. A written report was also provided.

Standing Committees

CDE/LDE Committee: Barzydlo presented the CDE/LDE committee report. At the March meeting a google form for chairpersons application was presented and tabled until this meeting. The Board approved this application. Lesh/Espenshade moved to concur. Motion passed. The application can be found here

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1IOb6RC_drXzcXEJmRO0w61j7rrHxWZx9/view?usp=sharing

SAE Committee: Nailor presented the SAE committee report. SECOND VOTE on policy changes listed at the end of the minutes. Also to add policy stating that Students must have at least two different agricultural classes across their instructional time to receive their keystone degree and be in an ANFR pathway. Motion passes. Laird/Kerstetter moved to concur. Motion passed – SECOND VOTE NOW POLICY. George Dietrich was appointed to the committee.

Provided a written report about proposed changes to the keystone degrees. Motion to pass all changes to state awards keystone degree procedures highlighted in red. Motion passes. Kerstetter/Lesh moved to concur.

Reports of Special Committees:

Strategic Planning: Dr. Curry and Dr. Musser have dates set to start the strategic planning before State Convention on June 3, 2025. There is a 10 person max to meet with the planner. Barzydlo, Ch. Bomgardner, and Lesh will also be attending the meeting as board representatives.

Competitive Events Creation: Sparks provided a written report of association board policy change and provided that there would need to be an application that would have to be filled out to present the creation/development committee with a new competitive event. There is an application that has been drafted asking about chapters that participate in this event, is it offered in other places like the Big E and nationals, why is it being submitted for approval, has it been offered for two years, how does it relate to agriculture, and other questions along those lines. The application can only be submitted by a regional coordinator. As a committee report with an implied second, the Board approve this policy change. Motion passed. Lesh/Kerstetter moved to concur. **SECOND VOTE NEEDED IN JUNE.** NEW policy at the end of the minutes.

Idea to bring back in August – How many is too many competitive events being offered? Time/resources and space are a concern. More discussion needed.

Chartering Committee: SECOND VOTE on the new policy for chaperones/charters which was provided in a written report. Motion passed. Laird/Kerstetter moved to concur. NOW POLICY – LISTED AT THE END OF THE MINUTES.

Brammer provided an update on chartering CCA – This charter is on hold pending an approved Agriculture certified teacher.

Discussion about adding a policy about ways to stay a chapter, and what happens if the certified agriculture teacher leaves was held. To grant a charter, the school has to have a certified agriculture teacher, but there is no policy about what to do if the certified teacher leaves and a non-certified teacher becomes the instructor of record/FFA Advisor. Need further discussion.

Masser entertained a motion to approve the charter for McCaskey High School. Motion passed. Espenshade/Martin moved to concur.

Middle School Committee: No report at this time.

National Chapter Award Committee: Berndtson provided a written report. Reviewed information advisors had sent in. Discussed some topics that can be brought up with the committee. The committee will be accepting applications in AET. Teachers or anyone with direct contact to a chapter cannot be a judge.

Motion to approve this as our procedure/process and a \$500 budget for AET. Motion passed. Lesh/Martin moved to concur. SEE END OF MINUTES.

Human Resources: Clark presented a report. The committee has been assembled. June 2026 is the new hiring date for an executive director, and the committee needs to have a plan before then on a transition plan.

Leadership Conference review Committee: Rank provided a written report. The committee did a Swat analysis, and decided they should look at reevaluating the structure of leadership conferences. They want to send a survey to advisors asking if we are meeting student needs and what the student needs are. More work to do. Report back in August.

Unfinished business:

Regional Alignment Research: Nothing to report at this time.

SLLC Review: Lesh covered this topic during the State Officer Report.

Convention/Activities Week Preview/Constitutional Amendment: Brammer reported that registration for convention closes May 15, 2025. There are 34 state officer candidates this year. Gold Toe SOCS is being held this weekend.

New business:

2025-2026 Budget Approval

Kerstetter/Espenshade moved to accept the 2025-2026 budget as written. Lesh/Clark moved to concur. Motion passed.

Honorary & Citation Awards - 2025

Lesh/Albright moved to accept the Honorary degrees and Citation Awards for 2025 as written with the addition of Jack VanSant and Neil LeFever. Kerstetter/Espenshade moved to concur. Motion passed.

Farm Show Letters of Disqualification: Brammer announced that if there are any problems with animals and they are disqualified, the student showing is also disqualified from showing for 1-2 years. What, if anything should be done with this information? This topic will be tabled until the August meeting. Davis and others to research.

4-H sharing space with our competitive events at Activities Week: The board is not in favor of sharing space at this time due to liabilities, costs, etc.

Terms for members of standing committees: Masser provided a written report about adding a policy for standing committee members terms. There is no current policy. The proposed policy highlights terms and purposes of committees. Cambruzzi/Barzydlo moved to create a committee to review the entire policy manual, made up of 5 members chosen by the Board chair. The members include Cambruzzi-Chair, Davis, Berndtson, Nailor, and Frederick. Lesh/Espenshade moved to concur. Motion passes.

Clearances & # of Chaperones/Students needed for events: Masser provided a written report. No action was taken today on this policy change. Referred to the manual revision committee.

Board elections: Rank nominated Hoover for president. Hoover accepted the nomination. Clark nominated Berndtson for vice-president. Berndtson accepted the nomination. Moved to accept Hoover for president and Berndtson for Vice-President. Motion passed.

Good of the Order:

Regional Coordinators:

South Central Region- Barkley provided an update from the region.

Eastern Region- Frederick reported that there were 850 students registered for Eastern Region CDEs, and New Jersey attended.

Western Region and Northern Region not in attendance and no report provided.

Penn State Agricultural Teacher Education/Center Report: Curry reported that there are six students that just graduated. Four are on the market, one is the honey queen, and one has a job. Thirteen are graduating next year. 17 the following year and 30 the following. Interviewing for Ewing's position. 2025-26 professional development programming coming soon. Currently 11 students undergoing instructional certificates currently teaching.

PA FFA Foundation: Sparks provided a written report.

Commission for Agriculture Education Excellence: Davis reported that they are still working on creating a definition of Agricultural Education to help legislators and others to understand what it is so that everyone is on the same page. Also working on different education opportunities including a mobile butchering lab to help with the shortage of butchers. Still working on changes and improvements to NOCTI tests. Farm show updates - registration for all Department 26 entries will all be online, and premium books are coming out shortly. The suggested theme for entries is America - 250.

SAE Specialist: Fay provided a written report. Not in attendance.

PAAE: Pontius reported that the summer conference will be held at Otto-Eldred during the second week of July. PAAE will be hosting an agriculture education family meeting on July 8, 2025 before the conference to talk about the future, changes that are happening, and prepping for what is to come.

FFA Alumni: Nailor reported that WLC registrations have all been paid, and that Gold Toe SOCS is being hosted this weekend, and that 27 of the 34 candidates have registered. Brandon Bixler is leading SOCS this year.

Announcements:

Future Board Meetings: 2025-2026

(At PSU) June 11 & 12

(At Country Inn & Suites - State College) August 6, (Wed) December 2, (Tues) March 11, 2026, (Wed) May 12 (Tues)

Other Events:

- o State Convention & Activities Week- June 10-12, 2025
- o Fall Leadership – October 7, 2025
- o Farm Show 2026 – January 10-17, 2026
- o Mid-Winter Convention – January 12, 2026
- o ACES 2026 - Jan 31-Feb 1, Feb 14-15, Feb 21-22, Feb 28-March 1
- o SLLC 2026 – March 22-24
- o 97th State Convention/Activities Week – June 9-11, 2026 (Tentative)

Closing ceremonies were conducted by the State Officer Team. The meeting adjourned at 4:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Brammer,
FFA Executive Director

Sydney Albright,
FFA State Secretary

SAE COMMITTEE POLICY CHANGES – APPROVED

I.c. Regional Coordinators

I.c.1. Duties of Regional Coordinators

- i. Work with the state advisor, executive manager, and FFA facilitator to ~~insure~~ **ensure** continuity of program and purpose. Perform such duties as assigned to assist with the establishment and advancement of the FFA. Serve as liaison between the State Association and local chapters in their respective region. Coordinate the flow of information from the State Association and the local chapter and vice versa.
- ii. Facilitate the management, organization, and implementation and forward the information to the ~~FFA Facilitator~~ **PA FFA Association State Office** of the following regional FFA activities:
 1. Parliamentary procedure, public speaking, safe tractor driving, and small gasoline engines.
 2. Keystone Degree selection, Regional Star selections, and **evaluation of** Proficiency awards, including checking appropriate documentation.
 3. Attend state staff meetings and Board of Directors meetings to be an integral part of the decisions making process, and reflect the concerns of each region at the meetings.
 4. Assist, if needed, with FFA activities at the Pennsylvania State Farm Show and Pennsylvania FFA Association Mid-Winter Convention and State FFA Convention.
 5. Attend PAAE Regional meetings to update teachers on FFA activities.
 6. May conduct other Career **and Leadership** Development Events as needed and requested by regional teachers.

I.c.2. Term Of Office

- i. Region Coordinators shall serve for two years starting on June 1. The Executive Manager will advertise for regional coordinators. Regional Coordinators' Job Description and Selection Procedure.

Section IV: State Awards

IV.a. Keystone Degree Procedures

- i. Candidates must be at least a junior in high school to be eligible to apply for the Keystone degree.
 1. Keystone Degree verification process will take place at the ~~Regional~~ **State** level. ~~Regional Coordinators shall schedule the event and form a committee of six eight to evaluate the applications. A list will then be provided to the Executive Manager of those approved.~~ **The State evaluation committee will consist of a minimum of eight (8) members, none of which shall be current PA Agricultural Educators. This committee will be formed and coordinated by the PA FFA Association Executive Manager.**
 2. All other details of the evaluation process will be outlined and approved by the PA FFA Association Board of Directors annually.

IV.b. Guidelines for Selection of Keystone Degree Recipients and Star Candidates.

IV.b.1. Keystones i. All Keystone FFA Degree applications and appropriate information need to be ~~forwarded to the corresponding regional coordinator~~ **registered and submitted for evaluation** according to the directions and dates set forth by the Pennsylvania FFA Association Board of Directors.

IV.b.2. ~~Regional~~ **Keystone** Stars Selection i. Candidates **MUST** be approved to receive their Keystone Degree the same year applying for STAR.

- ii. The regional coordinator will oversee a selection committee comprised of an agriculture teacher from each area (when possible) and a representative from the agricultural or education industry, when possible. The committee members should not be from the same high school as a star candidate for the category of selection.
- iii. The top candidates from each area will be present for an interview with the selection committee. Upon the conclusion of the selection committee evaluation and interviews, their recommendation for regional stars shall be submitted, by the regional FFA coordinator, to the FFA Board of Directors for final approval. When the regional selection committee meets, they will take into account the following:
 - 1. That the student has in operation, an outstanding supervised agricultural and/or other occupational experiences program, which must show comprehensive planning, continuation, growth, and increase in scope with records to substantiate such accomplishments.
 - 2. That only the appropriate part of the application that is being considered for star shall be judged. Examples: production pages should not have bearing in selecting star agricultural business and vice versa
 - 3. That the best candidates of that year be considered for stars. Time should be provided for those candidates, following Regional Star Selection to provide additional documentation for the State Star Selection Committee

IV.b. 3. State Star Selection Committee

- i. The SAE Specialist or the FFA Board designee will oversee a selection committee for each star category to review applications and interview the candidates **according to the procedure and timeline approved by the PA FFA Association Board of Directors.** ~~the morning of the Pennsylvania FFA Association Mid-Winter Convention. (2017)~~
- ii. This committee will consist of one Pennsylvania agricultural educator (when possible), one member from the FFA Foundation (when possible), and at least one other member that represents the agricultural or education industry for a minimum of three members.
- iii. The committee will be evaluating only those parts of the records and application that pertain to the star category in which the member has applied.

IV.b.4. Star Awards

- i. The four Pennsylvania Star areas are:
 - 1. Star in Ag Production
 - 2. Star in Ag Placement
 - 3. Star in Ag Business
 - 4. Star in Agriscience
- ii. Each regional star will receive a regional plaque and monetary award at the Mid-Winter Convention.
- iii. Each state star will receive a state plaque and monetary award from National FFA at the Pennsylvania FFA Association Mid-Winter Convention
- iv. The representatives that will go on to the Big E will be the four state stars at the Pennsylvania FFA Association Mid-Winter Convention.

IV.b.5. Record Book—State Stars

- vi. All students who apply for county/area, regional and state stars must submit ~~state-approved~~ **complete and accurate** record books for the years covered by the application with their application. 1. Each county/area committee will make their star selection based upon the state definition. All applications and record books will be forwarded to the regional coordinator for evaluation by the regional level verification committee.
- 2. State Keystone verification committee will certify the regional stars **are being recommended for their Keystone Degree and are, therefore, eligible to compete for State Star.**
- 3. Records for all years of the application shall accompany applications to the first level of judging and will be kept with the applications as they progress through judging. Records will be returned

promptly following judging. **Records shall be provided electronically.**

4. ~~State-approved~~ **Complete and accurate** Record Books substantiating all years of activity covered by the application must accompany the application. Photocopies of the required state-approved record book will be acceptable.

CREATION/DEVELOPMENT OF NEW CDE/LDE's POLICY

COMPETITIVE EVENTS CREATION/DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE SECOND VOTE NEEDED IN JUNE

Association Board Policy:

- **A competitive event must be offered at the regional or area level for two years prior to the event becoming a state event.**
 - Reasoning - to formulate the components of the contest, understand the needs of the contest, etc.
- **A competitive event must have a minimum of 10 members or 3 chapters participate at each pilot event prior to the event being offered at the state level.**
 - Reasoning - student interest is driving the addition of new competitive events
- **A competitive event must have a state chair one year prior to the state event.**
 - Reasoning - limited resource of volunteers
- **A competitive event must provide opportunities to various careers in the agriculture industry.**
 - Reasoning - address as many students interests as possible with limited resource Capacity
- **As a competitive event is evaluated an alternative event outside of the state convention can be deemed as our state event if duplication occurs. (Designated Event = National FFA).**
 - Reasoning - limited resource of volunteers
- **As a competitive event is evaluated the potential for sponsorship will be discussed.**
 - Reasoning - limited financial resources
- **Once a competitive event becomes a National or Eastern Regional contest, the chapter will be responsible for trip costs for the first two years. No trip stipends are guaranteed from the PA FFA Foundation during this time. Trip stipends will be provided the third year of the contest being offered.**
 - Reasoning - limited financial resources
- **Competitive events will be evaluated and archived if student interest declines to less than 8 students for three consecutive years.**
 - Reasoning - limited resource of volunteers

CHARTERING COMMITTEE POLICY CHANGE

Update Chaperones Policy

i. Page 15, line 24: “Chapter chaperones must be school district employees or other individuals approved by the school district.”

ii. Page 17, Add after II.e.iii, Line 30: “Chapter chaperones must be school district employees or other individuals approved by the school district.”

i. Add to policy as Section II.d.iii: “The region for an FFA chapter will be determined based on the legal address of the charter/school district. Appeals to the assigned region can be sent to the board of directors for review.”

ii. Edit Section II.d.I.1. Classroom Instruction

1. Current: Courses in the sequence must involve physical seat time in the building.

2. Proposed Change: Courses in the sequence must involve classroom and laboratory instruction related to any disciplines of agriculture.

NATIONAL CHAPTER APPLICATION PROCESS

Hoy and Price will oversee the judging process on Tuesday afternoon of convention week. All applications will be accepted through AET and scored through AET. Must be submitted by 11:59pm Monday June 9th. Chapters will also bring a hard copy and that copy must match the electronic version.

Once registration has closed, a list of chapters stating they are submitting an application will come from Jon Seaman to Berndtson so an email can go to those advisors communicating the need to submit electronically.