

Pennsylvania FFA Association

Board Of Directors Meeting

August 5, 2026

The Meeting was called to order by President Levi Ferster at 1:00 PM with the State Officer Team conducting opening ceremonies. In attendance were: Alex Barzydlo, Mike Clark, Brandon Witmer, Melanie Berndtson, Anthony Honeycutt, Joanna McKelvey, Neil Fellenbaum, Katie Ranck, Ron Frederick, Natalie Barkley, Curt Turner, McKayla Plewe, Sarah Sparks, Krista Pontius, Carole Fay, Alexis Butler, Sarah Firestone, Levi Ferster, Nate Huber, Draven Stout, Garrett Kaltenbach, Tanner Zimmerman, Kayla Hyde, Crystal Bomgardner, Thomas Gabel, and Mike Brammer.

Huber/Kaltenbach moved to accept the minutes presented from the May and June, 2026 meetings. Motion passed. Fellenbaum/Ranck moved to concur. Motion passed.

Reports of Officers/Staff

Executive Director Report

Gabel provided an update on activities since assuming the Executive Director position on June 1st.

Assistant Executive Director Report

Bomgardner provided an update on activities since assuming the Assistant Executive Director position on June 1st.

Financial Report

Brammer presented the financial report. The report will be filed for audit.

State Officer team Report

Zimmerman and Kaltenbach presented an update on what the State Officer Team has done so far and what they hope to accomplish this year.

Reports of Standing Committees

CDE/LDE Committee

Barzydlo presented the report. An updated list of CDE/LDE Committee members was provided. This year there was an appeal filed concerning scoring/placement of the Veterinary Science CDE and the Dairy Cattle Management & Evaluation CDE. In both cases, the appeals were upheld and changes were made to the Results Book.

Proposed changes to align to Nationals: Employment skills, Environment & National Resources, Extemporaneous Public Speaking, Junior Prepared, and Public Speaking. The committee made a motion to approve the changes with an implied second. Motion passed. Zimmerman/Kaltenbach moved to concur. Motion passed.

Proposed changes to Ag Education CDE, Floriculture, and Scrapbook to facilitate their completion at PA FFA Activities Week. The committee made a motion to approve the changes with an implied second. Motion passed. Huber/Zimmerman moved to concur. Motion passed.

The committee proposed the Fruit Judging CDE be approved for State Pilot at the PA Farm Show in January. The committee made a motion to approve with an implied second. Motion passed. Kaltenbach/Stout moved to concur. Motion passed.

The committee recommends additional flexibility with making efforts to align with changes from National FFA that will be sent to the board for approval in December. The committee made a motion to approve the changes with an implied second. Motion passed. Zimmerman/Kaltenbach moved to concur. Motion passed.

Fellenbaum/Firestone moved to allow Alex Barzydlo to contact CDE/LDE Chairs as part of her doctoral research. Motion passed. Zimmerman/Kaltenbach moved to concur. Motion passed.

SAE Committee

Brammer spoke upon the written report provided by Nailor. Included in the report was a personal recommendation from Nailor, suggesting to create a special committee to review the length of competitions for CDEs/LDEs at State Convention.

McKelvey/Fellenbaum moved to create a special committee to review the length of competition for CDEs/LDEs at the State Convention with Sherisa Nailor as the chair and members Alex Barzydlo, Thomas Gabel, and Mike Brammer. Motion passed. Kaltenbach/Huber moved to concur. Motion passed. Report back in December.

Reports of Special Committees

Policy Manual Revision Committee - Plewe

No report.

Strategic Planning Steering Committee - Fellenbaum

No report.

Unfinished Business

Review - Convention & Activities Week

Brammer, Gabel, and Bomgardner provided an update on Convention & Activities Week.

Alexis Butler - National Officer Candidate Update

Butler provided an update on activities during her training as a National Officer Candidate, as well as a preview of upcoming events and training.

New Business

New Charters

- a. **Reach Cyber Charter** - Stout/Kaltenbach moved to grant REACH Cyber Charter School an FFA Charter. Motion passed. Ranck/McKelvey moved to concur. Motion passed.
- b. **Towanda** - Hyde/Kaltenbach moved to grant Towanda High School an FFA Charter. Motion passed. Ranck/Berndtson move to concur. Motion passed.

STATE STARS Process to Mrs. Plewe and Ms. Bomgardner

Gabel presented an update. *Mrs. Fay has asked for a replacement to be named to take over the State Star Selection Process. This requires the board approving new designees. A policy change was also suggested to clarify this appointment for the future.*

Zimmerman/Kaltenbach moved to appoint Mrs. Plewe and Ms. Bomgardner as the FFA Board designees to the State STAR selection process. Motion passed. Fellenbaum/Firestone moved to concur. Motion passed.

*Zimmerman/Kaltenbach moved to amend the Pennsylvania FFA Policy Manual, Section IV.b.3.i Under State Star Selection Committee, by striking the words 'The SAE Specialist or,' so that the provision would read: 'The FFA Board designee will oversee a selection committee for State Star category to review applications and interview the candidates according to the procedure and timeline approved by the Pennsylvania FFA Association Board of Directors. Motion passed. Firestone/Fellenbaum moved to concur. Motion passed. Needs a Second Vote. **POLICY CHANGE.***

Middle School Charters Winning Trips - Moving from 8th to 9th grade

Brammer provided information on situations involving 8th grade students winning trips at the State Convention and then moving on to a different building and teacher the following year. Further discussion was requested for a future meeting.

Letter from Pequea Valley

Gabel provided an update on a letter received from Pequea Valley highlighting some concerns and discrepancies related to policy and procedure of competitive events at the State Convention and Activities Week. These concerns focused on the eligibility of students who placed first in a team event to return and compete in future years, and the ability to compete in a multi-day public speaking event alongside another event at the State Convention and Activities Week. *Kaltenbach/Huber moved to commit the discussion on eligibility of first place individuals to the policy manual revision committee. Motion passed. Firestone/Ranck moved to concur. Motion passed.*

Delegate Report 2026

Stout provided an update on delegate reports from the 2026 Pennsylvania FFA State Convention and Activities Week. No action is being taken at this time and a report with recommendations from the State FFA Officer Team will be brought back at the December Board of Directors Meeting.

Constitutional Amendment - Allowing 6th Grade Students to be Members

Huber/Zimmerman moved to pass the delegate proposal containing all approved constitutional amendments. Motion passed. Firestone/Huber moved to concur. Motion passed.

New Ag Science and Proficiency Awards for 26-27

Fellenbaum/Berndtson moved to align the Pennsylvania FFA Agriscience Fair and Proficiency Award programs with the National FFA updates for the Agriscience Fair and SAE Award programs. Motion passed. Kaltenbach/Zimmerman move to concur. Motion passed.

Stipends for teams/individuals

Honeycutt/Ferster moved to provide a travel stipend to the top placing team or individual of the Pennsylvania FFA state level contests corresponding to the National FFA Endorsed Activities - Turfgrass Science Invitational (Turfgrass Management CDE), FFA Quiz Invitational (FFA

Knowledge CDE), and Agricultural Education Invitational (Agricultural Education CDE), with an implementation date of the 2027 Pennsylvania FFA State Convention. Motion passed. Zimmerman/Kaltenbach moved to concur. Motion passed.

State Officer Selection Process Committee Appointment

Hyde/Huber moved to create a special committee to conduct a comprehensive review of the Pennsylvania FFA State Officer Selection Process that will consist of Chair Sarah Firestone, and voting members, Mike Clark, Katie Ranck, Casey McKasters, Kelly Lowery, Garrett Kaltenbach, Nate Huber and Ex-Officio Non-Voting members Thomas Gabel, Crystal Bomgardner, and Mike Brammer. Motion passed. Ranck/Witmer moved to concur. Motion passed.

Good of the Order

Regional Coordinators

Mrs. Barkley – No report

Mr. Wallace - No report

Mr. Frederick – Held regional planning meeting

Mr. Turner – Northern Leadership Nov 12 – Stars Nov 23 – CDE/LDE April 16.

PA FFA Foundation

Mrs. Sparks provided a report of Foundation events/happenings. Written report provided after the meeting.

Commission for Agriculture Education Excellence

No report.

SAE Specialist

Mrs. Fay presented a report. Pennsylvania has 124 American Degree recipients this year. The written report includes an update from Ben Meyer of AET that includes changes within AET.

PAAE

Mrs. Pontius presented the report. Holly Oberholtzer will serve as President-Elect.

Nathan Moyer selected as Executive Secretary.

FFA Alumni

Mrs. Pontius provided an update. Jacket information will be sent out on August 15th.

Penn State Agricultural Teacher Education / Center Report

No report.

Announcements

The Golden Owl award application is now live. The link is on the web site.

Future Board Meetings: 2026-2027

December 9, March 10, May 12, (All at the Country Inn & Suites - State College)

June 9 & 10, 2027 (PSU - Convention & Activities Week)

Other Events:

- a. All American Dairy - September 12-16, 2026
- b. The Big E – September 18-19, 2026
- c. KILE – September 25-October 4, 2026
- d. Fall Leadership – October 6, 2026
- e. National FFA Convention – October 21-24, 2026
- f. PA Farm Show – January 9-16, 2027
- g. Mid-Winter Convention – January 11, 2027
- h. ACES - Feb 6-7, 20-21, 27-28, 2027
- i. SLLC – March 14-16, 2027
- j. State Convention & Activities Week – June 8-10, 2027 - TENTATIVE

Closing Ceremonies were conducted by the State Officer Team. The meeting was adjourned at 4:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Kayla Hyde
FFA State Secretary

Thomas Gabel
Executive Director