

Ohio FFA Boards of Trustees Minutes  
October 23, 2002

There were 13 members in attendance: Ike Kershaw, Chair; Steve Gratz, Executive Secretary; Dave Mayer, Supervisor Representative; Dena Wuebker, Teacher Representative; Kip Hamilton, Teacher Representative; Kevin Kremer, Teacher Representative; Dwayne Seikman, Sponsors' Team Representative; Marlene von Stein, State FFA President; Lindsey Calhoun, State FFA Vice President; Bethany Frew, State FFA Secretary; Cris Sprague, State FFA Treasurer; Karen Blankenship, State FFA Reporter; and Jill Tyson, State FFA Sentinel.

Ike Kershaw called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 23, 2002, at the Dublin AmeriSuites Hotel in Columbus, Ohio.

Those in attendance gave brief introductions.

Minutes from the previous meeting were read, and Dena Wuebker moved to approve them. Kevin Kremer seconded. Motion passed.

The state FFA officers gave an update on the Ohio FFA Association. Marlene von Stein reported on the State Presidents' Conference and state officer activities. Cris Sprague reported on the convention delegate committee and process. Lindsey Calhoun reported on her involvement with the nominating committee. Jill Tyson reported on Ohio's National Officer candidate, Julie Tyson. Karen Blankenship reported on the FFA Booth at the National FFA Convention. Bethany Frew reported on the COLT conferences and upcoming events. Discussion then followed on the number of students allowed to attend COLT from each chapter, and feedback from this fall's conferences was shared. Many felt that two officers instead of one should be permitted to attend. It was noted that the lower number of students in attendance at this year's fall COLT conferences did increase the quality of the program, as indicated in the evaluations by the FFA members who attended. Steve Gratz reported on the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, FFA membership, and FFA Membership in Ohio. He mentioned several ideas that the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary committees had made, as well as discussing two new contests--public speaking and time capsule--which will be implemented for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary. He also shared information on the banquet that will be held on Thursday night of state convention prior to the Opening General Session. Discussion then followed about whether the banquet should be held with the sponsors' team, if it should be held on the Expo Center grounds, and what the price(s) should be. Many felt that the price should be \$35 for everyone, which would go towards covering the costs, and the silent auction should be the main moneymaker. In regards to rosters and dues, discussion on consequences for not sending in a rostrum and paying dues, such as denial of participation in CDE's or revoking a chapter, followed. FFA membership in Ohio, in regards to how exactly a member maintains active membership, then took place. Article V, Section B of the Constitution states in part that members must be enrolled in an agricultural education class to become an active member, and to retain that membership, they must be enrolled or follow a course of study and have an SAE, be involved, pay dues, and display proper conduct. Current scenarios of questionable membership in Ohio were discussed, and board members debated whether they were considered "enrolled." A diagram was drawn to better illustrate the issue/scenarios at hand (attached).

Since students have many more educational options available to them today, this issue of accommodation to these options by becoming more flexible in what is considered enrolled, has arisen. One key concern is if students were to retain membership through some of the questionable scenarios (i.e. post-secondary, independent studies), would they receive adequate and necessary classroom instruction? According to the chart, the top could, but the bottom section could not. It was believed by some that students in independent studies could still get the appropriate instruction. However, the intensity of that instruction was questioned. Several felt that the quality and intensity would not always be equal to that of the normal ag class. Also, the argument was made that students in post-secondary classes were no different from an FFA grad I member majoring in agriculture, for they may not always be taking agriculture classes. Several felt that students taking post secondary should not be penalized for trying to advance their education. However, many others felt that allowing these questionable enrollment situations to pass would cause too much flexibility and a lack of continuity (“give and inch, take a yard”). Other questions/concerns that arose included is there a legal issue at hand (precedence), are teachers losing good students because there is not enough flexibility, and are we being too restrictive?

Under Old Business, it was discussed that no actions had been taken or planned yet on revising the Reporter’s Book Rubric. It was also noted that big issues within the FFA Board of Trustees or elsewhere are not being communicated quickly enough to teachers. Several felt that releasing evaluations the first week of December was not soon enough. It was also recommended that minutes of the Board of Trustees be sent to all teachers statewide to better inform them of the issues and decisions made. Motions from the previous meeting, regarding chapters submitting no more than two proficiency award applications and not permitting any corrections to FFA awards during the evaluation process, were discussed.

Under New Business, the record book rubrics were discussed. Board members looked over the three examples that had been prepared. A motion made at the last meeting required that a rubric be used to evaluate record books for the 2002-2003 school year, and students must score at least 75% of the points. There was a large concern over the variances in the subjectivity of points to be given. Some felt, however, that the issue lies with the teachers, not the rubrics. Others thought that while the rubrics address the desired aspects, they might not be good enough. Could they be better? It was then noted that the board had to make a decision, and they had three choices: 1) do nothing, 2) accept one of the three now and continuously improve it as it is used, or 3) accept one of the three and be done with it. Discussion then continued. The point was made that many teachers would want the rubric to not be too difficult or time consuming – it needs to be simple, quick, and easy to use. It was mentioned that if the old rubric (which was one of the three) was used, many teachers would be familiar with it, and therefore, it would be easier for them. Additionally, many thought that a rubric should be used this year only to show that there is a problem with the quality of books, but then from next year on, actually use the rubric for official score.

Kevin Kremer then moved to use example number three rubric to be used for grading at district evaluation, but no members will be disqualified this year for not reaching the number of required

points, but starting next year (2003-2004), members will be disqualified if they do not reach the 75%. The motion died for a lack of a second.

Discussion then continued on the rubrics. It was believed that the rubrics should be more detailed to show the need for higher quality, but doing so would make it too time consuming to grade the books. The suggestion was made that the rubrics could be used, but also have an addendum to show more clearly what each points range includes. It was mentioned again that a decision needed to be made at this meeting, since the rubrics were to be used for the 2002-2003 school year. The point was made that the department is moving away from the use of instructional books, and the rubric crosses into the instructional and FFA area. Should we invest funds to get it done, and/or is there an alternative? Many felt that there definitely is a need for something to make the state degree a standard degree since there is not current standard for record books. There must be an explanation somewhere, however, to tell how to grade, what each area means, and what concrete things must be included in those areas.

Kip Hamilton moved to use rubric number one with the state association investing in an addendum (what does each requirement mean and include) that better describes and explains the grading process for this year (2002-2003). Dena Wuebker seconded. Discussion continued. Several felt that instead of having an addendum, a description of what each cell means and should include should be listed in the cell itself. It was noted that we would not be able to get the rubric done by December – it is simply not feasible. Plus, how would people feel if it was released in December? There would be concerns. The addendum is a time problem. Then, it was asked who would do the addendum – the association would. Everyone liked the idea of a rubric, but time is needed to develop it. Since many people would not like a change, it was believed that the rubric should be used this year for practice and then next year for real. Teachers should be told about the rubric, but it would not be completed and implemented until next year. We need teacher commitment, and we need to give them time to think about it. It was noted that a good time to release the rubric and get feedback is at the beginning of the year when teachers/members are doing record books.

Kip Hamilton moved to withdraw his motion, and Dena Wuebker consented. Discussion continued. It was asked if a rubric is worthwhile. It was agreed that is worthwhile. It was then asked if it was worthwhile for the amount of money to develop it. That depended. Have rubrics been shown to improve quality? Yes.

Dena Wuebker moved to rescind the notion of March 26<sup>th</sup> 2002 meeting concerning the rubric. Dave Meyer seconded. Discussion continued. It was pointed out that if this motion was rescinded, then a timeline would need to be made to clarify what is going to be done and by when. A reason why would also be needed. The vote (2/3 needed) was taken: 10 for and 1 against. Motion to rescind passed.

Kip Hamilton moved that the association provide funding to develop a more detailed record book rubric to be presented to the Board of Trustees for approval at the March meeting to go into effect for the 2003-2004 school year. Dena Wuebker seconded. Discussion followed. It was noted that the cost needs to be investigated first. This led to the question of what ramifications the cost will have on the rest of the association with the lower budget? Others asked if the time

line is realistic to be done by March. Many felt that the summer is amore realistic time. It was believed that a timeline should be included in the motion. However, most agreed that we just need something to be presented at the March meeting. The motion passed unanimously.

Steve Gratz then brought up the paying dues issue. The question was posed “What does ‘not in good standing’ mean?” It was believed that a procedure is needed of what “not in good standing” means. Although there is currently nothing in the constitution right not about revoking a charter, it would be easy to add. It was agreed that “not in good standing” means not receiving or participating in the services from the State FFA Association.

Dave Meyer moved that FFA chapters not paying dues by the deadline will be considered “members not in good standing” (not receiving or participating in the services from the State FFA Association) until their rostrum is turned in. Marlene von Stein seconded. Discussion continued. Should we revoke chapters? It was agreed that we should not revoke chapters yet; the penalties of no services or participation is enough. The motion passed unanimously.

Kevin Kremer then brought up the National Chapter Evaluation Application process. He made the following points: the application numbers continue to decline (which actually was only a change of +/- 5 of 70 in the past 5 years), many good chapters are not applying, the group of evaluators remain the same, there should be no ag teachers evaluating, there should be no more than one person per school evaluating, the top chapters remain on top while others are not applying because they don't do well, the states who evaluate applications should be rotated, a standard time line in needed between the different states, and other states are in favor of these recommendations. Discussion then branched off from this. Members were reminded that the purpose of this board is policy and not procedure. Therefore, we cannot set up process of how to get more chapters to apply; we only deal with policy. We should ask if and how we need to get more chapters to apply, after asking if we should and can have more apply. We have no power on the procedures. It was agreed that the biggest concern is the low number of applicants. The point was made that not all ag teachers feel that this application is important. It was also noted that Ohio has the most applications in the nation, and we need to check with other states first before making any changes. It was suggested that the scoring be changed to a standardized form and the evaluation rooms be monitored to keep them quiet. Then the board will deal with the policy of applications numbers. The bias should be reduced first. Steve Gratz then passed out handouts that showed how standard deviation could be used to rank chapters and reduce bias (in addition to just pulling out high and low scores). This process did change the final placing of several of the top 20 chapters from this year's applicants. The question was posed if it is the goal of the association to have the applications filled out. Many felt that chapters should be surveyed to see why or why not they fill out the applications. Again, the point was brought up that some teachers (especially younger ones) don't feel that this application is as important as individual awards. The group decided that the final plan is to eliminate bias by using standardized deviation. We can encourage more chapters to apply by communicating the new approach and change to them.

The issue was then brought up of allowing district contests/activities that are run by state guidelines to be counted on the state degree. Some students cannot go to the state contest because their schedules won't allow for it, but should they still get credit on their state degrees?

The question was asked if there are any guidelines that say if a district contest is equal to the state contest. It was noted that the CDE committee didn't agree with allowing district contests to be counted as state contests. Many felt that allowing this would lower the level of quality for the degree. We need to know the ramifications of allowing this first. It was agreed that this issue needed to be taken back to the districts first, where more research can be made and we can get a better feel for and feedback from the chapters.

Dave Mayer moved to adjourn the meeting. Cris Sprague seconded. Motion passed. Meeting adjourned.

The next meeting will be held on March 26, 2003 at the FFA Center at 3:00.