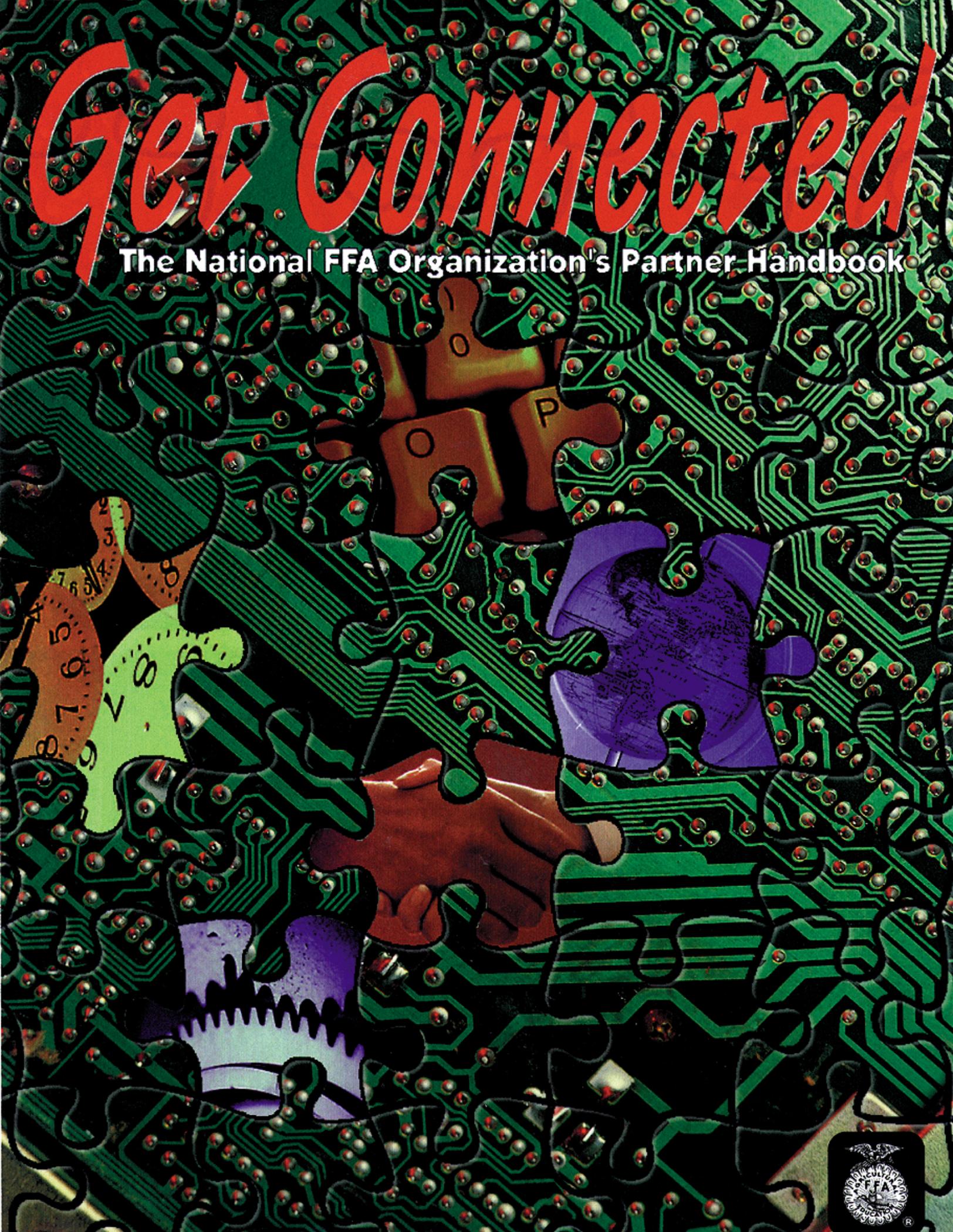


# Get Connected

The National FFA Organization's Partner Handbook



# Local Program **SUCCESS** for agricultural education

*Building quality programs and putting school-to-career in action*

## **FFA Mission**

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for **premier leadership, personal growth** and **career success** through agricultural education.

The National FFA Organization affirms its belief in the value of all human beings and seeks diversity in its membership, leadership and staff. *Get Connected* was prepared and published by the National FFA Organization in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Education as a service to state and local agricultural education agencies.

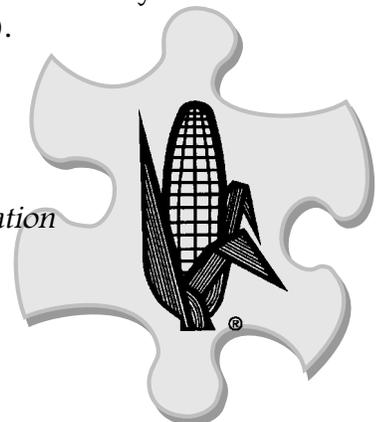
## **The Agricultural Education Mission**

Agricultural education prepares students for successful careers and a lifetime of informed choices in the global agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources systems.

Participation in agricultural education/FFA develops employability skills recommended by the U.S. Secretary of Labor Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS).

More information on FFA and working with partners can be found on the FFA homepage: [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org).

*Production of these materials sponsored by the National Corn Growers Association as a special project of the National FFA Foundation.*





**National Corn  
Growers Association**

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April 1999

Dear Agriculture Instructors,

The National Corn Growers Association is proud to sponsor the National FFA Organization's "Get Connected" partner handbook. This valuable handbook will assist you in making important key connections in your community who have the potential to be great supporters and provide you with resources for your local program.

There are always individuals, community groups and businesses that support initiatives to increase effective education for youth. The increasing amount of information covering all areas of agriculture and agribusiness today is more than any teacher can be expected to acquire. To do a complete job of educating your students you must become a manager of information and efficiently utilize local experts who can provide valuable experiences for your students. This handbook outlines the importance of partnering and helps you "get connected" to important groups in your community.

The National Corn Growers Association and National FFA Organization have several things in common. We both serve members at the local level and develop partnerships within the community. Not only do our members benefit, but agricultural industry, school and community are also strengthened by these and other initiatives.

The "Get Connected" partner handbook is the primary tool to help you develop and maintain effective and lasting partnerships, while serving as a guide for promotion and partner development processes. Making it happen is up to you.

Good luck!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christine L. Wehrman".

Christine L. Wehrman  
Executive Vice President/CEO

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# Executive Summary

This handbook was designed with agriculture teachers and students in mind. Just as the motherboard of your computer connects you with a myriad of functions and processing power, partners can connect you with the resources and support you need in your community. It's time to "get connected!"

This handbook is intended to provide information to expand and promote your programs. It is not just a book of facts, figures and statistics; but a guide to the philosophies, thoughts, ideas, concerns and priorities of those around you—those who can affect your program by their support or lack thereof.

In the following pages, you will find descriptions of your key partners—principals, counselors, superintendents, parents and school board members. These descriptions provide you with information about who your partners are, what they may think, typical job descriptions and key points you can use to communicate with them. You'll also find ready-to-use information and places to go for additional information in key areas.

Although you can read this handbook from cover to cover, it is designed to be used more like a dictionary or an encyclopedia. By using the Table of Contents or the Cross-Referenced Index, you should be able to find pertinent information on the topic you're seeking and go directly to it so that you can "read what you need," rather than the whole book. For information on school boards, turn to page 1-14. For information on parents, go to page 1-11. It's simple.

In addition to the descriptions of these partner groups, you'll find a section describing key state allies, chief state school officers and state directors. For ease of use and maximum effectiveness, we've added

the same insightful information on these groups as for the other partner groups.

Information on other helpful sources are also included. State supervisors, teacher educators and alumni can be especially valuable when you are seeking specific insight, such as how to improve your program and increase enrollment.

We have included an information section you can use as a quick reference. When you are talking to those who know little about what you do or the services you provide, this section can deliver ready-to-use information. Want to recruit students? Turn to "Career Opportunities in Agriculture" on page 4-2. Need industry facts? Turn to "The Industry that is Too Big To Ignore" on page 4-8. Want to know what some key high-visibility supporters have to say? Turn to "Quick Quotes about Agricultural Education and FFA" on page 5-8.

It's all at your fingertips. We hope this resource will be dog-eared from constant use. We hope you will make it your own by making notes in the margins and adding resources to your binder as you collect them. In fact, notice that the pages are numbered by section so that you can add your own resources to the back of each section and number them! In addition, as you discover resources you think should be added or that other teachers would find helpful, we hope you'll share them by sending them to the Partner Development Team at the National FFA Organization or mentioning them in the Teacher's Workroom section of National FFA Online ([www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)).

If you don't have time to use it, form a "Partner Development Team" of key people who can plan and implement strategies to promote your program.

*Do it now!*



# Preface

We live in an exciting time. The world's knowledge base is doubling every 18 months. Soon it will double every 12 months. While this means people are solving all sorts of age-old problems, all of this new information creates challenges of its own, particularly in education and even more forcefully in technical education areas such as agriculture. How will you prepare your students for the careers of the new millennium? How are you going to "get connected?"

Many educators are changing their philosophies and methods of teaching. Rather than seeing themselves as traditional "storehouses of knowledge" and teaching their students from that knowledge base, they are becoming "managers of information" and helping their students find the information needed. Educators are giving students a solid basic education so students can interpret a wide range of information.

A key part of this transformation is developing and using partnerships. Your local program may survive or fail based upon your ability to promote it to your local partners. This handbook will help you understand the importance of partnering and help you "get connected" to important people and groups in your community including: 1) principals, 2) guidance counselors, 3) superintendents, 4) parents and 5) school board members.

This handbook will also help you readily locate and utilize a wide array of information and resources, many of which can be provided by state leaders. It includes sections detailing how you can effectively work with each of the partner groups and why they may hold the key to your success. It will be a primary tool to help you develop and maintain effective and lasting partnerships and a guide for the promotion and partner development processes.

# Why Use the Handbook?

Just as two people viewing the same painting will have different interpretations, individuals will view your program based upon their experiences. If you hope to maintain or expand your program, it is important to look at it through the eyes of your key partners. When you understand what issues these people find important, you can show them how your program will address the challenges they face. This is a fundamental step in convincing them to support and expand your program. Ultimately, it will help you increase enrollment with a diverse group of students, expand your program and meet the needs of your community.

Remember, there is no need to do this alone! Form a committee or a partner development team to help promote your program. Your team should include a person from each of the five groups (principals, counselors, superintendents, parents and school board members) and any

available help from your state leaders, as well as business and student representation. Promoting your program is not just the “polite” thing to do—it is a matter of survival.

## Steps to Success

- 1.** Identify potential partners.
- 2.** Identify benefits of involvement for partners.
- 3.** Present benefits to potential partners.
  - Use information presented in this Handbook to turn a “no” into a “yes.”
  - Use school-to-career concepts to attract key partners to your program.
- 4.** Establish a plan for involving core partners.
- 5.** Reward partners by recognizing their contributions and support.

# *How to Use This Handbook*

The first three sections of this handbook summarize important information about your key partner groups: 1) school-based partners, 2) community-based partners, and 3) career partners. Each section has subsections which explain how each group views the “world,” how to speak their language, issues of importance to them, a typical “job description” for the group, a characterization of a typical “day in the life,” and key points regarding how you can position yourself to help solve their particular problems.

The first three sections of this handbook have been developed utilizing input from the National Association of State Directors of Vocational Technical Education, the American Counselors Association, the Council of Chief State School Officers, the National Association of School Boards, the American Association of School Administrators, the National Association of Secondary School Principals and the National Association of State Supervisors of Agricultural Education. The National FFA Organization would like to thank each of these groups for providing insight and analysis into the development of this handbook.

It is important to remember that these groups do not exist in a vacuum.

This handbook will explain how these groups work together and how they sometimes overlap. As an educator, you must be familiar with key officials in each of these groups. Check the FFA homepage ([www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)) and its partner links to find the names and addresses of key officials in your state.

This handbook contains a general framework of programs and attitudes, but these will vary depending on the state. Also provided is relevant planning information for each group. Remember—key dates and events are important to establishing an effective marketing and partnership program. By remembering key dates and events, you communicate the idea that this group is important to you—and everyone likes to know that someone has taken the time to learn what is important to their organization.

Sections four, five and six of this handbook provide ready-to-use information and listings of resources to consult for additional information. You will find career statistics, case studies, specific examples of particularly effective promotion and partnership development situations, quotes, effective speech passages and other helpful suggestions for the development of a partnership team.

## *Developing a Partner List*

The first step in getting connected to partners is to determine who they are. Every program's list of partners will vary, but essentially these are people who can say either "yes" or "no" to your agricultural education program. Administrators and principals are partners because they can say yes or no to budget requests. School board members are partners because they have the ultimate say in whether or not your program exists. Guidance counselors are partners because they can steer students toward your program or away from it. The same is true for parents. Every community has leaders—official and unofficial—whose opinions and actions carry a lot of weight. Do not forget to include these people on your partner list. Write the names of your key partners on the next page. You may also want to visit the National FFA Homepage ([www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)) and download an easy-to-complete database template so that you can develop an electronic ready-to-use list of partners.

Once you have identified your key partners, the next step is to understand them. Personal success author and speaker Stephen Covey stresses the importance of "seeking first to understand, then to be understood." If you don't understand your audience, you may not "connect" that audience to your program. Understanding each group and the challenges it faces is critical to appropriately positioning your program.

By asking questions and listening to answers, you can learn what they think about your program, how you and your program can provide them with solutions rather than challenges, and some key points to share with each group. The next three sections provide brief information about some of the key partner groups with whom you will need to work and helpful hints for positioning your program.

The following Partner Matrix will be an excellent way to identify the key partners in your community. It is suggested that you develop an electronic database to organize your contacts for even more efficient use.



# *Partner Matrix*

School	Contact Name	Address	E-mail	Phone Number
Superintendent				
Superintendent's Secretary				
Finance Director				
Other Key Central Administration Staff				
Principal				
Principal's Secretary				
Assistant Principal(s)				
Middle School or Jr. High Principal(s)				
Guidance Counselor(s)				
Middle School or Jr. High Counselor(s)				
State Counselor Association				
Vocational Director				
State Vocational Director				
Elementary School				
Principal				
Counselor				
Teachers				
District Secretary (Finance)				
(Attendance)				
(Activities)				
(Other)				
School Board				
Chairman				
Board Members				
State Association				
Activities Director				
Coaches				

# *Partner Matrix*

<b>School</b>	<b>Contact Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Directors of other Student Organizations				
(DECA, band, etc.)				
School Newspaper				
Key Teachers (Science, math, etc.)				
Support Staff				
Transportation				
Maintenance				
<b>Local Community</b>	<b>Contact Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Mayor				
City Manager				
Key City Council Members				
Chamber of Commerce				
Local County Agent(s)				
Local Newspaper				
Local Radio Station				
Local Television Station				
Community Improvement Groups				
Agricultural Businesses				
Other Key Businesses				
Advisory Committee				

# *Partner Matrix*

<b>Local Community (cont.)</b>	<b>Contact Name</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
Game Warden				
Natural Resources Commission				
Agriculture Associations				
Local FFA Alumni Contacts				
Economic/Financial Leaders				
Insurance Agents				
Real Estate Agents				
Parent/Teacher Associates				
Key Long-Term Residents				
Key Parents				
Key Students				
Social/Service Organizations:				
Kiwanis				
Lions				
Rotary				
Jaycees				
Moose				
Elks				
American Legion				
Eagles				
Veterans of Foreign War				
Beautification or Garden Clubs				



**Section I:**

*Get Connected to  
School-Based Partners*



School-Based  
Partners

# Section 1:

## Get Connected to School-Based Partners

As you read each of the following sections, think about the individuals filling these positions in your school. You may want to highlight items that seem written especially about them or make notes in the margins as you read and thoughts about positioning your program to these individuals bounce through your head.

### *Principals*

#### **Who are they?**

- Principals manage every elementary, middle and secondary school in the United States.
- Principals, as education leaders, are essential to ensuring the flow of change in our schools. They must be the primary agents of change for effective learning and teaching.
- Principals serve as liaisons between students and teachers, teachers and superintendents or school boards and between unions and non-union workers.
- Principals enable each young person the equal opportunity to learn.
- The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) is the preeminent organization for middle and high school administrators. The NASSP asserts itself to address school quality and professional leadership needs.

#### **What do they think?**

- A primary goal of principals is improving the conditions under which schools are organized for effective teaching and learning. You may want to position your program as “moving in the right direction” or helping to improve learning conditions.
- Principals know that they must take the lead in reconceptualizing and restructuring schools for the new millennium with an emphasis on new technology.
- Principals must strive to provide the optimum teaching and learning environment.
- Principals work with local and state leaders to bring attention to education as their number-one priority.
- Principals will not always make the decision or provide the supportive action you desire. Do your best to understand the situation they are in and the many groups they must try to please.

#### **How do principals see themselves?**

Devoted educator... Innovative... Tireless worker... Gets along well with everyone... Supporter of athletics, arts, academics... Arbitrator... Counselor... Disciplinarian... Planner... Visionary... Traditionalist... Jack of all trades, master of many.

## A Principal's World

Early mornings... Late-night calls... Snow days...  
Unions... Irritated teachers...  
Solution seeker... Upset parents...  
Ineffective school boards... Lack of funds... District meetings...  
Motivated students... Eager teachers... Satisfied parents...  
New roof... More bleachers... Too many students... Not enough teachers... Fair division of labor?... Study halls?... Lunch duty... Lots of paperwork...

### Key Points

To build and maintain good relationships with principals, communicate the following key points consistently:

1. Principals want a well-organized, well-run, orderly school! Support that concept by being organized yourself, reduce the number of "special requests" you make, provide prepared solutions when you have a problem and give plenty of lead time.
2. Help principals understand how you solve their problems of decreasing the number of dropouts, working with all types of students, building community support and keeping things under control.
3. Help principals understand that your classes can be a great arena for applying math, reading/writing and science skills. Emphasize that when students "learn by doing," they learn for life.

## Connecting To the Restructuring of the American High School

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) set out to create a mechanism to provide educators with the best ideas, thoughts and reflections that could be disseminated to the widest audience for implementation. To address this area, the NASSP assembled a commission on the restructuring of the American High School. Over a two-year period, the commission set out to broaden the understanding of what is necessary to improve the quality of education and prepare for the high school of the next millennium.

The following recommendations are for those who are interested in the welfare of youth and their preparation for a productive life following graduation from high school. The commission's work is a series of recommendations that speak to those who are committed to reform. It is a blueprint containing the ingredients that will make modern schooling work. These are the benchmarks of the future for high schools. A copy of the commission's report, entitled "Breaking Ranks," can be obtained by contacting the National Association of Secondary School Principals, 1904 Association Drive, Reston, VA 22091-1537.

## NASSP Recommendations

### Priorities for Renewal

Offering knowledge, integrating it and making connections to real life

### Agricultural Education Response

Through laboratory instruction and Supervised Agricultural Experiences, students are able to connect classroom curriculum to real-life situations.

Engaging students in their own learning

Through participating in Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs and Career Development Events (CDEs) students are engaging in competent problem solving and critical thinking. The advisor making SAE visits and coaching teams for CDEs will convey a sense of caring to students.

Creating a climate conducive to teaching and learning

Through the National Chapter Awards program, local FFA chapters can develop plans to promote an atmosphere of participation, responsibility and ownership. FFA advisors also work as personal advocates helping students personalize their educational experience. With hands-on learning, the world is the classroom.

Technology—making way for electronic learning

Continual changes in technology are addressed through programs created through agricultural education/FFA. Continuing teacher education programs are essential to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills they need to integrate technology into the curriculum. Technology becomes a tool for increasing skill development and creates a life-long learning environment.

## NASSP Recommendations (cont.)

### Priorities for Renewal

### Agricultural Education Response

Restructuring space and time for a more flexible education

Flexibility to adapt the structure of educational environment is key. Agriculture teachers have the resources to develop partnerships throughout the community. Building partnerships to accomplish tasks will free-up valuable time, which will increase the effectiveness of instructors.

Assessment and accountability

Performance standards in agricultural education are essential to creating the assessments necessary to demonstrate success. Through performance-based education, FFA advisors and agriculture instructors are able to track student progress and offer advice to ensure the students qualify for entry-level jobs or are ready for post-secondary training.

Professional development

Through use of the Professional Growth Series and continued education courses, agriculture instructors have many opportunities for professional development. *A Guide to Local Program Success* is a valuable resource designed to enhance the professionalism of local teachers and their programs.

Diversity—finding strength in differences

FFA and agricultural education are equipping students to recognize the strengths and advantages of a diverse population. With the ever-growing demand for qualified people to supply the world's need for food and fiber, it is essential to involve all people of this diverse world.

## NASSP Recommendations (cont.)

### Priorities for Renewal

.....

Governance—streamlining the operations of schools and school districts

### Agricultural Education Response

It is essential for agriculture instructors and administrators to develop partnerships and work collaboratively to attain educational goals. Developing partnerships through advisory councils is a strong asset that includes the community in the educational process.

.....

Resources—structure in agricultural education

Building partnerships will increase the opportunities for students to gain experience in a variety of areas beyond the official funding sources. The FFA offers many chances for students to develop career skills through CDEs and SAEs.

.....

Ties to higher education seeking unity in purpose

Agriculture instructors enhance the educational process by working to build partnerships with local and state post-secondary schools to articulate student learning.

.....

Leadership—attributes that need nourishment

Strong leadership developed by students in the FFA and agricultural education will carry over, building a stronger community for years to come.

## Guidance Counselors

### Who are they?

- Guidance counselors are certified professional educators.
- Counselors are employed at all levels of education. Their work is differentiated by attention to age-specific stages of growth, tasks and challenges.

### What do they think?

- Counselors implement comprehensive developmental programs at all levels of education.
- Counselors believe that programs should focus on needs, interests and issues related to the various stages of student growth and achievement.
- Counselors are usually committed to individual uniqueness and the maximum development of student/human potential.
- Counselors function as an integral part of any school's total education program.
- Counseling programs are designed to help students develop their educational, social, career and personal strengths in order to become responsible and productive citizens.
- Counseling programs should contain objectives, activities, special services and expected outcomes. These programs will help students learn more effectively and efficiently.

### How do counselors see themselves?

Quick on their feet... Never surprised... Willing to find the answer... Great listeners... Easily respected by students and peers... Working long hours... Involved with many students... Flexible... Hip, yet traditional...

Counselors generally rely on three processes to get the job done:

- **Counseling**—a process in which the counselor establishes a trusting, confidential working relationship with the student.
- **Consultation**—a cooperative process in which the counselor assists others (teachers, parents, etc.) in thinking through problems and helping them develop skills that make them more effective when working with students.
- **Coordination**—a leadership process in which the counselor helps organize and manage the school's counseling programs.

### A Counselor's World

I do not like my English teacher... Do I have to take gym class?... I want a seventh-period study hall... How many AP courses am I allowed?... What college is best for me?... Where can I find a job without college?... My father hits me... I'm so discouraged... I was accepted by my first choice!... I found a job!...

### Key Points

To secure and maintain counselor support, you need to show that your program:

- Develops the entire student through class, job training and student organization activities.
- Reduces the number of "problems" counselors have to solve related to keeping students interested in school.
- Involves parents and can be a resource to the counselors.
- Involves students over a 2-6 year period and can support their interests for more than a one-semester or one-year program.
- Provides scholarships for further education through the student organization (FFA).

# Sharing the Vision

## School Counselors and Agricultural Education

### *Academic Development*

Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge and skills that contribute to effective learning in school and throughout their lives.

Through programs initiated by FFA and agricultural education, students are able to develop a positive attitude and attain effective working skills for life.

Students will complete school with the academic preparation essential to choose from a wide range of substantial post-secondary options.

Through agricultural education, students receive contextual classroom and laboratory instruction with a wide range of career skill development in FFA which prepares them for post-secondary and college training.

Students will understand the relationship of academics to the world of work, and to life at home and in the community.

Agriculture students understand through the ever-changing technology of agriculture and agribusiness there will always be a need for continued education.

### *Career Development*

Students will acquire the skills to investigate the world of work in relation to knowledge of self and to make informed career decisions.

Students will develop skills in identifying career choices through exploration and mentoring in agricultural education and the FFA.

Students will employ strategies to achieve future career success and satisfaction.

Students will acquire work experience through supervised agricultural experience programs (SAE) while applying classroom skills, which will enable them to achieve career success and satisfaction.

Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education and training, and the world of work.

During the experience of leadership through FFA and agricultural education, students will develop an understanding of the importance of continued education for career success.

## Personal•Social Development

Students will acquire the attitudes, knowledge and interpersonal skills to help them understand and respect themselves and others.

Through community involvement, students develop premier leadership and personal growth and acquire an understanding of our society.

Students will make decisions, set goals and take the necessary action to achieve goals.

In agricultural education and the FFA, students are encouraged to set goals and develop plans to achieve attainable goals, both as a part of their leadership skills training and their work-based experience program (SAE).

Students will understand safety and survival skills.

Through skills learned in their supervised agricultural experience program (SAE), and classroom and laboratory instruction, students will develop safety skills as well as increase their potential to survive in the ever-changing world.



## Superintendents

### Who are they?

- There are approximately 18,000 school administrators and superintendents in the United States.
- Superintendents and school administrators provide leadership skills, communication skills, professionalism, community involvement and commitment for school districts.
- Superintendents are advocates for educational excellence in their respective communities.
- They are motivators of teachers, exceptional communicators and partnership builders.

### What do superintendents think?

- In a 1990 issues survey conducted by the American Association of School Administrators, superintendents identified the following as the ten most important issues they faced:
  1. Accountability (setting and meeting standards)
  2. Improving student achievement
  3. Building morale/motivating staff
  4. Using technology to improve education
  5. Building students' self-esteem
  6. Improving the leadership of school principals
  7. Involving parents in their children's education
  8. Helping at-risk students
  9. Building public confidence in schools
  10. Preventing/dealing with drug and alcohol abuse

This survey contained 159 items. Here are some additional issues and their ranks that might be important for you to know:

32. Serving the "student in the middle"
33. Teaching values and ethics
36. Recognizing student achievement and performance
43. Responding to students' learning styles
47. Cooperative learning/peer teaching
66. Dropout prevention
67. Effective middle schools
70. How vocational education must change to prepare students for the job market
71. Improving guidance and counseling
72. Building effective school/business partnerships
78. Education for employability and citizenship
82. Environmental education
99. Improving college preparation programs for teachers and administrators
114. Youth/community service
126. Implementing national education goals
134. Multicultural education
143. School violence

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA) collaborated with the National School Boards Association (NSBA) to develop strategies for improving our schools. The AASA/NSBA strategies are as follows:

1. Focus on children.
2. Establish collaboration among school boards, administrators, teachers, community leaders and government institutions at the local, state and federal levels.
3. Involve parents and other adult volunteers.
4. Offer parent education programs.
5. Renew curricula.
6. Ensure equal and ready access to a high-quality education for all students.

7. Provide early childhood education and child care programs with strong educational components.
8. Bring the best and the brightest into educational careers.
9. Demand adequate funding.
10. Help immigrants into mainstream American education.

### How do Superintendents See Themselves?

Experienced teacher... Patient... Tenacious... Experienced as a principal or head teacher... Unlimited energy... Bridge builder... Resolute... Decision maker... Visionary... Confident...

### A Superintendent's World

Vocal parents... School boards... Too many students... Not enough students... Late buses... Sick mechanics... Blown hot water heaters... Not enough teachers... Operating supplies... Cafeteria operations... Athletics... Arts... Authoritative state leaders... Town meetings... Funding cuts... Outdated equipment... Budgets...

### Speaking Their Language

Here are a couple of questions often asked by superintendents:

1. What can be done to reduce the number and extent of at-risk children and youth in America? What can be done to help them achieve in school?
2. How can schools cooperate more closely with other agencies so that all can work together toward the goal of providing services to these at-risk children and youth?

### Key Points

To secure and maintain support, you need to demonstrate the following points:

- Student achievement is improved through your agricultural education program because students see the practical application of academic skills and are motivated through this applied approach to learning.
- Students learn principles as they apply technology.
- Your program increases students' self-esteem because they experience success and are able to demonstrate their abilities through leadership, competition, community service and other opportunities your program offers.
- At-risk students are able to set goals, accomplish them and have tangible reasons to stay in school and do well.
- Parents are directly involved in your programs and are strong supporters. They see direct benefits for their children.

### Positioning Yourself to Help Solve Problems and Work with This Group

In a presentation at the National FFA Convention, Gary Marx, senior associate executive director of the AASA, outlined seven suggestions for developing partnerships and working within your school system. They are:

1. Become a counselor to your school system on issues. Tie into timely issues that are center stage and help people understand the meaning and the implications of them for your community and school.

2. Show your superintendent, school board and community how your program adds value to education. Bring key players together to discuss how agricultural education adds value to the total education experience.
3. Show connections between what students are learning in agricultural education and the possible solutions to problems facing education and society. Be topical. Show how agricultural education provides real life solutions and how it ties into other courses.
4. Mobilize your alumni. Hold an alumni rally. Ask for testimonials from successful, high-profile alumni.
5. Use your power to convene groups of people. Hold forums on issues related to agriculture.
6. Become an educator of your community. Provide information, put it into context and explain the issues in terms that everyone can understand.
7. Build bridges between schools, parents and the business community, thus helping increase support for education from the community. This has important implications.

## Parents

### Who are they?

- They have legal responsibility for school-age youth. They may or may not be a blood relative.
- They have a major influence on the courses taken and the career goals of students.
- A national organization which represents parents is the National Parent Teacher Association (PTA) based in Chicago, Illinois. They have nearly seven million members in more than 27,000 local units.
- The mission of the National PTA is:
  - to support and speak on behalf of school children and youth in schools, communities, governmental agencies, and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;
  - to assist parents in developing the skills needed to raise and protect their children; and
  - to encourage parent and community involvement in the public schools of this nation.

### What do they think?

The PTA and Chrysler Corporation conducted a national parent survey. Entitled “A Study of Parental Involvement in Children’s Education,” the study was based on interviews with 792 adults and drew several conclusions. Selected items from the study results follow.

#### Why Parents Visit a School

- *Virtually all parents (95 percent) visited their child’s school at least once during the school year. The three most common reasons for visits were to attend:*
  - 1) an open house,

- 2) a class or school program, or
- 3) a scheduled parent-teacher conference.

- *Three other reasons for visiting a child’s school were mentioned by at least 40 percent of the parents:*
  - 1) attend a PTA or parent organization meeting,
  - 2) discuss a problem the child was having at school, or
  - 3) attend an athletic event.
- *The younger the child, the greater the likelihood of a parent visiting the child’s school or being involved with their child’s education.*
  - 83 percent of the parents with children in grades K-3 attended a class or school program, in contrast to 59 percent of the parents with children in grades 10-12
  - The one exception to the above was athletic events. Parents are twice as likely to attend athletic events of children in the higher grades as opposed to those in the earlier grades.
  - 66 percent of parents with children in the higher grades talk to their children about school topics and only six percent help with homework.

#### Parents—Keeping Them In Touch

- *Parents who are PTA members visit their child’s schools far more than did adults who do not belong to a parent group. PTA members are more likely to serve as school volunteers (57 percent versus 21 percent).*
- *One method schools employ for improving their relationships with parents is to keep parents informed regarding what happens to the children during the school day.*
  - 25 percent of parents say they know “almost everything”

about what happens to their children, while 72 percent say they know at least “most things”

- Overall, parents spend an average of 5.5 hours per week involved in their child’s formal education. Generally, mothers are more involved than fathers. Parents of older children are less involved than those with younger children.

### **How Parents View Teachers/Schools**

- Parents tend to grade their children’s teachers highly. More than 80 percent of teachers receive an A or B grade from parents. Furthermore, parents of younger children tend to grade the teachers higher than the parents of older children.
- The parents’ grade of the school generally corresponds to that given the teacher — with 80 percent rating their school in the A or B range. Again, parents with younger children give higher ratings than the parents of high schoolers.

### **Safety Concerns**

- Parents were asked to rate the extent to which 15 social problems exist in the high school their child currently or most likely will attend. More than two-thirds of the respondents listed the following seven problems:
  - illegal drugs
  - smoking cigarettes
  - sexual activity among students
  - disruptive or unruly students
  - alcohol
  - school dropouts
  - teen pregnancy
- Safety is a major concern of most parents. Parental perception

regarding the safety of their children’s schools indicates a significant problem. Less than a quarter felt that their child was “extremely” safe at school, while almost half felt their child was “very” safe. A little more than a quarter felt their child was “somewhat” safe.

### **Parents’ Aspirations for Their Children**

- Parents’ educational aspirations for their children are high. Essentially all (99 percent) parents expect their children to graduate from high school, and two-thirds expect their children to graduate from a four-year college. However, only one-third expect the education to culminate in receipt of a post-graduate degree.
- The better educated the parent, the higher the expectations of the child. Of the parents who had a high school education or less, 58 percent expect their children to graduate from college, while 91 percent of parents who are college graduates expect their children to receive a similar degree.

### **Parents Views on Funding**

- Only half of the parents feel the funding to support their child’s school is adequate.
- Knowledge regarding how local public schools are financed is limited.
  - 75 percent of the parents surveyed believe that the majority of funding comes from the local or state level.
  - 14 percent admit they have no idea at all regarding school financing.
  - Almost two-thirds of the parents said they would be willing to pay more taxes to improve public schools (for those that could afford to do so).

## How do parents see themselves?

Counselor... Devil's advocate... Adversary... Best friend... ATM machine... Cook... Chauffeur... Schedule planner... Auto mechanic... Hairdresser... Coach... Fashion critic... Last word of authority... A shoulder to cry on... Ultimate decision maker Compromiser... Music critic... House cleaner... Window washer... College planner... Drama coach... Scout leader... Time manager... Referee...

## A Parent's World

6:00 a.m. alarm... Wake up kids... Shower... The Weather Channel... Wake up kids, again... Dress for work... Coax kids out of bed... Bribe kids out of bed... Fix breakfast... Make lunches... Ask kids to hurry up... Eat breakfast... Get kids out the door... Off to work... Late for a meeting... After school... Football practice... Piano lessons... Scout meetings... Grocery shopping... Pay bills... Fix dinner... Where are those kids?... School play... Can I borrow the car?... Can I have an allowance advance?... Remember the bush that **used** to be on the corner of the driveway?... Inform kids it's bedtime... Inform kids it's bedtime... Loudly inform kids it's bedtime... Set alarm... Remember tomorrow's meeting... Prepare for meeting... Sleep!

## Speaking a parent's language

- Show concern with the welfare of their children
- Want for them what they never had as children
- Let them know their child is someone special
- "I only can be in three places at once"
- School work first
- "I don't mind paying extra for quality for my child, if I can afford to do so"
- Responsibilities to home and family are important
- Just say no
- Just do it

## Key Points

To build and maintain good relationships with parents, keep the following key points in mind:

- Work with parents, not against them
- Listen to their concerns; each child is different and special
- Two careers, college plans, intense pressure
- Keep parents of older students involved in the school
- Talk to parents, not at them
- Encourage dialogue between parents and students
- Remember, you may be the communication link between a parent and child
- Sometimes the most simple solutions can work
- Build time into your visits to involve parents

## School Boards

### Who are they?

- School boards are local entities which make major decisions for a school district.
- School boards can be elected or appointed, partisan or non-partisan.
- School boards make decisions on issues ranging from books to football to equipment purchases to personnel decisions.
- The National School Board Association (NSBA) is a non-profit federation of state associations of local school boards which represents the interests of local school boards at the federal level.
- NSBA is not centrally controlled, but rather, policy ideas move from the periphery—the local level—to the center, where they are integrated by the delegate assembly. Thus, ultimate authority resides at the local level with the individual school boards.

### What do they think?

As stated earlier, NSBA is directed from the local level, so an examination of the issues pursued at national level gives a good idea of the ideas emanating at the local level and the individual school boards.

In 1998 NSBA:

- the premise of public education is to maintain the quality of school to ensure an educated and productive democracy where everyone has the opportunity to excel
- Provide tax breaks for “educational expenses,” including tuition and fees at public, private and religious schools

- Lobby against proposals to create private and parochial school vouchers that siphon scarce public resources away from the nation’s public schools
- Correction of the overcrowded and dilapidated school facilities that affect the quality of education available to all students
- Maintain the federal commitment to vocational education in order to prepare students for the work force
- Lobby the Individuals with Disabilities Act
- The major initiative—The partnership for Children’s Education

### How do school board members see themselves?

Committed to education... Program and community oriented... Budget analyst... Able to hold down two jobs... Capable of “playing politics”... Can deal effectively with state and local leaders... Decisive... Tenacious...

### A School Board Member’s World

Curriculum decisions... Elections... Parents... Local elected officials... Tax increases... Second job... Late-night meetings... Vocal criticism... Explanations... Regional compromises... Diversity issues... Textbook choices...

## Speaking a school board member's language

One way to keep up with current thought coming from local school boards to is review the *American School Board Journal*. This monthly publication of NSBA, founded in 1891, is one of the oldest continuing publications in the country. Subjects covered include:

- public school governance
- public/private school choice
- curriculum reforms/choices

### Key Points

To build and maintain good relationships with school board members, keep the following points in mind:

1. Be an advocate for your school board in your community. Work with them in developmental planning issues. Show how your program can be incorporated into short- and long-range plans. They will appreciate that you are part of the solution rather than part of the problem.
2. Find ways to bring parents and the community into the school to “see the good work that is being done,” e.g. open houses, parents night, award banquets, state and national conventions, etc.
3. Get to know each school board member personally.
4. Attend school board meetings.

## Other Teachers

### Who are they?

- They are your colleagues.
- They have lunchroom duty, study halls and other non-classroom activities just like you.
- They are the football coach, or perhaps the sponsors of the drama club, the debate team or the cheerleaders.
- They are the teacher part of the PTA—just like you!
- They are experts in their own fields, kings of their kingdoms.
- They have been teaching for one year, five years, 25 years.
- They are interested in seeing students achieve.
- They are valuable resources and friends.

### What do they think?

- Discipline and self-esteem are important for students.
- Extra-curricular activities can get in the way of learning “what is really necessary.”
- “I like the way I teach.”
- Students do not study enough.
- Every student cannot possibly make it in life without knowing (fill in the blank).
- It is important for students to be exposed to a wide range of ideas and concepts.

- The school day is not long enough (Monday). The school day is way too long (Friday).
- Vocational-technical education students and teachers are gone from school a lot!

### What they DON'T think

- Vocational-technical education is a vital part of the curriculum.
- Most classes can be applied to vocational-technical education.
- Vocational-technical education serves a useful purpose in a student's life.
- More money should be spent to support vocational-technical education programs.
- I can help the vocational-technical education programs in my school.

### How do other teachers see themselves?

Faster than a running student...  
 More powerful than a disinterested class... Able to correct 150 tests in a single night... Able to overcome fatigue with eagerness... Understanding yet stern... Committed yet flexible... Able to eat lunch in a wide variety of settings...

### The Other Teachers' World

Why are assemblies always scheduled during my class?... The copy machine is broken again... My supplies budget has been cut in half... Yes, this will be important to you later in life... No, you cannot be excused... Where is your hall pass?... Who was smoking in the boy's/girl's room?...

## Key Points

To build and maintain good relationships with other teachers, consider implementing the following ideas:

- Identify ways in which other teachers can apply their classwork to vocational-technical education programs and functions
- Invite them to functions that fit their schedules and their respective disciplines
- Invite them to state and national conventions
- Solicit input from them on how your students are doing in their classes
- Make yourself available to counsel and support other programs in the school
- Become personally acquainted with other teachers
- Invite other teachers to visit students' workplaces/homes with you
- Develop joint student projects with teachers of other disciplines (science, social studies, English, etc.)

## *Other Agriculture Teachers*

It is very beneficial for you to build good relationships with other agriculture teachers. You will acquire helpful suggestions from their experiences and be better prepared to handle situations as they arise. These partners provide you with someone with whom to talk and discuss your profession. They are able to relate similar situations and offer advice. Consider implementing the following ideas:

- Develop a joint project which teachers and students from both programs can work together to complete.
- Invite your peers to chapter functions to gain new insights and build good relationships.
- Create a working relationship where you trade responsibility of serving as an official for selecting student awards.
- Solicit information from them on how they handle specific situations about which you have questions or concerns.
- Purchase supplies together to save money.
- Invite other teachers to visit your program to gain new and progressive ideas. In turn, visit their facilities.

**Section 2:**

*Get Connected to  
Community-Based Partners*



Community-Based  
Partners

## Section 2:

### Get Connected to Community-Based Partners

In addition to school-based partners, cultivating a number of community partners should also be a priority. Every community has its movers and shakers. Some are powerful because they hold positions of authority. Some are elected, some are business owners or managers. Some are unofficial community leaders whose thoughts and words are respected because of who they are regardless of whether or not they hold any official position.

You'll find it helpful to tap into this group because its members can help make or break an agricultural education program. They can identify resources and get the ball rolling, or they can withhold resources and set a negative tone by their example. This section will help you identify these people in your community and help you develop them into staunch supporters.

As you begin to identify your community-based partners, be observant to not only select from what you deem to be the traditional community. There is a need to identify those partners who might not be inside the city limits but are valuable contributors to your school and community. Many of your students may not live within what is viewed as the traditional boundaries of the community. As community boundaries change, so must our thinking to include all those who are prospective partners.

#### *Alumni*

One of the first places you should look for support in your community is former agriculture students/FFA members. This can be a great pool of support. Because of their experience in the program, they often can help in ways other partner groups can't, such as coaching career development event teams and helping students think through their SAE options. Alumni can be your staunchest allies willing to fight for your program at a moment's notice. If your chapter doesn't have an active Alumni affiliate, consider starting one soon.

To initiate interest in an Alumni affiliate, find five to six people in the community who are interested in your program and have offered to help with different activities. Look for people who are leaders in the community—those whom others respect and enjoy being around. Don't forget to include parents in this effort or in the alumni affiliate. More than anyone else, parents are counting on the program to benefit their child and will generally be more willing to commit their time and effort to ensuring program success. Although the group is titled "alumni," don't limit yourself to people who are former FFA members. Anyone who has a genuine interest in agriculture and the FFA should be welcomed.

A working relationship with alumni members is vital to the success of your local program.

Alumni can do a lot to make teaching easier, increase your chapter's funding and recruit more students for the program. Want to ease your workload and maximize your efforts? Then tap into the support of your local FFA Alumni affiliate.

The key to this relationship is for you to become a “manager of resources” and let alumni members do the rest. By working together and using alumni resources to ease your workload, you are free to focus on the bottom line—teaching students.

FFA Alumni can build a strong link between the local agriculture programs and the community. Involved community members provide leadership, career mentoring and role models. The broader the base of your alumni team, the more opportunities you can offer students. When recruiting alumni members, consult the following list of potential members.

### Potential Alumni Recruitment List

In School:

- central administration (e.g. finance director)
- coaches
- career counselors
- elementary school teachers
- middle school teachers
- other high school teachers
- parents
- principal/assistant principal
- school board members
- school secretary
- site council
- superintendent
- support staff
- vocational director
- adult agriculture instructors and students

In the Community:

- agricultural associations
- agricultural businesses such as the local co-op, feed mills, etc.
- community college agriculture faculty and students
- Farm Bureau
- Grange
- natural resource commission
- natural resources/environmental groups
- university agriculture faculty and students
- Young Farmers

Others in the Community:

- American Association of Retired Persons
- county extension agent
- general businesses
- chamber of commerce
- city council
- city manager
- county government officials
- county/parish board members
- funding providers
- immediate and extended families
- key staff of elected officials
- local legislators
- local media (newspaper, radio and television reporters)
- long-term residents (bedrock of the community)
- mayor
- parent/teacher association
- Business and Professional Women of America
- real estate agents
- economic/financial leaders
- insurance agents

Others:

- religious leaders
- social or service organizations:
  - Social or service organizations may also have auxiliaries or supporting groups that are equally important to recruit in the process.
    - American Legion
    - Eagles
    - Elks
    - Garden clubs
    - Izaak Walton

- Jaycees
- Junior League
- Kiwanis
- Lions
- Moose
- Rotary
- Ruritan
- Veterans of Foreign Wars

There are a large number of social and service organizations. This is only a sample list which will change depending on your location.

For more information on starting an Alumni affiliate, contact the national office at 317-802-4292.

A word of caution regarding former agriculture students: be careful how you approach them. While many people hold fond memories of their FFA experiences, some do not. Knowing this kind of background information will help you effectively position the current program and will help your alumni articulate where they'd like to see the program go.

Although many alumni (and parents) realize what a strong agricultural education program can mean to youth and how FFA develops leadership, character, good citizenship and career success, do not assume they know. Many people who think they know the program may not understand what FFA is today.

When working with alumni, make sure you present information about today's agricultural education program. The National FFA Organization has many brochures, videos and other tools to help you communicate the appropriate messages. See the resource section for ideas and helpful tools.

In many communities, alumni want to help ensure that others are aware of agricultural education's contributions and that the program receives the support it must have.

This is particularly important when the public questions the need for programs. Examples of the assistance alumni can provide include:

- Support and promote the organization and activities on the local, state and national levels
- Involve former members in activities
- Promote a greater knowledge of the importance of the industry
- Help with raising scholarship funds
- Provide support for legislation
- Offer leadership workshops

### **Benefits of Alumni Support**

In less than seven years, the Scott County, Kentucky, FFA Alumni has become one of the most active affiliates in the nation. Now more than 140 alumni members participate in 75 activities that support the local program's needs. Alumni members:

- Raise more than \$10,000 annually at a fall Pumpkin Fest to fund FFA activities,
- Cover students' expenses to the state leadership camp, National FFA Convention, Washington Leadership Conference and Made for Excellence personal development program,
- Sponsor more than \$3,000-worth of scholarships annually (for a total of \$20,000 in nine years),
- Train students for speaking and judging competitions,
- Recruit students to the program (more than 20 percent of freshmen were recruited by alumni members),
- Serve as substitute teachers and chaperones on field trips when teachers have other duties,

- Chaperone monthly FFA-sponsored recreational activities such as a ski or canoe trip, and
- Serve as mentors to students and offer needed encouragement and advice.

During the 1996-1997 school year alone, the affiliate logged more than 8,800 hours in serving the local program and working directly with students. As a result, it received the outstanding affiliate award in 1997 for its support of the local FFA chapter and agricultural education program.

### Secrets to Alumni Support

Here are Scott County's secrets to creating a dynamic, alumni support network:

#### Secret 1

Focus on parents as your main supporters. "Parents know that \$1 of their dues goes directly into the scholarship fund," Oldfield says. "They see that as a small investment when they understand that the organization is giving \$15,000 to their students."

#### Secret 2

Let everyone participate at their own level. "Trust members to volunteer when you need them," Oldfield explains. "We can be successful without having all 140 members at each meeting."

#### Secret 3

Share with alumni what they can do to serve the program. At first, teachers invited alumni to support projects directly related to the chapter's program of activities. Later, they found it more advantageous to review with

members their roles and general areas on how they could support the program and let them go from there. "After alumni realized they could fund scholarships for students," Oldfield recalls, "they just took off and continued to find new ways to raise money."

#### Secret 4

Recruit strong leaders. One of the things that has helped the affiliate to thrive has been the strong support and leadership of parents who have active students in the program. In 1988, 1991 and 1994, alumni elected parents and a former agricultural education major to serve as presidents. Knowing what the program was all about helped these leaders to focus the affiliate on the true needs of the program, students and teachers. At this point, all three agriculture teachers realized they could relinquish more control because the group was in capable hands.

#### Secret 5

Recruit members all year long. Scott County alumni hold a kick-off dinner in September where more than 100 parents, supporters and students listen to the benefits of the alumni membership and FFA. To add prestige to membership, the affiliate offers alumni sweatshirts, t-shirts and a directory to active members.

#### Secret 6

Provide time for fun. Each month, Scott County alumni chaperone local FFA chapter recreational activities such as trail riding, skiing or a cookout. This builds camaraderie between alumni and students, releases

stress and positions the organization to non-members as a “fun” place to be.

### Secret 7

Develop activities that place alumni in direct contact with students. “Sometimes alumni have more credibility than teachers do,” Oldfield adds. “Students learn a lot about being punctual and dependable by working side-by-side with alumni such as at the Pumpkin Fest each October.”

Read on for more tips to building successful alumni/parent relationships.

### Recruiting Parents to the FFA Dream Team

FFA Alumni can build a strong link between parents and local agriculture programs. Involved parents provide leadership, career mentoring and role models, says Denmark, Wis., agriculture teacher Ken Seering. “With more parents on the team, a program has more manpower and students have more opportunities,” he says.

Securing parental involvement has its challenges. Despite the hurdles, the Denmark FFA Alumni has one of the nation’s largest memberships and strongest parental/alumni support networks.

### Support Starts at Home

Most parents want their children to become caring adults and good citizens, says Denmark membership chairperson Marilyn Madsen. “FFA members are doing positive things for society,” she adds. “That’s a natural selling point.”

For other parents, she stresses the need to be involved in their children’s education, which is one reason she joined the alumni in 1976. Examples build future legacy.

“Seeing us involved gets them involved,” explains alumni board member Kathy Rentmeester of her children. Though not an active member, Rentmeester’s daughter volunteers her time because she sees her mother and father support the local chapter and what FFA does for her friends.

### Tips to Increase Parental Involvement

1. Encourage FFA members to talk to parents. Explain how agricultural education and FFA build skills for life and work.
2. Keep them informed. Send parents a regular newsletter, highlighting specific examples of support and ideas for involvement.
3. Invite parents to participate in FFA activities. Many tasks require very little time commitment. Many volunteers mean a low burnout ratio. In Denmark, parents are invited to participate as soon as their children enroll in agricultural education.
4. Hold social gatherings to show appreciation. Host a corn roast, steak and shrimp dinner and appreciation night where parents are recognized for their support. “Having fun draws people out,” Madsen says.
5. Recruit graduating seniors. Involve graduates early before they become parents and there is less time in their schedules.
6. Contact parents in person. “Parents are more apt to respond after personal contact,” Madsen adds. “We have a core group of

members who keep in touch with volunteers.”

7. Refer to acquaintances. Rentmeester and her husband, Glenn, speak of mutual friends who are current members as a bridge to membership.
8. Build ownership through publicity. Denmark FFA and Alumni members submit weekly articles on activities to the local newspaper. They regularly give status reports to the school board. Each year a 40-page supplement appears in the newspaper featuring award winners, degree recipients and other positive examples of what the program is doing. “We have a lot of support because we tell our story and the community knows it’s their program,” Seering says.

### Get the FAQs on Alumni Support – Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

- Q: What is the alumni association?  
A: An organized group of individuals concerned with the success and growth of their community. Their primary purpose is to support their local agriculture program and FFA chapter.
- Q: Who should be part of a local alumni volunteer network?  
A: Anyone interested in supporting and promoting youth, agriculture and local education success. Parents form the core working group, but bankers, lawyers, co-op owners, school officials and agribusiness leaders are important potential members, too.
- Q: Won’t an alumni affiliate take too much of my time. Won’t I have to be at every meeting?  
A: You’ll notice it takes very little of your time as you learn to delegate and trust others to help out. Make your expectations about your time commitment clear at the beginning. Have your local FFA

president or alumni chairperson serve as the liaison between the chapter and affiliate as Oldfield does in Scott County, Ky.

- Q: How do I get people to join an alumni affiliate?  
A: You don’t have to do it yourself. Provide a list of goals and accomplishments for your program and how it will benefit your students and community.
- Q: How can I locate potential members?  
A: Again, delegate the task of recruitment. Encourage members to attend community organization meetings and talk about the local program and FFA chapter’s achievements.
- Q: What are the major benefits of having an alumni affiliate to the program, students and teachers?  
A: There are many benefits. They can generally be divided into four categories:
- 1) continuity after you leave teaching;
  - 2) unified community support;
  - 3) financial support; and
  - 4) an information and career network.

Now that you have recruited members, it’s time to plan activities that support the program and ease your workload. IDEA: Alumni members can bring special knowledge of various enterprises to share with students in the classroom.

### Create and Implement Successful Activities

1. Make a “wish list” of all program needs. While it’s not a guarantee you’ll find alumni to do the work, this process will provide a strategy for recruiting people able to handle those tasks. Start by asking these four questions:
  - Of all the activities we are currently conducting, in which

areas would we like to become even more active?

- What unmet needs does the local program have that we presently are not addressing?
  - What would support me in my work?
  - What might we do differently if we had more skills and time available to us?
2. Ask members, parents, school administrators, alumni and community members what types of activities would best support the agriculture program. Plan and implement your program's goals and activities by answering these questions:
    - How do we position agricultural education within the school and community?
    - How do business and industry fit into the program?
    - How can we best use alumni?
    - How can we demonstrate student achievement to potential partners?
  3. Find out who can do the work. "It is not enough to say we need supporters and volunteers," says Susan Ellis, internationally known volunteer leader and author of *The Volunteer Recruitment Book*. Recruiting specific volunteers for specific jobs can help gain and retain their support long-term. For example, if you're looking to establish a scholarship program, search for someone such as a grant writer whose occupation involves educational funding, counseling or proposal writing. People are more apt to say "yes" if they have a concrete task that suits their interests.
  4. Research and know all the legal or policy requirements and liabilities of working with volunteers. Legal issues vary by state, but could include liability while driving vehicles, steps for notifying administration when entering the school, legal background checks and guidelines for how to interact with

students. Contact your local administration for school district policies.

5. Analyze community resources. Find out:
  - Where will you get the equipment, supplies and money you need?
  - Who do you know who has valuable contacts and resources?
  - Where will you get the highest return on your time invested?

### Outstanding Affiliates Offer Ideas for Activities

The Scott County, Ky., and LeRoy, Ill., FFA Alumni affiliates were the 1997 outstanding affiliate award winner and runner-up. The award is given to affiliates for an outstanding program of activities in support of local FFA chapters and agricultural education programs. Listed here are activities that each affiliate conducts and may spark ideas for you.

### Instructional Activities

- Hold a livestock judging clinic
- Provide equipment and materials for an FFA corn plot
- Assist with training career development teams
- Donate computer programs and videos
- Host an FFA/alumni marketing class and Internet workshop
- Offer sites for agricultural placement
- Hold a student skills event and present awards

### Cooperative Activities with Local Chapter

- Serve as judges for chapter speaking events
- Assist with livestock show and sale
- Provide scholarships to FFA members

- Establish nature trails in the country
- Conduct a food drive for local charities
- Distribute trees for Arbor Day
- Remodel community center and athletic facilities
- Conduct a community safety program

### **Fundraising Activities**

- Provide food concessions at school sporting events, livestock shows and sales
- Cater an agricultural appreciation dinner
- Sell magazines, cookbooks and calendars
- Provide travel scholarships for FFA members
- Assist with FFA fruit sales
- Donate plants and materials for FFA greenhouse and agriculture course

### **Social Activities**

- Hold a free chili supper
- Host a chapter greenhand meal and program
- Chaperone the chapter's winter ski trip and canoe trip/cookout
- Provide a meal for chapter agricultural olympics
- Conduct a summer cookout and game night for alumni and FFA members
- Hold an FFA Week breakfast for supporters

### **Recruitment Activities**

- Conduct a presentation for parents of chapter greenhand candidates
- Publish articles highlighting the alumni in local newspaper
- Send a letter to the parents of new agriculture students
- Conduct a presentation at the parent-member banquet promoting alumni membership

- Speak to other civic organizations and explain alumni goals and aims
- Conduct a "chartering" program for other schools
- Send a postcard to all existing members reminding them of dues collection

For more tips on how to create and implement successful activities, see the April/May and June/July 1997 issues of *New Visions*, the National FFA Alumni Association newsletter.

### **Veteran Teachers Share How Alumni Help Build Success**

Two agriculture teachers shared their insights and strategies for building this most important partnership with alumni members.

- Q: What can local agriculture teachers do to build a relationship with alumni members?
- A: Ray Gillmore, a 27-year teaching veteran from Molalla, Ore., suggests local teachers start by meeting with key alumni members. "This will give them an accurate view of your expectations and clarify how they play a positive role locally."

Gillmore, whose 70-plus member alumni affiliate is five years old, says member involvement needs to be structured around the fact that teachers are responsible for the program.

"This means that both sides need to have open and direct communications," adds MeeCee Baker, Ph.D., agriculture teacher at Greenwood High School in Millerstown, Pennsylvania.

Q: What is the key to successfully working with local alumni members?

A: “The key word is ‘supporter,’ explains Gillmore. “Teachers need to stress that that is the role for alumni members and not fear that alumni want to ‘take over.’” Baker adds that advisory committees serve as natural places for alumni members to offer support and volunteer their time.

Q: What role can alumni play in building a local program or helping instructors?

A: Baker, who is starting a local alumni affiliate for the program, says teachers usually welcome volunteer assistance, especially in areas that add value to agricultural education programs. Local volunteers “with experiences or related careers in horticulture have been a tremendous asset in building our greenhouse,” she explains.

“It can be as simple as calling them on the phone and asking for help,” says Baker. “However, keep in mind the tremendous time demands on local alumni members.”

Share an example of how you would like them to get involved, offers Gillmore. “Every community is different, so assess the situation and let them determine how they can contribute.”

Both offered the following ideas as ways for alumni to get involved. Suggest that they:

- train the chapter’s teams or individuals for career development events or competitions,
- assist the local chapter with fundraising,
- volunteer to speak with graduates about potential careers,
- transport FFA members’ projects to the county fair,

- serve as a chaperone for overnight events,
- encourage students to enroll in the local program or become FFA members, and
- offer students paid or unpaid agriculture career experiences.

Q: What other ways can alumni help out?

A: Besides direct instructional assistance, alumni volunteers can be key in reopening a closed agricultural education program, as was the case in Millerstown, Pennsylvania, says Baker. Since that time, the program has grown to more than 75 students, one third of the school’s enrollment. “Local residents who are organized are in a better position to assist local teachers.”

Gillmore adds that local alumni have been responsible for preserving his advisor’s stipend and increasing his extended contract to more than 50 extra days despite severe school district budget cuts.

Molalla Alumni have also single-handedly helped the local program secure funding and permission for a new 60’ x 125’ facility with a shop and computer lab and a 50-acre land lab. They also obtained a \$35,000 sponsorship for equipment for the new shop.

“My alumni has been the best thing that happened in my 27 years of teaching!” —Ray Gillmore, agriculture teacher

## How to Recruit Counselors and Administrators

Counselors and administrators need to be reminded about the solid career opportunities available in agriculture today. Before classes start in the fall, visit with

your career counselors, superintendent and principal. If they hold any misconceptions about agriculture, you can share information that can help build the credibility agricultural education and FFA deserve. Comments from alumni such as parents and community members can lend strong support to your agricultural education program. Work with the alumni to help develop the best strategies for success.

Counselors and administrators need to hear these key talking points:

1. **Scholarships.** FFA awards more than \$1.5 million in scholarships annually to its members. Counselors can remind students about these opportunities for higher education funding.
2. **Work-Based Experience.** Related work experience—supervised agricultural experience (SAE)—is an integral part of agricultural education. Students apply the concepts they learn in a related work experience and document their progress toward individual careers.
3. **Leadership Development.** The national, state and local FFA officers are outstanding leaders due to their FFA preparation. Students attend workshops such as Made for Excellence, Washington Leadership Conference and the State Presidents' Conference. More than 45,000 students participate in the National FFA Convention held annually in Louisville, Ky.
4. **Increased Self-Esteem.** All FFA members have a chance to grow and experience success through competitive events.
5. **Increased Career Opportunities.** According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, there will be a 10 percent shortage of college graduates in the food and agricultural sciences needed to fill positions by 2000.

## Eight Ways to Open Doors

Here are other activities to give counselors and administrators a better grasp of the opportunities in agricultural education and FFA:

- Present updates and student successes at staff or public meetings in cooperation with local alumni.
- Invite them to join the alumni association and sponsor their membership.
- Involve counselors or administrators in community activities that allow them to have contact with district residents who support the local program.
- Give each of them a complimentary subscription to the *FFA New Horizons* magazine.
- Invite them to a breakfast or FFA chapter banquet where key business supporters and volunteers present why they support FFA.
- Invite them on a tour that highlights student agribusiness, technology or environmental projects.
- Invite them to a chapter meeting to observe leadership in action.
- Leave copies of the following publications: *The Industry Too Big To Ignore*, *Open a Promising Future for Students* and *Discovering an Agricultural Biotechnology Career*. These excellent four-color publications are available at minimal cost and can help graphically explain your points.

Resource materials in this article are available through FFA Distribution Services, 800-332-2668.

## Where to Go for Help

1. For more information, contact the National FFA Alumni Association at 317-802-4292. Write: P.O. Box 68960, 6060 FFA Drive, Indianapolis, IN 46268-0999. Visit the alumni home page at <http://www.ffa.org>.
2. To purchase a copy of *The Volunteer Recruitment Book*, contact Energize, Inc. at 1-800-395-9800 or search its web site at <http://www.energizeinc.com>.
3. Review *A Guide to Local Program Success* for strategies on how to work with partners such as alumni.

## Business and Industry

Local business and industry personnel can be valuable resources. When state and federal funding declines, business and industry may provide additional funding, human resources, equipment or other assistance. It is up to you to convince them that this is something they would want to do. Don't forget to mention that today's students are tomorrow's customers, employees and community leaders.

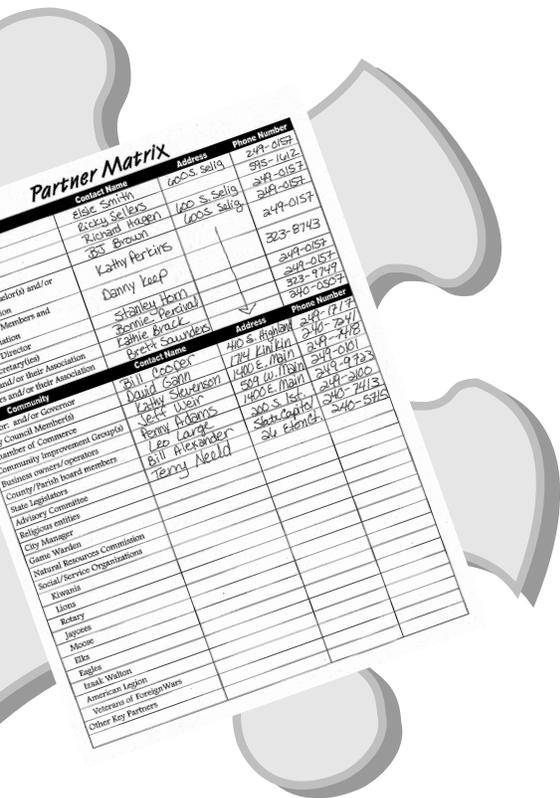
You can get business and industry leaders involved in your program in a variety of ways. Here are a few examples:

- Invite them to local or regional meetings
- Ask for their input regarding local program goals (refer to *A Guide to Local Program Success* for sample surveys, page 4-10)
- Ask them to define what is important to the local and state economies
- Ask them to host workshops
- Ask for their help in sponsoring events
- Get their input regarding the type of worker/student they see as the "model worker" or "model student"

- Use existing advisory committees to communicate the value and importance of your program (if you don't have an advisory committee, start one!)

Local business people may be connected to other state-wide organizations which might be helpful. Ask for their assistance in contacting other industry leaders throughout the state. State-wide business leaders could have a significant, positive impact on local chapters. State-wide businesses could:

- Provide direction for state-wide goals
- Encourage state-wide economic development
- Encourage students to remain in a state/community upon completing their education
- Show students where the economic opportunities are in the state
- Encourage state government to provide greater support (funding, other resources) for the agricultural education program and the student organization (FFA)
- Promote greater awareness of how the entire state is affected by vocational-technical education
- Provide contact between and among several local chapters



## Advisory Committee

Not only can business and industry provide additional resources to a program, they can also serve as members of the advisory committee. An advisory committee is a carefully selected group of business, industry, community and school-related individuals that help you keep the program on track and up to date with current technology, a challenging curriculum and progressive practices. When an advisory committee is appropriately managed, it will provide both guidance and support. By tapping into the knowledge and wisdom of the local advisory committee, you can develop, design and deliver a quality total program. Effective use of the council requires regularly scheduled, well-planned meetings with specific goals in mind.

For additional details on working with advisory committees, refer to the *Agriculture Teacher's Manual*, which can be purchased through the National FFA Organization (item #TOM). Additional supporting resources can be found in Section 6 of this publication.

Members of the advisory committee can provide many new ideas and insight that will give your program that extra boost it needs to put you on the leading edge. To be effective, council members should be given the opportunity to provide input on a regular basis. Below are some examples of what an advisory committee can accomplish when the teacher becomes a manager of resources.

- Evaluate the current agricultural education program to determine if it is providing realistic and

current preparation and training for students

- Act as a change agent to increase the agricultural education program's relevance.
- Act as a communications link to help develop community understanding of and support for the agricultural education program.
- Assist in developing training stations for students in placement and intern programs and assist in placing program graduates.
- Serve in official capacities as judges, help plan special events, introduce projects to the community, and secure needed facilities.

### Guidelines for Creating an Effective Advisory Committee

Providing guidelines for the advisory committee to follow assists in the process and helps ensure constructive outcomes. Listed below are some helpful suggestions for creating an effective advisory committee.

- Work with local administrators to select valuable members for your committee.
- Select members from diverse areas of the agricultural and educational committee.
- Rotate committee members so they serve a reasonable term of service.
- Do not just select members who will tell you everything looks good in the program. To improve the program, you must make quality changes to advance it to the next

level. Members with vision and knowledge of current trends in the agricultural industry and education can assist in designing a blueprint for a complete agricultural education program.

- Connect the advisory committee members with the local board of education. This will ensure that the local board of education recognizes the work the advisory committee is doing to improve the education of students in the agricultural education program and their school. It will also validate for school board members the importance of agricultural education within the local community.
- Select quality representatives as advisory committee members to ensure school officials and the school board will value their recommendations.
- Conduct regularly scheduled, well-planned meetings to keep current on plans to improve the agricultural education program. Regular meetings will add to the commitment of the committee members and give their recommendations more prompt consideration by those who make the final educational decisions. It will also assist in scheduling meetings if the meeting dates and expectations are set in advance.
- Provide direction and training in the expectations of an advisory committee member.
- Keep meetings on task and focused on the agenda.
- Select a chairperson and have him or her facilitate the meetings.

## *National, State, County and Local Associations*

This is a very important section. Many of the connections are made at the state, county and local levels. These are people who can offer new ideas on the current trends and technology that are being incorporated into businesses every day.

### **Who are they?**

These associations are comprised of local producers and people with special interests in the agriculture and agribusiness communities. They control the destiny for the agriculture community in your area. They are designed to keep local producers current on today's trends, share information and develop a market for local producers to distribute their products.

Most state, county and local organizations are typically members of a national organization with similar goals. The state, county and local organizations may serve their members on a focused basis, as their needs may be different than those in other parts of the country.

Some of the organizations represented in this group would be the National Corn Growers Association, American Egg Board, various livestock associations, American Society for Horticulture Science, American Seed Trade Association and many more. Each local area will have associations that serve the needs of its members.

### **How are they important to agricultural education?**

Each organization works to increase promotion, research and education. When educators connect with associations on the local level, they can receive many benefits. A sample of those benefits follow.

- Associations can provide a direct connection for keeping current with markets and marketing trends that affect the local economy.
- These relationships create a way to stay in touch with current technology available in industry.
- Teachers can help students develop leadership skills thereby preparing them to assume future roles in the organization. Junior associations for youth to develop their leadership skills are excellent resources.
- Organization members can promote research to students who then can become involved in developing new ideas and technology for the future.
- Organization members can promote career opportunities for students so they will develop an interest for careers in agriculture.
- Organizations can provide scholarships to worthy students who are pursuing an education in the field of agriculture.

## How to "Get Connected"

Making the connection with agricultural associations that are a part of your community is the first step to developing good working relationships. These associations and their members can be vital resources for your agriculture program. The ideas listed below are examples that will assist you in your quest to "get connected."

- Make a point to meet all of the agricultural organization leaders important to your program and your students.
- Stay in touch with the leaders of the associations on a regular basis.
- Ask to be put on their mailing lists.
- Keep them informed about your program by sending them a chapter newsletter or a complimentary subscription to *FFA New Horizons*. Be sure to involve students in the process.
- Invite organization leaders to program functions and events. Recognize those who have helped the local program prosper.

- Invite organization leaders to visit your classroom and laboratory facilities or host one of their meetings at the agriculture department.
- Ask them for their assistance and be willing to offer your assistance to them.
- Say "thank you," "thank you," "thank you."

## Identify the Opportunities and Benefits

Once you have connected with each association and understand their purpose and goals, you can plan activities to include them. When developing your chapter's Program of Activities, involve key associations that can connect with program events and advance the quality of career education for students. Partnering with associations can be beneficial to all involved, especially the students.



## Service Clubs and Organizations

Do not overlook the service clubs and organizations in your area. They are often looking for guest speakers and can provide willing audiences with which your public speaking candidates can practice. In addition, most already have service commitments to the community and might be interested in conducting joint community service projects. By working with them, you and your students can demonstrate the value you provide to the community. Once the relationships are established, you'll find they know the community in-depth and can provide all sorts of resources—financial, human and otherwise. If you haven't already done so, complete the community section of the Partner Matrix on page viii.

Don't forget that partnerships are a two-way street. It will be easier to connect with community groups and resources if you're seen as a community leader yourself. Consider becoming involved in different groups and serving on community committees. Your involvement will show others you care and make them more willing to help your program.

## Working With Volunteers

Once you have identified people in your community who are willing to work with your program, you'll need a plan to keep

them involved and active. Assign volunteers specific tasks and give them enough information to complete the task successfully. For instance, if you want community volunteers to set up career development events, provide them with a set of the rules that govern the event and specific written instructions regarding your expectations. Meet with the volunteers in advance and walk them through how the event should work and what they should expect. If you are aware of general pitfalls or things to avoid, warn them in advance so they don't feel like they were set up for failure.

When working with volunteers, it is important that you are aware of the legal or policy requirements and liabilities. The legal issues vary by state, but can include things like driving vehicles, steps for notifying the administration when volunteers are invited onto school property, necessary background checks, etc. Your local administration probably has all of this information available. Check to see if they have any information you need to distribute to volunteers or waivers that volunteers must sign.

For more information on working with volunteers, refer to the Partners section of *A Guide to Local Program Success*. Another good resource with more in-depth information is *The Volunteer Recruitment Book* by Susan J. Ellis (published in 1996, ISBN#094057618X). Refer to state and federal laws for working with minors.

## Key Steps to Working with Volunteers

- Make a list of tasks that need to be performed during the year so you are ready if someone wants to know what he or she can do to assist the program.
- Let the community know you are looking for assistance with specific projects.
- Inform advisory committee members and students of upcoming events with which you will need assistance.
- Recruiting volunteers is a great way to receive help for specific tasks that require a certain expertise.
- Don't overlook senior citizens who may have a lifetime of experience working with young people. They can be a great benefit and will usually have time when others do not.
- Analyze the community to identify volunteers who might be available.
- Focus on the volunteers' reasons for supporting the program to keep them motivated and involved.
- Prevent burnout of volunteers who have been very helpful. Do not ask too much of them.
- Make sure they see the benefits of their involvement.
- Rotate the jobs of volunteers so they get the opportunity to experience all aspects of a project.
- Make sure volunteers receive tokens of appreciation and "thank yous" for all their hard work.



**Section 3:**

*Get Connected to  
State Leaders*



State  
Leaders

# Section 3:

## Get Connected to State Leaders

State education leaders can be important allies in the expansion and development of your program. Two groups of individuals can be particularly powerful allies, these are the Chief State School Officers and the State Directors of Vocational-Technical Education. In addition, your state supervisor(s) of agricultural education and the agricultural education teacher educators at your state's teacher training colleges or universities can provide valuable assistance in many ways. Here are more details about each of these groups.

### *Chief State School Officers*

#### **Who are they?**

- Chief State School Officers are the 57 elected or appointed public officials who head the departments of elementary and secondary education in the fifty states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. territories and the U.S. Department of Defense Dependent Schools. These individuals oversee each State Education Agency (SEA).
- The national organization which represents the 57 chiefs is the Council of Chief State School Officers. Founded in 1927 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., the Council coordinates and expresses the views of its

members to federal government agencies, Congress, and civic and professional organizations.

#### **What do they think?**

Chief state school officers firmly believe that the primary authority for education policy in this country belongs to the state governments, not the federal government.

Because of this belief, the chief in your state can be a valuable ally. The chief must be made aware of your programs, their content and their value to the state and community. The following statements underline this point:

- Some of the issues the chief state school officers have advocated at the federal level include:
  - raising graduation rates
  - establishing national education goals
  - flexibility for federally-funded programs
  - federal funding for statewide education reforms
- In 1992, the chiefs agreed to actively pursue the following three topics in their work at the state and federal levels:
  - School Success through Collaboration - Education Success for All
  - Connecting School and Employment
  - Student and Teacher Assessment

## How do chief state school officers see themselves?

Educator, for at least 10 years... Experience at the secondary and/or post-secondary level... Some government experience helpful but not necessary... Good oral communication skills... Persuasive... Determined... Able to handle multiple tasks... Leadership abilities...

## A Chief State School Officer's World

State centric—education decisions revolve around the state level... Liaison... Bridge builder... Equitable funding of programs... Federal legislation for employment preparation programs... Comprehensive early childhood programs... Expansion of adult education and literacy training... Authorization of state by state NAEP (National Assessment of Educational Progress)...

## Common Beliefs

- The federal government should allow states to disperse education funds to areas that show the greatest need, or show the greatest possibilities for encouraging youth to stay in school.
- Vocational-technical education programs should build connections between school and careers. These programs, focusing on youth apprenticeship and work-based learning, should provide opportunities for students who want to enter the world of work directly after high school.
- The state should help local districts ensure the success of programs through collaboration — SEAs and school districts must explore ways to connect

health, welfare and housing, juvenile justice, vocational-technical education and business to ensure educational success.

## Speaking Their Language

- The Study Commission is the action arm of the Council of Chief State School Officers. It is composed of high-level staff members from each state, as designated by the state chief. This group determines the Council's agenda, which, in turn, determines the focus of the individual chiefs.
- *CONCERNS* is a quarterly newsletter published by the Council's Resource Center for Educational Equity.

## Key Points

To secure and maintain chief state school officer support, demonstrate the following points:

1. Show how your program can “keep kids in school” and increase graduation rates because you teach:
  - a. topics of high interest (many students have an interest in living things)
  - b. “learning by doing,” is active learning and isn't “boring” to young people
  - c. in a way that helps students apply math, English, economics and science by giving students a context in which to learn. You may contribute to *increasing* test scores in these areas thus reducing low grades, failure and boredom.
2. Show how you collaborate with business in developing supervised agricultural experiences. Suggest possible school/business partnerships statewide.

3. Show how you connect school and employment by:
  - a. working with the business community.
  - b. continuing to counsel your students after graduation from high school.
  - c. providing a source of employees for the local business community.

## *State Directors of Vocational-Technical Education*

### **Who are they?**

- The state directors oversee more than 25,000 facilities which offer over 150 occupational education programs at the secondary, post-secondary and adult education levels.
- State Directors of Vocational-Technical Education are concerned with developing and maintaining vocational-technical education programs and facilities.
- Each state director works with his/her staff, business, labor and other state education officials to build quality vo-tech programs.
- The state directors are usually appointed by the chief state school officer or the state education commissioner.
- The National Association of the State Directors of Vocational-Technical Education (NASDVTE) is represented in all 50 states, U.S. territories, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. The NASDVTE is governed by a 17-member board of directors.

### **What do state directors of vocational-technical education think?**

State directors generally believe that vo-tech education has an important role to play in helping students prepare for life-long learning and employment. One of the highest priorities of the state directors is the pursuit of an integrated academic and vocational education program at all levels.

### **State directors think:**

- It is important to expand the concept of academic-vocational integration beyond just curriculum concerns and into a structured relationship between the two communities.
- Vocational and academic educators must work together to see that students acquire basic academic skills that are relevant to occupational training.
- Joint staff development programs must be created for academic and vocational teachers to help them understand each other's curricula. This development must:
  - encourage the design of courses that urge students to use both academic and technical materials and skills in solving problems.
  - encourage the development of programs which show vocational teachers how to use real-world problems in all of their courses.
- Many state directors support student organizations as an integral part of the classroom, reinforcing relevant and current skills and concepts.

### State directors agree that:

- Federal legislation should encourage integrative programs.
- States should direct federal and state funding to those vo-tech programs that give students rigorous, coordinated programs in grades 9-12.
- Vocational students must be required to complete a logical sequence of courses throughout junior and senior high school. They should not be permitted to “wander” through a series of unrelated courses and materials.

### How do state vocational-technical directors see themselves?

Education, business, labor experience... Networker... Budgeting skills... Some state/federal government experience helpful but not necessary... Good communication skills... Ability to accomplish a great deal with limited resources

### A State Director’s World

State Liaison... Bridge Builder between academic and vocational communities... Apprenticeship... School-to-Career.. Tech Prep... Applied academics... Workforce preparation... State plans... Integration...

*Note: Some states use the phrase “School-to-Career” to represent the School-to-Work Act. The two phrases are interchangeable and refer to the same initiative.*

### Speaking Their Language

- Tech Prep (2+2)
- Integration
- Applied Academics
- Business\Education Partnerships
- Skill Standards
- The Perkins Act
- Office of Vocational and Adult Education
- School-to-Career

*Note: for definitions of the preceding terms, please refer to the Glossary of Educational Terms.*

### Key Points

To develop and maintain support from state directors of vocational-technical education, you need to shed light on the following points:

1. Demonstrate to academicians how your program helps students acquire basic academic skills and integrate them with technically relevant material.
2. Demonstrate how your program requires both academic and technical materials in the curricula.
3. Demonstrate how the state-wide and local business communities are actively involved in your programs.

## *State Supervisors and Teacher Educators*

This section is structured differently than the previous sections because state supervisors and staff, and teacher educators can provide resources to work with your partners and state leaders. The resources and guidance which they can provide include:

- Curricula and materials
- Teaching methods
- In-service programs
- Information on funding
- New directions in the industry
- Insight into new technologies
- Moral support and encouragement
- Understanding the political climate
- Networking
- Business partnerships
- Supervision
- Understanding how to meet federal and state regulations
- Instruction on how to complete required forms
- Offering opportunities for administrators and counselors at state and national conventions

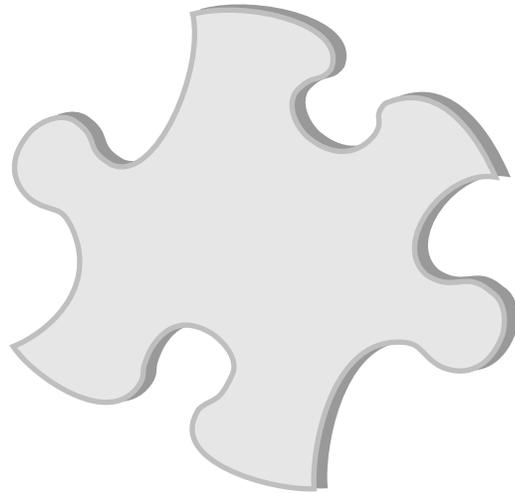
If you need to locate your state supervisor, consult National FFA Online ([www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)). It contains a list of all state supervisors and state staff members. To locate your state's teacher educators, call your state's land grant university or your state supervisor.

## *Building State Leadership Capacity*

State Agricultural Education Success occurs through strong leadership in:

- Visioning and Strategic Planning
- Program Development (Improvement)
- Instruction & Curriculum (SAE & FFA)
- Professional Development
- Partner Development
- Marketing/Communications

...so that local programs are successful.



**Section 4:**

*Get Connected to  
Careers*



Careers

# Section 4:

## Get Connected to Careers

As an agriculture teacher, you are probably aware of the exciting (and expanding) array of agricultural careers available to your students. However, students are often unaware of all the possibilities and only know of those careers they see in their communities. This chapter provides career information you can use with your students to help them understand that there are more than 300 career areas in agriculture.

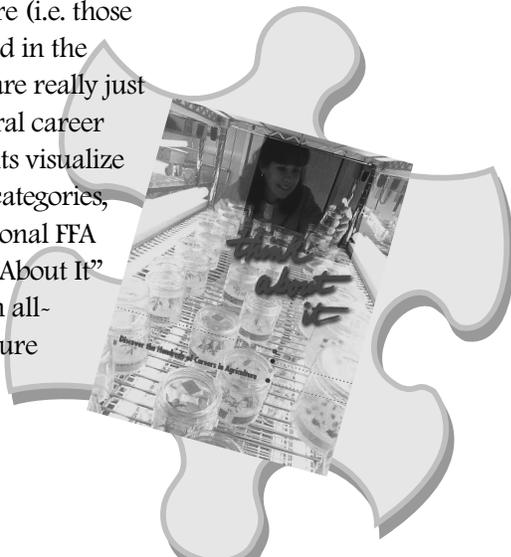
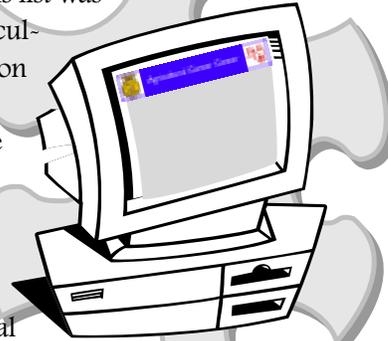
An easy way to get students thinking about agricultural careers and the number of positions available in each of the different major categories is to use the “Career Opportunities in Agriculture” pyramid. Consider reproducing the following page as an overhead transparency to show to your class.

### *Agricultural Career Options*

Once you have shown your students the pyramid, point out that the jobs most people think of when they think of agriculture (i.e. those at the tip of the pyramid in the production category), are really just the tip of the agricultural career iceberg. To help students visualize careers in each of the categories, consider using the National FFA Organization’s “Think About It” brochure. While not an all-inclusive list, the brochure

provides a good sampling of career titles split into 13 general categories presented in an attractive, student-friendly, full-color display. This brochure can be ordered through the National FFA Organization. Call 1-888-332-2668 and request item #CB.

To assist you in introducing the wide variety of agricultural careers, a list of more than 300 agricultural job titles follows. This list was taken from the Agricultural Career Center on National FFA Online ([www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)). The Agricultural Career Center features an interactive career interests quiz, more than 300 agricultural career titles and descriptions, examples of résumés, cover letters, thank you notes and internship information. After you’ve introduced your students to the broad array of agricultural careers, consider assigning each of them to complete the on-line quiz and research their top 3-5 career matches.



# Career Opportunities in Agriculture

## Employment Categories



Source: Higher Education Programs, Cooperative State Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

## **Agricultural and Forestry Production Specialists**

Agricultural and forest production units reach far beyond the traditional farm managers and ranch/owner/operators. Producers now take advantage of the integrated inputs of science, educators, business representatives and natural resource managers to create a diverse work force. Here is a sampling of job titles from this career cluster:

- Aerial Crop Duster
- Ag Plumber
- Aquaculturist
- Beekeeper
- Cash Grain Farmer
- Cattle Rancher
- Certified Seed Grower
- Citrus Grower
- Cotton Producer
- Custom Operator
- Dairy Farmer
- Dairy Herdsman
- Diesel Mechanic
- Diversified Crop Farmer
- Diversified Livestock Producer
- Farm Manager
- Farm Stand Operator
- Farmer
- Federal Grain Inspector
- Feed Mill Operator
- Feedlot Manager
- Fish Farmer
- Fish Hatchery Manager
- Forester
- Fruit Grower
- Game Farm Supervisor
- Grain Elevator Operator
- Greenhouse Manager
- Harness Maker
- Harvest Contractor
- Heavy Equipment Operator
- Horse Rancher
- Hydroponics Grower
- Livestock Yard Supervisor
- Lumber Mill Operator
- Machinist
- Milking Machine Operator
- Mink Producer

- Mushroom Grower
- Nursery Operator
- Nut Orchardist
- Orchard Supervisor
- Peanut Producer
- Potato Grower
- Poultry Hatchery Manager
- Rice Farmer
- Sheep Shearer
- Shrimp Farmer
- Silviculturist
- Tobacco Grower
- Trapper
- Tree and Vine Fruit Grower
- Tree Farmer
- Turf Farmer
- Turkey Producer
- Vegetable Grower
- Welder
- Wildlife Manager

## **Communication and Education Specialists**

Computerized information management has necessitated growth in agricultural communication and education specializations. Combined with a strong emphasis on business communications, writers, broadcasters, science editors, environmental public relations, technical consulting and industrial educators provide an important component in the business structure. Here is a sampling of job titles from this career cluster:

- Ag Educator
- Ag Extension Agent
- Ag Extension Specialist
- Ag Journalist
- Ag Lawyer
- Ag Mechanics Teacher
- Ag News Director
- Agriculture Attaché
- Agriculture Instructor/FFA Advisor
- Biotechnology Technical Recruiter
- College Teacher

- Computer Analyst
- Computer Programmer
- Computer Software Designer
- Computer Specialist
- Computer Systems Analyst
- Conservation Officer
- Cooperative Extension Agent
- Editor
- Education Specialist
- Electronic Editor
- Environmental Educator
- Farm Auctioneer
- Farm Broadcaster
- High School Teacher
- Horticulture Instructor
- Illustrator
- Information Specialist
- Information System Analyst
- International Specialist
- Journalist
- Labor Relations Specialist
- Magazine Writer
- Public Relations Representative
- Publicist
- Publisher
- Quality Assurance Specialist
- Radio/Television Broadcaster
- Scientific Writer
- Software Reviewer
- Youth 4-H Leader

### **Managers and Financial Specialists**

These professionals have expertise in management, finance, accounting and/or statistics. Agribusiness financial managers, planners, government program managers, accountants and human resource managers represent occupations in this area.

Here is a sampling of job titles from this career cluster:

- Ag Consultant
- Ag Corporation Executive
- Ag Economist
- Ag Loan Officer
- Ag Market Analyst
- Animal Keeper
- Biotechnology Regulatory Affairs Specialist
- Commodity Broker
- Consumer Information Manager
- Credit Analyst
- Dairy Management Specialist
- Equipment Operator
- Export Sales Manager
- Farm Investment Manager
- Fertilizer Plant Supervisor
- Food Processing Supervisor
- Golf Course Superintendent
- Information Director
- Kennel Operator
- Land Bank Branch Manager
- Marketing Manager
- Meteorological Analyst
- Milk Plant Supervisor
- Parts Manager
- Pet Shop Operator
- Produce Commission Agent
- Public Relations Manager
- Purchasing Manager
- Quality Control Supervisor
- Regional Planner
- Regulatory Agent
- Research Economist
- Resource Manager
- Sales Manager
- Timber Manager
- Training Manager
- Turf Manager
- Water Resources Manager
- Winery Supervisor

## Marketing, Merchandising and Sales Representatives

Utilizing a broad array of scientific and business management tools, graduates placed in this cluster draw on a wide range of agricultural and natural resource backgrounds and have an interest in and understanding of marketing and merchandising. Sales and marketing representatives of plant protection products, seeds, fertilizers, forest products and lawn, garden and nursery products are included in this area. Here is a sampling of job titles from this career cluster:

- Account Executive
- Advertising Manager
- Ag Association Executive
- Ag Chemical Dealer
- Ag Equipment Dealer
- Biotechnology Documentation Specialist
- Biotechnology Patent Administrator
- Biotechnology Patent Agent
- Butcher
- Cattle Buyer
- Chemical Distributor
- Computer Operator
- Computer Salesperson
- Field Sales Representative, Animal and Feed Products
- Field Sales Representative, Ag Mechanics
- Field Sales Representative, Chemicals and Pharmaceuticals
- Field Sales Representative, Crop Production
- Floral Designer
- Floral Shop Operator
- Florist
- Food Broker
- Forest Products Merchandiser
- Fruit Distributor
- Grain Broker
- Grain Buyer
- Grain Merchandiser
- Graphic Designer
- Greenskeeper

- Groundskeeper
- Hog Buyer
- Insurance Agent
- Landscape Architect
- Landscape Contractor
- Landscaper
- Lawn & Garden Equipment Mechanic
- Livestock Commission Agent
- Market Analyst
- Meat Buyer
- Meat Cutter
- Pest Control Technician
- Photographer
- Poultry Field Service Technician
- Produce Buyer
- Real Estate Broker
- Sales Representative
- Service Technician
- Technical Service Representative
- Tobacco Buyer
- Wool Buyer

## Scientists, Engineers and Related Specialists

This group includes professional problem solvers dealing with environmental challenges and is focused on assuring a safe, nutritious and economical food supply. Careers are found in many types of industries, but primarily support research-oriented agendas. Bioprocess engineers, food process engineers, plant geneticists, forest scientists, animal reproductive physiologists and horticultural scientists find positions throughout universities, government laboratories and privately operated research programs. Here is a sampling of job titles from this career cluster:

- Ag Aviator
- Ag Construction Engineer
- Ag Electrician
- Ag Equipment Designer
- Ag Safety Engineer
- Agricultural Engineer
- Agriculturalist
- Agronomist

- Animal Behaviorist
- Animal Breeder
- Animal Cytologist
- Animal Ecologist
- Animal Geneticist
- Animal Nutritionist
- Animal Physiologist
- Animal Scientist
- Animal Taxonomist
- Animal Technician
- Artificial Breeding Distributor
- Artificial Breeding Technician
- Artificial Inseminator
- Avian Veterinarian
- Bacteriologist
- Biochemist
- Biomedical Engineer
- Biophysicist
- Biostatician
- Biotechnician
- Biotechnology Assay Analyst
- Biotechnology Library Assistant
- Biotechnology Manufacturing Technician
- Biotechnology Product Development Engineer
- Biotechnology Quality Control Engineer
- Biotechnology Research Assistant
- Biotechnology Research Associate
- Biotechnology Validation Engineer
- Biotechnology Validation Technician
- Botanist
- Cell Biologist
- Chemical Applicator
- Dairy Nutrition Specialist
- Dendrologist
- Dietician
- Embryologist
- Enologist
- Entomologist
- Environmental Conservationist
- Environmental Scientist
- Equine Dentist
- Feed Ration Developer
- Food Chemist
- Food Engineer
- Food Scientist
- Geneticist
- Groundwater Geologist
- Herpetologist
- Horticulturist
- Hydraulic Engineer
- Invertebrate Zoologist
- Irrigation Engineer
- Lab Technician
- Limnologist
- Mammalogist
- Marine Biologist
- Microbiologist
- Molecular Biologist
- Natural Resources Scientist
- Nematologist
- Nutritionist
- Organic Chemist
- Ova Transplant Specialist
- Paleobiologist
- Parasitologist
- Pathologist
- Pharmaceutical Chemist
- Physiologist
- Plant Breeder
- Plant Cytologist
- Plant Ecologist
- Plant Geneticist
- Plant Nutritionist
- Plant Pathologist
- Plant Scientist
- Plant Taxonomist
- Pomologist
- Poultry Scientist
- Range Conservationist
- Rangeland Scientist
- Reproductive Physiologist
- Research Engineer
- Research Technician
- Satellite Technician
- Soil Conservationist
- Soil Scientist
- Statistician
- Toxicologist
- Tree Surgeon
- Vertebrate Zoologist
- Veterinarian
- Veterinary Pathologist
- Virologist
- Viticulturist
- Waste Management Specialist
- Water Quality Specialist
- Weed Scientist
- Zoologist

## Social Service Professionals

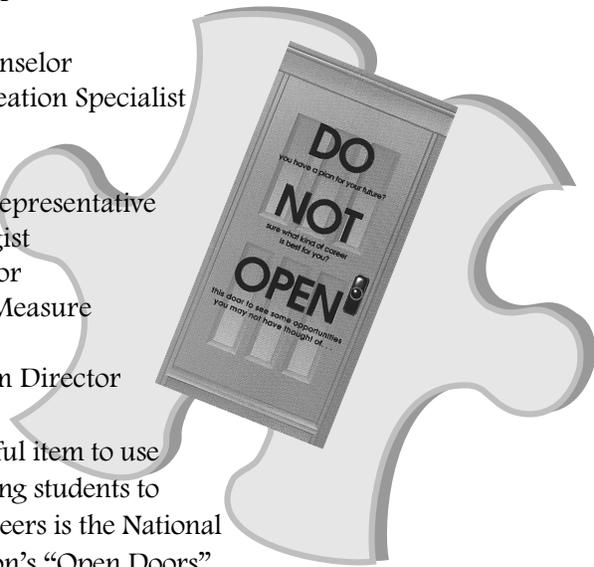
Public interest in the environment, outdoor recreation activities, and safe and nutritious foods are principal factors which will generate most social service positions. These careers require educated individuals involved in the inspection process to utilize sophisticated instruments and inspection procedures. Nutritionists, dietitians, regional and community planners and land-use specialists have highly valued professional positions in the social service arena. Here is a sampling of job titles from this career cluster:

- Ag Establishment Inspector
- Animal Groomer
- Animal Inspector
- Animal Trainer
- Biotechnology Glasswasher
- Biotechnology Laboratory Assistant
- Biotechnology Media Prep Technician
- Canning and Preserving Inspector
- Career Counselor
- Caseworker
- Christmas Tree Grader
- Community Development Specialist
- Consumer Counselor
- Cotton Grader
- Dog Trainer
- Farm Appraiser
- Fiber Inspector
- Fire Warden
- Flower Grader
- Food and Drug Inspector
- Food Inspector
- Foreign Affairs Official
- Forest Fire Fighter
- Forest Ranger
- Fruit and Vegetable Grader
- Game Warden
- Horse Trainer
- Insect and Disease Inspector
- Land Surveyor
- Log Grader
- Logging Operations Inspector

- Meat Inspector
- Naturalist
- Nutrition Counselor
- Outdoor Recreation Specialist
- Park Manager
- Park Ranger
- Peace Corps Representative
- Rural Sociologist
- Safety Inspector
- Weights and Measure Official
- Youth Program Director

Another helpful item to use when introducing students to agricultural careers is the National FFA Organization's "Open Doors" brochure. This two-color piece takes a unique approach to introducing students to agricultural careers. It provides lists of career titles sorted by function rather than specialty, i.e. people feeders, problem-solvers, science explorers, environmental protectors, etc. This brochure can be ordered through the National FFA Organization. Call 1-888-332-2668 and request item #ODB.

*American Careers* magazine has printed several articles on agricultural careers. These pieces were developed for use by students. You can use them for reading assignments, career exploration exercises, and other related activities. The articles, entitled, "The Industry Too Big To Ignore," and "Discovering An Agricultural Biotechnology Career That May Be For You," are reprinted on the following pages. Full-color versions of these article reprints can be ordered through the National FFA Organization. Call 1-888-332-2668 and request item #AATB for "The Industry Too Big To Ignore," or item #DABC for "Discovering an Agricultural Biotechnology Career That May Be For You."



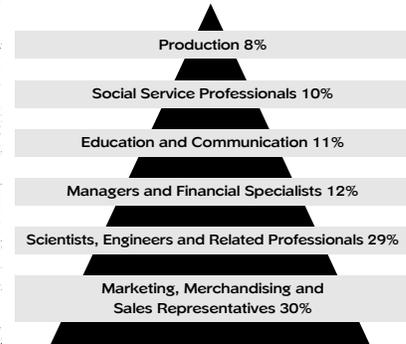


## The Industry Too

# Big

To Ignore

### Career Opportunities in Agriculture Employment Categories



Source: Higher Education Programs, Cooperative State Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C.

Are you looking for a challenging career that will broaden your horizons? Would you like to be involved in a dynamic, exciting industry? Today's food and fiber industry offers these benefits and more. Whether you are interested in business, computers, mechanics or communications, America's largest industry has a place for you.

Over 20 percent of America's work force is employed in some phase of the agricultural industry. There are seven people working in agribusiness for every farmer. In fact, there are over 8,000 job titles in agriculture. And they all work together to provide food and fiber for the planet's growing population.

Virtually any career in which you may be interested can be applied to agriculture. Engineering? You bet! Today, farmers are leveling fields with lasers to decrease erosion and using robotic equipment to do dangerous or repetitive jobs. If progress is to continue, agriculture needs the best and brightest young minds working to solve tomorrow's agricultural engineering challenges.

An increasing population means a greater demand for food and fiber. It also means a growing demand for qualified people in the agricultural industry. Almost 10 percent of today's professional jobs in agriculture go unfilled simply because there are more jobs than people who understand agriculture. And the opportunities are increasing. Agriculture is changing rapidly and many of tomorrow's careers have not yet been imagined. It is an exciting, challenging field in which to work.

For more information write:

Partner Development Team  
National FFA Organization  
PO Box 68960  
Indianapolis, IN 46268-0960

## Scientists, Engineers & Related Professionals

Agriscience, with its related occupations of engineering, biochemistry genetics and physiology, is the fastest growing area within the agricultural industry. This is agriculture's cutting edge. If you are interested in applying scientific principles to practical situations, this may be the career area for you.

Agricultural Engineer  
Animal Scientist  
Biochemist  
Cell Biologist  
Entomologist  
Environmental Scientist  
Food Engineer  
Food Scientist  
Forest Scientist  
Geneticist  
Landscape Architect  
Microbiologist  
Molecular Biologist  
Natural Resources Scientist  
Nutritionist  
Paravet/Animal Health Technician  
Pathologist  
Physiologist  
Plant Scientist  
Quality Assurance Specialist  
Rangeland Scientist  
Research Technician  
Resource Economist  
Soil Scientist  
Statistician  
Toxicologist  
Veterinarian  
Waste Management Specialist  
Water Quality Specialist  
Weed Scientist

## Production

If you enjoy working with plants and animals, there are broad opportunities in production agriculture.

Aquaculturalist  
Farmer  
Feedlot Manager  
Forest Resources Manager  
Fruit and Vegetable Grower  
Greenhouse Manager  
Nursery Products Grower  
Farm Manager  
Rancher  
Turf Producer  
Vitaculturist  
Wildlife Manager

## Agricultural Marketing, Merchandising & Sales

There are many demands for agricultural products today. Consumers expect to walk into supermarkets and find the shelves bursting with choices. If you are interested in sales and helping people acquire the goods and services they need, a career in agribusiness or agricultural marketing could be what you are looking for.

Account Executive  
Advertising Manager  
Commodity Broker  
Consumer Information Manager  
Export Sales Manager  
Florist  
Food Broker  
Forest Products Merchandiser  
Grain Merchandiser  
Insurance Agent  
Landscape Contractor  
Market Analyst  
Marketing Manager  
Purchasing Manager  
Real Estate Broker  
Sales Representative  
Technical Service Representative

## Education & Communications

More than ever before, the agricultural industry today needs to tell its story to the rest of the population. If you are interested in sharing the news, maybe a career in education and communications is for you.

College Teacher  
Computer Software Designer  
Computer Systems Analyst  
Conference Manager  
Cooperative Extension Agent  
Editor  
Educational Specialist  
High School Teacher/  
FFA Advisor  
Illustrator  
Information Specialist  
Information System Analyst  
Journalist  
Personnel Development Specialist  
Public Relations Representative  
Radio/Television Broadcaster  
Training Manager

## Managers & Financial Specialists

In order for today's agricultural industry to operate, it must have management and financial specialists. From your local bank's agricultural loan officer to the USDA's economists, this is an area that demands both agricultural and business skills

Accountant  
Appraiser  
Auditor  
Business Manager  
Credit Analyst  
Customer Service Manager  
Economist  
Financial Analyst  
Food Service Manager  
Government Program Manager  
Grants Manager  
Human Resource Development Manager  
Insurance Agency Manager  
Insurance Risk Manager  
Policy Analyst  
Research and Development Manager  
Retail Manager  
Wholesale Manager

## Social Service Professionals

Like most other industries, an increasing number of social professionals are needed. If you like working with people and filling an important role in your community, this may be the career area for you.

Career Counselor  
Caseworker  
Community Development Specialist  
Conservation Officer  
Consumer Counselor  
Dietitian  
Food Inspector  
Labor Relations Specialist  
Naturalist  
Nutrition Counselor  
Outdoor Recreation Specialist  
Park Manager  
Peace Corps Representative  
Regional Planner  
Regulatory Agent  
Rural Sociologist  
Youth Program Director

# A M E R I C A N CAREERS

**WHAT TO  
DISCOVER:**  
*Biotechnology  
may be for you!*

**HELPING  
HEROES**  
*Careers for  
today's heroes.*

*Financial Services*  
**GOOD JOBS FOR THE MATH-MINDED**

• • • SPECIAL REPRINT FOR NATIONAL FFA • • •

# DISCOVERING

## *An Agricultural Biotechnology Career* THAT MAY BE FOR YOU

DO YOU OFTEN WONDER  
WHY THE SKY IS BLUE ...  
WHY VEGETABLES ARE  
GOOD FOR YOU ...  
WHAT MAKES A  
BLUEBIRD SING?  
DO YOU WONDER ABOUT  
ALMOST EVERYTHING?  
DO YOU OFTEN WISH THE  
WORLD WOULD CONTINUE  
TO BE A HEALTHY PLACE  
TO BE ... THAT THERE  
WOULD BE GOOD FOOD  
TO SHARE FOR EVERYONE  
EVERYWHERE?

■ By Joyce Winterton

Discovery is fun for scientists. For agricultural biotechnology technicians, fun means everything from working with plants and animals to observing organisms you can see only through a microscope.

As an agricultural biotechnology technician, you might help ...

- Develop new kinds of food and fiber crops with higher nutritional value.
- Produce more and better food for the world's growing population on ever-diminishing acres of land.
- Improve dairy cows' ability to produce milk.
- Develop ways that food crops can resist disease and insects.
- Improve the flavor and texture of food. Improve the way food is processed.
- Provide better food and medicines for farm animals.

The list could go on. Because the field of agricultural biotechnology is broad, it offers tremendous variety both in where you work and what you do. Jobs will be available in traditional laboratory settings, in animal care facilities, in production

and manufacturing facilities, or in growth chambers, greenhouses or fields.

And there are jobs in agriculture for people who don't have a four-year college degree. The *National Voluntary Occupational Skill Standards: Agricultural Biotechnology Technician* booklet published by the National FFA Foundation lists some of the latest ones:

- Environmental Assessment and Monitoring Technician
- Information Technologist
- Quality Control Technician
- Turf and Landscape Technician
- Horticultural Technician and Food Processing Industry careers.

Whatever you do, you'll be a part of an exciting new field of science – one that will beneficially impact the environment, world agriculture and the quality of life.

*Joyce Winterton, Ph.D., served as the formative evaluator for the National FFA Foundation's Agricultural Biotechnology Skill Standards project. This story was compiled from the project's publication on National Voluntary Occupational Skill Standards: Agricultural Biotechnology Technician. Photos are courtesy of Karen Rogers and Monsanto.*



▶  
*Agricultural biotechnology research already has produced tomatoes that ripen more slowly and have better flavor.*

## WHAT ARE SKILL STANDARDS?

According to the U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Labor, skill standards identify the knowledge, skill and level of ability needed to perform a given job. Why are skill standards important? They help educators plan courses of study, and they're a way to prove you can do the job.

To date, these two federal government agencies have joined together to fund skill standards projects in 22 career areas. The standards are written by people who represent companies, professional associations, labor and educators in a particular industry.

For a free copy of the skill standards for agricultural biotechnology technicians, contact:

**National FFA Organization**  
Attn: Distribution Services  
5632 Mt. Vernon Memorial Highway  
P.O. Box 15160  
Alexandria, VA 22309-0160

## SKILLS NEEDED IN AGRICULTURAL BIOTECHNOLOGY

More than 200 skills are used by an agricultural biotechnology technician. Here are just a few of them:

- **Technical communication skills**, including comprehending a technical vocabulary, keeping accurate records and writing technical summaries.
- **Safety skills**, such as monitoring, using, storing and disposing of hazardous materials.
- **Basic lab skills**, including the ability to perform aseptic techniques\*, make reagents\*\* and solutions and do mathematical calculations and conversions.
- **Cell biology techniques**, such as using a microscope and performing catalyzal tests

- **Information skills**, including reading and comprehending written documents, communicating well with others and using word processing and spread sheet computer programs.
- **Employability skills**, including time-saving habits, self-starting techniques, ability to use resources, organization skills, ability to relate to and communicate with supervisors and work as a team member.



\* Ways to prevent infection, contamination.  
\*\* A chemical solution that causes a reaction, such as film developer.

▲ Growing modified plants in tissue culture is an important laboratory technique in agricultural biotechnology.



▲ A technician cross-pollinates plants by hand in the greenhouse.

▼ General care of research plants by technicians ensures optimal growth and development.





*"Agricultural biotechnology has tremendous potential for making the world a better place in which to live. But to make the most of it, companies like Pioneer need talented and creative technicians. They are increasingly a vital link in turning technology into solutions for our customers around the globe."*

CHUCK JOHNSON  
President and Chief Operating Officer  
PIONEER HI-BRED INTERNATIONAL, INC.

*"Investment and progress in agricultural biotechnology will insure an abundant food supply and a healthy environment for everyone. We need future technicians who have a strong science background to accomplish this goal."*

ARNOLD W. DONALD  
Group Vice President and General Manager  
THE AGRICULTURAL GROUP OF  
MONSANTO COMPANY

*"New applications of biotechnology are being developed continually. The need for personnel who are creative, well trained, committed and energetic will remain. The rewards, both professional and financial, can be gratifying for those with the necessary skills, an inquiring mind and the desire to grow with a dynamic industry."*

CARL B. FELDBAUM  
President  
BIOTECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY  
ORGANIZATION

*"The scientific principles taught in agriscience courses will provide students with a solid foundation to become agriculture's new leaders in the 21st century."*

ROD DUCKWORTH  
Teacher Services Specialist  
NATIONAL FFA ORGANIZATION



left to right: Joy McMillan, Sherrie Nelson, Jim Lee and Roberta Rue.

*"Careers in biotechnology are diverse and found in many traditional agribusiness sectors. Our two-year associate degree biotech program graduates are employed in companies and research laboratories involved in crop and animal improvement and field testing of genetically engineered crops. Many are employed in companies that are doing basic research as well as production. An educational background in the "bio"- technologies that includes both the theoretical and application work is the key to finding successful employment in the expanding agribusiness industries."*

JOY A. MCMILLAN, PH.D.  
Program Director  
BIOTECHNOLOGY LABORATORY TECHNICIAN PROGRAM  
MADISON AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE



back left to right: Susan Kittel, Hazelton Labs; Roxanne Kalk, Hazelton Labs; Jill Griffin, Epicentre Tech.  
front left to right: John Gehl, Agracetus; Brad Murkve, ABS; Herb Schmidley, UW-Madison Hybridoma Lab

*"The biotech program at MATC provided me with the education, experience and skills that I needed to attain my job as a research technician in the DNA genetics lab at American Breeders Service."*

BRAD MURKVE  
1994 Graduate  
BIOTECHNOLOGY LABORATORY  
TECHNICIAN PROGRAM  
MADISON AREA TECHNICAL COLLEGE



*"FFA has given me the opportunity to expand my use of science and its new technologies; not simply to read about science. Through experiments and the use of laboratory skills, encouraged by agricultural education, I was better prepared to enter the scientific environment at the collegiate level."*

MELANIE STORY  
Student/Morehead State University  
FFA AGRISCIENCE RECOGNITION  
NATIONAL FINALIST

**FFA makes a difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.**

Students aren't the only ones who generally have misperceptions about agricultural careers. Parents often don't realize the broad scope of agricultural career opportunities. Sometimes it can be helpful to provide parents with statistics regarding numbers

of positions in the different agricultural career categories to illustrate what is available. Here's a chart you can use to help parents and others understand the scope of possibility. Be sure to point out that the number of agricultural jobs is increasing.

Total United States Occupations Requiring Competencies in Agricultural Education, Employment in 1996 and Projected to 2006

Occupations Collected and Published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics

	EMPLOYMENT	
	1996	2006
A. <i>Occupations Requiring Agriculture Competencies in all Industries</i>		
<b>1. Farm Occupations</b>	<b>2,060,000</b>	<b>1,768,000</b>
a. Farm Managers	184,000	178,000
b. Farmers	1,109,000	997,000
c. Farm Workers	873,000	798,000
<b>2. Off-Farm Occupations</b>	<b>2,006,000</b>	<b>2,476,000</b>
a. Landscape Architects	17,000	20,000
b. Foresters and Conservation Scientists	37,000	43,000
c. Agriculture and Food Scientists	24,000	29,000
d. Veterinarians and Veterinary Inspectors	58,000	71,000
e. Animal Caretakers (except farm)	130,000	158,000
f. Nursery Workers	64,000	83,000
g. Forest and Conservation Workers	40,000	41,000
h. Logging Tractor Operators	21,000	22,000
i. Gardening, Nursery and Greenhouse Workers and Lawn Service	925,000	1,105,000
j. Vocational Teaching	311,000	383,000
k. Farm Equipment Mechanics	48,000	52,000
l. Lawn Service Managers	55,000	67,000
m. Dairy Processing Equipment Operators (including setters)	13,000	12,000
n. Meat, Poultry and Fish Cutters and Trimmers	151,000	186,000

	EMPLOYMENT	
	1996	2006
<i>A. Occupations Requiring Agriculture</i>		
<i>Competencies in all Industries continued</i>		
o. Supervisors (farm, fish and ag-related occupations)	88,000	92,000
p. All Other Agriculture, Forestry and Ag-Related Occupations	275,000	293,000
q. All Other Timber Cutting and Related Workers	122,000	123,000
r. Butchers and Meat Cutters	234,000	220,000
 <i>B. Occupations Requiring Agricultural Education Competencies in Selected Industries</i>		
a. Engineers, Chemical	49,000	57,000
b. Engineers, Electrical and Electronic	367,000	472,000
c. Engineers, Mechanical	228,000	264,000
d. Biological Scientists	83,000	103,000
e. Chemists	91,000	108,000
f. Economists	51,000	60,000
g. Designers (except interior)	279,000	351,000
h. First-Line Supervisors and Managers	7,800	7,700
i. Science and Mathematics Technicians	228,000	258,000
j. Inspectors and Compliance Officers	163,000	172,000
k. Geologists, Geophysicists and Oceanographers	47,000	54,000

Note: Pages 4-16 and 4-17 are intended for use as overhead transparency masters.

Total United States Occupations Requiring Competencies in Agricultural Education, Employment in 1996 and Projected to 2006

Occupations Collected and Published by the Bureau of Labor Statistics

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	EMPLOYMENT	
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<i>A. Occupations Requiring Agriculture Competencies in all Industries continued</i>		
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i. Science and Mathematics Technicians	228,000	258,000
j. Inspectors and Compliance Officers	163,000	172,000
k. Geologists, Geophysicists and Oceanographers	47,000	54,000

**Occupations Collected but Unpublished by the  
Bureau of Labor Statistics**

a. Agricultural Engineers including		
Chemical and Mechanical	1,382,000	1,632,000
b. Fish and Game Wardens	7,500	7,600
c. Purchasing Agents/Buyers of Farm Products	38,000	42,000

**Occupations Being Surveyed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics**

a. Nursery and Greenhouse Managers	817,000	975,000
b. Lawn Service Managers	55,000	67,000
c. Veterinary Technicians/ Technologists	27,000	34,000
f. Pruners	26,000	30,000
g. Sprayers/Applicators (agriculture services)	18,000	21,000
h. Lawn Maintenance Workers	96,000	109,000
i. Veterinary Assistants	33,000	42,000
j. General Farm Worker (agriculture services)	275,000	293,000
k. Food Service Worker	589,000	757,000

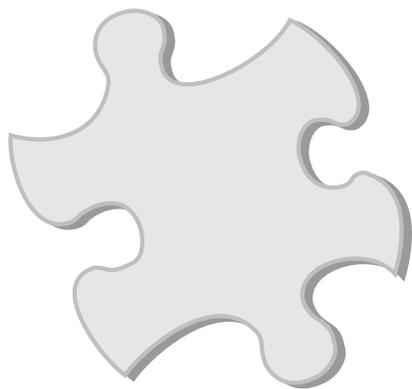
Principals, guidance counselors and others might also be interested in knowing about the number of annual job openings in various

areas of agriculture. Here are some employment statistics you can use.

### *Demand for New Agriculture College Graduates on an Annualized Basis*

<b>Area</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Graduates</b>	<b>+/- *</b>
Marketing, Merchandising and Sales Representatives	14,353	12,702	-1,651
Scientist, Engineers and Related Specialists	13,922	13,299	-623
Managers, Financial Analysts	5,613	5,469	-144
Social Services Professionals	4,862	4,564	-298
Communications and Education Specialists	6,295	5,510	-885
Agricultural Production Specialists	3,873	4,131	+258
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,918</b>	<b>45,675</b>	<b>-2,243</b>

- \* A “+” indicates an oversupply of qualified graduates.
- \* A “-” indicates an undersupply of qualified graduates.



**Section 5:**

*Get Connected to  
Information*



Information

# Section 5:

## Get Connected to Information

Have you ever felt like you could convince parents or your administrators or other partners to be more supportive of your program if you could just put your hands on the right information to share with them? If so, you are in the right place. This chapter contains a variety of information you can use with partners to help them

understand the industry of agriculture and agricultural education. Feel free to photocopy this information and use it as needed.

To help you quickly locate information that is appropriate for different audiences, use the following chart.

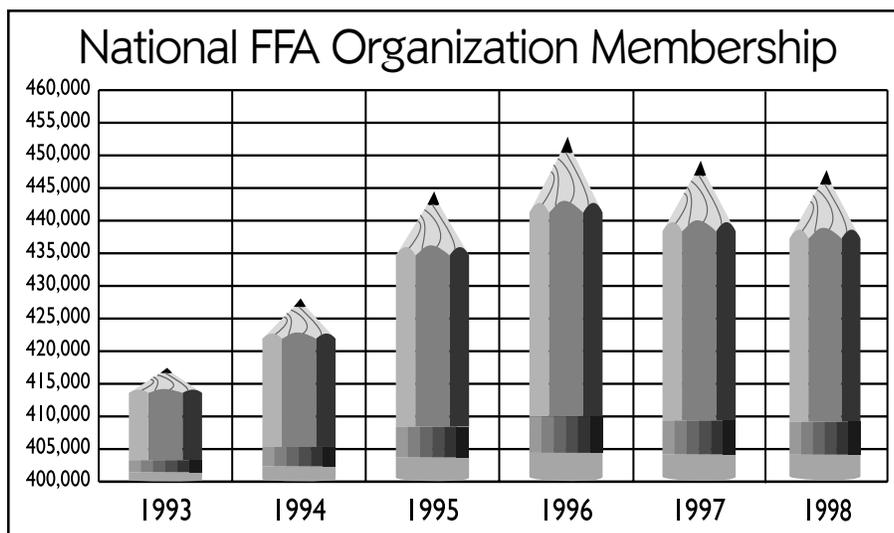
<i>Information for Different Audiences</i>				
<b>Item</b>	<b>Students</b>	<b>Parents</b>	<b>Administrators</b>	<b>Public</b>
• NASSP Recommendations (1-3)			X	
• Sharing the Vision (1-7)		X	X	
• “Think About It” Brochure (p. 4-1)	X	X	X	X
• Agriculture Career Center (on www.ffa.org)	X	X		
• Career Opportunities in Agriculture (p. 4-2)	X	X	X	
• “The Industry Too Big to Ignore” (p. 4-8)	X	X		
• Total U.S. Occupations Requiring Competencies in Agricultural Education, Employment in 1996 and Projected to 2006	X	X	X	X
• Demand for New Agriculture College Graduates (p. 4-17)	X	X	X	X
• Facts About Agricultural Education (p. 5-2)	X	X	X	
• Quintana Article (p. 5-4)	X	X	X	X
• School-to-Career Chart (p. 5-6)		X	X	
• Facts and Figures About Agriculture (p. 5-7)	X	X	X	X
• Quick Quotes About Ag Ed and FFA (p. 5-8)		X	X	X
• What Administrators are Saying... (p. 5-10)			X	
• Benefits of Agricultural Education and FFA (p. 5-13)	X	X	X	
• Administrator Survey (p. 5-14)			X	
• National Education Goals (p. 5-15)			X	
• Discovering An Agricultural Biotechnology Career” (p. 6-1)	X	X		
• “Open Door” Brochure (p. 6-1)	X			
• “Circle of Life” Brochure (p. 6-1)	X	X	X	
• “Agricultural Biotechnology: A World of Opportunity” (p. 6-2)	X			
• “Agricultural Education: Investing in Our Future” (p. 6-2)	X	X	X	
• “Opening a Promising Future” Brochure (p. 6-2)		X	X	X
• “Chronicle Agricultural Occupations Guidebook” (p. 6-2)	X	X		
• Best Educational Practices (6-2)			X	

## *Facts About Agricultural Education*

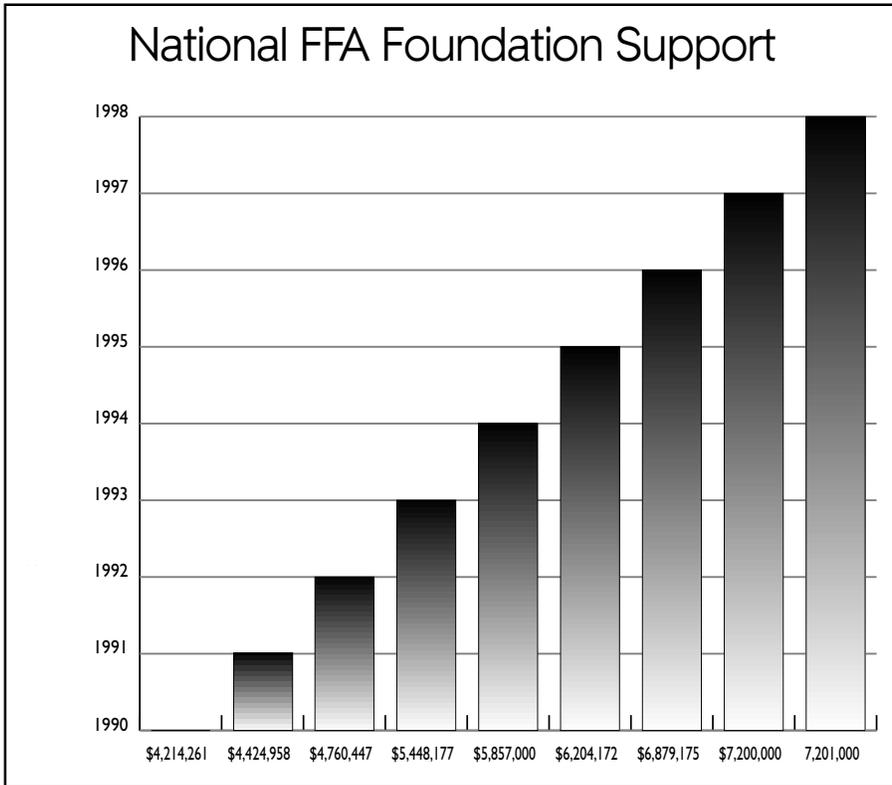
The agricultural education/FFA program has three components that provide a well-rounded, practical approach to learning:

1. FFA members are enrolled in agriculture courses in which they study topics such as plant and animal science, horticulture, forestry and natural resource management, agrimarketing and biotechnology.
2. Students apply the knowledge and skills learned in the classroom to a supervised agricultural experience (SAE) program at home or a part-time workplace.
3. FFA provides opportunities on the local, state and national levels for students to improve their leadership abilities and test their agricultural skills.

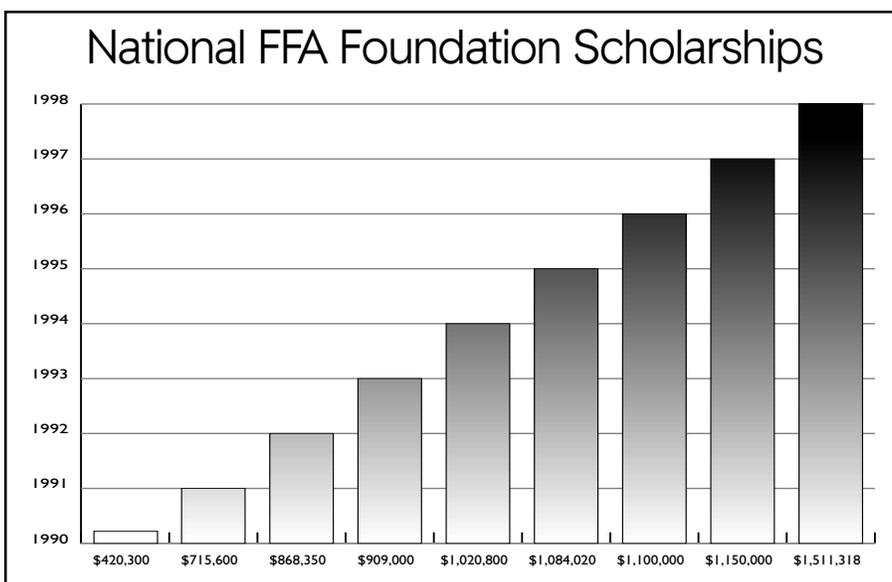
FFA membership has grown significantly in recent years. Here's a chart showing FFA membership from 1993 through 1998.



The National FFA Organization receives significant financial support from business and industry through its fund-raising arm, the National FFA Foundation. Contributions from business and industry are used to support scholarships, competitive events and other student award programs. The following chart shows the level of financial support received from 1990-1998.



FFA began focusing on raising scholarship support in 1990. Here is how the National FFA Scholarship Program has grown since then.



Note: While the scholarship dollars distributed through the national program are substantial, these figures do not include scholarships given through FFA at the local and state levels.

## Article Reprint

The following article was published in *The School Board News*, a publication of the National School Board Association. Use it with administrators and others when you need a short piece that contains lots of factual information about FFA and agricultural education.

**SAMMY J. QUINTANA:** NSBA PRESIDENT

# Agricultural education programs can offer many benefits to students and schools

**A**gricultural education isn't just about raising the biggest pig or growing the tastiest tomato. Today's agriculture, which I learned about at the annual meeting of the National FFA Organization, is about technology, computers, science and research, as well as the traditional concerns of agriculture.

While the number of family farms in the United States has plummeted, agricultural education programs in public schools and FFA is thriving. Nearly 8,000 school districts offer agricultural education and FFA student activities. Students in 18 of the largest school districts, including those serving Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Miami and Chicago, study agriculture.

The FFA annual conference in November, where I gave a speech on the importance of character education, attracted 41,000 students from every state. Membership in FFA (formerly known as the Future Farmers of America) has grown from 300,000 to nearly 500,000 in the past five years.

Students taking agriculture courses learn how agriculture has changed to meet the diverse needs of a modernized society.

Here are some of the benefits of agricultural education:

- Many students have a natural interest in plants and animals, and by pursuing their interests, they are motivated to learn more. Agriculture applies the tools of science (photosynthesis, genetics, and biology) and math (fractions, percentages, algebra) to real-world issues.
- Agricultural education and FFA incorporate the school-to-work concept, including applied learning, school-sponsored enterprises, and linking a career major with the workplace. Students in FFA are required to complete a work-based experience and document it in a record book.
- Tens of thousands of FFA members have participated in community services programs ranging from helping

the disabled to improving environmental quality.

- FFA's emphasis on learning by doing helps motivate students to be actively engaged with their studies and thus stay in school.
- Students trained in agriculture are well prepared for the job market. There are more than 8,000 different job titles in the field of agriculture—in such diverse fields as agricultural technology, biotechnology, genetics, horticulture and aquaculture. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reports there are 48,000 job openings that go unfilled each year because of a shortage of college graduates in agriculture.
- Finally, FFA teaches leadership skills that will help students succeed in whatever career they choose.

*For more information on how your schools can start an agricultural education program, contact Dean Folkers, Partner Development Team, National FFA Organization, 317-802-6060.*

Another great resource to use with principals, superintendents and other educators are the charts that follow. They graphically explain how agricultural education and FFA match up with

school-to-career initiatives. Use the first chart (3 columns) to provide an overview of the two programs, use the second chart (4 columns) to explain your program's school-to-work effort.

# School-To-Career and Agricultural Education/FFA

The three components of agricultural education (classroom/laboratory instruction, SAE and FFA) mesh well with the three basics of School-to-Career education (school-based learning, work-based learning and connecting activities). Just as you must have all three components of agricultural education to have a successful program, you must have all three elements of School-to-Career education to effectively reach students. The areas are not mutually exclusive; rather, they are interconnected. Use this worksheet in planning School-to-Career activities and showing how agricultural education fulfills School-to-Career requirements.

School-to-Career has three basic parts to guide state planning:

- Applied Learning
- Project-based instruction
- Selection of a career major
- Program of studies
- Integration of high academic and vocational education

## School-Based Learning

- High quality work and learning
- Instruction in workplace competencies
- Workplace mentoring
- Instruction in all elements of an industry

## Work-Based Learning

- Career counseling
- Matching students with employers (job placement)
- Establishing STC liaisons between school and workplaces
- Technical assistance to school, employers, students and parents
- Information collection and analysis
- Upgrading skills/staff development

## Connecting Activities

Fact: 18-20% of U.S. jobs are in careers related to agriculture.

The agricultural education program goals for School-to-Career:

- Agricultural courses/laboratory**
- Contextual instruction and skill development
  - Areas of study such as plant/animal sciences, horticulture, forestry, business, marketing, entrepreneurship, aquaculture and biotechnology

- Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Programs**
- Work experience
  - Entrepreneurship
  - Exploration/mentoring
  - Applied classroom skills
  - Research experiments
  - Matching students with employers

- FFA (447,000 members nationally)**
- Leadership development on local, state and national levels
  - Assessment through Career Development Events
  - Community/Education partnerships
  - Develop skills for life-long learning
  - Teacher inservice/development

## Facts About Agriculture and Agricultural Education

On page 5-7, you'll find an agricultural trivia quiz. You can use this quiz with students, parents, teachers and other partners to emphasize the importance of the agricultural industry and the significant role it plays in the U.S. economy.

When reviewing this quiz, take the opportunity to emphasize the need for applied learning, such as that offered through the agricultural education program. Mention the number of students who are FFA members and discuss the types of programs and opportunities offered by FFA, particularly those that appeal to your students.

You can also use the quiz as an overhead transparency for presentations or quote the information presented in news articles.

# School-To-Career and Agricultural Education/FFA

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## Connecting Activities

Fact: 18-20% of U.S. jobs are in careers related to agriculture.



Building quality programs and putting school-to-career in action

Our schools agricultural education program goals for School-to-Career:

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- Contextual instruction and skill development
- Areas of study such as plant/animal sciences, horticulture, forestry, business, marketing, entrepreneurship, aquaculture and biotechnology

- Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Programs**
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- FFA** (447,000 members nationally)
- Leadership development on local, state and national levels
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- Community/Education partnerships
- Develop skills for life-long learning
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## *Facts and Figures About Agriculture and Agricultural Education*

### **Answer the following questions:**

1. What percentage of America's workforce is employed in some part of the agricultural industry? \_\_\_\_\_%
2. What percentage of the professional jobs in agriculture go unfilled simply because there are more jobs than qualified people who understand agriculture? \_\_\_\_\_%
3. How many projected openings are there each year for agriculture college graduates? \_\_\_\_\_
4. The United States economy is comprised of what four major categories?
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
  - \_\_\_\_\_
5. Due to the research and technical advances in agriculture, one U.S. farm worker can supply enough food/fiber for how many people worldwide? \_\_\_\_\_
6. How many people are working in agribusiness for every farmer? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Agriculture accounts for what percent of the United States GNP (Gross National Product)? \_\_\_\_\_%
8. The U.S. industries that serve agriculture by producing, processing, marketing and preparing food and fiber products for consumers account for how much annual economic activity? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Approximately what percent of students learn best through an applied learning approach? \_\_\_\_\_%
10. How many students belong to FFA nationwide? \_\_\_\_\_

Quiz answers on page 18.

## *Quick Quotes about Agricultural Education and FFA*

Sometimes the best way to add prestige to your program is to quote people of prominence. The following few pages contain selected quotations gathered at the national level. Collect positive quotations regarding your FFA chapter/agricultural education program from local and state leaders and use them to promote your program! To help you keep them organized, create an electronic document with all of your local quotes. Periodically print out the quotes and place the updated copy in this section of your notebook.

*Feel free to reproduce the quotations provided here as needed.*

### **What High-Profile People are Saying About Agriculture and Agricultural Education...**

*"Agriculture is important because it produces the food and fiber that we need to survive as a society on earth."*

**Albert D. Kern**

Executive Vice President (retired)  
Mycogen Corporation

*"Go look at the programs that are offered in agricultural education. It's not just farming today—it is a broad cross section of experiences."*

*"I think that any parent today, if they look closely at the program, will see not only an excellent combination of real-life experiences and competition which is extremely valuable to young people, but also the ability to gain leadership skills, tools that are then applicable down the road. There is no other organization in the country that offers it."*

*"I am a U.S. Senator because of my leadership experiences in agricultural education and FFA."*

**The Honorable  
Larry E. Craig**

U.S. Senator, Idaho  
Former National FFA Officer

*"Agriculture and FFA as a linkage together provide a full range of programs for students today. It gives them a practical approach to thinking, life and being able to get along with people."*

*"Leadership is a very important part of the FFA program. The professional development, the training and the learning that goes on are very valuable and those students end up being leaders."*

**James R. Oglesby**

Assistant to the Chancellor  
University of Missouri at  
Columbia  
Former President, National  
School Boards Association  
Former Agriculture Teacher/  
FFA Advisor

*"I don't think that we realize the value to the Gross National Product that agriculture is and also to the differential advantage of this country. We compete in automobiles and microchips, but there is one ground that we are still number one on and we have out-produced other nations—that is total agricultural output. It is our differential advantage over our competitive countries as we enter a free-world market economy.*

**Rich Shuler**

President and CEO  
Vetlife, Inc.

*"There is no area of human existence that isn't in some way impacted by agriculture."*

*"When you invest in agricultural education, you are investing in the future. You are not just spending money, but you are investing in something that's going to have a high rate of return in the future. It could even influence whether we are able to sustain a country such as ours—a free and democratic society."*

**Gary Marx**

Senior Associate Executive  
Director  
American Association of  
School Administrators

*"We employ a tremendous number of people who are agriculturally trained in fields like research, crop protection chemicals, marketing, public relations, biotechnology—there is a tremendous future for kids."*

**Nick Hein**

Vice President, Biotechnology  
Dow AgroSciences

*"FFA definitely builds leadership skills. I think, if anything, what this country is lacking the most are people that want to become involved in the community and are willing to take responsibility."*

**Catherine Westphal**

Former Assistant Vice President,  
Public Relations  
Santa Fe Pacific Corporation

*"Spending tax dollars for agricultural education is probably one of the greatest returns we can get on any dollar we spend."*

**Dale Miller**

President & CEO  
Novartis Animal Health, U.S., Inc.

*"Many of us learn better through direct experience. We learn by doing, making, growing—that is a strength of agricultural education and FFA."*

**Gordon M. Ambach**

Executive Director  
Council of Chief State  
School Officers

*"The FFA is an integral part of public instruction in agriculture and today provides premier leadership, personal growth and career development to its 449,814 members. Local, state, and national activities as well as award programs provide opportunities for students to apply knowledge and skills acquired through agricultural education. FFA members strive to develop agricultural leadership, cooperation and citizenship."*

**William J. Clinton**

President of the United States of America

*"I liked studying agriculture. It allowed me to relate science information to real-world applications in agriculture and food science."*

**Monica Bierschenk**

Food Technologist  
The Food Network

*"The W.K. Kellogg Foundation invests in the FFA because we believe there is no program in America that more consistently and effectively develops leaders."*

**Dr. Norman A. Brown**

Former President  
W.K. Kellogg Foundation, and  
President & CEO  
Partners of the Americas

**What Administrators Are Saying About Attending the National FFA Convention...**

The following are comments made by administrators from Michigan who attended the national FFA convention. You might want to share them with your administrators, particularly if you're trying to get them to accompany you and your chapter to the national FFA convention.

*"Though I had always heard about how good the national FFA convention was, no words I had heard actually did justice to the fantastic experience I had. It was, without a doubt, the best thing that has happened to me in a long, long time."*

*"My faith in American youth was certainly renewed, along with my commitment to the necessity of a better agricultural education program in my school. Now, more than ever, I am determined to find a way to strengthen the agricultural experiences locally."*

*"Over 45,000 youngsters had a great value system imposed on them during the convention."*

*"In my 12 years of education, it (the convention) was one of the most impressive and well-organized events I have had the opportunity to observe. What was even more impressive was the realization that it was organized and run by the young people involved in the FFA. It was an experience that I will not forget."*

*"The FFA convention was one of the most memorable and meaningful three days of my life."*

*"The state of Michigan now has 10 of the proudest and most dedicated FFA supporters in the national because they made it possible for administrators to attend the national FFA convention."*

The following are comments made by participants in the first Administrators, Policy Makers and Counselors Forum held in conjunction with the national FFA convention:

*"I learned that there are skills for the young mind. Young kids put their best into representing their state. I learned a lot about the FFA program. This is my first time to an FFA convention and I enjoyed the visit and the education I've learned. I hope to get a chance to return."*

*"Appreciated the conference very much. A very worthwhile experience. The format was helpful along with the opportunity to share with other colleagues. The variety of topics was productive."*

*"Opportunity to share ideas, philosophies, problems and 'inspirations' with other educators proved very useful. Thanks for a wonderfully organized and informative conference."*

*"FFA is a wonderful program. It was very rewarding. Many of the concepts discussed will be considered for incorporation."*

*"Very informative. Great for follow-up."*

*"The model presentations were exceptional. More of this is needed. Somehow get more superintendents and principals here. If not for starting an ag program, then bring in more people and give ideas to existing programs. Excellent program."*

*"Tech prep presentations (models) were excellent. I feel I have gained a better understanding of how to address the needs of our students. I now have the job of 'selling' this to our superintendent and school board; hopefully, this will be met with much success. Agriscience student winners did a fabulous job. By far the most motivational speaker was the national officer on Friday morning."*

*"FFA is a strong program because it provides leadership opportunities for students."*

*"Came with questions about start-up and leaving with information that makes decision-making current. Using a 'global model,' this formula appears to have added insight into FFA and agricultural course offerings for all of us. Thank you for knowing my needs and satisfying my faith in what we are about to do."*

*"Enjoyed the opportunity to engage in discussion with other administrators concerning the needs of students and the agriculture sector of our economy. We experienced the results of an excellent leadership development program. The FFA leadership program is developmental and is an integral part of the vocational agriculture curriculum. I have been impressed and appreciate FFA's contribution to the educational process."*

*"This is an event one must experience to appreciate. It was dynamic, stimulating and productive. The students were learning math, economics, public speaking, science, computers, etc. in areas they could relate to. They were able to perform at high levels because it meant something to them personally."*

*"Bringing your principal, superintendent, counselor or school board member to the national FFA convention can help build support for your agricultural education and FFA program."*

## *Positioning Statements*

Use the following statements to help position your program.

When people think of jobs in agriculture, they automatically think of "farm jobs" or farming. When in actuality, most agribusiness jobs are "in support of" the actual "farm jobs."

The agribusiness job market runs independently of recessions in the overall economy. Agriculture seems to have its own ups and downs, (e.g. the defense job market being down doesn't have much bearing on the agribusiness job market). Most of the time, there is not much crossover between these two industries.

Demand for food will stay steady or rise slightly. Therefore, the demand for people in the food industry will be steady to higher. Almost anything can happen in the United States, but food consumption never seems to go down.

Bear in mind certain areas of the agriculture job section will decline but other areas will rise enough to offset this.

One of the largest—if not the largest—job force in the nation is agribusiness. This includes everything from growing the crop to final processing and sales.

## *Benefits of Agricultural Education/FFA*

The following table illustrates how agricultural education and FFA benefit today's students and how each benefit addresses partner needs. Use this table with your key partners to help explain how you can help them.

<b>Program Provides</b>	<b>How It Addresses Partner's Needs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Preparation for Careers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Connects education and work</li><li>• Creates context for learning</li><li>• Supports local business/tax base</li><li>• Builds community support for our schools</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hands-on learning in areas of student interest (plants, animals, environment)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduces boredom of students</li><li>• May help increase graduation rates</li><li>• Improves student performance</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Application of science and math skills</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Applies science and math concepts to the "real world"</li><li>• Motivates students to obtain higher skills</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improved self-esteem and work ethic</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helps all students succeed</li><li>• Demonstrates the benefits of work</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develops students' skills and provides opportunities to lead</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepares graduates to become better employees or employers and community leaders</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Scholarships</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Helps students finance further education</li></ul>

## Sample Administrator Survey

The following survey has been designed to help teachers and students better understand the concerns and challenges administrators face. It can be completed by both principals and superintendents.

Instructions: Rank the following issues/topics according to their importance to you as an administrator and in your school by using a 1 to 9 scale (1 being very important and 9 being unimportant).

- \_\_\_\_\_ Accountability (seeing and meeting standards)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Improving student achievement
- \_\_\_\_\_ Building morale/motivating staff
- \_\_\_\_\_ Using technology to improve learning
- \_\_\_\_\_ Building students' self-esteem
- \_\_\_\_\_ Improving the leadership of school principals
- \_\_\_\_\_ Getting parents involved in their children's education
- \_\_\_\_\_ Helping at-risk students
- \_\_\_\_\_ Building public confidence in schools
- \_\_\_\_\_ Serving the "student in the middle"
- \_\_\_\_\_ Teaching values and ethics
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recognizing student achievement and performance
- \_\_\_\_\_ Responding to students' learning styles
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cooperative learning/peer teaching
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dropout prevention
- \_\_\_\_\_ Building effective school/business partnerships
- \_\_\_\_\_ Education for employability and citizenship
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please list) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other (please list) \_\_\_\_\_

*(The survey is modeled after a broader survey conducted by the American Association of School Administrators, Rosslyn, Virginia, 1990)*

## *National Education Goals*

When working with school-based partners, you may wish to refer to the National Education Goals (below) and point out how your program addresses them. Agricultural education programs generally address goals 2, 3 and 5. They can also play a role in 6, 7 and 8.

### Goal 1: Ready to Learn

By the year 2000, all children will start school ready to learn.

### Goal 2: School Completion

By the year 2000, the high school graduation rate will increase to at least 90 percent.

### Goal 3: Student Achievement and Citizenship

By the year 2000, all students will leave grades 4, 8 and 12 having demonstrated competency over challenging subject matter including English, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography, and every school in America will ensure that all students learn to use their minds well, so they may be prepared for responsible citizenship, further learning, and productive employment in our nation's modern economy.

### Goal 4: Teacher Education and Professional Development

By the year 2000, the nation's teaching force will have access to

programs for the continued improvement of their professional skills and the opportunity to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to instruct and prepare all American students for the next century.

### Goal 5: Mathematics and Science

By the year 2000, U.S. students will be the first in the world in mathematics and science achievement.

### Goal 6: Adult Literacy and Lifelong Learning

By the year 2000, every adult American will be literate and will possess the knowledge and skills necessary to compete in a global economy and exercise the rights and responsibilities of citizenship.

### Goal 7: Safe, Disciplined, and Alcohol- and Drug-Free Schools

By the year 2000, every school in the United States will be free of drugs, violence and the unauthorized presence of firearms and alcohol and will offer a disciplined environment conducive to learning.

### Goal 8: Parental Participation

By the year 2000, every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children.

## *Suggested Partner-Building Activities*

The following are examples that chapters have used to build support from principals, counselors, superintendents, school board members and parents:

- Invite them to attend your awards banquet
- Plan a breakfast, lunch or barbecue in their honor
- Create a newsletter for these key partners to keep them informed and included in FFA
- Present special awards for their support
- Invite them to attend state and national FFA conventions
- Conduct a drug awareness activity for the entire community
- Assist with landscaping the school
- Inform them that the National FFA Organization provides more than \$1 million in scholarships annually—nearly one out of six applicants receives a scholarship
- Develop a presentation for the school board presented by

students and business/industry supporters

- Conduct a demonstration on how technology is used in your program
- Utilize materials that are available through the National FFA Organization to expand their understanding of agriculture careers and the benefit of FFA for leadership development, personal growth and career success (to order, refer to the *FFA Chapter Catalog*, Educational Resources section or call 1-888-332-2668). Here are a few resources to consider:
  - “Chronicle Agricultural Occupations Guidebook”
  - “Agricultural Education—Investing In Our Future” Video
  - “Agriculture: An Industry Too Big to Ignore” Brochure
  - “Think About It” Brochure
  - “FFA Advisor’s Public Relations Guide”

Brainstorm other possibilities with your Partner Development Team!

## *Why Students Do or Do Not Enroll in Agriculture Classes/FFA*

The following information was the result of a nationwide survey of agriculture students and FFA membership by The Ohio State University. This report can be used to evaluate your program and how well it is meeting student needs. Of course, it is always best to survey your audience (students, parents, community members, etc.) about what they want from the program and what they perceive the program offers. However, these research findings may provide helpful information about student wants and needs and how agricultural education is perceived to be meeting those wants and needs.

### **Results of the research findings:**

Persons influencing students to take agriculture courses:

- students enrolled in agriculture
- agriculture instructor
- parents
- relatives
- school counselor
- another teacher

Other influences on students taking agriculture classes:

- fun in class and activities
- personal desires
- occupational opportunities
- interest in agriculture for college
- farm background

Perceived image of agricultural education that keeps students from enrolling:

- I didn't want to be the only minority in class.
- Agricultural education is for farm kids.
- Agricultural education is for farm boys.
- Agricultural education is for young males.

Role of significant others and school standards that keep students from enrolling:

- The counselor did not suggest I take agricultural education.
- Agricultural education conflicts with high school graduation requirements.
- I have to take college prep courses.
- My friends said not to take agricultural education.

Reasons for joining the FFA:

- It is fun.
- I enjoy the school activities.
- Leadership skill development.
- It is an experience to learn about new things of interest and about myself.
- It will help me in the future.

Factors which influence joining FFA:

- I thought the FFA experience would help me get a good job as an adult.
- I was more interested in agriculture as a career.
- I had more friends as FFA members.
- There were more interesting FFA activities.
- I didn't have to work after school.

People who influence decisions to join an organization:

- friends
- parents
- teachers

What motivates you as a member:

- competition and contests
- conventions and conferences
- leadership activities
- winning awards
- hands-on activities and seeing results
- social events

Best ways to reach students like themselves (must be diverse):

- newspaper ads
- television advertising
- radio advertising
- pamphlets
- assemblies
- personal visits to classrooms

Reasons for not joining the FFA:

- I don't have enough time for FFA events.
- Few, if any, of my friends are FFA members.
- I don't see any future value in the FFA for me.
- I am not interested in agriculture as a career.

What would have influenced you to join the FFA:

- if my friends joined
- more interesting
- knowing more about it

**Here are the answers to the quiz on page 7.**

1. 21%
2. 11%
3. 48,000
4. Agriculture, Manufacturing, Service, Government
5. 128
6. 8
7. 17
8. \$700 billion
9. 60%
10. answer will vary from year to year, consult the latest edition of the *Official FFA Manual* or National FFA Online, [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)

**Section 6:**

*Get Connected to  
Resources*



Resources

# Section 6:

## Get Connected to Resources

While the authors have tried to provide as much partner information as possible in this handbook, it would be impossible to provide everything one might need.

However, we can provide descriptions and contact information regarding where to search for additional information. This chapter contains an FFA partner materials order form, lists of partner contacts and other resources you might find helpful.

### *National FFA Resources*

The National FFA Organization prepares and publishes many different items that can be helpful when working with partners. A list of the most popular items and ordering information follows. To order, call 1-888-332-2668 or fax 1-800-366-6556.

#### **“The Industry Too Big To Ignore” Brochure**

Reprint from *American Careers* magazine that highlights the numerous career opportunities available to youth in agriculture. It includes testimonials from national leaders urging students to consider agriculture as a career option.

- Item AATB 1-20, \$1.50 each; 21-50, \$1.25 each; 51 or more, \$1.00 each

#### **“Discovering An Agricultural Biotechnology Career that May Be For You” Brochure**

An excellent reprint from *American Careers* magazine that highlights the biotech skill standards criteria and

includes quotes from industry professionals and students about this exciting field.

- Item DABC 1-20, \$1.00 each; 21-50, \$.75 each; 51 or more, \$.50 each

#### **“Open Door” Brochure**

This piece uses a creative approach to promote agricultural careers. It is for young people who are exploring career opportunities in the food and fiber industry.

- \$1.40 each; 11 or more, \$.90 each

#### **“Think About It” Brochure**

The new version of this tremendous brochure highlights more than 200 challenging and exciting agricultural careers. It is an excellent recruitment tool and agricultural literacy brochure.

- Item CB 1-25, \$.50 each, 26-50, \$.45 each; 51 or more, \$.40 each

#### **Agricultural Biotechnology Information**

These products will help you implement information on the growing opportunities in agricultural biotechnology. The products were developed by an industry and education coalition through the National Skills Standards for Agricultural Biotechnology Technician project and funded by the U.S. Department of Education as a special project of the National FFA Foundation. Don't miss this chance to modernize and update your program!

#### **“Circle of Life: Using Biotechnology to Improve Agriculture Worldwide”**

This booklet defines biotechnology and related career opportunities.

- Item COL \$3.50 each

## **“Agricultural Biotechnology: A World of Opportunity”**

This video and educator's guide serve as companion pieces to highlight this exciting field and the available career opportunities.

- Item EDUGDE \$10.00 each

## **“Agricultural Education—Investing in our Future” Video**

An excellent video for marketing agricultural education to key audiences, including testimonials from agricultural and industry spokespeople supporting agricultural education's investment in youth. Great for use with school boards, parents, administrators and members of the community. (Time: 08:25)

- Item V-AE \$8.95 each

## **“Opening a Promising Future for Students” Brochure**

This is a great tool to use with school officials, counselors, parents, state and industry leaders. It summarizes the components and benefits of agricultural education and FFA. The piece contains charts on FFA membership, scholarships and corporate/foundation support and comes in two versions, one for school counselors and one for individuals interested in chartering a new chapter. The second version includes all of the above information plus an insert detailing the specific steps necessary for chartering a new chapter.

- Item OPFS-SCN 1-25, \$.85 each; 26-50, \$.80 each; 51 or more, \$.75 each
- Item OPFS-CC 1-25, \$.85 each; 26-50, \$.80 each; 51 or more, \$.75 each

## **“Chronicle Agricultural Occupations Guidebook”**

Contains 140 career descriptions and includes type of work performed,

hours and earnings, education required, employment outlook, entry methods, advancement opportunities and where to obtain additional information. A must for the school library, counselor's office and agriculture department.

- Item CAOG \$90.00 each

## **Best Educational Practices**

The agricultural education program of the Derry Area School District in Derry, Pennsylvania, underwent an in-depth survey by the Best Manufacturing Practices Center of Excellence to discover and record its Best Educational Practices. The survey results booklet highlights best practices you may be able to incorporate in your program. A similar survey was conducted at Oley Valley High School in Oley, Pennsylvania. Both reports are available free of charge through the National FFA Organization. To order, call 317-802-6060 and ask for the Partner Development Team.

## **A Guide to Local Program Success**

This guide contains step-by-step instructions for achieving local program success. It includes helpful hints from master agriculture teachers, along with their phone numbers in case you'd like additional information straight from the source. It also includes lots of ready-made surveys, news releases, planning charts and other pieces you can copy and use. To order, contact your state supervisor or the National FFA Organization at 317-802-4334.

To order any of the above items, call the National FFA Organization at 1-888-332-2668. For additional resources and updates to those listed, check the Teacher Resources section in *FFA Advisors Making a Difference* and the FFA homepage ([www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)) on the Internet.

## *Key Partner Links On Line*

To assist you in getting connected with a myriad of potential partners, the National FFA Organization has assembled a wide array of organizations and established hot links to them via National FFA Online ([www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)). Each of the following organizations has a hot link on the National FFA Organization's web site and the list is always expanding. For more information on any of these groups, point your browser to [www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org), navigate to the Partner page, and click on the organizations you'd like to know more about.

### **American Careers Magazine**

Career Communications, Inc., publishes *American Careers* magazine and other career planning resources for students and educators.

### **American Association of Community Colleges**

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) is the primary advocacy organization for the nation's 1,100 two-year degree-granting institutions. Organized in 1920, AACC promotes the causes of its member colleges through: 1) legislative advocacy, 2) monitoring national issues and trends, 3) collection, analysis and dissemination of information, 4) representation with other educational agencies and the national media, and 5) research and publication of news and scholarly analyses. The Association is a non-profit organization located in the National Center for Higher Education in Washington, D.C.

### **American Association of School Administrators**

The American Association of School Administrators (AASA), founded in 1865, is the professional organization for more than 16,500 educational leaders across North America and in many other countries. The four major focus areas for AASA are: improving the condition of children and youth; preparing schools and school systems for the future; connecting schools and communities; and enhancing the quality and effectiveness of school leaders.

### **American Society for Engineering Education**

The American Society for Engineering Education (ASEE) is a non-profit organization of individuals, institutions and companies dedicated to improving all aspects of engineering education.

### **American School Counselors' Association**

The American School Counselors' Association (ASCA) is the single national organization that represents the profession of school counseling. ASCA focuses on providing professional development, enhancing school counseling programs and researching effective school counseling practices. Its mission is to promote excellence in professional school counseling and the development of all students.

### **Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development**

The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) is an international, non-profit, non-partisan education association committed to the

mission of forging covenants in teaching and learning for the success of all learners. Founded in 1943, ASCD provides professional development in curriculum and supervision; encourages research, evaluation, and theory development; and disseminates information on education issues ranging from inclusion to parent involvement, learning styles to school leadership.

### **Council of the Great City Schools**

The Council of the Great City Schools brings together some of the largest urban public school systems in the country in a coalition dedicated to the improvement of education in the inner cities. By keeping Congress, the media and the public informed about the problems facing urban schools and the critical need to ensure that today's students receive an education based on high standards and expectations, the Council helps to set the course for the survival of our cities, the productivity of our citizens, and the future of our nation.

### **Clearinghouse for Network Information Discovery and Retrieval - K-12 Site**

The mission of the Clearinghouse for Network Information Discovery and Retrieval (CNIDR) is to promote and support the implementation and use of networked information discovery and retrieval software applications, such as the Wide Area Information Server (WAIS), World Wide Web (WWW), the Internet Gopher, free WAIS, and Archie. This page lists the WWW servers for education hosted at CNIDR.

### **Council of Chief State School Officers**

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nationwide, non-profit organization composed of the public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Education Activity, and five extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO seeks its members' consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public. Through its structure of standing and special committees, the Council responds to a broad range of concerns about education and provides leadership on major education issues.

### **Education Policy Analysis Archives**

This is a peer-reviewed journal of education policy topics published by the College of Education at Arizona State University. Includes abstracts and full text of articles published in EPAA and how to participate.

### **EDUCOM World Wide Web Server**

EDUCOM serves the leaders who manage information technology in higher education. For 30 years, EDUCOM has been leading the nation's educational community in integrating information technology into classrooms, curricula and research.

## **International Society for Technology in Education**

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) is a non-profit professional organization dedicated to the improvement of education through computer-based technology.

## **Institute for the Transfer of Technology**

The Institute for the Transfer of Technology (ITTE) is a program of the National School Boards Association designed to help advance the wise use of technology in public education.

## **National Association of Secondary School Principals**

The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) has grown considerably since 78 principals from seven midwestern states met in April 1916 to form the NASSP. Originally located in a small office on the campus of the University of Chicago, the Association today is headquartered in a modern, functional building set on five acres in Reston, Virginia, near Washington, D.C.'s Dulles International Airport

## **National Council for the Social Sciences**

The National Council for the Social Sciences (NCSS) is devoted solely to social studies education and engages and supports educators in strengthening and advocating social studies. With members in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 69 foreign countries, NCSS serves as an umbrella organization for elementary, secondary and college teachers of

history, geography, economics, political science, sociology, psychology, anthropology and law-related education.

## **National Council for Agricultural Education**

The National Council for Agricultural Education's (The Council) objectives are to provide a forum in which the profession can address important issues and generate solutions to problems of common concern; and to promote the improvement and further development of agricultural education at the local, state and national levels.

## **National FFA Alumni Association**

The mission of the National FFA Alumni Association is to secure the promise of FFA and agricultural education by creating an environment where people and communities can develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success.

## **National Parent Teachers Association**

The National Parent Teachers Association (PTA) is the oldest and largest volunteer association in the United States working exclusively on behalf of children and youth. In 1996, it celebrated the rich history of the National PTA, promoting the education, health and safety of children and families for 100 years.

## **National School Boards Association**

The National School Boards Association (NSBA) is the nationwide advocacy organization for

public school governance. NSBA's mission is to foster excellence and equity in public elementary and secondary education in the United States through local school board leadership.

### **National Education Association**

The National Education Association (NEA) is America's oldest and largest organization committed to advancing the cause of public education. Founded in 1857 in Philadelphia and now headquartered in Washington, D.C., NEA proudly claims over 2.2 million members who work at every level of education, from pre-school to university graduate programs. NEA has affiliates in every state as well as in more than 13,000 local communities across the United States.

### **National Science Teachers Association**

The National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) is committed to the improvement of science education at all levels — pre-school through college. To address subjects of critical interest to science educators, the Association publishes five journals, a newspaper, and a number of special publications. NSTA provides many programs and services for science educators, including awards and scholarships, teacher training workshops, educational tours, and an employment registry. NSTA offers professional certification for science teachers in eight teaching level and discipline area categories.

### **National Association of Agricultural Educators**

The mission of the National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE) is to advance agricultural education and promote the professional interests and growth of agriculture teachers. NAAE seeks to recruit and prepare students who have a desire to teach agriculture. The organization is dedicated to developing professional pride, nourishing a spirit of unity among classroom teachers and recognizing members for conducting outstanding programs.

### **U.S. Technology Corps**

The mission of the U.S. Technology Corps (TECH CORPS) is to recruit, place and support volunteers from the technology community who advise and assist schools in the introduction and integration of new technologies into the educational system. Volunteers provide assistance with local planning, technical support and advice, staff training, mentoring and classroom interactions. The organization utilizes the abilities of skilled volunteers across the country in an effort to prepare students, teachers and schools for the future.

### **U.S. Department of Education**

The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) provides resources on a tremendous amount of educational initiatives and resources. Information on grants, projects, statistics and the infrastructure of the Department are provided.

## **Western Governors' Association**

The Western Governors' Association (WGA) identifies and addresses key policy and governance issues in natural resources, the environment, human services, economic development, international relations and public management. Governors select the issues based on regional interest and impact. WGA helps the governors develop strategies both for the complex long-term issues facing the West and for the region's immediate needs. Governors use the WGA to develop and advocate policies that reflect regional interests and relationships in debates at the national and state levels.

## **Web66: A K-12 WWW Project**

The developers of Web66 see the World Wide Web as a catalyst

that will integrate the Internet into K-12 school curriculums. The University of Minnesota is beginning project Web66 to facilitate the introduction of this technology into K-12 schools. The goals of this project are:

1. To help K-12 educators learn how to set up their own Internet servers.
2. To link K-12 WWW servers and the educators and students at those schools.
3. To help K-12 educators find and use K-12 appropriate resources on the WWW.

Be aware that this information changes rapidly. For the most up-to-date information available on each of these organizations, visit the Partner section of National FFA Online ([www.ffa.org](http://www.ffa.org)).

**Glossary**  
*of Educational Terms*

**Glossary**  
*of Educational Terms*

**Educational  
Terms**

# Glossary of Educational Terms

Resources for the following terms include:

- The Official Guide to the Perkins Act of 1998,
- “Educational Week on the Web” ([www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org)),
- School-to-Work ([www.stw.ed.gov/index.htm](http://www.stw.ed.gov/index.htm)), and
- National FFA Communications Standards Manual

## A

**AAAE**—American Association of Agricultural Educators. The professional association of teacher educators in agriculture.

**Ability grouping**—A common instructional practice of clustering students according to their academic skills. Ability grouping allows a teacher to provide the same level of instruction to the entire group. Also called tracking.

**Accreditation**—The process by which an organization, usually the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education, sanctions teacher-education programs. The council gives certain programs—about 500 of the some 1,300 that prepare teachers—its seal of approval for quality. States also approve teacher-education programs by means of issuing teaching licenses to their graduates.

**Attention-deficit disorder (ADD)**—A disorder characterized by the inability to concentrate and, in some cases, impulsiveness and hyperactivity. Between three and 10 percent of the nation’s school age children are thought to have the disorder. Some children qualify for special-education services on the basis of having this disorder. The children who are hyperactive are often labeled ADHD, for attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder.

**Affirmative action**—Refers broadly to policies that are focused on race, ethnicity and gender. Examples include making an effort to hire minorities or setting aside a percentage of public contracts for minority firms. The term was first used in the 1960s, when Presidents Nixon and Johnson signed executive orders requiring businesses with federal contracts to establish goals and timetables for hiring minorities.

**Agribusiness**—School programs that focus on the study of animal science, horticulture and business-related aspects of agriculture.

**Agriculture**—School programs through which students are exposed to various aspects of agribusiness, including animal science and horticulture.

**Alternative assessment**—Any form of measuring what students know and are able to do other than traditional standardized tests. Alternative forms of assessment include portfolios, performance-based assessments and other means of testing students.

**Alternative schools**—This term broadly refers to public schools that are set up by states or school districts to serve populations of students who are not succeeding in the traditional public school environment. Alternative schools offer students who are failing academically or may have learning disabilities or behavioral problems an opportunity to achieve in a different setting. While there are many different kinds of alternative schools, they are often characterized by their flexible schedules, smaller teacher-student ratios and modified curricula.

**Assessment**—An exercise—such as a written test, portfolio, or experiment—that seeks to measure a student’s skills or knowledge in a subject area.

**At-risk**—Describes a student with socioeconomic challenges, such as poverty or teen pregnancy, which may place the student at a disadvantage in achieving academic, social or career goals. Such students are deemed “at risk” of failing, dropping out or “falling through the cracks” at school.

**B**  
**Basic skills**—The traditional building blocks of a curriculum that are most commonly associated with explicit instruction in early elementary language arts and mathematics. Basic skills have historically been taught in isolation. Basic skills include teaching the letters of the alphabet, how to sound out words, spelling, grammar, counting, adding, subtracting and multiplying.

**Benchmarking**—The continuous process of measuring products, services and practices against strong competitors or recognized industry leaders. Benchmarking is an on-going activity, intended to improve performance; it can be applied to all facets of operations; it requires a measurement mechanism so that the performance “gap” can be identified; and it focuses on comparing best practices among dissimilar enterprises.

**Bilingual education**—An education program for children whose native language is not English. Children are taught for some portion of the day in their native language, with the goal of moving them into mainstream English classes as quickly as possible—usually within two or three years. Ideally, such programs allow students to keep up academically because they can learn subject matter in their native language while they learn English.

**Block scheduling**—A means of circumventing the time constraints of a single class period. The traditional school day is typically divided into six or seven classes that each last from forty-five to fifty-five minutes. With few

exceptions, classroom instruction begins and ends within the allotted time period. Blocked courses may be scheduled for two or more continuous class periods or days to allow students greater time for laboratory or project-centered work, field trips or work-based learning, and special assemblies or speakers. Moreover, block scheduling reduces the instructional time lost in passing between classes.

**Business compact**—Informal contracts among community leaders to work together to define common goals and strategies for initiating and sustaining local educational reform. Compact representatives may include politicians, secondary school superintendents, college presidents and heads of business organizations. Compacts provide a structure of mutual accountability, because all participants agree to work together and separately to support group goals. Efforts on the part of compact members may include creating employment opportunities for students, helping to restructure educational systems and providing local labor market information.

**Business-education partnerships**—Various school-reform coalitions formed by private businesses and schools or school districts. Partnerships have evolved from individual school partnerships, to the introduction of management principles into public schools.

**Brown v. Board of Education**—The 1954 U.S. Supreme Court decision that banned racially segregated schools, saying that “separate educational facilities are inherently unequal.” In mandating desegregation, *Brown v. Board of Education* led to widespread busing. See “Desegregation.”



**Career academy**—A school-within-a-school that offers students academic programs organized around broad career themes. Integrating classroom instruction with work-based learning, career academies equip students with the necessary skills for both work force entry and postsecondary admission. Staffed by a team of teachers from various disciplines, academy classes are block scheduled and smaller than those in the typical high school, enabling teachers to structure activities that build students’ sense of membership in the academy community. Curricula are often planned with the assistance of business partners, who suggest program structure, provide classroom speakers, host school field trips and provide mentors for individual students. Where possible, students are placed in jobs related to their field of study in the summer following their junior year, and may spend some part of their senior year participating in a work experience program.

**Career Awareness**—Instruction that introduces students to the range of career options available to them. These school-based programs, often aimed at the elementary and middle-school level, help expand the occupational knowledge of youth by helping them identify occupations and career cluster areas they may be interested in pursuing during their secondary years. These programs introduce students to a wide range of labor market issues and teach them about the education and training requirements of different occupations. Career awareness activities may include: studying and producing work products, participating in career inventory and assessment programs, and interacting with and listening to presentations by employers and career counselors.

**Career Days/Career Fairs**—Special events that allow students to meet with postsecondary educators, employers or career development professionals to learn about future work opportunities. Information may be distributed via brochures that students receive from visiting firm or school representatives, via formal or informal discussions held in the classroom or via tours of the business or college. Career day activities are designed to help students think about their skills and knowledge in relation to potential careers, and to meet service providers who can assist them in getting the necessary skills and experience for workforce success.

**Career Development**—Individuals seeking employment may choose from a wide variety of entry-level or more advanced

career opportunities that require different responsibilities and types of skills. Individuals typically enter their selected job at levels that correspond to their present knowledge and ability, and advance in their career by securing additional training and on-the-job experience over time. To increase their likelihood of obtaining an initial job of their choice, individuals may pursue general or specialized academic or vocational training at the secondary or postsecondary level.

**Career Guidance and Counseling**—The term “career guidance and counseling” means programs- (A) that pertain to the body of subject matter and related techniques and methods organized for the development in individuals of career awareness, career planning, career decision making, placement skills, and knowledge and understanding of local, state and national occupational, educational, and ongoing market needs, trends and opportunities; (B) that assist individuals in making and implementing informed educational and occupational choices; and (C) that help students develop career options with attention to surmounting gender, race, ethnic, disability, language or socioeconomic impediments to career options and encouraging careers in non-traditional employment.

**Career Major**—The term “career major” means a coherent sequence of courses or field of study that prepares a student for a first job and that- (A) integrates academic and occupational learning, integrates school-based and work-based learning, establishes linkages between secondary schools

and postsecondary institutions; (B) prepares the student for employment in a broad occupational cluster or industry sector; (C) typically includes at least two years of secondary education and at least one or two years of postsecondary education; (D) provides the students, to the extent practicable, with strong experience in and understanding of all aspects of the industry the students are planning to enter; (E) results in the award of a high school diploma or its equivalent, a certificate or diploma recognizing successful completion of one or two years of postsecondary education (if appropriate), and a skill certificate; and (F) may lead to further education and training, such as entry into a registered apprenticeship program, or may lead to admission to a 2- or 4-year college or university.

**Career map**—A written plan of study that helps students select a coherent sequence of secondary (and where appropriate, postsecondary) courses and experiences to prepare them for college entry or work in a selected career cluster or area. Career maps are particularly valuable for entering high school freshmen, who often begin scheduling their high school program with little understanding of the choices available to them, the courses they will need to pursue a particular career, or the impact that their decisions will have on their future life.

**Carl Perkins Act**—The legislation that authorizes federal funding of vocational and technical education to states and local education agencies.

**Carnegie units** -A credit representing the completion of a core of high school courses. Developed in the early 1900s to set norms for curriculum and course time in public schools across the country, these are named after the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, which first suggested the practice.

**CD-ROMs**—An acronym for “compact disk-read only memory.” An optical-storage device, identical to those used to record music, that holds roughly 600 times as much data—including text, graphics, sound and video—as a standard computer floppy disk.

**Character education**—Deliberate instruction in basic virtues or morals, as opposed to weaving these values into every lesson. A national movement is underway to include character education in school curricula as one means of alleviating the current deficit in schoolchildren’s values by strengthening their moral fiber.

**Charter schools**—Schools run independently of the traditional public school system but receiving public funding, run by groups such as teachers, parents, or foundations. Charter schools are free of many district regulations and are often tailored to community needs.

**Civic education**—The teaching of civics, which addresses the roles and responsibilities of citizens and their governments.

**Choice**—Programs potentially open to all students in a given area, although there are sometimes lotteries or waiting lists.

**Collaboration**—A partnership of professionals and community members who work together to improve the condition of children and families. Such partnerships generally involve some combination of educators, human-services professionals, community groups, parents, businesses, government officials and neighborhood leaders.

**Competency-based education**—A program by which students receive credit when they demonstrate proficiency in a given area.

**Connecting activities**—Programmatic or human resources intended to help link school- and work-based educational programs as defined in the School-to-Work Opportunities Act (STW). Connecting activities include: (1) matching students with work-based opportunities; (2) using school site mentors as liaisons between educators, business, parents and community partners; (3) providing technical assistance to help employers and educators design comprehensive STW systems; (4) providing technical assistance to help teachers integrate school and work-based learning as well as academic and occupational subject matter; (5) encouraging active business involvement in school- and work-based activities; (6) providing assistance to STW completers to help them find appropriate work, continue their education or training, and link them to other community services; (7) evaluation of post-program

outcomes to assess program success, particularly with reference to selected populations; and (8) linking existing youth development activities with employer and industry strategies to upgrade worker skills.

**Contextual learning**—Instruction that imparts knowledge within the “context” in which it will later be used. Linking abstract concepts with real-life problems, contextual learning enables students to personally test and prove academic theories via tangible, real world applications. Stressing the development of “authentic” problem-solving skills, contextual learning is designed to blend the teaching of skills and knowledge in a specific industry or occupational area.

**Cooperative education**—A structured method of instruction whereby students alternate or parallel their high school or postsecondary studies, including required academic and vocational courses, with a job in a field related to their academic or occupational objectives. Students and participating businesses develop written training and evaluation plans to guide instruction, and students receive course credit for both their classroom and work experiences. Credit hours and intensity of placements often vary with the course of study. Moreover, depending on the state, secondary and postsecondary cooperative education may or may not include paid work experiences. Since employers are subject to the Fair Labor Standards Act Child Labor Laws, programs must be designed to comply with federal and state child labor provisions.

**Cooperative learning**—A method of instruction that encourages students to work in small groups, learning material then presenting what they have learned to other small groups. In doing so, they take responsibility for their own learning as well as their classmates’.

**Critical thinking**—The mental process of acquiring information, then evaluating it to reach a logical conclusion or answer. Increasingly, educators believe that schools should focus more on critical thinking than on memorization of facts.

**Curriculum**—The subject matter that teachers and students cover in class.

**Curriculum alignment**—The linking of secondary academic and vocational curricula so that course content dovetails across and/or within subject areas. Curriculum alignment may take two forms: horizontal alignment, when teachers within a specific grade level coordinate instruction across disciplines, and vertical alignment, when subjects are connected across all grade levels (K-16), to build cumulative, comprehensive, increasingly complex instructional programs.

## D

**Decentralization**—The breakup and distribution of power from a central government authority, usually including a reduction of the personnel and funding of that authority. In education, the term is most frequently used to describe the transfer of school policy-making

authority from the federal to the state level, or the transfer of decision-making authority from the state level to districts or schools.

**Desegregation**—Plans aimed at reducing racial isolation in schools and improving racial balance. See “Brown v. Board of Education.”

**Distance learning**—The use of telecommunications technologies, including satellites, telephones, Internet and cable-television systems, to broadcast instruction from one central site to one or more remote locations. Typically, a television image of a teacher is broadcast to students in remote locations. This may also be done using interactive video-conferencing. School districts frequently use distance learning so one teacher can teach to students in more than one school at once. Rural districts often rely on distance learning.

**Dropout**—The term dropout can refer to an event, such as leaving school before graduating, or a status, such as an individual who is not in school and is not a graduate. A person who drops out of school may later return and graduate. At the time the person left school, he/she is called a dropout. At the time the person returns to school, he/she is called a stopout. Measures to describe these behaviors include event dropout rate, status dropout rate and high school completion rate.

**Drug-free school zones**—In response to public concern over an increase in illegal drug use during the 1980s, the U.S. Congress and

many state legislatures have passed laws designating areas around schools as drug-free zones. Persons caught or convicted of possession or use of illegal drugs in these areas are subject to increased penalties under the law. The actual area of the zone and the penalties vary from state to state.

**Dyslexia**—A reading impairment, thought to be a genetic condition, which affects up to 10 percent of the nation’s school children. One trait of dyslexia might be transposing letters. Children born to parents with dyslexia may be eight times as likely to have the condition.

## E

**ESL**—See Bilingual education.

**Emotional and behavioral disorders**—Also called EBDs, disorders characterized by consistently aggressive, impulsive, or withdrawn behavior, including schizophrenia. Each state classifies these conditions differently. Clinicians generally consider behavior to be an EBD if it impairs personal, social, academic and vocational skills.

**Edutainment**—A general classification for software programs that combine elements of instruction and entertainment, including video, animation and music. Educators disagree on the educational value of most ‘edutainment’ software.

**Enrichment Programs**—Originally designed primarily for gifted students, but now widely used with at-risk children as well,

enrichment programs are intended to supplement the regular academic curriculum for students who might otherwise be bored with their classwork. For the gifted, they are an alternative to acceleration, so that even the cleverest students can remain in class with children their own age and maturity, yet be adequately challenged. Sometimes run as pull-out programs, enrichment programs are also an alternative to creating entirely separate gifted classrooms. Enrichment is intended to add value to the curriculum, often in a fun way, through such activities as special projects, guest speakers, concerts and museum visits. Many educators have found that what was originally considered enrichment is actually worth incorporating into the regular curriculum.

**Entrepreneurship education**—Efforts to teach and experience business development, planning and ownership. This area continues to increase, providing resources and assistance for students to recognize opportunity, start and develop their own business.

**Environmental education**—Programs designed to teach about the ecosystems and the environment, and how changes in them can affect the health and survival of people, other species and natural resources.

**Experiential education**—Education that stresses hands-on experience, accomplished by field trips, internships, or activity-oriented projects as opposed to traditional classroom learning.

**F**

**FFA Alumni**—The mission of the National FFA Alumni Association is to secure the promise of FFA and agricultural education by creating an environment where people and communities can develop their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success. Membership in the National FFA Alumni Association is open to anyone who is interested in supporting and promoting agricultural education and FFA on the local, state and national levels. Alumni membership is one of the four categories of FFA membership.

**Financial aid**—Any combination of monetary assistance available to students attending institutions of higher education. That aid can consist of low-interest loans, needs-based grants, scholarships, work-study funds and fellowships.

**G**

**GED**—General Education Diploma. Also called high school equivalency, it is given to students who pass a competency test.

**Gender bias**—Conscious or unconscious differential treatment—in a textbook or by a teacher or employer—of females and males based on their sex.

**General track**—Many high schools use achievement or ability tests to group students into academic, vocational or general programs of study. Unlike the academic track, which offers advanced instruction to the college-bound, or the vocational track, which outfits youth with

entry-level job skills, the general track is characterized by a less rigorous and more broadly defined curriculum and prepares students neither for college nor work force entry.

**Gifted students**—Pupils who are considered to have the capacity to achieve beyond the norm—either because of their IQ scores, their demonstrated ability in the classroom, or both. Once limited to academic skills, the definition of giftedness in many schools is expanding to include children with a wide variety of talents.

**Goals 2000**—A federal program that provides grants to states and school districts in exchange for establishing challenging academic content standards and accompanying assessments. Goals 2000 codifies the six national education goals that emerged from the 1989 education summit of President Bush and the nation's governors. Introduced by the Clinton administration and adopted by Congress in 1993, Goals 2000 has now expanded to eight national education goals.

**Gun-Free Zones**—State legislatures, in response to public concerns over violence in schools, have in the past few years adopted laws which heighten penalties for those persons who are convicted of the illegal possession or use of a firearm in and around school property. The U.S. Congress passed gun-free-school zones legislation, but the U.S. Supreme Court invalidated the federal law on grounds that it did not have the authority to enact the legislation.

## H

**Head Start**—A federal program, established as part of President Johnson’s anti-poverty agenda, that provides economically deprived preschoolers with education, nutrition, health and social services at special centers based in schools and community settings throughout the country. The program, designed to help prepare disadvantaged children for school, is known for its high degree of parental involvement in planning and management.

**High-performance workplace**—A workplace model that suggests that a robust, thriving economy can be sustained if more sophisticated, technically advanced and efficient production techniques are employed. This type of workplace requires workers with advanced academic and occupational skill holdings that enable them to learn on the job, adapt to rapidly changing technology and work in teams to solve problems. High performance workplaces are often seen as a strategy to reach “high-skill, high-wage” employment, because they restructure firms to offer economic incentives for workers with multiple skills and talents. In addition to their economic development potential, high performance workplaces may help drive school reform by providing educators with a set of skill competencies that are required for marketplace success.

**High school completion**—Most students complete high school by finishing the requisite secondary coursework to receive a regular high school diploma. A

relatively small number of students may complete high school by receiving an alternative high school credential, such as a General Educational Development (GED) certificate, certificate of completion, or certificate of attendance. The term does not distinguish how long it takes to achieve the high school credential.

**High-skill, high-wage**—In a high-skill, high-wage economy, employers pay workers higher salaries than they might otherwise earn because workers’ advanced skill holdings make them more efficient and thus more profitable to the firm. One suggested strategy for moving to a high skill, high wage economy is to adopt “high performance” work organizations, which offer greater incentives for more educated workers. Shifting to this type of work force may require reforming secondary and postsecondary educational curriculum, and emphasizing instruction that smoothes the transition from school to work. The emerging “high performance” workplace stresses more flexible, decentralized systems in which multi-skilled workers share greater responsibility for and control over their work. To function in this new work environment, workers will require more advanced skill holdings than they presently possess.

**Home schooling**—The practice of parents’ teaching their children at home rather than sending them to public school. According to the U.S. Department of Education, an estimated 1,500,000 students—three percent of the nation’s school-age population—are now home schooled.

**I** **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)**—A landmark 1975 federal law, originally known as the Education for All Handicapped Children Act. In exchange for federal money, schools must guarantee that all children with disabilities receive a “free, appropriate public education.” Different portions of the law cover children from birth to age 21. The law has been amended several times but originally addressed children with disabilities who were kept out of the public schools, and taught either at home or institutions.

**Illiteracy**—The condition of being unable to read. People were once considered illiterate if they could not sign their name. More recently, the definition has been expanded so that literacy tests now measure people’s ability to perform everyday tasks, such as understanding a bus schedule.

**In-service training**—The workshops and lectures designed to keep teachers abreast of the latest developments in their field. The training is called “in-service” to distinguish it from “pre-service” training, which means undergraduate coursework taken by those intending to teach.

**Inclusion**—The controversial practice—sometimes called “full inclusion”—of educating children with disabilities alongside their non-disabled peers, often in a regular classroom in their neighborhood school. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act requires that disabled children be educated in the “least restrictive environment” possible. See *IDEA*.

**Independent schools**—A private or non-public school that is not part of a school system. An independent school is governed by a board of trustees instead of by the state board of education. It is funded by tuition and private donations and grants. The school must hold a non-profit status and be accredited by an approved state or regional association. It must also be nondiscriminatory, and it can be either religious or non-religious.

**Integration of academics and vocational**—The process of connecting academic coursework to real-life applications. Often involves teachers team teaching in areas of their discipline expertise. Strategies focus of application of academics to “real world” situations. Examples include: agriculture and science; business and English, etc.

**Internship**—Students work in an environment where they perform a variety of tasks for a specific occupation. Internships are usually short-term, and they can be paid or unpaid.

**I.Q.**—Shorthand for “intelligence quotient,” which is a person’s purported mental capacity. IQ tests have become increasingly controversial because critics claim they measure only a narrow band of intellectual strengths, primarily “school smarts.” Others claim the tests are biased against members of some minority groups.

## J

**Job rotation**—An employment practice whereby workers periodically transfer among a number of different positions and tasks within jobs that each require different skills and responsibilities. Rotating job tasks helps workers understand the different steps that go into creating a product and/or service delivery, how their own effort affects the quality and efficiency of production and customer service, and how each member of the team contributes to the process. Cross-training can also contribute to productivity by giving employees a more conceptual understanding of the job, making them more adept at problem-solving and critical thinking, and helping them to value working together in groups. Job rotation requires that employees possess a wide range of general and specific skills, and undergo advanced training, to enable them to perform a variety of work functions.

**Job shadowing**—A school program whereby students accompany an employee at the workplace, observing and learning about various tasks associated with an occupation.

## K

**Kentucky Education Reform Act**—The nation's most sweeping state school-reform law. Passed by the Kentucky General Assembly in 1990, it enacted new curriculum, governance, finance and technology initiatives. The law grew out of a 1989 state supreme court decision.

## L

**Learning disabilities**—Encompasses a wide variety of learning difficulties; the criteria for the label varies from state to state. In general, a learning disability describes a discrepancy between a child's intelligence and academic achievement. Some children have learning disabilities only in specific areas, such as reading or math.

**Limited English Proficient (LEP) students**—Students who speak a language other than English. They are either immigrants or children born in the United States. Each state has a different way of ascertaining whether a child is limited-English-proficient. Usually such students receive bilingual-education or English-as-a-second-language (ESL) services.

**Local educational agency (LEA)**—A local level administrative unit that exists primarily to operate public schools or to contract for public school services. Its synonyms include “school district” and “local basic administrative unit.”

**Local partnership**—An entity responsible for local School-to-Work Opportunities programs that offer school-based learning, work-based learning and connecting activities between the two. Participating members include (A) employers, representatives of local educational agencies and local postsecondary educational institutions (including representatives of area vocational schools, where applicable), local educators (such

as teachers, counselors or administrators), representatives of labor organizations or nonmanagerial employee representatives, and students; and (B) may include other entities, such as employer organizations, community-based organizations, national trade associations working at the local level, industrial extension centers, rehabilitation agencies and organizations, registered apprenticeship agencies, local vocational education entities, proprietary institutions of higher education, local government agencies, parent organizations, teacher organizations, vocational student organizations, private industry councils, federally recognized Indian tribes and Native Hawaiian entities. Moreover, partnerships must establish a process by which responsibilities and expectations of students, parents, employers and schools are clearly established.

## M

**Magnet school**—A school that places special emphasis on academic achievement or on a particular field, such as science, designed to attract students from elsewhere in the school district. Studies offered in some magnet programs include: international baccalaureate, allied medicine, performing arts, animal production and engineering and science technology.

**Mentors**—Role models for youth who have an understanding of the world of work, and have demonstrated themselves over time to be valued workers who are concerned about their customers and fellow employees. Working with an individual student

throughout the school year on a one-to-one basis, mentors typically dedicate a few hours each month to familiarizing their student with the workplace, offering insight on basic skills needed to enter the job market, or assisting with school projects and personal issues. Time for mentor-student interactions may be donated by employers during the work day, or volunteered by adults on weekends or after work hours.

**Mentoring**—A professional works closely with a student, instructing and motivating him or her, in consultation with the teacher.

**Merit pay**—Any number of plans to pay teachers on the basis of their demonstrated competence in teaching. The pay plans are controversial because it is difficult to objectively identify good teaching and many argue that such plans would be little more than popularity contests.

**Migrant education**—Education programs established mainly to meet the needs of children of farm laborers, who often face such challenges as poverty, poor health care and the readjustments of moving often from school to school.

**Multicultural education**—An educational philosophy and curriculum that looks beyond curricula from the white Western European tradition. Some multicultural education models highlight subjects from diverse cultural, ethnic, racial and gender perspectives. Others represent an immersion in one culture, ethnicity, or race.

## N

**National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE)**—The NAAE is a federation of 50 state agricultural educators’ associations. The governing body of the organization consists of a board of directors with a president, president elect, and six regional vice presidents. Today, more than 7,600 agricultural educators are members of the NAAE. NAAE is ... “Professionals providing agricultural education for the global community through visionary leadership, advocacy and service.”

**NYF/REA**—National Young Farmer/Ranchers Education Association. Primarily an adult education organization that focuses on continuing education for practitioners in agriculture.

**National Association of Supervisors of Agricultural Education (NASAE)**—Professional organization for state supervisors of agricultural education. Primarily focused on issues related to state leadership.

**National Council for Agricultural Education**—Provides leadership, coordination and support for the continuous improvement and diversity of agricultural education.

**National Skill Standards Board**—Established under Title V of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the National Skill Standards Board serves as a catalyst to stimulate the development and adoption of a voluntary national system of skills standards, assessment and certification of attainment criteria.

## O

**Occupational cluster**—A grouping of occupations from one or more industries that share common skill requirements. Occupational clusters form the basis for developing national skill standards, organizing instruction in all aspects of an industry, establishing career academies, and creating career clusters as part of school-to-work programs.

**Outcomes-based education**—An education theory that guides curriculum by setting goals for students to accomplish. Outcomes-based education focuses more on these goals, or outcomes, than on “inputs,” or subject units. This theory has drawn intense criticism from parent groups who fear that, by focusing on outcomes, schools are inflicting values onto students.

## P

**PAS**—The National Association of Postsecondary Agriculture Students is an organization primarily designed to promote agriculture leadership in two-year institutions.

**Parochial schools**—A school that is church-related, most commonly to the Roman Catholic Church but also to other denominations. Hebrew day schools can also be termed “parochial.”

**Performance-based assessment**—Requires students to perform hands-on tasks, such as writing an essay or conducting a science experiment. Such assessments are becoming increasingly common as alternatives to multiple-choice, machine-scored tests. Also known as authentic assessment.

**Performance Measure/  
Performance Standard**—

Strategies used to monitor changes in student outcomes at the program or institutional level. Used for accountability or program improvement purposes, the choice of metric depends on the goals and objectives that educators are seeking to attain. A performance measure is a type of educational outcome, such as the percentage of students finding a job upon graduation, that is considered appropriate for monitoring. A performance standard is a level of performance that individual students, programs or institutions are expected to achieve on a specific measure. For example, a programmatic outcome might be that “all programs will have placement rates of at least 75 percent.” Performance measures and standards systems are also found in the business world, where they may be used to assess worker performance in relation to industry norms.

**Phonics**—An instructional strategy used to teach letter-sound relationships to beginning readers by having them “sound out” words.

**Placement**—A school program where students are employed in a business or work situation to gain skills and experience in that particular industry. Agreements with employer, school supervisor and parents are completed to ensure involvement of all parties in the educational process.

**Portfolio**—A systematic and organized collection of a student’s work throughout a course or class year. It measures the student’s

knowledge and skills and often includes some form of self-reflection by the student.

**Postsecondary Educational Institution**—

A school that provides formal instructional programs with a curriculum designed primarily for students who have completed the requirements for a high school diploma or equivalency certificate. This includes programs of an academic, vocational and continuing professional education purpose, but excludes vocational and adult basic education programs.

**Private school**—An independent school that is controlled by an individual or agency other than the state or district. It is usually supported by private funds and is not controlled by publicly elected or appointed officials. See “Independent School.”

**R**

**RAE 2020**—Reinventing Agricultural Education for the Year 2020, a visioning and planning initiative, is bringing together key local, state, regional and national stakeholders to develop a vision for agricultural education. These groups are sharing their thoughts and ideas while developing consensus on the mission for agricultural education in the 21st century.

**Reform networks**—An association of educators, schools or districts joined together to provide mutual support as they work on common plans for improving education. Popular reform networks include Theodore Sizer’s Coalition of

Essential Schools and James Comer's School Development Program.

**Remedial education**—Instruction that seeks to bring students deficient in basic skills up to standard levels in essential subjects such as writing, reading and math.

## S

**SAE**—See “Supervised Agricultural Experience”

**SAT**—The SAT is a standardized test, usually taken by college-bound students. The SAT I: Reasoning Test is a test of verbal and mathematical reasoning ability. It is designed to predict who will do well in college. The SAT II: Subject Test, formerly known as Achievement Tests, are tests of current ability and knowledge in high school subject areas such as English and biology.

**SCANS (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills) Report**—The result of a massive, two-year project of the U.S. Department of Labor, in 1992 this report recommended a host of changes to make school curricula and teaching methods more relevant to the modern workplace.

**School-based management**—The shift of decision-making authority from school districts to individual schools. Such proposals vary, but they usually give control of a school's operation to a school council composed of parents, teachers and local administrators. See “Site-Based Management.”

**School choice**—Any proposal that allows children to attend schools outside their local district boundaries. Such schools may be public institutions other than the school that is assigned in their district or they may be private and/or religious schools. Often these proposals include public funding for all or some of the tuition costs.

**School reform**—A generic term encompassing a variety of efforts that are taking place to improve schools. Reform efforts focus on all aspects of schooling, from how schools are governed to what curriculum is taught in the classroom.

**School-sponsored enterprise**—The production of goods or services by students for sale to or use by others. School-sponsored enterprises typically involve students in the management of the project. Enterprises may be undertaken on or off the school site.

**School tutors**—Individuals who work with students at school on topics or concepts that need reinforcement on a regular basis. Tutoring activities may take place during or after school or work, and may or may not be part of a structured school program. In addition to academic coursework, tutors may work with students to address career or personal development issues. Tutors may be paid or unpaid (volunteer).

**School-to-Work Opportunities Act**—A federally funded program that uses three main pieces of education (school-based learning, work-based learning and connecting activities) to

create a complete educational transition into the work place. Programs have been implemented throughout the country and are often joint projects with the Department of Labor and Department of Education.

**School-to-work transition**—Any of a host of programs—from on-the-job training to apprenticeships to cooperative agreements between high schools and community colleges—designed to prepare students not bound for college to enter the job market.

**Secondary school**—A school comprising any span of grades, beginning with the next grade following an elementary or middle school (usually 7,8,9), and ending with or below grade 12. Both junior and senior high schools are included.

**Service learning**—Programs incorporating citizenship values into education by requiring students to perform community service. In some districts, community service is a mandatory requirement for graduation.

**Site-based management**—The shift of decision-making authority from centralized bureaucracies to local individual establishments. Such proposals vary, but they usually give control of an organization's operation to local administrators. See "School-Based Management."

**Skill certificate**—Portable, industry-recognized credentials that certify the holder has demonstrated competency on a core set of performance standards related to an occupational cluster area.

Serving as a signal of skill mastery at benchmarked levels, skill certificates may assist students in finding work within their community, state or elsewhere in the nation. Issued by a School-to-Work Opportunities Act program under an approved state plan, state-developed skill standards used for certification purposes must be at least as challenging as standards ultimately endorsed by the National Skill Standards Board established under the National Skill Standards Act of 1994.

**Special education**—Programs designed to serve children with mental and physical disabilities. Such children are entitled to individualized education plans that spell out the services needed to reach their educational goals, ranging from speech therapy to math tutoring. Traditionally, special education has taken place in separate classrooms. Increasingly, the services may also be offered in regular schools and classrooms.

**Standards**—Subject matter benchmarks to measure students' academic achievement. Curriculum standards drive what students learn in the classroom. Most agree that public schools' academic standards need to be raised. However, there is national debate over how to implement such standards—how prescriptive they should be, and whether they should be national or local, voluntary or mandated.

**State Educational Agency**—As defined in the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, the term "state educational agency" means the officer or agency primarily

responsible for the state supervision of public elementary and secondary schools. In many states, a state board of education and/or chief state school officer supervises the operation of public schools. State board members are typically appointed by the governor, or elected by partisan or nonpartisan ballot. Chief state school officers (sometimes called state superintendents) are typically appointed by the state board, or elected by partisan or nonpartisan ballot. A small number of states rely solely on either their state board of education or chief state school officer for educational governance.

**Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE)**—A work-based learning program sponsored by the National FFA Organization that is specific to agricultural education (see “work-based learning”).

## T

**Teacher certification**—A process through which teachers become recognized by the state as expert educators, implying that a teacher has mastered the complex art of teaching. This is distinguished from a “licensed” teacher, one who practices teaching but is not considered an expert.

**Teacher educator**—A university professor charged with the responsibility of preparing teachers to teach in an area of discipline chosen by the student. Most agricultural education teacher educators are located at land grant institutions.

**Teacher licensing**—The process by which teachers receive

state permission to teach. States typically have minimum requirements, such as the completion of certain coursework and experience as a student teacher. Some states, faced with shortages of teachers in particular areas, grant teachers emergency licenses and allow them to take required courses while they are full-time teachers.

**Tech prep**—Programs offering at least four years of sequential coursework at the secondary and postsecondary levels to prepare students for technical careers. Programs typically begin in the last two years of high school, and result in an award of an associate’s degree or certificate after two years of postsecondary training. Other Tech prep combinations are also available, depending on local consortium arrangements. The curriculum is designed to build student competency in academic subjects, as well as to provide broad technical preparation in a career area. Coursework integrates academic and vocational subject matter, and may provide opportunities for dual enrollment in academic and vocational courses at secondary and postsecondary institutions.

**Title I**—The nation’s largest federal education program, with a 1995 funding level of \$7.2 billion. Created in 1965 during the War on Poverty, Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act serves remedial education programs to poor and disadvantaged children in nearly every school district in the country. Amendments to the law in 1994 were designed to tie the program to schoolwide and districtwide reforms based on challenging

academic standards. Title I was formerly known as “Chapter 1.”

**Title IX**—The federal law that bars gender discrimination in education facilities that receive federal funds. The full name of the law is Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Title IX cases, which have typically been filed at the college level, have increasingly been filed against K-12 schools for gender equity in extracurricular sports.

**Title VII**—A federal program to make limited-English-proficient students proficient at the English language. The full title of this program, created in 1984, is Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Funding goes to alternative approaches to bilingual education, such as English immersion programs, as well as traditional instruction in a student’s native language.

## V

**Vocational education**—The term “vocational education” means organized educational activities that:

- (A) offer a sequence of courses that provides individuals with the academic and technical knowledge and skills the individuals need to prepare for further education and for careers (other than careers requiring a baccalaureate, master’s or doctoral degree) in current or emerging employment sectors; and
- (B) include competency-based applied learning that contributes to the academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning and problem-solving skills, work

attitudes, general employability skills, technical skills and occupation-specific skills, of an individual.

**Vouchers**—A document or coupon, usually issued by the state, which can be used by parents to pay tuition at an out-of-district public school, a private school, and/or a religious school. The term is also used more broadly to describe school-choice proposals in which states would help pay tuition for children attending private or religious schools.

## W

**Work-based learning**—Learning that takes place in the work place. Work-based learning includes a number of different activities that can be arrayed along a continuum from shorter-term, introductory types of experiences to longer-term, more intensive ones, including paid work experiences and formal training. Although work-based learning activities vary, they generally involve schools and employers working together to devise objectives, activities and work tasks, and, sometimes, criteria for monitoring or assessing students. Known as supervised agricultural experience (SAE) in agricultural education.

**Whole language**—A philosophy and instructional strategy that emphasizes reading for meaning and context. Although teachers may give phonics lessons to individual students as needed, the emphasis is on teaching students to look at the wholeness of words and text.



## XYZ

**Year-round scheduling**—A modified school calendar that offers short breaks throughout the year, rather than the traditional summer vacation. The calendars vary, as do the reasons for switching to a year-round schedule. Some schools stagger the schedules to relieve crowding. Others think the three-month break allows students to forget much of the material covered in the previous year.

**Youth apprenticeship**—Students prepare for an entry-level job through a combination of work place learning and academic work. Apprenticeships can either be paid or unpaid.

**Youth mentoring**—The process of youth serving as mentors for other youth. Training and development in the strategies of mentoring to create an effective mentor/mentee relationship is essential.

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