

Georgia FFA Association



State Officer Candidate Preparation Handbook

**For use with the
96th Georgia FFA Convention
April 24-27, 2024**

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Prepared for
Georgia FFA Members
Seeking an office with the Georgia FFA Association

Section One:

Guidelines and Expectations

Roles and Expectations of State Officers

Roles of an Officer:

1. A leader who serves the Georgia FFA Association in local, area, region, state, and national activities in an effort to achieve the mission, strategies, and core goals of the organization.
2. A member of the Georgia FFA Association Executive Officer Team that executes the activities outlined in the Georgia FFA Program of Activities.
3. A role model to motivate, inspire, and encourage FFA members to participate in agricultural education and FFA; assist members in their advancement of agricultural knowledge and leadership development.
4. An FFA member who maintains positive relationships with members, advisors, regional and state staff, agribusiness persons, and others interested in agricultural education.
5. A student representative who projects a positive image as a leader among American youth representing those qualities members and society accept as a lifestyle role model.

Expectations of an Officer:

1. Be dedicated and committed to FFA and the total program of Agricultural Education.
2. Be willing to commit necessary time and travel to area, region, state, and national activities.
3. Become knowledgeable of agriculture, education, and FFA information and issues.
4. Develop into an effective public speaker and always project a desirable image of FFA.
5. Be timely with letters, thank-you notes, and other correspondence, which is a necessity.
6. Continually strive to improve communication and leadership presentation skills.
7. To forgo alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substances at all times during the year of service to the FFA.
8. Conduct yourself in a manner that commands respect without any display of superiority.
9. Avoid places or activities that in any way would raise questions as to one's moral character or conduct.
10. Use wholesome and appropriate language in all speeches and informal conversations.
11. Maintain proper dress and good grooming for all occasions.
12. Work in harmony with fellow officers, and not engage in conversations detrimental to others.
13. Serve as a member of the team, always maintaining a cooperative attitude.
14. Be willing to take and follow instructions as directed by those responsible for the FFA programs.
15. Maintain at least a C average in all academic course work.

Commitments for the Upcoming Year of Service

An officer's year of service will be filled with many activities that carry out the mission statements of both Agricultural Education and FFA. Below is a listing of several of the activities as they occur throughout the year; this is only a tentative list to provide a preview of the year's events.

Dates for mandatory attendance events are outlined by the State FFA Executive Secretary and will be expanded upon at the *Base Camp* New State Officer Training.

State FFA Officers are expected to travel throughout their year of service. Dependable transportation, as well as a valid driver's license and willingness to drive are important. Officers will have the opportunity to be reimbursed for their out-of-pocket travel expenses. During much of the year the officer's food and lodging expenses will be covered by the Georgia FFA Association.

June

- *Base Camp* New Officer Training
- Workshop Development Training
- COLT conference preparation

July

- Chapter Officer Leadership Training
- National State Officer Summit (D.C.)
- Business & Industry visits

August

- Executive Meeting

September

- Chapter Visits
- Discovery Conference
- National Delegate Orientation

October

- Georgia National Fair
- Sunbelt Ag Expo
- National FFA Convention

November

- GAC Harvest Celebration (Athens)
- Chapter Visits

December

- State CDE Day at ABAC
- Chapter Visits
- Pacesetter's Luncheon (Athens)
- Team Christmas Retreat

January

- Chapter Visits
- Discovery Conference
- State Convention Planning

February

- State CDE Day at Camp John Hope
- National FFA Week
- FFA Day at the Capitol (Atlanta)
- State Livestock Show

March

- State CDE Day at the FFA Center
- Greenhand Jamboree
- Success Conference
- FFA Blue & Gold Gala

April

- Georgia FFA Convention

May

- Chapter FFA Banquets
- Area Award Banquets/Programs

Activities Throughout the Year

Regular Executive Meetings (monthly)
State Career Development Events
Local, Region & State livestock shows & fairs
Area/Region Activities
Chapter Visits and Promotions

Eligibility and Application Procedure

Eligibility

- Each candidate must be a bona fide, dues paying, FFA member during their year of service.
- Each candidate must have obtained his or her State FFA Degree at the time of applying for State Office or be scheduled to receive it during the state FFA convention he/she will run for state office.
- Each candidate must schedule to attend and participate in the entire state FFA convention while running for state office.
- Each candidate must submit the State FFA Officer Application to the Region Office by March 1.

Application Procedure

- Confirm candidacy for the State FFA Degree if not already obtained prior to the convention in which he/she will run for state office.
- Complete the State Officer Application cover page and all requested information.
- Obtain all signatures and recommendations required on the State Officer Application form.
- Secure a completed copy of your State Officer Application (all parts and pages). Know what is on your applications, because the committee may use some of the information to ask you questions about your experiences and SAE program.
- Submit State Officer Application & a digital photo to your Region Office by March 1, 2024.
- Adhere to directions in the application confirmation letter sent by the State FFA Executive Secretary.
- Attend the nominating committee process as outlined in the letter from the State FFA Executive Secretary.

Steps to State Convention

- Thoroughly read all information and directions given in the confirmation letter from the State FFA Executive Secretary.
- Prepare for written exam by reviewing the information contained in the publications on the Examination Resource List.
- Prepare for the nominating committee interviews by setting up mock interviews to practice possible questions that cover the categories listed in the Outline of Interview Format.
- Prepare a two-minute nomination speech to be presented to the convention delegates.

Section Two:

The Election Procedure

Guide to Preparing for the Election Procedure

- **Develop an Understanding of FFA's Role in Agricultural Education**
 - ❑ Review the history of Agricultural Education and the introduction of FFA.
 - ❑ Review and understand Agricultural Education's place in Career & Technical Education.
 - ❑ Be able to explain the concept of the three interlocking circles of the program components.
 - ❑ List the values of FFA to the members, home, school, and community.

- **Develop a Base Knowledge of FFA Fundamentals**
 - ❑ Review the information in the publications listed on the Examination Resource List.
 - ❑ Review the basics, i.e. Creed, Mission, History, Organizational Structure, Awards, Etc.
 - ❑ List your FFA experiences and describe the lessons you learned from those experiences.
 - ❑ Review the activities that take place in your region.
 - ❑ Develop an understanding of what FFA is to you.
 - ❑ Learn and understand the mission, strategies, and value statements of the FFA.
 - ❑ Review the three divisions within the program of activities.
 - ❑ Understand the organization and function of the FFA Foundation.
 - ❑ Understand the organization and function of the FFA Alumni & Supporters.

- **Develop a Working Knowledge of Current Issues in Education and Agriculture**
 - ❑ Read education and agriculture periodicals.
 - ❑ Meet with school administrators to talk about the issues in education.
 - ❑ Meet with agricultural professionals in your community to learn about issues facing the industry.
 - ❑ Visit with FFA members to learn of their concerns and suggestions for the organization.

- **Practice for the Interview Process**
 - ❑ Set up interviews with several different individuals.
 - ❑ Follow the outline of the interview format to simulate the interviews.
 - ❑ Wear your official dress to practice the interviews.
 - ❑ Brainstorm a list of possible questions to practice.
 - ❑ Read available information about interview tips and techniques.

- **Practice for the Knowledge Examination**
 - ❑ Complete the questions of past FFA quizzes available from your advisor.
 - ❑ Develop a list of possible questions from the information in the resources.
 - ❑ Make a set of Ag Ed/FFA Quiz flash cards and/or online study quiz (i.e. Quizlet).

- **Prepare Yourself**
 - ❑ Develop an understanding of why you want to serve the organization.
 - ❑ Clean up your official dress to display the appropriate image.
 - ❑ Read motivational literature.
 - ❑ Have a positive attitude throughout the convention.
 - ❑ Practice communication and people skills that will be useful while meeting delegates.

Outline of Nominating Committee Format

- The nominating committee process will consist of:
 - Candidate orientation
 - A 50-question, multiple choice exam
 - 2 individual interviews
 - 1 group interview
- The nominating committee will be selected by the State Executive Committee as outlined in the Georgia FFA Constitution.
- All candidates will be retained in a holding area throughout the interview process.
- Candidates will remain in the holding area until released by the nominating committee.

Interview Format

- The nominating committee develops six questions; one from each of the Interview Question Areas listed on page 9 of this handbook.
- Each candidate will have two individual/personal interviews. Three question areas will be covered in each of the two interviews. Each individual interview will have a 5-minute time limit. Each candidate will complete each interview round before the next interview round begins.
- The group interview will include groupings of candidates to simulate an officer team experience. Each group will be given a task to perform. The topic could be related to any of the six question areas identified in this handbook.

Interview Scoring

Candidates will be scored on the following characteristics in individual interviews.

- Appearance/Professionalism
- WOO (Winning Others Over)
- Focus
- Discipline
- Relator Skills (ability to relate to others)
- Command
- Knowledge

Interview Question Areas

➤ **Personal Information**

This question is designed to get a better understanding of the candidate as a person. Possibly what they feel are their strongest leadership qualities; what are the most important things in life to them; how involvement in school activities has affected their leadership development; etc.

➤ **Agriculture in the World Today**

As ambassadors of an agricultural organization, it is important to know what is happening in agriculture today. The question will remain very general; possibly naming and explaining two current issues in agriculture; naming and explaining an agricultural issue and then explaining how FFA could be involved; or explaining a current issue in their part of the state.

➤ **Educational Issues in the World Today**

It is important as we meet with state legislators, school administrators, and other interested parties, to have a working knowledge of current education issues. The question will remain very general; possibly agricultural education's role in the current school system; how agricultural education must change to meet the demands of students; or how the agricultural education program is a model for other programs.

➤ **FFA Activities**

Officers are expected to know the basics about FFA. Often an officer will need to provide members and advisors with information about upcoming events and programs. This question is designed to test the FFA knowledge of the candidate. Possibly explain three leadership conferences available to FFA members; what is the FFA mission and give examples of how it is carried out; describe three of your FFA experiences and describe what they taught you; etc...

➤ **Officer Role Play**

Being an officer requires people skills to interact with members, advisors, parents, and others. This question will involve a simple role-play to determine how the candidate would react in a practical officer situation. Possibly a radio interviewer approaches the candidate at the Sunbelt Expo and asks the officer to explain the FFA in thirty seconds; a potential FFA member approaches the officer at the Georgia National Fair and asks the officer what the FFA has meant to them; you are asked to introduce the national FFA officer for their keynote address at the Greenhand Jamboree; etc...

➤ **Leadership**

As a leader in the organization, the candidate should be aware of leadership qualities and ways to develop those qualities through the FFA. Possibly what are three essential qualities of a team and why; name top ten qualities of a leader and which do you possess; etc...

Review of Ag Ed/FFA Knowledge Examination

Examination Format

- All candidates will complete the examination in one room at the same time; no one other than the candidates and the person giving the exam are allowed in the room.
- Candidates will be supplied with the written exam and a pencil to take the exam; no other materials will be allowed in the exam area.
- The exam will consist of fifty multiple-choice questions. The exam score will be based on one hundred points.
- All exam questions will be developed from information found in the publications on the resource list below.
- Questions will concern practical information that a state officer should know.
- Candidates will be allowed a maximum of 1 hour (60 minutes) to complete the exam.

Recommended Study

- Official FFA Manual (current printed version – updated every 2 years)
- Official FFA Manual (PDF version available online – updated annually)
- Farm Bureau Farm Facts Booklet (Available online at www.fb.org or from your Farm Bureau Office)
- FFA New Horizons – Past 12 months

Guide to Meeting the Convention Delegates

- Personal contact with the members and delegates is essential.
- **No campaign materials** such as printed cards, handouts, posters, or brochures are allowed *(including online and social media campaigns)*.
- Prior to the convention, practice informal, 1-on-1 conversations with your peers.
- While the convention is not in session, mingle with and get to know the members.
- Prior to convention sessions, greet members and advisors as they enter the convention center.
- Take the initiative to start conversations with members.
- Introduce yourself to the members.
- Smile and enjoy yourself.

Candidate Process at the State FFA Convention

- All State Officer candidates will introduce themselves on stage during a session of the State Convention (*give your name and chapter only*).
- Prior to the start of the delegate business session, the Nominating Committee report will be read, announcing the top four candidates in each Region that have been chosen to advance in the election process.
- The twelve candidates selected (four each from the North, Central, and South regions) will each be allowed **2 minutes** to address the voting delegates.
- Candidates are not allowed to use props of any kind during their campaign speeches.
- Convention Delegates will vote for two candidates per region.
- The top two vote getters per region (six total) will be announced as State Officers. Any of the first six officers elected can then seek the office of State FFA President.
- Candidates for State President will have **1 minute** each to address the voting delegates.
- Once a State FFA President is elected, the candidate who received the third most votes from the region the new President is from will become a State Vice-President. No other candidates can be selected from that region.
- Of the remaining first six officers, any who are not from the same region as the State President, may run for State Secretary. Candidates will have **1 minute** each to address the delegates.
- Once a State Secretary is elected, the candidate who received the third most votes from the region the Secretary is from will become a State Vice-President.

Candidate Campaigning & Use of Social Media

- State Officer candidates are not allowed to publish, print, or handout any campaign material leading up to, or at the State FFA Convention. That includes others passing out or sharing promotional material on behalf of the candidate.
- State Officer candidates are certainly allowed to have a normal presence on social media through the candidate process, but are expected to not campaign, disrespect another candidate or solicit votes through social or any online media.

Section Three:

Agricultural Education and FFA Resources

Mission and Goals of Agricultural Education and the FFA

In 1950, a federal charter was granted to the National FFA Organization (Public Law 740) by the United States Congress, which made it an integral part of agricultural education. In 1998, PL 740 was revised by Congress and replaced by Public Law 105-225. In 2019, this law was again revised by Congress and replaced by Public Law 116-7.

The FFA, integrated into agricultural education, vitalizes, and motivates the learning experiences of students. An outstanding FFA chapter is an integral part of any agricultural education program.

The FFA provides students with dynamic ways to learn about agriculture and leadership, as well as opportunities for self-improvement. Just as the agriculture teacher uses a shop to teach agricultural mechanics, he or she also uses the FFA to teach leadership and motivate students to set high goals and work to achieve those goals. The FFA is an intra-curricular activity having its origin and roots as a definite part of the curriculum in agricultural education. An outstanding FFA chapter, under guidance of an advisor and a challenging program of activities, enriches the instruction in agriculture.

Everyone in the agricultural education and FFA family should be constantly aware of our mission statement, what we value, and the goals we have set for agricultural education.

-Excerpted from the National FFA Officer Preparation Manual, National FFA 1999

Agricultural Education

Mission

The mission of Agricultural Education is to prepare and support individuals for careers, build awareness and develop leadership for the food, fiber and natural resource systems.

We value and desire to achieve this mission by:

- Providing instruction in and about agriculture, food and natural resource systems.
- Serving all populations.
- Developing the whole person.
- Responding to the needs of the economic and educational marketplace.
- Advocating free enterprise and entrepreneurship education.
- Functioning as a part of the total educational system.
- Utilizing a proven educational process that includes formal instruction, experiential learning, leadership and personal development.

Goals

- To update instruction in and expand programs about agriculture, food and natural resources systems.
- To serve all people and groups equally without discrimination.
- To amplify and expand the “whole person” concept of education, including leadership, personal and interpersonal skills.
- To develop educational programs that continually and systematically respond to the trends and demands of the marketplace.
- To provide the stimuli that will foster the spirit of free enterprise and develop creative entrepreneurship and innovation.
- To provide leadership and cultivate strong partnerships in the total educational system.
- To elevate and extend our standards of excellence in classroom and laboratory instruction, supervised experiences and student organizations.

National FFA Organization

Vision

- Growing the next generation of leaders who will change the world.

Mission

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

Strategies

To accomplish this mission, the FFA:

- Develops competent and assertive agricultural leadership.
- Increases awareness of the global and technological importance of agriculture and its contribution to our well being.
- Strengthens the confidence of agriculture students in themselves and their work.
- Promotes the intelligent choice and establishment of an agricultural career.
- Encourages achievement in supervised agricultural experience programs.
- Encourages wise management of economic, environmental and human resources of the community.
- Develops interpersonal skills in teamwork, communications, human relations and social interaction.
- Builds character and promotes citizenship, volunteerism and patriotism.
- Promotes cooperation and cooperative attitudes among all people.
- Promotes healthy lifestyles.
- Encourages excellence in scholarship.

Code of Ethics

FFA members conduct themselves at all times to be a credit to their organization, chapter, school, community and family. FFA members pledge to:

- Develop my potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success.
- Make a positive difference in the lives of others.
- Dress neatly and appropriately for the occasion.
- Respect the rights of others, and their property.
- Be courteous, honest and fair with others.
- Communicate in an appropriate, purposeful and positive manner.
- Demonstrate good sportsmanship by being modest in winning and generous in defeat.
- Make myself aware of FFA programs and be an active participant.
- Conduct and value a Supervised Agricultural Experience Program.
- Strive to establish and enhance my skills through agricultural education in order to enter a successful career.
- Appreciate and promote diversity in our organization.

National FFA Value Statements

- We respect and embrace every individual's culture and experiences.
- We welcome every individual's contribution to advance our communities and the industry of agriculture.
- We cultivate an environment that allows every individual to recognize and explore their differences.
- We create leadership opportunities for every individual to enhance their personal and professional endeavors.

Agricultural Education in Georgia

Senate Bill 330, passed in 2018, codified the 3-Component Model of Agricultural Education into state law, and introduced a 3-year pilot program for elementary agricultural education.

In 2022, House Bill 1303 was passed, removing the “pilot” status from the elementary agricultural education program in Georgia.

Listing of Resource Materials

The following list of resources is for possible reference in preparing for the interview process; however, questions for the knowledge exam will be taken only from the resources referenced for the exam.

- Official FFA Manual (current printed version **AND** online PDF version)
- Robert’s Rules of Order
- FFA New Horizons – *Past 12 months*
- Georgia FFA Website (www.georgiaffa.org)
- National FFA Website (www.ffa.org)
- Farm Bureau Farm Facts Booklet (Available online at www.fb.org or your county Farm Bureau Office)
- Georgia Department of Education Website (www.doe.k12.ga.us)
- Georgia Career, Technical & Agricultural Education Website (www.gaaged.org)
- Georgia FFA Association Constitution and By-Laws
- The FFA at 50-Golden Anniversary Book
- Brochures published by the National FFA Organization
- Agricultural Publications
- Commodity Organization Publications
- The Agricultural Education Magazine
- Local FFA members and advisors

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