



Regional FFA Coordinators Policy Development 2014

Issue:

The FFA is a statewide, intracurricular youth organization supported by only two full-time staff members. Regional staff members are needed to provide support for and coordination between local programs at the district, section, region, state, and national level of competition and affiliation.

Questions:

Do you support the addition of regional FFA staff?

Have you seen a decrease in FFA participation in your area? If so, what do you think has caused it?

How many state staff positions do you believe are needed?

Background:

The Tennessee FFA Association makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education. FFA is an intracurricular part of the total agricultural education program. Agricultural education is comprised of three equal components: classroom/laboratory instruction, Supervised Agricultural Experiences (SAE) and FFA.

Tennessee FFA Association consists of 212 chapters, with 33,547 students enrolled in agricultural education courses and 347 agricultural teachers. Supporting these students enrolled in agricultural classes are two full time staffers housed in the Tennessee Department of Education. One staff member is primarily responsible for curriculum and support of the agricultural education program; the Agriculture, Food & Natural Resource Consultant. One staff member is primarily responsible for FFA program and administration; the Career and Technical Education (CTE) Specialist for FFA. These full time staff members are supported part time by a bookkeeper, who also supports six other CTE programs and an administrative assistant, who also supports three additional CTE programs.

Historically, the state had six regional staff members and the full time administrative assistants as well as two state staff supported by two full time administrative assistants. Tennessee FFA membership included more than 17,000 students before those regional positions were eliminated July 1, 1981. With the elimination of regional staff members, Tennessee FFA has remained stagnant and is failing to reach its full potential. This year, Tennessee was one of nine states to report a membership loss, and even had the highest loss out of those states. While Tennessee lost 543 members (bringing membership down to 12,965), our neighboring states have seen gains ranging from 490 members in Kentucky to 2,121 members in Georgia. Evidenced by their successful growth, Georgia has twenty staff members focused on Agricultural Education and/or FFA.

Farm Bureau Policy:

Agricultural and Family consumer Science Education (Partial)

We support Division of Post Secondary Access and Success (Formerly Career and Technical Education) and all activities of Tennessee FFA and FCCLA (Family Career and Community Leaders of America) chapters.

We support continued funding of a state-funded endowment to support the youth development and leadership goals of the Tennessee FFA Foundation Inc. and the Tennessee 4-H Foundation Inc.

We believe the professional staff positions providing national leadership and support for Agricultural Education and the FFA through the Office of Vocational and Adult Education in the U.S. Department of Education should be retained.