

New Jersey Agricultural Education Advisory Council

N.J. State FFA Convention, Hickman Hall, **Room 210**

Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey

May 25, 2010

2:00 – 4:00 pm

PLEASE NOTE ROOM CHANGE – WE WILL BE IN ROOM 210

AGENDA

- I. **Call to order** – Chairman Bill Walker
- II. **Introduction of new members and guests**
- III. **Approval of minutes from February 2010 meeting**
- IV. **Report on FFA related activities**
 - A) National Officer Spotlight – Levy Randolph, National FFA President
 - B) National Team Ag Ed Update - Kevin Keith, National FFA Organization
 - C) State FFA Convention Update – Nancy Trivette
 - D) National FFA Officer Candidate Selection – June 16th
- V. **Industry Updates**

From an industry perspective, how should we better focus our educational and training programs?
- VI. **Old Business:**
 - A) Agricultural Teacher Education Update – Rebecca Jordon, Rutgers University
 - B) Continuing Discussion on Agricultural Education Program Approval & Programs of Study – Gary Diggs
 - C) NJ C.A.S.E. Programs – Nancy Trivette
- VII. **New Business:**
 - A) N.J. State CTE Invitational Meeting - June 4th
 - B) Next Meeting Date
- VIII. **Meeting Adjournment**

New Jersey Agricultural Education Advisory Council,
Hickman Hall, Room 210, Rutgers University
Meeting Minutes May 25, 2010

Bill Walker called the meeting to order and asked all in attendance to introduce themselves. The **minutes from The February meeting** were reviewed

- Rich Hartung moved and Liz Thompson seconded to accept the minutes. Minutes were accepted unanimously.

Levy Randolph, national **FFA President addressed** the Advisory Council and reviewed the mission statement for this year's officers which is R.H.T.E.B. – this stands for Roots, Heart, Trust, Empower, and Blessed. Levy explained how these concepts have sustained and motivated the officers during their travels around the world this year. Levy announced that the theme for this year's National Convention will be "Infinite Potential". He also announced the retirement of National FFA Advisor, Larry Case.

National LPS Specialist, Kevin Keith addressed the State Advisory Council. The National Agricultural Education Summit will be in March 2011 in Orlando. NJ should begin putting together their team. Nancy Trivette suggested that we schedule Kevin Keith for some meetings in NJ with teachers, teacher education and local agricultural education programs to help increase connections at all levels.

Nancy Trivette provided an update on the NJ State Convention going on from May 24 – May 27:

- There are over 400 students registered
- Over 75 industry experts volunteering to coordinate and judge FFA Career Development Events
- Awards, Degrees and recognitions presented
 - Over \$14,000 in state scholarships
 - \$2500 in national funds
 - \$2600 in awards and plaques
 - 52 Blue Jackets will be given out as a result of generous donations to the State FFA Foundation – about \$2700 worth of jackets
 - There are 10 American degree candidates

Ms. Trivette also reported that NJ currently has 2 national officer candidates and that both candidates will be put through an intense round of interviews to simulate the kind of intensity that the national officer selection process involves. Each state can only advance one national officer candidate.

Bill Walker asked for input from the Industry perspective:

R. Hartung (farmer) suggested focusing on leadership.

Liz Thompson (NJ Farm Bureau) commented that, from the perspective of Farm Bureau, the high school and college students do not have a good handle on bigger agriculture issues such those with legislative or political implications. She encouraged teachers and professors to focus on bringing current agriculture issues into the classroom instruction. B. Walker suggested that the Secretary of Agriculture reports be posted on our website for teachers and students to access. NJ Farm Bureau initiated a new membership program this year for FFA members. They are

providing free membership to seniors. There was more discussion about the value of understanding the legislative issues and the need for informed advocates from industry. Better informed students and teachers could help build a base of advocates for New Jersey agriculture. **Amy Isenker (Mercer County College Horticulture Professor)** mentioned that she had a DEP representative speak to her soils class about proposed fertilizer legislation and the students had many questions for the presenter and resulted in a greater depth of thinking and learning for her students. We need to encourage teachers to reach out to the industry or agencies for information and to create awareness.

Jan-Marie Traynor (County College of Morris Horticulture Professor) suggested developing a resource list of those in all aspects of the ag community which could be organized on a county by county basis. Discussion continued about the general support for agriculture among the public. It was noted that even in the tight economy open space funding is still supported at the polls.

B. Walker commented that we need ambassadors and **Nick Semeniuk (Cumberland County College Horticulture Professor)** added that the ag community in Cumberland County has always been supportive. **Gary Diggs (NJDE) commented that all programs must have an advisory committee** and that these committees can be great resources for the teachers, instructors, administrators and students.

Discussion then moved onto the need for articulation agreements and each Community college represented identified the number of agreements they have in place with secondary schools as well as senior institutions.

Gary Diggs (NJDE) addressed the Program Re-approval Process which all Career and Technical Education Programs must complete over successive years – agriculture programs will be starting the process in September 2010. Any school which identifies a Program of Study (as opposed to a Program) must have a sequence of course leading to college credit and signed articulation agreements in place with either a two or four year college or university. The comment was made that in NJ we need to bridge the gap to get more Programs of Study as opposed to just having courses.

N. Trivette (NJDA –OAE) commented that if a program does not get re-approved then her office will not be able to support an FFA chapter charter at that school. FFA chapters exist in NJDE approved programs of agricultural education. Quality programs must maintain a strong three-component program of class/lab instruction, experiential learning and leadership development.

G. Diggs commented that a three or four course sequence with a clear progression must be shown in the re-approval application including the content of the courses. A. Isenker questioned the transferability of credits awarded by examination or by articulation agreement. Credits awarded and placed on a student's transcript need to transfer fully.

Frank Yesalavich (Adjunct instructor for RU 'Ag Teacher Education') reported on the current status of the Rutgers University program which will have 2 student teachers this year.

G. Diggs provided a more detailed report from NJDE to give guidance to the agriculture program re- approval next year – the largest career cluster is the Business Education area. Many applications for **program re-approval** were returned for remediation for a variety reasons – some of the most common were:

- Poor descriptions of courses
- Inadequate enrollment data for the past 3 years
- Poor reporting of the number of completers versus the number of students who enroll in the program

- Poor reporting of performance data
- Lack of connection to the county Workforce Investment Board – there must be a connection between the program and a viable career

The program re-approval process is related to the overall process of reforming education. G. Diggs also noted that approximately 50% of students admitted to two-year community colleges need some form of remediation. The number is about 30 – 40% at four year institutions. In addition students graduating high school (and some colleges) lack the soft skills including critical thinking skills to succeed on the job.

There was some discussion about getting high school students to take the state accuplacer test while still in high school. JM Traynor described the pilot being conducted in Morris County where the English and Math Departments from the County College of Morris are going out into selected high schools, administering the tests to juniors in an effort to help identify at risk students before they reach their senior year. The project has just started.

N. Trivette described the **Curriculum for Agricultural Science Education (CASE)** – NJ will have 7 schools implementing CASE courses in September. NJDA, in cooperation with NJDE, provided \$50,000 in grants to schools to enable them to upgrade facilities with equipment and supplies necessary to conduct either the Introduction to Ag, Food and Natural Resources, Principles of Plant Science, or Principles of Animal Science courses. Central to CASE is that students completing a CASE Program of Study will receive college credit and will also have been exposed to the development of many academic and soft skills necessary for high school and college graduates. Students completing CASE courses will be college and career ready. CASE teachers also receive intense professional development before teaching the courses which meet academic and ag content standards nationwide. N. Trivette also commented about the CASE presentation to the USDA Science and Educational Research Foundation. CASE received high marks from the scientists presented who felt that this program will provide rigorous science instruction and prepare students well for challenging careers.

N. Trivette then reviewed the June 4th **CTE Invitational Meeting** and encouraged Ag Advisory Committee members to attend.

Next NJAEAC meeting will be October 5th at the NJ Farm Bureau Office in Trenton.

Meeting adjourned at 4:45.

Submitted:

Jan-Marie Traynor

Secretary