

[KANSAS FFA



State Officer **Selection Handbook**

2026-2030

Revised 2026

INTRODUCTION

Each year, the Kansas FFA Association selects a team of up to six student members to serve the association as state FFA officers. Making this selection from a pool of outstanding FFA members annually is a challenging task for the nominating committee and state delegates, and to do so, the association has established an extensive selection process. The Kansas FFA Association believes this selection process should serve as a growth experience for all candidates, regardless of whether or not they are elected to office.

The handbook is designed to help candidates, advisors, parents, and FFA members to consider running for state office in the future, and others supporting candidates in their pursuit of state office to understand the role of a state FFA officer, how the selection process works and how candidates can best prepare for the process.

Beginning during the 2004-2005 academic year, a formal system to review the state officer selection process was implemented. Every five years a committee consisting primarily of current FFA members, chapter advisors, past state officers, and state staff evaluates the process, gathers data, and identifies changes or improvements necessary to the selection process.

In 2019-2020, the review committee was charged with evaluating the state officer candidate behavioral based themes as they had not been fully evaluated in 20 years. In light of the 2018 process where the clause in the Kansas FFA bylaws enabled the nominating committee to produce a slate of six candidates based on the total number of candidates, the review committee was also charged with evaluating and comparing the traditional slating process versus the committee selection process.

The committee was comprised of ten members and met four times to identify areas of possible improvement, develop surveys, review survey results, and formulate recommendations. Surveys were conducted of former state delegates, former state officers, former state officer candidates, state staff, agriculture educators, and other state associations. Based on the survey results and the committee discussion, the committee recommended an overhaul of the behavioral themes, the role of delegates in providing feedback on the candidates to the nominating committee, and the slating process.

Proposed changes not requiring a constitutional change to take effect were approved by the Kansas FFA Board of Directors. Proposed changes requiring a constitutional change to take effect were presented to the delegates of the 2020 Kansas FFA Convention and approved. The delegates approved a change in the process that determined the nominating committee shall present a slate of officers determined with input from the convention delegates.

The 2024–2025 State Officer Candidate Review Committee evaluated the Kansas FFA state officer selection process using survey input from past candidates, nominating committee members, and delegates. The committee reviewed virtual components, delegate input, candidate recruitment, and academic expectations.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Table of Contents	3
Role of a State FFA Officer	4
State Officer Eligibility and Requirements	5
Constitutional and Manual Officer Descriptions	6
Expectations of State Officers	9
State Officer Commitment	12
Year of Service	13
Expenses and Reporting	16
Myths and Facts	17
Understanding the Selection Process	18
Who is Involved	19
Expectations for Candidates	21
Timeline of the Process	22
Role Before, During and After Convention	24
Overview of the Process	25
Behavioral Themes of State FFA Officers	26
Components of the Process	28
Nominating Committee Scoring	33
Delegate Evaluation of the Candidates	35
Selecting the Officer Team	36
Defining Success	37
Preparing for the Selection Process	38
Preparation Tips by Process Components	39
General Preparation Tips	44
Suggested Resources	46
Advisors, Coaches and Mentors	48
Nominating Committee	49
Structure and Selection	50
Training and Time Commitment	51
Glossary	52
Appendix	53
Past State Officers' Reflections	60



ROLE OF A STATE OFFICER



- State Officer Eligibility and Requirements
- Constitutional & Manual Officer Descriptions
- Expectations of State Officers
- Officer Commitment Form
- Year of Service
- Expenses and Reporting
- Myths and Facts

State Officer Eligibility and Requirements

Kansas FFA officers are elected at each state convention to serve as representatives of the Kansas FFA Association, serving members for a full year from state convention to state convention. These student leaders bear a variety of responsibilities. State officers are leaders who motivate, inspire and encourage FFA members to participate in agricultural education and FFA. They are role models who assist members in advancement of agriculture knowledge and leadership development. State officers maintain positive relationships with members, advisors, state staff, agribusiness professionals and others interested in agricultural education and FFA. They are student representatives who project a positive image as leaders and role models among American youth.

All state officer candidates must have obtained or be in the process of obtaining their State FFA Degree and have graduated from high school during or before the year of their candidacy as the Kansas FFA Association constitution states in Article VII. Officers, Section D: *"No state officer may be reelected to an office. All state officer candidates shall have attained the State FFA Degree and have graduated high school prior to August 1st following the state FFA convention at which they are a candidate"*.

Each state officer candidate shall be an active FFA member and eligible to retain active membership in the organization until the member completes the term of office. This includes high school seniors, college freshman and college sophomores.

There is no limit on the number of candidates. According to the Kansas FFA Constitution, Article VII. Officers, Section E: *"Any qualified FFA member may run for state FFA office."*

Candidates must have a C Average (cumulative 2.0 GPA) at the time of application to run for state office.



Constitutional & Manual Officer Descriptions

As stated by the Kansas FFA Association constitution, Article VII. Officers, Section A, 1, "The officers of the Kansas Association shall be as follows: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, reporter, sentinel, executive secretary, and advisor."

President

By-Laws: "It shall be the duty of the president to preside over state FFA convention and over all meetings of the state board of directors. The president shall call one state FFA convention to order each year. The president shall appoint all committees and may serve as an ex-officio member of these committees. In case the office of president becomes vacant by resignation or otherwise, the vice president shall succeed the president."

Stationed by the rising sun – "The rising sun is a token of a new era in agriculture. If we follow the leadership of our president, we shall be led out of the darkness of selfishness and into the glorious sunlight of brotherhood and cooperation."

- Preside over meetings according to accepted rules of parliamentary procedure
- Appoint committees and serve on them as an ex-officio non-voting member
- Coordinate activities of the association and evaluate the progress of each division of the Program of Activities (POA)
- Represent the association in public relations and official functions

Vice President

By-Laws: "The duties of the vice president shall be to assist the president in whatever capacity the president may assign, as representing the president, working with committees, etc."

Stationed by the plow – "The plow is the symbol of labor and tillage of the soil. Without labor, neither knowledge nor wisdom can accomplish much. My duties require me to assist at all times in directing the work of our organization. I preside over meetings in the absence of our president whose place is beneath the rising sun."

- Assume all duties of the president, if necessary
- Develop the POA and serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of the POA committees
- Coordinate all committee work
- Work closely with the president and advisor to assess progress toward meeting association goals

Secretary

By-Laws: "The secretary shall perform the duties common to such an office, such as keeping accurate records of meetings of the Kansas association."

Stationed by the ear of corn – "I keep an accurate record of all meetings and correspond with other secretaries wherever corn is grown and FFA members meet."

- Prepare and post the agenda for each association meeting
- Prepare and present the minutes of each association meeting

- Place all committee reports in the secretary's file
- Be responsible for association correspondence
- Maintain member attendance and activity records and issue membership cards
- Have on hand for each meeting:
 - * Official FFA Association's Secretary book
 - * Copy of the POA, including all standing and special committees
 - * Official FFA Manual and National FFA Student Handbook
 - * Copies of the Kansas FFA Association Constitution and Bylaws

Treasurer

By-Laws: "The treasurer shall act as chairman of the auditing committee and assist the executive secretary in handling the financial business of the organization."

Stationed by the emblem of Washington – "I keep a record of receipts and disbursements just as Washington kept his farm accounts – carefully and accurately. I encourage thrift among the members and strive to build up our financial standing through savings and investments. George Washington was better able to serve his country because he was financially independent."

- Receive, record, and deposit FFA funds and issue receipts
- Present treasurer reports at association meetings
- Collect dues and special assessments
- Maintain neat and accurate treasurer records
- Prepare and submit the membership roster and dues to the National FFA Organization through the state FFA association office in cooperation with the secretary
- Serve as chairperson of the finance committee

Reporter

By-Laws: "It shall be the duty of the reporter to publicize FFA activities in ways established by the board of directors."

Stationed by the flag – "As the flag covers the United States of America, so I strive inform the people in order that every man, woman, and child may know that the FFA is a national organization that reaches from the state of Alaska to the Virgin Islands, and from the state of Maine to Hawaii."

- Serve as chair of the POA public relations committee
- Plan public information programs with local radio, television, newspaper and service clubs and make use of other opportunities to tell the FFA story
- Release news and information to local news media
- Publish an association newsletter or website
- Prepare and maintain an association scrapbook
- Send local stories to reporters and any school publications
- Send articles and photographs to *FFA New Horizons* and other publications and websites
- Serve as the association photographer

Sentinel

By-Laws: "It shall be the duty of the sentinel to set up paraphernalia for the convention and to see that the hall is in order for the meeting. The sentinel shall occupy a place near the entrance to the hall and see the proceedings are not interrupted by unnecessary entering and leaving the room. The sentinel shall see to the registration and introduction of guests."

Stationed by the door – "Through this door pass many friends of the FFA. It is my duty to see that the door is open to our friends at all times and that they are welcome. I care for the meeting room and paraphernalia. I strive to keep the room comfortable and assist the president in maintaining order."

- Assist the president in maintaining order
- Keep the meeting room, equipment, and supplies in proper condition
- Welcome guests and visitors
- Keep the meeting room comfortable
- Take charge of candidates for degree ceremonies
- Assist with special features and refreshments

While the constitution does assign these specific, official duties to each office, the officers share many roles and responsibilities. The nominating committee refers to these constitutional definitions and those responsibilities outlined in the opening ceremonies during the slating process to ensure the state officer team, together, exhibits a full range of talents and traits.



Expectations of State Officers

Being elected to state FFA office is making a commitment to service unique to most student organizations. In addition to serving and representing more than 13,700 FFA members, officers represent the image and direction of the Kansas FFA Association to teachers, state staff, teacher educators, agricultural industry executives, government leaders, the media and the general public. An officer is also a teammate to five other officers and a coworker to more than 320 Team Ag Ed members.

There are eight keys to performing the duties of a state FFA officer successfully. Those who commit their time, energy and passions to learning, living and modeling these eight keys of success will not only successfully complete their terms of service, but also move toward personal excellence. The following is a summary of each key to being a successful state FFA officer. The primary purpose of this section is to convey the intent and spirit of each key. The newly elected officer team will develop additional procedures with their teammates and supervisor during their training period. Candidates are expected to commit to these keys of success and the operational procedures that accompany them as part of declaring their candidacy for state office.

BE THE BRAND

Kansas FFA officers are committed to upholding the FFA brand and understand and successfully complete their roles in representing the organization. This includes communicating FFA's brand, vision and strategic plan to others as well as communicating key organizational messages (agricultural education, Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE), FFA, youth issues and agriculture). This requires officers to be in their role twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week for a three hundred sixty-five day year. As part of the FFA brand, there are general rules of behavior to follow including projecting a professional image, proper etiquette, positive media interaction and the promotion of diversity:

- Be dedicated and committed to FFA and the total program of education in agriculture and agribusiness.
- Forego all use of alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances at all times during a year of service to the FFA.
- Avoid places or activities that in any way would raise questions as to one's moral character or conduct.
- Use wholesome and appropriate language in all speeches and informal conversations.
- Maintain proper dress and good grooming for all occasions.
- Be willing to take and follow instructions as directed by those responsible for state FFA officers and state and national FFA programs.
- Maintain at least a "C" average in all academic coursework.

BALANCING ACT

A state FFA officer must include personal health, wellness and stress management as one of their keys to success. Officers not committed to this area do not position themselves to fully serve the members and the Kansas FFA Association. Included in this key commitment are flexibility/adaptability, personal reflection and growth, maintaining relationships with family and friends, keeping a realistic view of self and preparing to transition back after a year of service.

- Maintain and protect personal health.
- Control what you can.
- Write all letters, thank-you notes, emails and other correspondence, which are necessary and desirable, regularly and on time.

STEP UP TO THE BOARD

Training and experiences in this key help officers gain confidence in their abilities and take measured risks moving themselves from average to spectacular performers. To achieve this, state FFA officers must be committed to trying new things, approaching failure as a learning experience, challenging themselves to grow, challenging the process with respect, building team trust and resolving conflict.

- Accept and search out constructive criticism and evaluation of total performance.
- Through preparation and practice, develop into an effective public presenter and project a desirable image of FFA at all times.

THIS IS IT

The training and experiences in this key center around life and time management. Officers should excel in these areas, so they will be better able to give their full concentration and focus to the present. This includes:

- Logistics Management: Using computers and technology, appropriately managing travel, completing and submitting vouchers properly and on time, and providing excellent communication with teammates and staff.
- Meeting Management: Creating and following agendas, building consensus, bringing people back to task and keeping focus.
- Life Management: Prioritizing, meeting deadlines and being timely.
- Financial Management: Maintaining personal finances and understanding and following program budgets.
- Focus: Listening and connecting conversation topics to FFA key messages and programs.
- Team: Understanding roles on the team, following the team code of ethics, following the team mission and following the team vision.

While excelling in these areas, officers must:

- Be willing to commit the entire year to state officer activities.
- Be willing and able to travel while serving the Kansas FFA Association.
- Consider FFA officer activities to be the officer's primary responsibility.

PAYING IT FORWARD

Service is an important component of an officer's year. The training and experiences in this key help make service more realistic to the officers, and help them approach the year of service with a plan. This includes focusing on the future value of current work (e.g. board of directors work, business and industry visits, Chapter Leadership Training (CLT), state convention, etc.), building strategic relationships and partnerships, treating everyone with respect, facilitating workshops in an engaging manner, and teaching to meet all learner needs (e.g. learning abilities, diversity, etc.)

- Strive to improve on the ability to carry on meaningful and enjoyable conversations with individuals of all ages and walks of life.
- Treat all FFA members equally by not favoring one over another.
- Conduct self in a manner that commands respect without any display of superiority.
- Maintain dignity while being personable, concerned and interested in contacts with others.

LIVE ABOVE THE LINE

This key focuses on virtues and behavioral characteristics that should be associated with a state FFA officer. These include responsibility, integrity, keeping promises, speaking with good purpose (communicating in a positive, honest and direct way), dealing with difficult people and teammates in a constructive way and seeking win-win solutions.

- Evaluate, periodically, one's personality and attitudes, making every effort to improve.
- Serve as a member of the team, always maintaining a cooperative attitude.
- Work in harmony with fellow FFA officers and not knowingly engage in conversations detrimental to other FFA members, officers or adults.

LEARNING FOR LIFE

This key focuses on the importance of learning throughout the officer year in several subjects. Developmental topics include communicating about agricultural education and the agriculture industry; the history and foundations of FFA; and the future directions of FFA, Kansas Department of Agriculture (KDA), Kansas Department of Education (KSDE), etc. In addition, state FFA officers learn advanced workshop and speech design and delivery methods. Also, growing knowledge of self (focus on growth) and growing knowledge of team members allows the officer to perform more efficiently and effectively.

- Increase knowledge of agricultural education, agriculture issues and policy, agribusiness trends and FFA.
- Keep up-to-date on current events in agriculture and education.

FUEL THE FIRE

This key focuses on passion: helping the officers find and share passion with members and the team so they can help members find their passions. To achieve this, state FFA officers discover and build on their personal interests and passions. The officers use the team's passions to develop themes (e.g. CLT and District Officer Conference (DOC)). State officers learn to share their passions by building individual and team relationships with state staff and teachers, as well as through effectively delivered speeches and keynote addresses.

Kansas FFA State Officer Commitment

Being elected to Kansas FFA office is making a commitment to service that is unique to most student organizations. In addition to serving and representing more than 13,200 Kansas FFA members, officers will represent the image and direction of the Kansas FFA Association to teachers, state staff, teacher educators, agriculture industry executives, government leaders, the media and the general public. They will also be a teammate to five other officers and a co-worker to the Kansas Team Ag Ed staff.

1. Be dedicated and committed to agricultural education and the FFA.
2. Be willing to commit the entire year to Kansas FFA officer activities and consider FFA officer activities to be my primary responsibility.
3. Be willing and able to travel in serving the Kansas FFA Association using my personal automobile.
4. Be knowledgeable of current events in agriculture, education in agriculture and of FFA.
5. Through preparation and practice, develop into an effective public speaker and presenter. Project a desirable image of FFA at all times.
6. Regularly, and on time, write all letters, thank-you notes, e-mails and other correspondence that are necessary and desirable.
7. Strive to improve my ability to carry on meaningful and enjoyable conversations with all individuals of all ages and walks of life.
8. Accept and search out constructive criticism and evaluation of my total performance.
9. Maintain and protect my health and abstain from any and all use and/or consumption of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substances at all times during my year of service to the FFA.
10. Treat all FFA members equally by not favoring one over another.
11. Conduct myself in a manner that commands respect without any display of superiority.
12. Maintain my dignity while being personable, concerned and interested in contacts with others.
13. Avoid places or activities that in any way would raise questions as to one's moral character or conduct – be beyond reproach.
14. Use wholesome and appropriate language in all speeches and informal conversations.
15. Maintain proper dress and good grooming for all occasions.
16. Work in harmony with fellow FFA officers, and not knowingly engage in conversations detrimental to other FFA members, officers, and adults.
17. Work cooperatively with other officers of the Kansas FFA Association; always maintaining a cooperative attitude.
18. Be willing to take and follow instructions as directed by those responsible for FFA activities and programs.
19. State officers must maintain a C Average (2.0 GPA) or better if enrolled in coursework.

Candidates should read, study and understand the intent and spirit of the items listed above. By signing their application, each candidate commits to following the rules and procedures outlined. Every candidate elected to office is expected to make serving the Kansas FFA a top priority for the coming year and be prepared to devote **150-175** days during the year to serve the Kansas FFA Association. They should be prepared to miss between **16-30 days** of school to meet their responsibilities of serving as a Kansas FFA officer. If elected, candidates are committing to devoting the time needed to carry out the duties of a state officer. Candidates must realize that if they do not satisfactorily follow these established standards and/or break these agreement/policies it will likely result in limitations being set on their roles as a Kansas FFA officer and/or their possible removal from office by the state FFA advisor, executive secretary, and/or Board of Directors.

Year of Service

The activities on the following pages consume most of the state officers' year of service. Officers receive exact dates and locations of summer activities following state convention, as well as the remaining activities throughout the year.

Candidates will receive a full calendar of state officer events after turning in the State Officer Candidate application.

JUNE 2026

- State Officer Experience - Weekend Following Convention
- Career and Technical State Officer (CTSO) Training
- Base Camp
- Kansas State University Interaction
- Kansas FFA Board of Directors Meeting
- Understanding Facilitation
- State Officer Checkpoint #1
- Kansas FFA Foundation Overview
- Learning Chapter Leadership Training Curriculum
- Chapter Leadership Training Preparations

JULY 2026

- Chapter Leadership Training Sessions
- Insight Training
- Chapter specific events
- State Officer Summit and National FFA Delegate Process
- K-ACTE/KAAE Teacher's Summer Conference

AUGUST 2026

- District Officers Conference Preparation and Training
- District Officers Conference
- Business and Industry Visit Training
- Blue & Gold Golf Scramble
- Kansas FFA Board of Directors Meeting
- Kansas State Fair Preparations
- State Officer Team Meetings
- Association Office Assistance

SEPTEMBER 2026

- Kansas State Fair
- Greenhand Conference Planning
- Greenhand Conferences

OCTOBER 2026

- Greenhand Conferences
- Chapter visit workshop planning
- National FFA Convention and Expo

NOVEMBER 2026

- District Leadership Schools
- Stand and Deliver Conferences
- State Officer Checkpoint #1
- Southwest Leadership Day
- Southwest Ag Industry Experience

DECEMBER 2026

- Middle School events
- District Public Speaking events

JANUARY 2027

- International Leadership Seminar for State Officers (ILSSO)
- Kansas FFA Board of Directors meeting
- Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) Citizenship Day



FEBRUARY 2027

- K-State Ag Ed Speech Day
- Super Sunday State Officer Training
- Chapter visits
- National FFA Week visits
- Speech preparation
- Convention preparation

MARCH 2027

- Chapter visits
- Convention preparation
- Leader Lab Conferences
- Kansas FFA Board of Directors meeting

APRIL 2027

- Convention preparation
- Chapter and District Banquets

MAY 2027

- State Career Development Events
- Chapter and District Banquets
- Convention preparation
- Week Before Convention preparation in Manhattan
- Kansas FFA State Convention



Expenses and Reporting

The association receives many requests for state FFA officers to travel and participate in various activities. Officers must understand which costs are incurred by the officer, which costs are reimbursed by the association and how the reimbursement process works.

Costs incurred by the state officer:

State officers drive personal vehicles for much of their in-state travel (i.e. chapter visits, banquets, etc.). Therefore, mileage is accumulated over the course of their year of service. In addition, it is important for those interested in pursuing state office to take into consideration the opportunity cost of serving as a state officer rather than working part-time to the extent many college students work. While some officers have managed to obtain a part-time job during their year of service, it is discouraged due to the extensive time commitment of service to the association. In addition, all officers will receive a \$500 scholarship from Midwest Ford Dealers at the beginning of the fall semester. Officers will also receive a \$1,000 scholarship following the completion of their service.

Costs reimbursed by the association:

The Kansas FFA Association reimburses most travel expenses. Officers receive a stipend per mile traveled in personal vehicles for state officer activities. Officers are also reimbursed for workshop materials and dry-cleaning for their official dress. Quarterly reimbursements are provided to cover such costs. Additionally, lodging and meals are covered on extended trips such as national convention and training conferences. It is expected officers will use good judgment and thrift when spending FFA funds. Officers who major in agriculture at Kansas State University receive a \$500 scholarship from the College of Agriculture.

Reporting and reimbursement process:

To receive quarterly reimbursements for eligible costs incurred, state officers are required to complete a quarterly report regarding their experiences. The quarterly report asks officers to reflect on questions like:

- What were the highlights of this quarter?
- Where do you wish you had received more training?
- In addition to training, is there anything else you would have liked to receive to help with the transition to state office?
- What do you wish you had done differently during this quarter?
- If you were to choose one area for self-improvement, which area would that be?
- What are important pieces of information you would pass on to next year's team regarding activities from this quarter?

While officers are given many opportunities to reflect on their experiences and express any concerns, these reports provide a formal method of doing so. The reports are reviewed by the executive secretary.

In addition to the reports, officers must submit an expense form that includes the dollar amount and description of all expenses they are requesting reimbursement for, as well as all receipts.

Myths and Facts

Myth: State officers are natural born leaders.

Fact: State officers are selected for their traits and abilities, but they undergo a dynamic leadership training process that enables the team to effectively lead the state association.

Myth: Only high school seniors are able to run for state office.

Fact: Any student who has or will graduate from high school prior to August 1st following the state FFA convention at which they are a candidate and has received their State FFA Degree or will receive the degree as a candidate is eligible to run. This includes high school seniors, college freshman and sophomores. Remember, members are able to maintain FFA membership for four National FFA Conventions following high school graduation. Each state officer candidate shall be an active FFA member and eligible to retain active membership in the organization until the member completes the term of office.

Myth: State officers must first be chapter and district officers.

Fact: While state officers must demonstrate leadership ability, they do not have to hold chapter or district offices prior to running for state office. In fact, there have been several state officers who never served as district officers.

Myth: Only students who plan to attend Kansas State University can run.

Fact: While most state officers choose to attend K-State, it is not a requirement.

Myth: Only students who plan to major in agriculture can run.

Fact: Students are not required to major in agriculture. While a strong knowledge of and passion for agriculture is essential for state officers, it is not a required major.

Myth: Serving as a state officer is expensive, as officers must pay for their expenses during the year.

Fact: There is some opportunity cost of serving as a state officer, as officers are discouraged from obtaining a part-time job during their year of service due to extensive time commitments. However, the Kansas FFA Association pays for most travel expenses incurred by state officers when travelling on official business for the association. Additionally, lodging and meals are covered on extended trips such as national convention and training conferences. Officers are reimbursed for workshop materials and dry-cleaning for their official dress. Also, they receive a \$500 scholarship to assist with college expenses if majoring in agriculture at Kansas State University. In addition, all officers will receive a \$500 scholarship from Midwest Ford Dealers at the beginning of the fall semester. Officers will also receive a \$1,000 scholarship following the completion of their service.

Myth: State officers have no time for school, work, etc.

Fact: State officers do have a full agenda, but they still lead lives outside of the FFA. Past state officers have managed a full-time academic schedule (averaging 12-15 hours per semester), and most have been active in other student organizations during their year of service. While some have managed to work part-time jobs, it can be difficult with the time commitment. The expectation is simply for state officers to make FFA a top priority during their year of service.



THE SELECTION PROCESS



- Who is Involved
- Expectations for Candidates
- Timeline of the Process
- Role Before, During and After Convention
- Overview of the Process
- Behavioral Themes of State FFA Officers
- Components of the Process
- Committee Scoring
- Delegate Evaluation of the Candidates
- Selecting the Officer Team
- Defining Success

Who is Involved?

Nominating Committee

According to the Kansas FFA Constitution, *“The State FFA President shall appoint the chair of the nominating committee from the immediate past state officer team, who will facilitate the functions of the committee. The committee will consist of three immediate past state officers, three former state officers, two industry representatives, two designees of the KAAE president, the state FFA executive secretary or his or her designee, and the state FFA advisor or his or her designee.”*

The nominating committee’s responsibility is to learn each candidate’s strengths, personality, interests and desire to serve. While using the selection process to get know each candidate individually, the committee scores candidates on a variety of traits and utilizes delegate input to build a final slate of state officers. The committee’s desire is for all candidates to focus on being themselves throughout the process. Those who serve on the nominating committee recognize all individuals have both strengths and areas for growth. The goal is to select a team of officers expressing a full range of talents and strengths.



Nominating Committee Coordinator

The coordinator’s role in the selection process begins before the process is officially started from a candidate’s perspective. This individual coordinates all activities pertaining to the selection process and co-leads the nominating committee and delegate team. The coordinator trains the nominating committee and manages the room during all rounds of the selection process, assuming duties such as informing the candidates of what to expect in the rounds, keeping time and tracking scores. This individual does not score candidates. While the coordinator facilitates committee discussions, the coordinator does not contribute to discussions or decisions. There are typically at least two assistant coordinators who share in these responsibilities.

Delegate Coordinator

The delegate coordinator works closely with the nominating committee coordinator and co-leads the Nominating Committee and Delegate Team. They coordinate all aspects of the delegate process, including delegate training, business sessions, delegate committees, and delegate-candidate interactions (workshop facilitation and meet the candidates session).

Nominating Committee Chair

Like the coordinator, the chair's responsibilities begin in advance of the selection process. The chair serves as the candidates' liaison throughout the entire process. From the time the applications are submitted, the chair maintains communication with candidates and advisors and works with the coordinator to organize all aspects of the selection process. The chair is present for all selection process activities, including growth activities. Once the nominating committee convenes during state convention, the chair serves as an official member of the committee and contributes to the scoring and decision process.

Nominating Committee and Delegate Team

This is a dedicated team of assistants, often former FFA state officers and state officer candidates, involved with the selection and delegate processes. They help design and manage the growth experiences, prepare for the convention, and organize convention week activities. During convention, these individuals remain in the candidate holding room during the rounds of the process and are never in the nominating committee room while candidates are being interviewed. The assistants spend time with the candidates and serve as liaisons between the candidates and the committee when necessary. In addition, the assistants make sure the rooms are prepared for the candidates and nominating committee. The committee assistants' primary role is to maintain the flow of the process. In addition, the assistants help the delegate coordinator in preparing for and managing the entire delegate process.

Delegates

Each FFA chapter in the state has the opportunity to send two delegates to represent them at the Kansas FFA Convention. The delegates are responsible for setting the stage for a successful convention. They attend workshops, conduct business and make decisions that direct the Kansas FFA Association for the following year. One of their primary roles is to provide input on the state officer candidates to the nominating committee after attending candidate led workshops, interacting with them during the meet the candidate session and evaluating the candidate speeches.

Candidates

Candidates for state FFA office are a part of a distinguished group of FFA members. Few reach this point in their FFA careers to be considered for a state office and will experience weeks full of growth through this opportunity. Regardless of the outcome, the greatest rewards can be achieved by approaching this process with a mindset of learning and growth. Candidates are encouraged to fully prepare themselves for this process and use it as a true growth experience in their future service, whether that service is applied to state office or to other future endeavors.



Expectations for Candidates

Be Yourself

The entire selection process is designed to help candidates develop and present their best self. The nominating committee and delegates are not looking for a group of candidates who are exactly alike and present programmed responses. They want to get to know candidates as individuals. The only “right answer” in the process is for candidates to be themselves.

Go the Distance

By choosing to run for state office, candidates choose to take a risk. This risk will ultimately result in personal growth. The state officer selection process is rigorous and may even be slightly intimidating, but during this process, candidates learn a great deal about themselves. What truly makes the state officer selection process unique is that candidates build such strong friendships with the other candidates. Candidates will hear many words of encouragement from fellow candidates and, in return, should provide other candidates with encouraging thoughts as well. Candidates should be confident of their own abilities and help fellow candidates and friends find confidence as well.

Wear It with Pride

Candidates, and people in general, only get to make a first impression once. By wearing official dress properly and with pride, candidates are sure to make a strong first impression. To wear it with pride, candidates should present a professional and respectful image. White collared shirts should be long-sleeved and freshly pressed. Candidates are encouraged to visit the FFA website to see if their scarves or ties are up-to-date. Black skirts or slacks may be worn with black closed-toe shoes and black socks or hosiery. Wearing official dress properly means wearing official dress proudly. Refer to the Official FFA Manual for further official dress details.

It’s Electrifying!

Thinking to past state conventions, recall a group of students who seem to have enough energy to light up the world. That highly engaged group of students is the group of state officer candidates. One of the most enjoyable aspects of running for a state office is getting McCain Auditorium pumped up and excited for the Kansas FFA Convention. It is a state officer candidate’s responsibility to get the crowd on their feet and excited for sessions. Candidates have the chance to experience the electricity flowing through them and their friends as hundreds of FFA members follow along in clapping with the songs and expressing enthusiasm.

In High Regard...

The members in McCain Auditorium are looking to candidates for leadership. Just as it is candidates’ responsibility to spark enthusiasm and energy, it is also their responsibility to excel in respect. The sessions are meaningful to all who attend convention. FFA members, current state officers and guest speakers deserve to be treated with high regard. Candidates set the standard for McCain Auditorium. By listening attentively, keeping quiet and cheering only when appropriate, candidates set the standards high. Just as they set the tone for energy and excitement, candidates are expected to establish the level of respect and reverence.

Timeline of the Process

Date/Deadline	Action and Description
February 15	The state officer candidate on-line application is available on the Kansas FFA Association website. The revised candidate handbook will also be posted. Initial information about the process will be released on Kansas FFA social media as well as the Kansas FFA website (ksffa.org).
March 17th March 24th	<p>Potential candidate "Overview of the State Officer Candidate Process" virtual meetings are held. Specific dates are released on social media and the state website.</p> <p>Potential candidates should consistently check social media and the website for process updates</p>
April 5	All candidates' application are due by midnight. They are to be submitted online only.
April 20	Candidate evaluations are due.
Throughout April	<p>Periodic opportunities for growth hosted by volunteers and partner groups may be available.</p> <p>Candidates receive a final schedule of growth and evaluated activities to be held during convention.</p>
May 3	An in-person session will be held to introduce candidates to the details of the selection process. Candidates will participate in a growth activity, learn about the process components, get advice on preparation and have official photos taken.
May 22 - Friday prior to state convention	Essay component is due.

Date/Deadline	Action and Description
May 25 (annually the Monday of state convention week)	All candidates arrive in Manhattan. The in-person state officer selection process at convention officially begins. Convention is held during the week of Memorial Day.
May 27 (Wednesday afternoon)	Delegate business meeting, candidate workshop facilitation, meet the candidate session and delegate committees.
May 27 (Wednesday evening)	Candidates present their prepared speeches during the first convention session.
May 29 (Friday afternoon)	The Kansas FFA State Officer Team is announced. The newly elected state officers attend the Blue and Gold Celebration Friday evening. Following the Blue and Gold Celebration, the new team remains in Manhattan to begin their year of service. Candidates should pack at least one week of casual and business casual clothing in case of election.



Role Before, During and After Convention

Growth Experience

A virtual session for all potential candidates who have registered will be held in early/mid-March. The session will review the process, explain the timeline and answer any questions candidates may have. Once applications are submitted, candidates will use the candidate portal on an online learning management platform to access all information about the process. Log-in information will be provided to all candidates who complete an application. An in-person all candidate session will be held in mid-April (after applications are due). Additional details about the process and some growth activities will occur. Candidates should expect weekly growth activities starting in late April and continuing to convention week. These activities are designed to help candidates prepare for convention and grow in all aspects of the process. Candidates can expect growth activities to be completed a full week before convention.

Convention Week

Candidates should expect a full schedule of selection process responsibilities from the time they arrive at state convention on Tuesday morning until Wednesday evening, at which time the “scored” portion of the process is concluded. When candidates are not participating in rounds of the selection process, they are expected to remain in the candidate holding room unless they are participating in a state Leadership Development Event and the nominating committee chair and coordinator have approved their temporary absence.

Candidates should plan to attend all general convention sessions and be seated in the candidate section, unless they are receiving an award that requires alternative seating arrangements. Finally, newly elected officers are expected to attend the Blue and Gold Celebration on Friday evening following the final session. A final, detailed schedule for the given year will be provided to the candidates and their parents/guardians a few weeks prior to state convention.

After Convention

Candidates should plan to pack official dress for four days of state convention activities. In addition, newly elected state officers will immediately begin their state officer activities. Therefore, candidates should plan to pack for a full week of casual and business casual dress, as well as at least one extra day of official dress, in case of election.

Special Note on Campaigning

Campaigning or any practice of soliciting support for a candidate for state office is not permitted in any part of this selection process.

Convention Conflicts

During the formal selection process, all candidates must be in attendance the entire time. Candidates who are participating in state LDEs will be able to participate in those events. If a candidate has a conflict with a non-FFA event outside of the formal selection process time frame, such as the Kansas 4-H Foundation Emerald Circle Banquet, they should communicate that conflict to the committee chair and all efforts will be made for them to participate.

Overview of the Process

A simple description of the behavioral-based process is that the methods used require candidates to share past experiences, behaviors, ethics, knowledge and abilities in great detail, which allows the nominating committee to discover the best candidates with the necessary skills and characteristics, desire for growth and attitude for service. Furthermore, the nominating committee is able to ask questions that translate to capable state officers. For example, teamwork is an essential part of a successful state officer team. A behavioral-based process allows the nominating committee to develop situations or questions that result in finding individuals who can come together and work as a team.

This follows the philosophy: *the best predictor of future performance is past performance*. When a candidate answers an open-ended interview question using a past experience as an example, the committee can begin to understand the candidate's thoughts and behavior in related situations. The committee can also observe a candidate's behavior, in general, through daily interactions. Even the exam reflects a candidate's desire to learn and prepare and their overall commitment to serving as an officer.

The behavioral-based process is described as it relates to each round in the selection process in greater detail later in this handbook. The nominating committee might not choose to utilize all of the rounds each year, but candidates should assume all rounds will be used. With so many rounds incorporated in the selection process, one "bad" round does not typically affect the outcome. An important part of this process is the candidates' ability to "start fresh" in each round, no matter how they feel they performed in previous rounds. Preparation tips for each round are provided in the next section of the handbook.

Behavioral Themes of State FFA Officers

The Kansas FFA Association has identified ten themes defined by traits and characteristics that are important to effective state officer teams. During the selection process, the nominating committee looks closely at these themes, keeping in mind all candidates possess strengths and opportunities for growth. The purpose of identifying the candidates' abilities to express these themes is to help the committee build a full team of officers that, with all officers' themes combined, strongly exhibit the breadth of traits and characteristics represented by the themes. The following list of the themes provides a definition of each, along with specific traits, characteristics and descriptors of what the nominating committee commonly looks for to identify each theme. The nominating committee adds further descriptors and traits to each theme during their training.



Theme:	Definition:	Common Identifiers:
Agriculture/FFA Advocate	The candidate is an advocate for agriculture, agricultural education and FFA. They display passion for and practical experience in all three components of the school-based agricultural education model. They demonstrate knowledge and wisdom in, understanding of and a desire to learn about the agriculture industry. They have a strong vision for the future of Kansas FFA. Believing in the future of agriculture matters to them.	Knowledge of agricultural issues, awareness of current events in agriculture and education, wisdom, up to date on FFA and agricultural education activities, meaningful experience with SAE, classroom component and FFA, able to effectively represent FFA, agricultural education and the agricultural industry
Authentic	The candidate is true to their authentic self. They are confident and self-aware. They have a strong feeling of self-worth. They understand and accept their own strengths and limitations. They are comfortable with who they are and know what motivates them and what holds them back. They have the courage to stay true to themselves. They demonstrate the ability to use their strengths to make a positive difference. While they believe in themselves and their talents, they remain humble and demonstrate humility. Being genuine matters to them.	Confident, self-aware, genuine, well-rounded, knows self, accepts self, knows strengths and weaknesses, real, positive, humble, demonstrate humility, courage, consistent, utilizes strengths, coachable
Critical Thinker	The candidate is a problem solver and a critical thinker. They can think on their feet, analyze a situation, assess the options and determine the best path forward. They are flexible and able to adapt to different situations successfully. They can think outside the box and act strategically. Finding solutions matters to them.	Critical thinking, problem solving, creative, open minded, solution minded, sees the big picture, can assess a situation from different angles, flexible, futuristic, adaptable, think on their feet
Growth Mindset	The candidate strives to learn and seeks opportunities for personal and professional growth. They have a strong desire to improve and work hard to develop their talents and intellect. They are curious, open-minded and coachable. They seek out feedback and advice, and they accept criticism as a path to self-improvement. Learning to Do and Doing to Learn matters to them.	Seek new information, learner, desire to improve and grow, appreciate feedback, teachable, coachability, examples of growth, seeks improvement, accepts criticism, hungry, seeks help and advice, curiosity, asks questions
Self-Motivation	The candidate is a hard worker and dependable. They are driven and a motivated self-starter. They have a strong sense of what needs to be done, take initiative in getting started, and can be counted on to follow through until the task is completed. They are effective and efficient time-managers, organized, focused, able to prioritize, and capable of balancing multiple responsibilities. They demonstrate grit, dedication, perseverance, discipline, durability, commitment, purpose, resiliency and consistency. Getting things done matter to them.	Able to multi-task, steadfast, strong work ethic, focused, responsible, dependable, shows initiative, motivated, willing to go the extra mile, pay attention to detail, perseverant, courage, mentally tough, committed, dedicated, drive, durable, tenacious, resilient, efficient, purposeful

Theme:	Definition:	Common Identifiers:
Servant Leader	The candidate is focused on other people and is driven to serve others before self. They care about others, are aware of what others need and put those needs before their own. They want to improve the well-being of people around them and are willing to make sacrifices for others. They are inclusive, considerate, respectful, selfless and encouraging. They are a servant leader. They can connect with and relate to all types of people and place a high value on relationships. Living to Serve matters to them.	Empathetic, people person, others-focused, encouraging, understanding, sincere, genuine, respect, compassion, accepting, inclusive, selfless, relatable, willing to help, caring, puts others first, considerate, service-minded, servant leader, values relationships, able to connect, sacrifice
Team Mindset	The candidate is a team player. They value the importance of a team and its individual members. They understand the strengths of others, what motivates others, and the importance of team dynamics. They know when to lead and when to follow. They work well with others, value team success over individual success, and are loyal to the team. Being a contributing team member matters to them.	Respectful, flexible, team oriented, motivating, able to delegate, values teamwork, able to compromise, approachable, patient, committed, loyal, reliable
Values Driven	The candidate is of high moral character. They consistently demonstrate strong values and ethical behavior, act in terms of what is right, and do what they say they will do. They take responsibility for their actions and have a well-developed belief system. They are honest, trustworthy and an effective role model. Doing what is right matters to them.	Honesty, ethical behavior, doing what's right, modeling the right stuff, loyalty, personal character, role model, trustworthy, ethics, responsibility, belief, integrity, authentic, morals
Effective Communicator	The candidate is an effective communicator. They have strong verbal, non-verbal and written communication skills. They are well-spoken, a good listener, and can carry a conversation. They know when to listen and when to speak. They can present effectively in front of an audience and are able to adapt to the situation when needed. They can develop a message and get that message across to others. Communicating effectively matters to them.	Strong communicator, good writing skills, articulate, listener, conversationalist, professional, public speaking skills, presentation skills, power of expression, personable, economy of words, well-spoken
Overall Impression	The candidate is prepared and ready to serve Kansas FFA. They are passionate, professional, ready to lead and committed to the cause. They are outgoing and enthusiastic. They demonstrate poise, presence and a positive attitude. They understand the purpose of serving as a state officer. They leave the nominating committee and the delegates with a strong "gut feeling" that they will be an exceptional Kansas FFA state officer. Serving the Kansas FFA matters to them.	Passion, service, purpose, enthusiasm, strong desire to serve, real, positive attitude, appearance, self-confidence, mature, outgoing, energy, real, genuine, prepared, consistent, approachable, coachable, leader

Components of the Process

GROWTH EXPERIENCES

The growth experiences are designed to allow candidates to experience interviews similar to what they will experience during state convention. The growth committees' responsibility is to provide advice and feedback to candidates as they prepare. The nominating committee does not take candidate performance in the growth interviews into consideration during selection.

Candidate growth activities will be offered in a combination of in-person and virtual experiences. A virtual session will be held in early March for all candidates who are interested in applying for office. During this session, candidates will be provided an overview of the process, schedule, recommendations for preparation and other advice. A required candidate growth session will be held during the Kansas State CDEs in Manhattan to provide more detailed information, preparation tips, example activities and a practice interview round. All recommended activities will conclude a full week before convention week.

These growth interviews are simply provided as a preparation tool for the candidates and their advisors, who are also encouraged to attend and observe. All candidate meetings will be recorded for any candidates or advisors who are unable to attend.



APPLICATION

The application for state office is an online form available on the Kansas FFA website. It is comprised of multiple sections, including biographical information, leadership experience, agricultural education experience, and two personal questions. The leadership experience section provides candidates with the opportunity to share five offices or committee assignments held, ten FFA activities participated in and ten other extra-curricular leadership or service activities. Candidates are asked to provide an overview of their educational experience, career objective and SAE scope. The application also requires that candidates provide medical information, parent/guardian information, vehicle and driver's license information, media contacts and school official's contact information. Candidates must list their state convention conflicts and sign a state officer commitment form. Candidates will also be required to list their evaluators. Sample application questions can be found in the appendix. The application must be submitted by midnight on April 5.

EVALUATIONS

Each candidate is required to have seven evaluation forms submitted on their behalf:

- One form must be submitted by the candidate's chapter advisor (if the chapter has more than one advisor, advisors can each complete a form or can complete the form together)
- One from a school administrator from the candidate's school (a collegiate faculty member should be used if the candidate is in college)
- One from a non-agriculture teacher from the candidate's high school, college or university
- Four from FFA members (including at least one FFA member from the candidate's home chapter and at least one FFA member from different chapter than the candidate's home chapter)

Candidates will provide a list of their evaluators as a part of their application. Candidates should ask those they would like to serve as evaluators before submitting their names. The evaluators will receive a link to an on-line evaluation form. Candidates should follow up with the evaluators to confirm they received the link and to remind them of the deadline. It is the responsibility of the candidates that evaluations are submitted on time. Evaluations must be submitted by April 20. An example of the type of questions on the evaluation form can be found in the appendix.

EXAMINATION

The purpose of the exam is to evaluate each candidate's base understanding of relevant issues related to agriculture, agricultural education, FFA and the American education system. The exam will consist of written essay questions on agriculture, agricultural education and FFA. The exam will be provided to candidates at least three weeks before convention and will be due the Friday before convention week. Sample essay questions can be found in the appendix.

INTERVIEWS

Each interview round is limited in the number of questions asked and the amount of time that a candidate is given to respond. The coordinator or assistant coordinator informs the candidates about the number of questions and time allotment before each interview round. For example, prior to the candidate entering the interview room, the coordinator shares something similar to the following: "You have ten minutes to answer ten questions. Please use your time accordingly." Answers should average one minute per question.

Once a candidate enters the interview room, a nominating committee member initiates the interview. To remain consistent for all candidates, committee members may repeat questions if asked, but they will not re-word or explain. Two-part questions may be asked. Such questions are asked consistently among candidates, and time is adjusted if necessary. After the total amount of time allotted for the candidate's interview has expired, the coordinator or assistant coordinator calls time. Once time is called, candidates must cease speaking. Interviews are conducted using two formats, full committee and one-on-one.

Full committee interviews: Each candidate addresses the full committee in these interviews. The candidate might be sitting, standing or offered a choice, and the committee might be seated around a board table or at tables positioned in a "U" shaped formation. Candidates are usually asked eight questions, with one question asked pertaining to each behavioral trait except communication and overall impression. In this case, each candidate is in the interview room for 10 minutes, with 8 minutes allowed for the candidate's responses, one minute allotted for the questions being asked and one minute of flex time. The coordinator adjusts time for pauses, two-part questions or time lags caused by the committee. A shortened version of the full committee interview may also be included in the process, likely taking place at either the very beginning or end of the selection process. The coordinator will instruct the candidates if this interview will take place.

One-on-one interviews: In these interviews, each candidate meets with each nominating committee member individually. Nominating committee members are positioned around a room, and candidates rotate to a nominating committee member each time the coordinator or assistant calls time. Rounds may include all nominating committee members or a portion of the committee. Usually, three to five questions are asked by each nominating committee member. On occasion, one of the questions is selected by each committee member based on the specific candidate's application or other personal information shared.

PREPARED SPEECH

Candidates should prepare a candidate speech prior to arriving at state convention. The candidates present their speeches during the first convention session on the main convention stage. Both delegates and nominating committee will evaluate the candidate speeches. Candidates do not need to introduce themselves before beginning their speech. Props are not allowed, and the speech is a maximum of 2.5 minutes in length. A warning will be given after two minutes have elapsed, and time will be called at the end of 2.5 minutes, at which time the candidate must cease speaking. Candidates will use a handheld microphone when presenting.



EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS

This component will be completed during convention. It will consist of two rounds. One round will be live in-person with the committee. The other round may be live or recorded. Topics will include:

- One topic related to FFA or agricultural education experience
- One current topic or issue in agriculture, agricultural education, or FFA

For each part, candidates will receive guidelines and prompts, provided a set amount of preparation time ranging from 3-10 minutes, and given a maximum presentation time ranging from 1.5 – 3 minutes for each part. For some parts, candidates may have the opportunity to choose a prompt from a short list.

STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS

The purpose of this round is focused on the evaluation of each candidate's demonstration of effective officer competencies while carrying on an issue-based conversation with a key stakeholder. Stakeholders may include industry leaders, school administrators, agriculture educators, teacher educators, foundation sponsors, media, parents, FFA members, potential FFA members, government officials, FFA alumni and others. The coordinator or assistant coordinator presents each candidate with a brief description of the stakeholder in the room and the issue or topic they wish to discuss. When the candidate enters the room, the candidate is expected to engage in dialogue with the stakeholder. Each conversation could be sitting or standing and lasts 5 minutes, at which point time is called and the candidate must cease speaking. Three conversations occur in separate rooms, with different stakeholders and different topics discussed. One of the conversations will be a media interview. Each candidate rotates through each room, and the nominating committee is divided among the rooms accordingly. The portion of the committee observing the conversation sits at a distance, and candidates should not address the committee. This is a two-way conversation, not an interview. In addition, this is not a role-playing scenario; candidates should represent themselves as candidates, and the stakeholder will represent their actual role in the industry.

GROUP ACTIVITY

This round requires candidates to work in groups of 3-5 candidates depending on the total number of candidates. Groups are given a topic or scenario to address. This is not a role-playing activity. Candidates serve as candidates and should remember to work as a team. They will be observed by the committee who will evaluate the candidates on their ability to work together. This activity may be completed virtually or in-person. It may be conducted during convention week or the week before.

MEALS AND INFORMAL INTERACTIONS

Candidates and nominating committee members have a number of opportunities to interact in informal settings, including a few meals. Candidates should conduct themselves professionally at all times and seek out the opportunity to interact with members of the nominating committee.

WORKSHOP FACILITATION

Candidates will receive their workshop facilitation assignment, partner, and activity instructions at the in-person session in mid-April. Candidates should prepare to facilitate their activity prior to the convention on their own time. All needed supplies will be provided. All delegates are pre-assigned in groups, and positioned in their groups around a large room or in multiple rooms. Delegates will rotate to the candidate workshop stations. Facilitations will last seven to ten minutes, based on candidate numbers. When time is called, candidates must cease facilitating and rotate to the next group. All candidates have the opportunity to facilitate all groups of delegates. If it is deemed appropriate by the coordinator, candidates will facilitate in pairs. An example activity is included in the appendix. This round is not scored by the nominating committee.

MEET THE CANDIDATES SESSION

This session's purpose is to provide an opportunity for candidates and delegates to interact in an informal reception setting prior to the candidates speech on the convention stage. Candidates should expect to provide a brief formal introduction at the beginning of the session and respond to 1-2 questions written by the delegates. Delegates write the questions and usually each candidate is asked one "fun" question and one "serious" question. Ample time for informal conversation will be allowed. Campaigning or any practice of soliciting support for a candidate for state office is not permitted in any part of this selection process.

DELEGATE COMMITTEE LEADERSHIP

Candidates will NOT be asked to lead the delegate committee meetings occurring at state convention. The committees will be led by district officers. If the schedule allows, candidates are encouraged to attend the committee meetings.



Committee Scoring

For each behavioral theme, approximately 7-12 scoring opportunities exist. The themes are not weighted against each other or averaged together, ensuring that candidates are analyzed for abilities in all themes.

The coordinator maintains a database of questions specified for each theme. Updates to the database are made with consultation of the committee, and the agriculture and education questions are updated annually. This database of questions is not used in any other process. The committee, in consultation with the coordinator, chooses the questions to be asked during interview rounds from the database. Each candidate is asked the exact same questions to ensure fairness.

For each scored component of the process, each nominating committee member receives a scoring card specific to the current round. Candidates are given a score on a scale of 0 (weak), 1 (acceptable), 2 (strong) or 3 (outstanding). The nominating committee scores the candidate on each theme as it appears in the round.

Scoring descriptions by round:

- **Application:** Applications are reviewed and scored by the nominating committee. The application will be scored for written quality (effective communicator), leadership and agricultural education involvement (ag/FFA advocate), and overall impression using the 0-3 scale. State convention delegates will also have the opportunity to review applications, but they will not score them. Personal data is removed from the delegate copies.
- **Evaluations:** Evaluations are reviewed and the overall evaluation is scored using the 0-3 scale. All identifying information of candidates is removed from the evaluations and scores are recorded on a number system. This way, nominating committee members score the evaluations without knowing which candidate they are scoring. This helps keep the process "blind." The responses will be provided to the committee in a compiled format, so individual responses will remain anonymous to the committee. If anything in the evaluations requires follow-up, the coordinator may follow-up with the candidate or evaluator for further information. If any candidate receives less than a 50% on the overall impression of the evaluation, the committee will discuss the candidate's eligibility to serve.
- **Exam:** While there is no required minimum score on the exam, candidates' performance on the exam is the equivalent to an interview round and will be factored into several trait scores, potentially including but not limited to ag/FFA advocate, critical thinker, effective communicator and overall impression scores. Essay responses will be scored based on accuracy and completeness of content as well as grammar and written quality using the rubric included in the appendix. The committee may review essay responses.

Using the following rubric, exams will be recorded equivalent to an interview round for each candidate. Exam scores will be graded and scored using a curve where the top score is recorded as 100%.

- Exam score of 90-100% = 3
- 80-89.9% = 2
- 70-79.9% = 1
- Less than 70% = 0

- **Interviews:** Each question in an interview round is focused on one theme. For example, if an interview question focuses solely on a candidate's ability to express growth mindset, each committee member will provide the candidate with a growth mindset score. If time is called before a candidate is finished answering all the questions in a given round, scores of zero are given for questions the candidate does not answer.
- **Speech components:** Prepared speech and extemporaneous remarks rounds allow the committee to evaluate communication skills as well as additional traits such as ag/FFA advocate or authentic. As an example, if one of the themes being evaluated is the candidates' authenticity, then each committee member provides each candidate with an authentic score as one part of the speech score in addition to the effective communicator, overall impression, ag/FFA advocate and other trait scores determined appropriate by the coordinator. Delegates will evaluate candidates' prepared speeches in the themes of authentic, effective communicator and overall impression on a 0-4 scale.
- **Stakeholder conversations:** In stakeholder conversations, candidates are scored on their abilities to seek information, listen, think critically, be themselves, have confidence, express their personal story and respect others' time, but other factors might also be considered. All scoring will be done utilizing the 10 themes and the 0-3 scale.
- **Group activity:** In the group activity round, committee members will observe the candidates' abilities to solve problems, listen, ask questions, be team players, value others, express desires to learn, think on their feet and apply agricultural knowledge. All scoring will be done utilizing the 10 themes and the 0-3 scale.
- **Workshop Facilitation and Meet the Candidates session:** These activities are not scored by the nominating committee but are scored by delegates. They will evaluate candidates in the themes of authentic, effective communicator and overall impression on a 0-4 scale.
- **Overall impression and daily communication:** Candidates are given an overall impression score per round and per day. Candidates are also given an overall effective communicator score each day. Candidates' professionalism and conversational ability during informal interactions and meals will be considered.

With all of the rounds compiled and the candidates receiving scores from every nominating committee member for each round, there are a large number of points distributed among the themes. Therefore, the candidates have multiple opportunities to express each theme, and "messing up" one interview question or even one full round does not significantly negatively impact the outcome of the process for the candidate.

As rounds are scored, the nominating committee members give the scores to the nominating committee coordinator, who compiles all data for each candidate. This way, the nominating committee takes only the candidates' performance for each individual round into account when scoring the round, disregarding the candidates' performance on previous rounds.

With each round, committee members' scores for each candidate are summed and averaged by theme resulting in a single trait score for each candidate for each round. All theme scores across all rounds are summed and divided by the total number of available points to create a single percentage score for each candidate for each theme. All rounds are weighted equally within the theme categories.

Delegate Evaluation of Candidates

As a part of the delegate process, delegates will receive training on the behavioral based selection process and theme evaluation. Training materials, along with candidate applications and videos, will be available on the delegate portal on an online learning platform.

The delegates will evaluate candidates on three themes: authentic, effective communicator and overall impression. They will score candidates after three activities: workshop facilitations, meet the candidate interactive session and prepared speeches. In addition, they will be able to review the candidate applications and introduction videos.

Delegates will use a 0-4 scale to evaluate the candidates. Immediately after each interaction between delegates and candidates, delegates will evaluate candidates' in the themes of authentic, effective communicator and overall impression. In total, each delegate will provide nine scores for each candidate.

Delegate scores will be collected electronically if possible. If not, paper forms will be used. Delegates' scores for each candidate for all interactions will be summed and averaged by theme resulting in a three theme scores for each candidate from the delegates. These scores will be divided by the total number of available points to create a single percentage score for each candidate for each theme. All rounds are weighted equally within the theme categories. These three scores along with a single combined delegate score for each candidate will be provided to the nominating committee.

Note: If candidate numbers exceed the ability for the selection process to accommodate delegates' ability to view all candidate speeches and evaluate them fairly, the nominating committee may alter the selection process to accommodate delegate scoring of candidate speeches. Process alterations may include but are not limited to decreased time allotted for each candidate speech or implementation of a candidate cut before delegates score candidate speeches.



Selecting the Officer Team

The Kansas FFA Constitution outlines the association's process for selecting the six state officers.

Article VII. State Officers and Procedures for Election, Section A, 2:

"The nominating committee shall present a slate of officers, determined with input from the present delegates. The slate may consist of one candidate for each office of president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, reporter, and sentinel to be approved by a majority vote of the delegate body present at state FFA convention."

The nominating committee will be provided the theme scores for each candidate as described in the previous section. In addition, they will be provided the delegate scores for each candidate which will be compiled in a similar manner. Delegate scores may initially be presented for the nominating committee's review completely separated from the nominating committee's own data. Then, once reviewed, it could be linked with nominating committee data. The nominating committee coordinator may present all data together. The nominating committee is expected to use the delegate data intentionally, but no predetermined weightings or requirements are set for how the data is used. Process and input from each year should be noted and used in the next process review.

Prior to the candidates' arrival at state convention, the committee discusses aligning themes with each office. The themes deemed necessary for each office are based on the committee's interpretation of what themes are most necessary to execute the officer responsibilities as defined in the constitution and opening ceremony. This will allow the committee to slate a candidate for each office whose strongest themes align with those identified by the committee as necessary to best execute the constitutionally defined role.

After all of the scored rounds of the selection process have taken place and the delegate input has been collected and compiled, the committee reconvenes to deliberate. During the deliberation, the committee receives one percentage score per theme for each candidate from the nominating committee process and the scores from the delegate evaluation. Each committee member charts the candidates' theme scores on a graph. Each candidate is, again, placed in a number system so the process remains "blind."

The process remains blind through the deliberation. The committee does not know the names of the individuals slated for each office until it is announced on the convention stage. Results of the election are provided in a sealed envelope to the state FFA president immediately prior to the announcement. The results are announced, the delegates vote to approve the slate, and the new officers are installed at the final session of state convention.

Defining Success

An important component of preparation for the selection process is for candidates to gain a personal understanding of what will truly make them feel successful in regard to their performance in the process. The success experienced in this process is not determined by the outcome of the election, but rather by what is learned and by the growth the candidate experiences.

This process encourages candidates to learn more about the National FFA Organization, the agricultural industry, the American education system and how each of these factor into the agricultural education system. Additionally, candidates gain a huge understanding of their personal strengths, weaknesses, interests and attributes. If a candidate truly places a lot of effort into their preparation for this process, the knowledge and skills they gain will be applicable in the future. Well-prepared candidates often experience the greatest amount of success as they pursue other opportunities, whether or not they ever served as state FFA officers.





PREPARING FOR THE PROCESS



Preparation Tips By Process Component
General Preparation Tips
Suggested Resources
Advisors, Coaches and Mentors

Preparation Tips by Process Components

The next few pages provide tips for candidates preparing for the selection process, focusing on the components of the process outlined earlier.

GROWTH EXPERIENCE

- As described previously, the growth experiences are provided solely as a learning opportunity for candidates.
- Advisors are encouraged to observe these experiences to help their candidate in their growth leading up to state convention.
- Since these interviews are designed to model the interviews used throughout the process, apply the same interview practices. See the interview section for tips for these behavioral-based interviews.
- Approach the interviews with an open mind and a willingness to learn. These interviews are just for practice!
- Be sure to participate in the all-candidate meetings. Topics covered include tips for making self-introductions, using this handbook, important updates that might include date changes, interview feedback and advice for all candidates, and a question and answer period.
- If a candidate must miss an all-candidate meeting, be sure to let the chair know.

APPLICATION

- Fill out the application honestly and completely. Submit the application in its entirety electronically by midnight April 5.
- Approach the open text questions similar to interview questions, providing great detail and examples, when applicable.
- Like most professional documents, consider asking at least one other person to review the application for grammatical errors.
- Consider typing up all the information you need in a word document and then copying it in to the on-line form.

EVALUATIONS

- Select evaluators who know you well.
- Make a good impression by contacting potential evaluators in a timely and professional manner before they receive an email from Kansas FFA asking for their evaluation.
- Be very gracious, politely remind the evaluators of the due date, follow up with them to ensure the evaluation form is completed on time and thank them verbally or with a card.
- Make sure evaluators are aware of the requirement that they are not to use specific names or any gender-specific pronouns. For example, instead of a name, the evaluator should use, "the candidate." In place of "he" or "she", the evaluator should use "they".
- An example of the type of questions on the evaluation form is located in the appendix. All evaluation forms must be submitted by April 20.

ESSAY EXAMINATION

- Be very familiar with state and national FFA resources such as websites and the official manual.
- Regularly utilize online and other news resources to learn more about what is happening in agriculture and education. Daily review of such resources is encouraged.
- Meet with leaders in agriculture and education and ask them about things happening in their industry.
- Practice writing responses to short essay questions and seek feedback from your English teachers or others with strong editing skills. Share the rubric included in this handbook with them.
- Refer to the resources section for additional ideas of places to locate helpful information.

INTERVIEWS

- Practice interviewing in each of the formats included in the process – a full committee and one-on-one.
- Keep a small notebook or journal to record experiences and thoughts.
- Wear official dress to practice interviews.
- Provide a breadth of examples, rather than only using FFA-related examples. The best example to use is the one that relates the most to the question asked.
- Become familiar with STAR responses. STAR responses encourage interviewees to include the following four components in their answers:
 - S – Situation: Describe the general situation you faced to help the committee understand the basis of your example.
 - T – Task: Describe the situation or the task needing accomplished, using a specific event or task as the example. Provide enough detail that the interviewer can truly picture what was occurring.
 - A – Action taken: Describe the action taken and be sure to keep the focus on your specific actions. Even if the situation involves group effort, describe your role.
 - R – Result: What happened? How did the situation end? What was accomplished? What was learned?
- Brainstorm a list of possible questions to practice but avoid creating canned responses or anticipating what will be asked. There are many examples of behavioral-based interview questions online. Check the resources provided on the Kansas FFA Association website, or search “behavioral-based interview questions” using an online search engine. Here are a few example questions:
 - Tell us about a time when you had to make a quick decision. What was the outcome?
 - Have you ever had trouble getting others to accept your ideas? How did you handle this situation?
 - How do you decide your priorities? Give us an example.
 - Share a time when you turned a negative situation into a positive experience.
 - Describe a situation in which you were able to use persuasion to successfully convince someone to see things your way.
- Create a list of potential people to practice interviews with, such as school board members, school administrators, agriculture leaders, local business owners and chapter FFA alumni.

INTERVIEWS CONT.

- Be honest. The nominating committee wants to get to know the candidate and how the candidate honestly handles situations. There are no “right” or “wrong” answers!
- Consider the role of a state officer. Read the current officers’ blogs to discover their roles more in-depth.
- Many school libraries and guidance offices have interview information available to read. Check it out!
- There is no need to make a personal introduction in the interview room. In addition, handshakes are not necessary during any of the interview rounds.
- Make eye contact with each person on the committee when answering a question, rather than focusing solely on the committee member who asked the question.
- During standing interviews, step close enough to feel natural when addressing the committee, and be purposeful with all movement.
- Voice volume should be matched to room size.

ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

- With all interviews occurring in the same room during both of these rounds, the room is loud. Voice volume should be adjusted to a conversation level.
- Candidates need to be highly focused on the committee member(s) they are meeting with at each stop in these rounds. With so much activity taking place, it is easy to get distracted. Practicing interviewing with TV or radio in the background may help develop the ability to focus in this type of situation.
- If the candidate finishes answering all questions with a committee member, the remaining time before rotation can be used for casual conversation for each to get to know the other better, if the committee member(s) desire.
- These rounds often feel more personal and many candidates enjoy them.

PREPARED SPEECH

- Think first about the important point(s) to share with the audience, and then determine a story or other type of support that the audience will enjoy. Many speakers try to brainstorm a fun story to share first, and then attempt to make the points they are trying to share fit with the story. Remember, though, the points are the most important part!
- Keep audiences in mind. Candidates address the nominating committee and delegates.
- The speech will be given on a large stage. Be sure to practice in a large space while holding a microphone.
- Most candidates tend to slow down on stage. So, consider making sure your speech is not too close to the time limit in length.

EXTEMPORANEOUS REMARKS

- The four parts of this component are related to situations a state officer experiences.
- As with any speech, it is important to remember to focus on the point(s) to be made. What does the audience need to hear for the given situation? Then, provide support that will engage the audience and relate to the point.
- Treat the audience as the audience in the situation. For example, if the candidate is providing a welcome for a banquet, the candidate should address the audience as banquet attendees.

STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS

- Remember, these are conversations, not interviews. Therefore, they should be two-way conversations.
- Avoid trying to role-play, or assuming the industry leader is trying to role-play. Candidates should represent themselves as candidates, and the industry leader represents his or her area of the industry.
- Like many other rounds, knowledge in the areas of FFA, agricultural education, SAEs, agriculture and education is important. In addition to the facts, candidates should make the conversations personal by connecting the facts to personal experiences. Remember, in a conversation with an industry leader, it would be important to know the facts, but to also move the conversation beyond simply reciting information.

GROUP ACTIVITY

- The content for the activity is related to agricultural education, FFA or SAE and is a typical situation for a state officer.
- Remember this is a TEAM activity. Work together.
- Discussions of the group should be held at normal volume allowing the committee to hear your discussion and input.

WORKSHOP FACILITATION

- Before facilitating an activity, a presenter must take several steps. First, analyze the audience and determine the age range, interests and motivations to make it easier to engage the audience in the activity. Second, identify the goal of the activity. For example, the activity might show the importance of listening or might help students identify their personal strengths.
- The National FFA Organization found that facilitators only have 90 seconds to gain the interest of their audience. Therefore, it is important to establish connections with participants from the very beginning. Facilitators can use personal stories, anecdotes, humor, etc. to gain interest, but it must happen quickly in the introduction. Once facilitators have the participants' interest, they can preview the points and get the participants' minds ready to learn.
- Remember the 80-20 rule. Facilitators should only speak 20 percent of the time, while the participants should speak and work 80 percent of the time.
- Practice giving instructions. An effective activity begins with clear directions, so all participants understand what will happen.
- With a simple review, facilitators ensure the audience remembers the material presented. So, a facilitator should walk the audience back through the main points of the activity before concluding. Reviews are just as important as introductions. They enable the facilitator to gauge the participants' learning.

WORKSHOP FACILITATION CONT.

- Be aware of the time. It is the facilitator's job to keep the audience engaged for the duration of the time allowed, but also have the activity wrapped up with all points covered.
- Consider practicing facilitation before convention. Brainstorm activities from previous conferences attended and ask an advisor to allow you to practice with a class. Then, request feedback from both the advisor and participants.
- Remember to have fun! Interact with the participants and make it an enjoyable experience.
- Review all facilitation materials when they become available. Be prepared to lead all of the activities.

MEALS

- Practice carrying on conversations while dining, and in both casual and formal situations. Consider sharing a meal with a school administrator, your agriculture teacher or another teacher.
- Read up on and practice dining etiquette.
- Think about how to ask good questions.

MEET THE CANDIDATES SESSION

- Practice answering impromptu questions.
- Speak in front of a large group.
- Practice introducing yourself and starting conversations with individuals.
- Enjoy yourself. Meet new people. Don't just chat with other candidates or members you already know.



General Preparation Tips

Develop a working knowledge of current issues in agriculture, agricultural education and education by:

- Reading education and agriculture periodicals.
- Meeting with school administrators to talk about issues in education. Discuss how the industry works, and especially how it relates to agricultural education.
- Meeting with agricultural professionals in the community to learn about issues in agriculture.
- Beginning to read an agricultural publication or e-newsletter on a regular basis.
- Utilizing online resources to stay up-to-date with current agricultural issues in the state, nation and world.
- Researching the agricultural industry in-depth and who it involves. This includes studying the various facets of agriculture and understanding the roles of each.
- Researching the Farm Bill and being able to explain what it is and who it affects as well as who influences agricultural policy. In addition, know who influences education policy.
- Discussing how education is funded, especially career and technical education programs with an agriculture education teacher or leader in career and technical education.
- Practice all activities in-person and via a virtual platform, such as Zoom. In any year, both types of experiences will be used.

Develop an understanding of FFA's role in agricultural education by:

- Reviewing the history of agricultural education and the introduction of FFA.
- Understanding agricultural education's place in career and technical education.
- Reviewing the three component model for school based agricultural education and be able to provide examples from each component.
- Listing the values of FFA to the members, home, school and community.

Develop a base knowledge of FFA fundamentals by:

- Visiting with FFA members to learn of their concerns and suggestions for the organization.
- Reviewing the information in the publications on the resource list for state officer candidates on the Kansas FFA Association website.
- Reviewing the basics from the Official FFA Manual (e.g. the creed, mission statement, vision, history and timeline, organizational structure, awards, code of ethics, essentials of a successful chapter, etc.)
- Listing personal FFA experiences (as well as non-FFA experiences) and lessons learned from those experiences.
- Periodically checking the National FFA Organization website to remain current on programs of the organization.
- Searching the Kansas FFA Association website to know the specifics of the association (e.g. membership numbers, date chartered, number of board of directors meetings, etc.)
- Developing a personal understanding of FFA's effect in a student's life.
- Learning and understanding the mission and strategies of the FFA.
- Reviewing the three divisions within the POA.
- Understanding parliamentary procedure as it is used in the FFA.
- Understanding the organization and function of the FFA Foundation.
- Understanding the organization and function of the FFA Alumni & Supporters.

Prepare yourself by:

- Learning beyond memorization of these facts and names. By developing a real, personal understanding of each of these topics, candidates are best preparing themselves to serve as representatives of the Kansas FFA Association, agricultural education and the agricultural industry.
- Developing a personal understanding of the desire to serve the organization.
- Preparing to display the appropriate image through official dress.
- Reading motivational literature.
- Preparing to have a positive attitude throughout convention.
- Practicing people skills for interactions with delegates and the nominating committee.

Get to know your own skills, abilities and traits by:

- Brainstorm a list of your experiences. This list should include: Offices you have held, groups you have been in, service you have provided, classes that impacted you, events you have participated in (personal, professional, etc) that motivated you, conferences you have attended that helped you grow, special memories (family or friend moments) that helped form you, times you helped other people, times you were helped by others, experiences that changed you, and more.
- Take each of those experiences and narrow it down to specific parts. Do not just write "Chapter President." Instead, divide that into "being elected chapter president", "leading the chapter officer team to", etc. Write each of these specific experiences on one side of an index card. (You cannot have too many!)
- On the other side of the index card, write the answers (in bullets not full sentences) to the following questions:
 - What did I gain from this experience?
 - What did I give during this experience?
 - Was there a challenge? If so, identify it.
 - What traits/characteristics did you exhibit?



Suggested Resources

Each candidate should develop their own set of tools and resources. On the Kansas FFA Association state officer candidate web page located at www.ksffa.org, the coordinator will provide a number of links to resources that will help provide a good start in developing a resource tool box. Candidates will find links to resources related to agricultural education, FFA, agriculture information and policy, behavioral based interviews, leadership and previous exams.

It is the candidates' responsibility to search for additional tools that may be helpful as they prepare. A few ideas to help candidates get started are included below and are linked on the state officer candidate web page. However, this list is not intended to be a comprehensive list; it is simply a starting point for candidates to begin the preparation process. Candidates should explore the web links, news sources, and social media platforms below for up-to-date data, programming and information. These are not resources to be glanced at once or twice, but actually used on a regular basis for continual learning and knowledge development. Candidates should also seek out experts in all of these fields and discuss topics and current issues with them.

Most of the following resources have websites, e-newsletters, media releases, Facebook pages, Twitter accounts, YouTube accounts and other social media platforms. Candidates should explore these and others and follow them on daily basis.

Agricultural Education and Education

Kansas State Department of Education (KSDE): www.ksde.org

- KSDE Career and Technical Education web page
- KSDE Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (CTE Career Cluster) web page

U.S. Department of Education: www.ed.gov

Teach Ag: www.naae.org/teachag

High School Agriculture Educators (HINT: start with yours!)

FFA

Kansas FFA Association & Kansas FFA Foundation: www.ksffa.org

National FFA Organization: www.ffa.org

Official FFA Manual

FFA Student Handbook

FFA Members, Alumni, Supporters and Advisors

Agriculture

Kansas Department of Agriculture: www.agriculture.ks.gov

U.S. Department of Agriculture: www.usda.gov

News publications (print, web and social media)

- Examples: High Plains Journal, Grass & Grain, Farm Talk, Agri-Pulse, Morning Ag Clips, Brownfield Ag News

Agriculture websites, email services and social media platforms

- Examples: Popular Ag Blogs, GMO Answers website, @agchat & #agchat on Twitter, agribusiness websites and social media, state and national agricultural association, organization and advocacy group websites and newsletters (examples include Kansas Farm Bureau, American Farm Bureau Association, Kansas Livestock Association, National Cattlemen's Beef Association, Kansas Farmers Union, Kansas Wheat, Kansas Corn, Kansas Soybeans, Kansas Pork, Midwest Dairy, U.S. Farmers and Ranchers Alliance and many others)

Behavioral Based Interviews

Web searches for behavioral based interviews will connect candidates with a number of job search companies, career services, universities and colleges, and others who share example questions, explain the process, and provide tips and hints

Leadership and Personal Growth

Leadership books and websites

Resources from previous leadership activities and experiences

Personal leadership style assessments and tools

Follow relevant organizations, agencies, leaders and associations on social media platforms and sign-up for Google Alerts on pertinent topics.



Advisors, Coaches and Mentors

Tips for candidates finding a coach or mentor:

Coaches and mentors serve an important role in candidates' preparations for the selection process. These individuals can help candidates stay on track, understand issues, brainstorm ideas for preparation and be a listening ear throughout the process. Consider utilizing more than one person to have different perspectives and areas of expertise.

Advisors can be a wonderful resource for candidates, including both the advisor from the candidate's home chapter and advisors from other chapters. Candidates can also consider seeking advice from others who have undergone the process, including past state officers who might still be college students living nearby and eager to help. In addition, individuals outside of FFA can serve as great coaches and mentors. Consider the following factors when selecting someone for this role:

- Find a person who has adequate time to meet on a regular basis.
- Find a person who knows you well.
- Find a person who cares about your growth and development, not simply getting you elected to state office.

Tips for advisors, coaches and mentors:

- Be sure potential candidates know about the Application deadline.
- Meet with the candidate soon after he or she decides to run for state office to understand their current level of comfort with the process and outlook on running for office. Observe his or her current understanding of who they are and why they are pursuing this opportunity.
- Help the candidate establish a preparation schedule, including time to meet often to review progress. Keep track of the candidate's schedule, balancing school and other activities to ensure he or she does not get burned out.
- Encourage the candidate while providing constructive criticism, especially as he or she prepares in areas of improvement. Remember to celebrate the candidates' strengths and efforts to improve.
- Conduct practice interviews, helping the candidate learn how to best express his or herself and avoiding the development of "canned" responses. Organize a few outside audiences to practice with. Consider utilizing a video camera to help the candidate evaluate the interviews.
- Help the candidate brainstorm a list of people to meet with to better understand topics and issues, including school administrators, FFA members, agriculture education teachers and industry leaders.
- Help candidates locate resources about current ag issues.
- Ask the candidate to explain current issues he or she has researched. This holds the candidate accountable for remaining up-to-date on current issues and developing a strong enough understanding to explain them to someone else.
- Check in with the candidate throughout convention to help ease anxiety.
- Keep in touch with the candidate after state convention. Regardless of the outcome, celebrate the great accomplishments achieved throughout the process.



NOMINATING COMMITTEE



Structure and Selection
Training and Time Commitment

Structure and Selection

The Kansas FFA Constitution outlines the process for organizing the nominating committee.

Article VI. Officers, Section G: *“The State FFA President shall appoint the chair of the nominating committee from the immediate past state officer team, who will facilitate the functions of the committee. The committee will consist of three immediate past state officers, three former state officers, two industry representatives, two designees of the KAAE president, the state FFA executive secretary or his or her designee, and the state FFA advisor or his or her designee.”*

Traditionally, the State FFA President appoints the state president from the immediate past state officer team to serve as the nominating chair. If the immediate past state president is not available to serve, the immediate past state vice president is traditionally selected to serve as nominating committee chair. The nominating committee chair and the coordinator work together to appoint the remainder of the committee.

The nominating committee coordinator is responsible for maintaining a database of past state officers to be used when recruiting each year’s committee. The coordinator works with the executive secretary and foundation director to update the database.

In addition, when selecting all committee members, special attention is given to ensure no committee member is too closely connected to a candidate. If either the advisor or executive secretary position is vacant, the coordinator identifies a suitable replacement. If the KAAE president and/or president-elect have candidates in the process, KAAE provides a replacement(s). The two immediate past state officers (selected in addition to the chair) are selected based on consultation of the chair and coordinator. The chair and coordinator will identify any immediate past state officers who cannot serve due to time conflicts or having a candidate from their home chapter or family. If there are not two eligible immediate past state officers, family conflicts are placed at the higher priority over chapter conflicts. Industry representatives may be selected in consultation with the FFA Foundation and state agriculture industry leaders.

Best attempts are made to diversify age, gender and district representation of the committee when selecting past state officers and industry representatives. Nominating committee members will be selected no later than the end of April. A nominating committee introductory video will be developed and provided to delegates and candidates by mid-May.



Training and Time Commitment

The nominating committee's work begins a month before state convention.

The nominating committee will hold an initial training session via conference call in early May to start preparing for the process. The committee members will receive applications and evaluations (in blind format) to read and assess prior to convention. All tools and resources will be provided via the committee portal on an online learning platform. Another training session will be held the week before convention. Additional just-in-time training modules will be provided as needed in the online learning platform.

Through live training session and recorded training videos, committee members spend adequate time developing an understanding of each component of the process. They learn the scoring system that is used throughout all of the rounds. As mentioned, a scoring system of zero (weak), one (acceptable), two (strong) or three (outstanding) is used. The committee members define what each of these scores mean to ensure each committee member scores each candidate consistently. It is critical that each committee member execute individual consistency throughout the process.

Next, the committee spends time understanding the state officer themes. A component of this part of training includes further defining what the committee will look for with each theme throughout the process, essentially creating a more in-depth definition for each that is understood by all committee members. Then, the committee reviews the roles defined by the constitution for each office and analyzes which of the themes are especially important to each office. For example, the secretary commonly has a high communication score, supporting the position's constitutional definition and role at state convention. The sentinel, who is "stationed by the door," often has a servant leader score. The president often has a high ag/FFA advocate score to ensure he or she is adequately prepared to represent the organization and industry. Of course, the responsibilities of each office do expand beyond the constitutional definitions and aligning a variety of the themes to each office allows for that flexibility. In addition, many themes are aligned with more than one office.

The committee then selects interview questions. Kansas FFA maintains a large bank of questions for each theme. The committee reviews the full list of questions and collaboratively selects questions for each round according to the themes evaluated. Practice rounds are held to provide all committee members the opportunity to experience the scoring process.

The nominating committee will begin scoring components (such as applications, evaluations, and extemporaneous remarks) before convention begins. The nominating committee will arrive at convention on Monday evening or Tuesday morning of state FFA convention and will remain engaged in the process through Thursday of that week. Committee service typically requires a 15-hour commitment per day.

Daily reminders and activities, as well as round specific instructions, are incorporated into the process to help the committee remain focused and consistent.

GLOSSARY

Application – The application may be found on the state officer candidate page on the Kansas FFA Association website. The application consists of general information and a few questions for candidates to answer. The application must be completed online by midnight, April 5. No hard copy is needed.

Behavioral-based – In a behavioral--based process, candidates are asked to share past experiences. The idea is that past behavior predicts future performance.

Behavioral themes – The nominating committee analyzes these defined traits and characteristics to learn more about each candidate’s personal attributes and strengths.

Candidate – FFA members who choose to serve the Kansas FFA Association as state officers must undergo the state officer selection process. Once these members submit their application, they are considered candidates for state office.

Delegate – Each chapter in the Kansas FFA Association has the opportunity to designate two current members as state delegates. These individuals make recommendations for the association on the key issues brought forth by the state Board of Directors, and also elect the new team of state officers. Throughout the week of state convention, there are various opportunities for delegates and candidates to interact before the election.

Growth experiences – Multiple growth experiences are held prior to state convention. These interviews are solely intended to help candidates prepare for the interview process at convention. The growth interviews are designed similar to what will take place at convention, and each candidate is provided feedback from the growth interview committee. The nominating committee does not take growth interviews into consideration during the selection process at convention.

Nominating committee – This group of individuals spends the week at state convention interacting with the candidates in various capacities. The group’s role is to get to know the candidates, and at the end of the process, selects a slate of officers.

Selection process – This process begins at the time candidates submit their application and continues until a new team of six state officers is selected at state convention.

State officer selection process review – The state officer selection process is reviewed every five years.

Team Ag Ed - Group comprised of those individuals with a vested interest in school based agricultural education in Kansas. The group serves as the advisory committee to the KSDE Agricultural Education Program consultant. The team is made up of secondary and post-secondary agriculture educators, Kansas Department of Agriculture representatives, Kansas FFA Foundation, Kansas FFA, Kansas Farm Bureau, and a few business & industry representatives.



APPENDIX



- Application question examples and components
- Interview example questions
- Extemporaneous remark examples
- Stakeholder conversations example scenarios
- Group activity example
- Workshop facilitation example
- Meet the Candidate & Delegate Session sample questions
- Essay exam example questions and rubric
- Evaluation form example questions

Application question examples and components

- Biographical information and photo in official dress
- Parent/guardian contact information
- Educational background and school official contact information
- SAE program, FFA leadership experience, FFA activities other school and community leadership
- Essay questions: What is your biggest accomplishment up until now? How has it shaped you and your leadership style? If elected, how would you positively influence the Kansas FFA Association?
- Information related to special accommodations, medical and health care, driver's license and vehicle, and local media
- State convention conflicts
- Signature approvals from parents and school officials
- State officer commitment form and signature
- Names and contact information for all evaluators

Interview example questions (group/one-on-one)

- Ag/FFA Advocate: What can the agriculture industry do to encourage interest in agriculture and agricultural careers in order to respond to the shortage of talent and labor in comparison to the increasing needs of a growing industry?
- Authentic: What is your greatest strength? In what area do you need to grow?
- Critical Thinker: Tell me about a problem that you have solved in a unique or unusual way.
- Growth Mindset: Describe a time you decided to learn about something new just for the fun of it.
- Self-Motivation: Give me an example of when you worked hard.
- Servant Leader: What drives you to serve as a leader? Provide an example.
- Team Mindset: Think about a team you have been a part of recently. What role did you play?
- Values Driven: Give me an example of sometime in the last month when you had to rely on your integrity.

Extemporaneous remarks examples

- You have three minutes to present a greeting to the delegates at the state FFA convention.
- You have three minutes to provide an overview of your SAE experience and how it has impacted you to a group of Greenhands.
- You have three minutes to introduce yourself to the Kansas FFA.
- You have three minutes to address the topic most challenging to U.S. agriculture. You are serving on a panel speaking to a group of agribusiness leaders.

Stakeholder conversations example scenarios

- You are visiting with a potential donor to the Kansas FFA Foundation. While they served as a former state officer, they have not recently been connected to FFA and are unaware of many of the new programs and activities taking place in FFA. They want to learn from you about the current status of Kansas FFA and how their contribution to the foundation might be used.
- You are attending an event at local high school. You have been given the opportunity to visit with a student considering enrolling in agricultural education. They want to discuss the opportunities for them in agricultural education and FFA.
- You are visiting with an agriculture educator who has been teaching for 5-10 years and is concerned with the shortage of agriculture educators and the support agricultural education receives in the traditional educational system. They are very concerned with how agricultural education can continue to prosper and remain relevant.
- You encounter a representative from a major state agricultural organization. They are very interested in what agricultural education and FFA is doing to help young people develop a true understanding of the agriculture industry and how it is preparing them to be spokespeople for the industry. They are interested in your knowledge of current events in agriculture as well.
- You are being interviewed by a reporter who does not have a lot of knowledge about agriculture education or FFA. They want to learn more about the organization and how it ties to agriculture.

Group activity example

This round will team candidates together as a working group of Kansas FFA student leaders. You are not state officers - just be yourself. You have been selected to give a presentation to a Kansas FFA Foundation partner regarding the value of Kansas agricultural education and FFA.

- Primary message should focus on the value of agricultural education, FFA, and special programs of the Kansas FFA Foundation.
- You have 30 minutes to prepare for the presentation. During that time, you can set an agenda, discuss how to best use your time, assign responsibilities, etc.
- The presentations should be interactive, inclusive, creative, organized, informative, and team based. You will not present; you will just prepare.

Workshop facilitation example

Paper Plate Shuffle

Materials needed: Paper plates, one for each student (these can be re-used for all groups)

Introduction: Greet the group with your name and chapter

Activity Instructions:

1. Form a circle, standing one arm's length from each other
2. Stand on the paper plate we give you (give each student one plate)
3. I will stand in the center of the circle and say my name then give a statement about myself such as: "I have been to Texas" or "My favorite color is purple"
4. If the statement is true for you, move and find a vacated paper plate to stand on
5. I will also try to find a vacated plate
6. The person who is unable to find a vacated plate becomes the new facilitator in the center of the circle and the game continues
7. What questions do you have?
8. After the activity: Collect the paper plates to re-use with the next group

- Wrap-up questions – 2 minutes:
 - What did you learn about others in this activity?
 - Why is it beneficial to learn about fellow chapter members?
 - What do you do in your local chapter to help members get to know each other?

Meet the candidate & delegate session sample questions

Delegates get to write the questions asked. Typically each candidate will respond to two questions - one "serious" and one "fun". See a few examples below.

- If you were to use one word to describe your leadership abilities what would it be?
- What is one of your greatest accomplishments in the past year?
- What is your plan to help improve the Kansas FFA Association if elected?
- What makes you want to be a better person?
- What would you do if you had a million dollars?
- If you could have any super power, what would it be and why?
- If you were stuck on an island, what three things would you wish to have?
- If you could go out to dinner with anyone, dead or alive, who would it be and why?

Essay exam example questions

- What is the status of the Farm Bill?
- Explain the importance of SAE's to the school based agricultural education model.
- Describe and explain the three-component-model of agricultural education.
- Explain the debate over GMO labeling.
- Describe the state and national trends related to FFA membership numbers and chapters, including any geographic trends.
- Describe the proficiency award system.



Scoring rubric for essay exam questions

CATEGORY	3	2	1	0
Knowledge – Agriculture, Agricultural Education and FFA	Exhibits thorough and accurate understanding of topic or issue.	Exhibits above average understanding of topic or issue.	Exhibits some understanding of topic or issue.	Exhibits minimal understanding of topic or issue.
Content – Focus, Organization and Support	Maintains excellent focus on topic/subject throughout response. Organization is a logical progression of ideas/events and is unified and complete. Support information is high quality and directly related to and supportive of the topic/subject.	Maintains above average focus on topic/subject and organization. Support information is related to and supportive of the topic/subject.	Exhibit lapses in focus on topic/subject. Exhibit lapses in the logical progression of ideas/events is evident. Weaknesses exist related to and/or in support of the topic/subject.	Fails to establish a clear focus on topic/subject. Ideas/events are presented in a random fashion. Support information has major weaknesses in relatedness to and/or support of the topic/subject.
Writing Style - Vocabulary, Fluency and Grammar	Exhibits skillful use of vocabulary that is precise and purposeful. Demonstrates skillful sentence fluency (varies length, good flow rhythm, and varied structure). Exhibits excellent control of grammatical conventions appropriate to the writing task: sentence formation; standard usage including agreement, tense, and case; and mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.	Exhibits above average use of vocabulary that is precise and purposeful. Demonstrates above average sentence fluency. Exhibits reasonable control of grammatical conventions appropriate to the writing task: sentence formation; standard usage including agreement, tense, and case; and mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.	Exhibits average use of vocabulary that is precise and purposeful. Demonstrates minimal sentence fluency. Exhibits minimal control of grammatical conventions appropriate to the writing task: sentence formation; standard usage including agreement, tense, and case; and mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.	Lacks use of vocabulary that is precise and purposeful. Sentence fluency is lacking. Lacks control of grammatical conventions appropriate to the writing task: sentence formation; standard usage including agreement, tense, and case; and mechanics including use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

Evaluation form example questions

In each section below, evaluators are asked to rate the candidate by indicating if the candidates rarely meet expectations, sometimes meets expectations, frequently meets and exceed expectations, or consistently exceeds expectations. For each of the ten themes, evaluators will be asked to assess the candidate on 4 descriptors.

Ag/FFA Advocate:

- Exhibits a diverse FFA experience
- Knowledgeable about agricultural industry
- Strong advocate for secondary education
- Passionate about the future of agriculture and agricultural education

Authentic:

- Makes decisions and choices that are true to themselves
- Understands their own strengths and weaknesses
- Demonstrate humility even in the case of success
- Display an appropriate amount of confidence and courage

Critical Thinker:

- Solves problems independently with little direction/supervision
- Is able to quickly and effectively think on their feet
- Finds unique and clever solutions when facing challenges
- Demonstrates adaptability and innovative thinking

Growth Mindset:

- Keeps up with current events and happenings in the world around them
- Strives to continually improve and develop self
- Desires and utilizes others feedback and suggestions for improvement
- Strives to learn and apply new information

Self-Motivation:

- Demonstrates responsibility in completing tasks, meeting deadlines and not procrastinating
- Is consistently dependable, reliable and accountable for their actions
- Takes initiative in getting things done without depending on someone else's motivation
- Manages stress well and does not allow stress to impact performance

Servant Leader:

- Makes a practice of focusing on others needs before their own
- Consistently exhibits sincerity in dealing with others
- Driven by goals that reflect a focus on social contribution not just individual success
- Listens with purpose to opinions and input from others

Team Mindset:

- Has the ability to motivate others effectively and consistently
- Makes a valuable, contributing team member in any team setting
- Gets along with others regardless of backgrounds and interests
- Desires to build strong relationships with others on their team or in their group

Evaluation form example questions cont.

Values Driven:

- Demonstrates integrity and honesty consistently without exception
- Serves as a quality role model for younger high school students at all times
- Exhibits sound moral judgment in all personal and professional settings
- Does what they say they will do and is trusted by others

Effective Communicator:

- Is an excellent public speaker in a variety of settings and formats
- Exhibits strong written communication skills with minimal errors
- Demonstrates effective one-on-one communications skills when interacting with others
- The way they listen, look, speak and react to others demonstrates respect

Overall Impression:

- Demonstrates emotional stability and maturity on a consistent basis
- Is poised and professional in their attitude and appearance
- Exhibits a strong desire to serve the Kansas FFA
- Displays enthusiasm and a high energy level

Evaluators are asked to respond to the following questions:

- Everyone has some virtues and some faults. Please briefly highlight your impression of the candidate's strengths and weaknesses.
- Would this candidate be a strong State FFA Officer? Why?
- Do you have any reservations about this candidate serving as a state officer? Are you aware of any conduct by the candidate that should be of concern to the Nominating Committee? Please explain.
- Please briefly share any additional comments about the candidate's ability to serve as a Kansas FFA State Officer.
- Should this candidate be considered for a state office? Yes/No
- Please indicate your overall recommendation to the Kansas FFA State Officer Nominating Committee for the candidate. Highly Recommend/Recommend/Recommend with Reservation/Do Not Recommend



PAST OFFICER REFLECTIONS



“Serving as a state officer was easily one of the most significant experiences in my life. It opened doors for me that I never imagined—I met people, went places and did things that I never would have otherwise.”

Lindy Bilberry (McMillen)

2013-2014 State President
Grain Originator, Garden City Co-op

“Serving Kansas FFA was my largest commitment ever, but it was the most rewarding and enriching experience of my life. It allows you the opportunity to serve in such an unbelievable role. It’s hard to imagine my life without it.”



Kurt Lockwood

2011-2012 State Secretary
Attorney, Virginia



“Being a state officer taught me that true leadership is service and true service is really the only thing I’ll do that will matter in the end. There is no better way to spend my time and energy.”

Bethany Schifferdecker (Ens)

2014-2015 State Vice President
Law Student



PAST OFFICER REFLECTIONS



“It’s hard to describe accurately with words. The networking, the connections, the personal growth—you hear that’s what one can gain from being a state officer. In truth, the improvement and experiences go much farther.”

Eli Ohlde

2017-2018 State President
Central Valley Ag

“A year of service is an opportunity. An opportunity to make a difference in every corner of the state and beyond, an opportunity to grow close to five other individuals that challenge you and support you, and an opportunity to find and grow yourself while being a part of something bigger.”

Bailey Peterson (Wilhelm) 2015-2016 State Vice President Agriculture Economics Professor



“My state officer year showed me what it meant to focus on serving others while at the same time, those same opportunities benefited me just as much. The entire year is a great lesson on ‘doing’ and focusing on improving yourself so you can serve others.”

Garrett Craig

2018-2019 State Sentinel
Agricultural Education Instructor, Clay Center

NOTES

NOTES



Visit the Kansas FFA State Officer Candidate Portal to access further training resources or head to the Kansas FFA website (ksffa.org) for more information. Questions about the process can be emailed to nominatingcommitteechair@gmail.com. This document was created by the Kansas FFA Association in conjunction with the State Officer Candidate process. Updated Feb. 2026.

