

The Essentials of a Successful West Virginia Agricultural Education Program

Instruction

- Offer at least one state approved CTE concentration per program, decided by the agriculture teacher in conjunction with local advisory council, and offer student certifications when possible to better prepare students for the workforce and future careers in the agriculture industry.
- Accept and recruit students with diverse ideas, abilities, backgrounds and culture including both skilled and professional pathway students.
- Stay up-to-date on technology: consider the equipment you use in the classroom and lab and the agricultural technology you teach as class content and develop a plan for replacing old and acquiring new technology to stay current with the industry.
- Make “real-world” connections for your learners so they may gain experience for post-secondary education and a future career.
- Provide articulation credits for post-secondary advancement.

FFA

- FFA is co-curricular and must be linked to FFA leadership activities, award programs and competitive events leading to a high quality agricultural education curriculum.
- Recruit and retain new members from diverse populations and ensure that all members share responsibilities and have access to leadership and other opportunities at the local, state and national levels.
- Elect capable officers and train them adequately.
- Formulate a workable constitution and by-laws and develop a challenging program of activities involving all members.
- Conduct well-planned, regularly-scheduled chapter meetings.

Marketing

- Submit at least one news worthy release to local media per month.
- Sponsor at least one recruiting event per year (open house, tours, etc.).
- Conduct events during National FFA Week that connects with your school and community.
- Highlight with the local media activities conducted with partners.
- Highlight with media innovative and unique activities and SAE success stories.

Partnerships

- Must have a local advisory council that meets at least twice annually.
- Collaborate with other community groups to plan and conduct community events (county fairs, community service projects, etc.).
- Form partnerships to assist with program needs (FFA Alumni, boosters, etc.).
- Partner with key community partners (Extension Service, Farm Bureau, etc.) to deliver adult education programs.
- Reward partners by recognizing their contributions and support.

SAE

- Every student enrolled in an agriculture course will develop a plan and work towards implementation of an SAE.
- Student SAEs should be connected to their concentration and career plans.
- Document the SAE by using up-to-date recordkeeping and analysis.
- A 240-day contract for Agriculture teachers is ideal to adequately supervise SAEs and other agricultural education and co-curricular FFA activities and the benefits should be discussed by key decision-makers in each county.
- Recognize students for their SAEs.

Professional Growth

- Create a vision for your program and teaching philosophy and develop a professional growth plan to accomplish goals.
- Join professional teaching organizations at state and national levels (WVAEE, ACTE, etc.).
- Commit to lifelong learning.
- Revitalize the profession and your program. Recruit students you think would benefit from agricultural education and be good teachers.
- Attend professional development workshops to expand your content knowledge.

Program Planning

- Involve key partners in developing a shared vision for your program.
- Create action plans to fulfill your program's vision (strategic planning).
- Implement your plan.
- Take the time to reflect upon your total program (instruction, SAE and FFA) and make adjustments as needed.
- Seek the input of an agriculture education mentor for idea sharing, advice and counsel.

