

Kentucky FFA State Officer Candidate Handbook



2017

Introduction

Each year the Kentucky FFA Association selects a team of individuals to represent the association as state FFA officers. Throughout the year, these state officers wear a variety of hats. They are elected officials expected to represent the student membership in their words, actions, and leadership. They teach workshops focusing on teamwork and leadership to FFA chapters. They are motivational speakers who provide inspiration to members and stakeholders. They are communicators and public relation representatives for the FFA, building positive relationships across the state. They are teammates to each other and to FFA state staff. They are learners, eager to grow and fulfill their responsibilities.

The work of a state officer is much more than what most people realize. Past state officers have compared the experience to having a full-time job while going to school. State officers must be able to utilize their strengths, improve upon their weaknesses, manage themselves, and maintain a clear vision in order to properly execute the duties of their office. Their year of service is a true embodiment of 'Living to Serve.'

This handbook has been designed to provide a tangible resource for those individuals desiring to one day serve as a Kentucky FFA State Officer. All information should be read and understood, and the individual must be willing to commit to the guidelines contained within. If after studying this handbook, you feel up to the job, then you may have what it takes to be a state officer. Best of luck in your pursuit of this challenging, yet extremely rewarding experience.

Any questions about state office or the selection process should be directed to Kentucky FFA Executive Secretary, Matt Chaliff (matt.chaliff@education.ky.gov) or Kentucky FFA State Advisor, Brandon Davis (brandon.davis@education.ky.gov).



Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy nor suffer much, because they live the gray twilight that knows neither victory nor defeat.

Theodore Roosevelt

State FFA Officer Roles, Competencies, and Responsibilities

To show your true ability is always, in a sense, to surpass the limits of your ability, to go a little beyond them: to dare, to seek, to invent; it is at such a moment that new talents are revealed, discovered, and realized.

Simone de Beauvoir

The Job of Being a State Officer

The primary responsibility of a state officer is to serve the association in local, regional, state, and national activities in a way that will inform, motivate and inspire FFA members, advisors, teachers and others to achieve the mission, strategies and core goals of the state association and national organization.

State Officer Job Description

Being elected to state FFA office is making a commitment to service that is unique to most student organizations. In addition to serving and representing more than 14,000 FFA members, you will represent the image and direction of the association to teachers, state staff, teacher educators, agriculture executives, government leaders, the media and the general public. You will also be a teammate to eleven other officers and a co-worker to the agricultural education state staff.

There are eight key roles state officers play. Those who commit their time, energies and passions toward learning, living and modeling these eight keys of success will not only successfully complete their term of service, they will move toward excellence professionally. The following is a summary of each of the eight keys, along with already-established procedures that will help you achieve success.

Be the Brand

State FFA officers are committed to representing and upholding the FFA brand. This includes communicating the FFA brand, vision and strategic plan to others as well as communicating key associational messages (agricultural education, supervised agricultural experiences (SAEs), FFA, youth issues and agriculture). This requires the officer to be in his or her role 24 hours a day, seven days a week for 365 days. As part of the FFA brand, there will be general rules of behavior to follow, including projecting a professional image, using proper etiquette, interacting positively with the media and promoting diversity.

- Be dedicated and committed to FFA and the total program of education in agriculture/agribusiness.
- Forego all alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances at all times during your year of service to 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.

Balancing Act

A State FFA Officer must also include educational goals, personal health, wellness and stress management as a key to success. A state officer committed to this will position themselves to fully serve FFA members. 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 your year of service.

- Maintain and protect your health.
- Regularly, and on time, write all letters, thank-you notes, emails and other correspondence, which are necessary and desirable.

The Time Is Now

The training and experiences in this area centers around life- and time-management. An officer should excel in these areas, so that he or she will be better able to give his or her full concentration and focus to the present. This includes:

- Logistics Management (use of computer and technology, appropriate management of travel, completing vouchers properly and submitting on time and excellent communication with teammates and state staff)
 - Meeting Management (creating and following agendas, consensus building, bringing people back to task and keeping focus)
 - Life Management (prioritizing, balancing school and officer duties, meeting deadlines and timeliness)
 - Financial Management (maintaining your personal finances, understanding and following program budgets)
 - Focus (listening and bridging — connecting conversation topics to FFA key messages/programs).
 - Team (understanding roles on team, following the team code of ethics, following the team mission and following the team vision)
- Be willing to commit the entire year to state officer activities
 - Be willing and able to travel and serve the Kentucky FFA Association
 - Consider FFA officer activities to be your primary responsibility outside of educational commitments

Step Up To the Blackboard

Training and experiences in this key will help officers gain confidence in their abilities and take measured risks. To achieve this, a state officer must be committed to trying new things, approaching failure as a learning experience, building team trust and resolving conflict.

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

Pay It Forward

Service is an important component to an officer's year. The training and experiences in this key area will help make service more realistic to you, and will help you approach the year of service with a plan. This includes: focusing on the future value of your current work (business and industry visits, chapter visits, etc.); building strategic relationships/partnerships; treating everyone with respect; teaching workshops in an engaging manner and teaching to meet all learner needs (learning abilities, diversity, etc.).

- Strive to improve your 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 yourself in a manner that commands respect without any display of superiority.
- Maintain your 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 officer. These include responsibility, integrity, keeping promises, speaking with purpose (communicate in a positive, honest and direct way), dealing in a constructive way with difficult people/teammates and seeking win-win solutions.

- Evaluate, periodically, your personality and attitudes, making every effort to improve yourself.
- Serve as a member of the team, always maintaining a cooperative attitude.
- Work in harmony with fellow FFA officers and state staff.
- Do not willingly engage in conversations detrimental to other FFA members, officers and adults.

Learning for Life

This key focuses on the importance of learning throughout the officer year in several subjects. Developmental topics will include communicating about agricultural education, the history and foundations of FFA and the future directions of FFA, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture, Kentucky Department of Education, etc. In addition, State FFA Officers will learn advanced workshop and speech design and delivery methods. Also, growing your knowledge of yourself and growing your knowledge of team members will allow the officer to perform more efficiently and effectively.

- Become knowledgeable of agriculture, of education in agriculture/agribusiness and of FFA.
- Keep yourself up-to-date on current events.

Fuel the Fire

This key focuses on passion. To achieve this, a state officer will discover and build on his or her personal interests and passions. The officer will use the team's passions to develop themes and will learn to share his or her passion by building individual and team relationships with state staff, teachers and through effective delivery of speeches and keynote addresses.

After leading a workshop in which we had telegram bags, where students could write happy messages to one another in the class, I was reading through mine and I received one that said:

"Thanks for giving me the hope, strength, and courage to carry on."

I carried this in my FFA Jacket during my year as a state officer because it served as a reminder of the differences that can be made during one single year of service. Even when you may not think you are making a difference, you are!

Callie Hobbs – Lincoln Trail State Vice President 2009-2010

Job Qualification/Competencies Required

Degree: Candidates must hold the State FFA Degree at the time of election.

Membership: State Officers must be an active member during their year of service. Additionally, at the time of running for state office, a candidate must be a graduating senior or have already graduated from high school.

Competencies: The following is a listing of the essential competencies required for serving as a state FFA officer. The officer selection process is designed to screen candidates to find those who demonstrate these competencies consistently.

Competency 1 – Communication - Demonstrates the effective use of various forms of communication, i.e., non-verbal, listening, written, speaking and facilitation to convey a message in both large and one-on-one settings

Competency 2 – Team Player - Demonstrates the ability to work in a team setting, values diversity of opinion, and works to be inclusive in the process, and is willing to put others above self

Competency 3 – Areas of Knowledge - Demonstrate the ability to articulate the systemic nature of food, fiber, agricultural, and natural resources issues, FFA and education issues

Competency 4 – Character - Displays a disposition that is genuine, responsible, honest, mature, confident, respectful and has a positive outlook on life

Competency 5 – Influence - Demonstrates the ability to influence others through modeling expectations, building relationships, and growing the association and organization

Review the five individual competency pages for detailed information on each.

Competency 1 - Communication

Demonstrates the effective use of various forms of communication, i.e., non-verbal, listening, written, speaking and facilitation to convey a message in both large and one-on-one settings

Competency Builders

- 1.1 – **Demonstrates non-verbal skills when communicating with others** - *Uses appropriate tone; gives full attention (eye contact); refrains from distracting mannerisms; uses effective and purposeful gestures (hand signals, facial expressions, body language).*
- 1.2 – **Display listening skills when talking to others** - *Recalls information; is attentive; utilizes appropriate wait times; listens for understanding; finds connections in the conversation.*
- 1.3 – **Demonstrate writing skills when communicating with others** - *Uses correct spelling and grammar; delivers a clear and concise message; uses various forms of written communication appropriately (including formal letters, thank-you notes and emails); varies writing style based on audience.*
- 1.4 – **Demonstrate speaking skills in a variety of settings (including classrooms, board rooms, auditorium, arena, small groups, and one-on-one) and audiences (including business/industry, parents, school officials, FFA members, elementary and secondary students)**
- 1.5 – **Demonstrate facilitation skills in a workshop setting** - *Accommodates different learning styles through various teaching techniques (including lecture, demonstration, hands-on activity, problem solving); seeks to make the experience meaningful and enjoyable; gauges student understanding and readiness throughout the workshop and addresses it appropriately; utilizes effective format in creating a delivering a facilitation outline (i.e., National FFA Magic Formula for Presentations, Instructional Plan Outline, etc.), and uses transitions appropriately.*

Communication is critical in everything you do: whether it's a one-on-one interaction, a presentation to an audience of hundreds or a thank you note you write to a CEO. When you become an effective communicator, you have a greater impact on those around you.

Competency 2 - Team Player

Demonstrates the ability to work in a team setting, values diversity of opinion, and works to be inclusive in the process, and is willing to put others above self

Competency Builders

2.1 - Demonstrate the ability to work in a team pursuing a common goal - *Easily transitions between leader and follower role; seeks to be a positive influence in group; is aware of personality styles; and successfully manages team dynamic.*

2.2 – Demonstrate the acceptance of differing viewpoints during a group or individual interactions - *Fosters a safe and open environment; values diversity of opinion; and shows respect and empathy toward others.*

2.3 – Demonstrate the ability to put team before self - *Empowers others; displays a spirit of humility; shares success with team members; and assumes responsibility for undesirable outcomes.*

When you serve as a state officer, you must remember that you are a member of the team. It is important to consider others' feelings, opinions and beliefs at all times.

Build for your team a feeling of oneness, of dependence upon one another and of strength to be derived by unity.

Abraham Lincoln

Competency 3 - Areas of Knowledge

Demonstrate the ability to articulate the systemic nature of food, fiber, agricultural, and natural resources issues, FFA and education issues

Competency Builders

3.1 – Demonstrate knowledge of the food, fiber, agricultural, and natural resources industries and their current issues - *Ability to connect facts and issues and articulate how they impact agriculture locally and globally; discuss key and emerging trends with related statistics; passes along knowledge of the career opportunities through agricultural career pathway (as outlined by the Kentucky Department of Education); articulate the primary components of the integrated food chain from production to consumption.*

3.2 – Demonstrate knowledge of the FFA and its current issues - *Ability to connect facts and issues and articulate how they impact FFA on a local, state and national level; discuss key and emerging FFA issues with related statistics; recall historic FFA events and understand their significance; recite and explain the FFA mission; demonstrates comprehensive understanding of the opportunities available within FFA; explain the organizational structure of FFA and its partner organizations; promote the organizations ability to develop and to foster leaders for the industry of agriculture.*

3.3 – Demonstrate knowledge of Kentucky and America’s Education system and its current issues - *Can articulate the role of FFA as an intra-curricular component of agricultural education; and understands the relationship between FFA and the Kentucky Department of Education career and technical education, federal funding and the issues connecting them. Can relate the importance of Unbridled Learning: College and Career Readiness for All accountability system to efforts in place in the agricultural classroom and in FFA activities.*

As a state officer, you automatically become a spokesperson for the Kentucky Association and National FFA Organization. You are a messenger of information and it is important to know the facts.

Competency 4 - Character

Displays a disposition that is genuine, responsible, honest, mature, confident, respectful and has a positive outlook on life

Competency Builders

5.1 – Displays reliability, integrity, and trust among others - *Does the right thing, even when it causes discomfort; takes responsibility for his/her actions; does what he/she commits to and more.*

5.2 – Displays adaptable and flexible characteristics - *Reacts well to changes; adjusts to new situations confidently.*

5.3 – Displays a positive attitude - *Approachable and engages in conversation; demonstrates an optimistic attitude; has an enjoyable presence about them.*

5.4 – Sincerity and compassion - *Demonstrates the genuine welfare of others; communicates true self with tact (passion or vulnerabilities).*

5.5 – Maturity - *Demonstrates an appropriate demeanor for the situation; uses mature language and mannerisms; demonstrates patience and self-control.*

5.6 – Coachable, life-long learning - *Seeks constructive feedback and uses in proactive manner.*

5.7 – Work ethic - *Demonstrates a sense of ownership; demonstrates a strong desire/drive for completion on all projects regardless of the circumstances.*

Character is about knowing right from wrong. You can count on a person with character to say and do the right thing. You can also count on them to honor their commitments.

Character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experience of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened, vision cleared, ambition inspired and success achieved.

Helen Keller

Competency 5 - Influence

Demonstrates the ability to influence others through modeling expectations, building relationships, and growing the association and organization

Competency Builders

7.1 – Supports and motivates FFA members and partners - *Communicates the value of being a member and the opportunities available in FFA; demonstrates support of individuals and groups through recognition, awards, letters and personal notes.*

7.2 – Mentors and coaches others - *Generate ideas for professional improvement for members and officers, serves as a role model.*

7.3 – Committed to member representation - *Carefully weighs impact of decisions on FFA and its members; isn't afraid to make tough decisions for the good of the association.*

7.4 – Builds Relationships - *Employs strategies to learn about others; attempts to ask questions; shows enthusiasm; engages others; and finds common ground with others.*

Influence is caring enough to make a positive difference in the lives of FFA members, advisors, and partners.

Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing.

Albert Schweitzer

Essential Functions of Kentucky FFA State Officers

1. Participate in training, orientation, continual self-improvement and evaluation of activities as required by state staff.
2. Work with the Kentucky Association of Agriculture Educators and Kentucky Agricultural Education state staff to attend all required meetings.
3. Participate in making visits to business and industry as directed by the Executive Secretary in cooperation with the Kentucky FFA Foundation staff.
4. Participate in chapter activities as requested by FFA advisors.
5. Represent the Kentucky FFA Association at other local, state, and national activities as scheduled by the State Executive Secretary, State Advisor, and/or chapter Advisors.
6. Attend the Kentucky FFA Leadership Training Center to serve as a facilitator for the Communication Skills class, interact with members, prepare nightly comments for sessions, and other duties as assigned by the Leadership Training Center Director.
7. Participate in the planning and presentation of workshops at chapter and regional levels in cooperation with appropriate parties.
8. Participate in the planning and conducting of the Regional Officer Annual Roundup (ROAR) under the direction of the Executive Secretary.
9. Serve as a delegate to the National FFA Convention including serving as a member of assigned committees, attending all required business and general sessions, and conducting the work of the Organization.
10. Participate in the planning and conducting of sessions and other activities at the state FFA convention.
11. Attend officer "home visits" to conduct business to plan for upcoming events of the association.
12. Attend regional events to bring greetings, evaluate state degrees, and conduct all duties expected of a state officer at such functions.

13. Author and co-author articles for print and online publications hosted by the Kentucky FFA Association and other participating organizations.
14. Plan, prepare, read, study, listen, review, and practice to continue to improve public speaking and teaching skills.
15. Stay up to date on agriculture, agribusiness, and agricultural education facts and issues.
16. Develop positive relationships with FFA members, advisors, staff, sponsors, and the general public.
17. Develop and exercise an awareness and sensitivity for the diverse geographic, ethnic, and cultural groups represented in FFA membership and the general student population.
18. Maintain a positive attitude and enjoy your year of service with members, advisors, staff, sponsors, and others.
19. Keep up to date on all correspondence. Examples of required correspondence include, but are not limited to, thank you notes to business and industry, replies to member emails, correspondence with state staff and event planners at the local, regional, and state levels.
20. Perform other duties as instructed by the state staff.

The preceding examples are representative of the assignments performed by this position and are not intended to be all-inclusive.

Officer Experience at a Glance

The following activities will consume the majority of the state officers' year of service. Adequate time must be allowed for preparation, evaluation, self-improvement, relationships, rejuvenation and team building.

State Office Overview	June	1-2 days
BLAST Off Training	June	3 days
NLCSO Training	June/July	One week
Workshop Training	July	3 days
FFA Camp	June/July	1 week
State President's Conference (President and Vice President)	July	1 week
Kentucky State Fair	August	1 week
Rising Sun Conference	September	2 days
National FFA Convention	October	1 week
State Convention Planning/KAAE Meeting	December	2 days
FFA Foundation Industry Visits	January	1 week
National FFA Week	February	1 week
Regional FFA Days	Feb-April	1 day
State Convention Planning	April	2 days
Chapter workshops and activities	Year Long	1 day each
Chapter Banquets	Feb-May	1 evening each
Representation at meetings/conferences	Year Long	1-2 days each
Officer Home Visits	Year Long	2 days each
Officer Retreat	May	2 days
State FFA Convention	June	6 days

Being an officer involves a commitment to tasks not listed here as well. For example, when officers are not on official business they are maintaining their academic requirements. They are also expected to stay up-to-date by checking and replying to email; calling contacts to schedule and prepare for the next set of events; maintaining finances; scheduling travel; and keeping up with correspondence. Being an officer means being available throughout the entire year and that includes "home office time" as well as a large commitment to working on behalf of the Association.

Student Officers

During their service, state officers typically are also attending college. This adds an additional level of responsibility to the life of an officer. It is crucial that officers discover a workable balance between the demands of attending school and doing the work of the association. Failure to find this balance results in an officer struggling in both their educational and FFA responsibilities.

Because of the rigorous demands of state office, it is recommended that much thought be put into the classes taken and the scheduling of those classes during the year of service. At some point during the year, an officer **will** miss class to perform FFA responsibilities. Most notably, National FFA Convention will require an officer to miss an entire week of classes and chapter visits will occur during normal school hours throughout the year. Planning and informing professors is vital in order for the officer to be able to make these arrangements work and not be penalized.

Upon election, officers should consult with their academic advisor and professors to inform them of the requirements of state office. At times it may be in the best interest of the officer to hold off in taking some classes after their year of service so they will not struggle in more advanced courses later. Universities with agriculture programs typically work well with officers and can ensure the disruption is minimal. Upon request, the Executive Secretary can provide a letter to professors explaining the role of a state officer.

Careful consideration should also be paid to the course load taken during a semester. Taking 18 hours in a semester while serving as an officer is almost always guaranteed to lead to disaster. Even if classes are only missed occasionally, the amount of after school hours for traveling and planning for FFA events makes time for studying precious and, at times, limited. **It is highly recommended that officer candidates consult current/former state officers from the school they plan on attending to get a “feel” for the best way to approach school and state office.**

Above all, officers are students first. Academics should be a priority and missing class should occur only in a “must do” situation. Many officers find it beneficial to work out a class schedule that allows for one or two “free days” during the week (i.e. taking classes only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays so that Tuesday and Thursday can be used for studying, chapter visits, preparing speeches and workshops).

Remember that staying ahead of the game is much easier than trying to play catch-up for an entire semester. Organization, time management, and focus must be a daily part of an officer’s life.

State Officer Commitment

Upon nomination to become a state officer, a candidate must complete the state officer commitment form by securing all signatures and submitting it as part of their completed application. Upon election, state officers will sign the commitment form again in the presence of state staff and their fellow officers.

1. Be dedicated and committed to FFA and the total program of agricultural education.
2. Be willing and able to travel as required in serving the Kentucky Association FFA.
3. Become knowledgeable of agriculture, education in agriculture and agribusiness, and the FFA.
4. Through preparation and practice, develop into an effective public speaker and project a desirable image of FFA at all times.
5. Regularly and on time, write all letters, thank-you notes, reports, and other correspondence that are necessary and desirable.
6. Strive to improve my ability to carry on meaningful and enjoyable conversations with individuals of all ages and from all walks of life.
7. Accept and search out constructive criticism and evaluation of my total performance.
8. Keep up to date on current events.
9. Periodically evaluate my personality and attitudes, making every effort for improvement.
10. Maintain and protect my personal health.
11. Forego alcohol and illegal substances at all times during my year of service to the FFA.
12. Treat all FFA members equally by not favoring one over another.
13. Conduct myself in a manner that commands respect and without any display of superiority.
14. Maintain my dignity while being personable, concerned, and interested in contacts with others.
15. Avoid places or activities that in any way could raise question to one's moral character or conduct.
16. Use wholesome and appropriate language in all speeches and informal conversations.
17. Maintain proper dress and grooming for all occasions.
18. Work in harmony with fellow FFA officers and not knowingly engage in conversations detrimental to other FFA members, officers, or adults.
19. Serve as a member of the team, always maintaining a cooperative attitude.
20. Be willing to take and follow instructions as directed by those responsible for state FFA officers and state FFA programs.
21. Attend all state officer training activities both in and out of state.
22. Serve the needs of local FFA chapters and regions, including assisting with training officers.
23. Attend local, state, and national activities (including State Fair, State FFA Convention, National FFA Convention, NLCSO, BLAST Off, state officer meetings, and others as needed) required as part of the duties of the office.

Selection Process For Kentucky FFA State Officers

Leadership is practiced not so much in words as in attitude and in actions.

Harold Geneen

Article VIII of the Kentucky FFA Constitution outlines the officers of the Association and the means by which they are selected.

Chapter and Regional Nomination

Each chapter may nominate one candidate to represent the chapter at the annual selection of the state officer candidates. Specific processes for selecting the chapter representative are to be determined by the chapter and outlined in the chapter's constitution and bylaws which are not in conflict with state or national requirements.

Among the chapter candidates presented to the regional delegates during a called meeting, two candidates will be chosen to represent the region at the State FFA Convention. Each region will adopt a process by which the two candidates are selected. This may include, but is not limited to, a written application, interview, and prepared speech. The protocol used in a region must be followed as described in the regional constitution and bylaws.

After the nomination of candidates has occurred at the regional level, the names of those candidates will be forwarded to the FFA Executive Secretary. Applications must be mailed to the Executive Secretary by the stated date and be complete at time of receipt.

If a candidate nominated from a region decides not to pursue state office prior to May 15th, they will be replaced by the candidate who received the third most votes from the regional selection process. Per action by the Kentucky Association of Agriculture Educators, in the event a candidate for state office decides not to run for office and makes this decision known to state staff after May 15th, there will not be a replacement candidate named.

When only one candidate is nominated for state office from a region, the candidate must meet all qualifications and participate in all facets of the state selection process. If the candidate does not meet the above, the nominating committee will not nominate the candidate to state office, thus no officer will be represented from that region.

Nominating Committee

Each region may nominate one member to serve as their representative on the State Officer Nominating Committee. One member may additionally be selected to serve as an alternate. These members must be receiving the state FFA degree and not be from a chapter that has a state officer candidate. In the event a region does not nominate a committee representative or the nominee does not meet the qualifications, the region will not have representation on the committee.

The chair of the nominating committee shall be the Second-Vice President, who is the immediate past state president. At least one adult consultant will also work with the nominating committee during the selection process.

State Officer Candidate Application

Each candidate selected by their region to run for state office, must complete and submit to the Kentucky FFA Executive Secretary, an application. The application must be received/postmarked by May 15th.

The application will be sent to all teachers of agriculture in the spring. Once regional candidates have been selected, the advisor should supply the candidate with the application and ensure that all components of the application are complete upon submission.

The application consists of seven parts:

1. Candidate Information – Basic contact information as well as information to be used for press releases upon election.
2. Letter of Application – Briefly outlines the candidate’s experiences and interests in becoming a state FFA officer.
3. Resume – Summary of academic, leadership, and work experiences that convey a candidate’s readiness to take on the challenges of state office.
4. Letters of Recommendation – Three letters from individuals that provide insight into the candidate’s characteristics that would make them an effective state officer.
5. Officer Commitment Form – Agreement by candidate to follow the guiding principles and procedures of state officers. Also contains the signatures of a parent/guardian, FFA advisor, and school administrator.
6. SAE Information – Brief overview of the Supervised Agriculture Experience program of the candidate.
7. Photograph – Provided to the nominating committee to assist in deliberations and may be used for promotional purposes prior to state convention.

The application contains specific instructions on how to complete each of the above sections.

The application is not scored as an individual component of the selection process. It does, however, provide the committee with insight into the candidate’s experiences and portions of the application may be used during the selection process.

Interview Rounds and Procedures

The interview process consists of two written components (multiple choice knowledge examination and essay) and four interview rounds (Introduction, Stand & Deliver, One-on-One, and Small Group).

All candidates will complete all components of the selection process.

Written Components

State officers must consistently demonstrate a command of key issues related to agriculture, FFA, and the education system. While some of this knowledge may be demonstrated by asking quality questions and carrying on informed conversations rather than “knowing facts,” it is still important that officers come in with a base understanding of core issues and facts related to these three areas of knowledge. Thus, a written exam consisting of two portions – multiple choice questions and an essay question -- will be administered to allow candidates to demonstrate evidence of this desired knowledge set. Candidates will complete the exam on Monday. Thirty minutes will be allowed for candidates to complete each of the writing components. Study materials will NOT be allowed during the examinations

Multiple Choice Knowledge Examination

All candidates will have 30 minutes to complete a written exam with 40 multiple choice questions. The composition of the exam will be as follows:

- 6 questions on FFA History
- 6 questions on FFA Structure and Operations
- 10 questions on FFA Events/Programs
- 6 questions on American agriculture issues
- 8 questions on Kentucky agriculture issues
- 4 questions on agricultural education

The multiple choice examination will count for 20 points toward a candidate’s final score.

Writing Exercise

All candidates will have 30 minutes to complete a written essay on a topic relevant to agriculture, FFA or the education system. The purpose of the essay is focused on student’s ability to convey knowledge and understanding in a different way than allowed through multiple choice questions.

Each writing sample will be reviewed and scored by two student members of the nominating committee. Scores will be assigned based on the candidate’s ability to demonstrate both content knowledge and communication skills in writing. Each of the two nominating committee members will score the samples on a scale of one to five with five representing strong evidence the skills are present and one representing strong evidence the skill is not present.

Interview Rounds

There will be four rounds of interviews held on Monday before state convention.

Round One - Introduction – In this round, candidates will have the opportunity to “introduce” themselves to the nominating committee. In this one-on-thirteen format, candidates should capitalize on this time by making their first impression a lasting impression. In addition, candidates can expect to answer two or three behavioral-based interview questions posed by the nominating committee and to expound on their goals, motivations and/or desire to be a state officer. This round lasts 4 minutes.

Round Two – Stand and Deliver – Candidates will have 10 minutes in a preparation room to prepare for delivering a 2-3 minute speech on a topic that is given to them. When preparing their speech, candidates should plan as if they are advocating for this topic and its supporting ideas. When candidates arrive to the preparation room they will receive the topic and instructions regarding the setting and audience to which the speech will be directed. Candidates will have a full 10 minutes to formulate their remarks. No materials will be allowed in the room during this time other than a pad of paper and a pen, which will be provided.

Candidates will promptly move from the preparation room to the interview room to deliver their 2-3 minute speech. Regardless of where they are in their time, time will be called at the end of three minutes. Candidates must stop their speech and wait for questions from the committee.

Carefully constructed questions will be asked of the candidate regarding the speech topic. Candidates have a total of two minutes to respond to the questions asked. The number of questions the committee intends to ask will be clearly stated prior to the start of this two minute period. Time will be called at the end of two minutes regardless of where the candidates is in his/her response. Should a candidate finish early he or she may leave the interview room.

Round Three – One-on-One - This round will consist of thirteen 2-minute interviews each with a different member of the nominating committee. The interview is focused on two objectives. First, this is an opportunity for individual committee members to develop rapport and get to know candidates in a one-on-one setting. Second, this will provide an opportunity for evaluation of a number of targeted competencies through structured questions and follow-up questions. The competencies outlined will be evaluated through observation and careful listening to candidate responses to questions.

Round Four – Small Group – Nominating Committee will split into three groups and each candidate will interview with each group. Three minutes will be allowed at each rotation, for a total of 9 minutes per candidate in the round. This round will focus on multiple competencies, with particular focus in critical thinking, team player, and character.

Candidates must remain in the holding room for the entire process, except for a dinner break and during other predetermined breaks.

Nominating Committee Function During Convention

Once candidates are excused from the holding room, the formal selection process has essentially been “placed on paused.” The committee will meet two more times during convention. The first meeting will be on Wednesday. At this time the committee will discuss the interview process and will make recommendations for improvements. They will also review preliminary scores from Monday’s interviews as needed. The final meeting of the committee will be on Thursday morning, where the slate of officers will be determined. Though the committee may not be in formal meetings, they will be watching the candidates’ actions during convention. While this is not a formally “scored” area, the committee may decide to address any pertinent issues they see during convention when they meet again.

Nominating Committee members and officer candidates are not to communicate with each other in regards to the selection process and should avoid lengthy contact.

Candidates’ Function During Convention

Candidates shall serve as ushers during the convention under the direction of the State Officer Candidate Coordinators and the state staff. Specific information dealing with times to report and duties will be shared in the holding room and prior to the start of sessions. Candidates should plan to arrive early to prepare for sessions and stay after sessions to prepare the convention hall for the next session. At times there will also be meetings and practices candidates must attend.

Candidates will be involved in a series of other events during convention. Time with their chapter may be limited and candidates should be prepared to assist in convention functions as called on by the state staff. Candidates participating in contests and other official activities will be permitted to do so without consequence.

State Officer Candidate Coordinators will hold “candidate only” activities to assist in surviving the convention. Details will be shared at convention by the candidate coordinators.

Candidates' Schedule During Convention

This is a draft schedule of State Officers Candidates during the 2016 Kentucky FFA State Convention. This should serve as a reference only. Times/locations will be adjusted as needed and other activities may be added for 2017's Convention.

Monday

9:15 – Candidates arrive
9:40 to 10:45 – Complete FFA Knowledge Exam/Writing Exercise
11:00 am – Candidate Luncheon with State Officers
12:30 – Round 1 - Introduction
2:30 – Round 2 – Stand and Deliver
5:00 – Dinner
5:45 – Round 3 – One-on-One
6:45 – Round 4 – Small Group
8:00 – Interview complete and committee begins deliberations

Tuesday

11:00 am – Leadership Workshops
1:00 pm - Leadership Workshops
Attendance recommended if not competing in state contests

3:00 pm – Meet State Officer Candidate Coordinators in Convention Hall
3:30 pm – **Session 1 begins**
After session – Prep for session 2
7:00 pm – Meet State Officer Candidate Coordinators in Convention Hall
7:30 pm – **Session 2 begins**
After session – Prep for concert
11:00 pm (approx.) – Practice Installation ceremony

Wednesday

10:00 am – Meet State Officer Candidate Coordinators in Convention Hall for awards practice
2:00 pm – Meet State Officer Candidate Coordinators in Convention Hall
2:30 pm – **Session 3 begins**
After session – Prep for session 4
7:30 pm – Meet State Officer Candidate Coordinators in Convention Hall
8:00 pm – **Session 4 begins**
After session – prep for session 5
Candidate-only meeting with State Staff and State Officer Candidate Coordinators

Thursday

8:30 am – Meet State Officer Candidate Coordinators in Convention Hall
9:00 am – **Session 5 begins**
12:00 pm - Luncheon for New Officers, Retiring Officers, and their parents
1:00 pm - 2015-2016 State Officers' Meeting

Nomination, Election, and Installation of Officers

On the final day of convention the nominating committee will reconvene. During this meeting the committee will review results from voting, discuss any issues/concerns, and will prepare a slate of candidates to recommend to the delegates.

Once the decision has been made, the committee will be sequestered during the final session to keep the results confidential.

When called by the state president, the Nominating Committee Chair (the Second Vice President) will present the report of the nominating committee to the delegates. As each officer nominee is called, they will be retrieved by the corresponding retiring state officer and brought on stage.

Once the entire report has been presented, the Second Vice-President will move for the passage of the nominating committee report, which has an implied second. The current president will seek acceptance of the report from the delegate body. Once the motion is passed, a motion will be entertained to elect the slate to state office. When adopted, officers-elect will be installed by the retiring officers.

After installation each officer will present the retiring officer with their retiring officer plaque and pin. The new state president will give brief remarks and close the convention using the official closing ceremony.

Upon adjournment new officers and their families will attend the new and retiring officer luncheon. The officers will then meet with state staff for a brief orientation meeting. *Every effort will be made to insure the orientation meeting concludes by 3:30pm ET.*