



VIRGINIA FFA
STATE OFFICER
CANDIDATE

HANDBOOK



VIRGINIA
FFA ASSOCIATION

**Virginia FFA State Officer Candidate Handbook
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VIRGINIA
FFA ASSOCIATION

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Dear Candidate,

Becoming a State FFA Officer is a challenging process, yet a very rewarding opportunity. Throughout the state officer candidate process, you will grow as a person and advance in leadership development and career preparation. Congratulations on deciding to run for office!

Although State FFA Office takes a great deal of hard work and dedication, officers will gain experiences and develop relationships that will last a lifetime. The skills gained will help prepare for future careers, opportunities in college, and leadership roles in other organizations. State officers serve Virginia FFA members and advisors on many different levels. They make a positive difference in the lives of members, supporters, the community and key stakeholders. The Virginia FFA Association is looking for highly motivated individuals who are willing and ready to work to promote Agricultural Education and FFA in our state.

This handbook is intended to provide a basic understanding of the duties and responsibilities of a Virginia State FFA Officer and to help you prepare for your candidacy as a State FFA Officer Candidate. In it, you will find a basic overview of the selection process, expectations, and the commitments that you will have if selected to represent Virginia as a state officer. Please thoroughly review all of the enclosed information as you prepare for the State Officer Selection Process.

Remember this handbook is only the beginning! As a candidate, you will need to study Agricultural Education and FFA information, practice interviewing and presenting yourself in front of an audience. It will take personal commitment and the highest level of dedication to prepare fully for this process. With the aid of this handbook and the state officer candidate study guide, we hope that you will have the necessary resources to prepare yourself to be the best candidate that you can be. Please know that this handbook is only one resource and it is important that you research additional resources to aid you in your candidacy for state office.

We wish you the very best in your preparations for state convention. If you have additional questions or concerns regarding the responsibilities of State Officers or the Selection Process, please feel free to contact the Virginia FFA Office. Good Luck!

Best Wishes,

Virginia FFA Association

State FFA 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 9,000 FFA members, you will represent the image and direction of the association to teachers, state staff, teacher educators, agricultural business and industry executives, government leaders, the media and the public. You will also be a teammate to other elected officers.

There are many key roles that state officers play in helping to further the Virginia FFA Association's mission and objectives. Those who commit their time, energies and passions toward learning, living and modeling those keys of success will not only successfully complete their term of service, they will move toward personal and professional excellence.

Below, we have outlined some of the key components of the "year of service" as a state officer. The information will help you better understand the responsibilities and duties of being a state officer.

BE THE BRAND

State FFA officers are committed to representing and upholding the FFA brand at all times. This includes communicating the FFA brand, vision and strategic plan to others as well as communicating key organizational 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 are rules, guidelines, and procedures regarding behavior requirements, including projecting a professional image, using proper etiquette, interacting positively with the public, the media, and promoting diversity.

1. Be dedicated and committed to FFA and the total program of education in agriculture and agribusiness.
2. Forego all alcohol, tobacco, and illegal substances at all times during your year of service to FFA.
3. Avoid places or activities that in any way would raise questions regarding one's moral character or conduct.
4. Use wholesome and appropriate language in all speeches and informal conversations.
5. Maintain proper dress and impeccable grooming for all occasions.
6. Be willing to take and follow instructions as directed by state staff.

BALANCING ACT

A state officer must also include personal health, wellness and stress management as a key to success. When committed to this, a state officer positions him or herself to serve FFA members completely. 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.

1. Maintain and protect your health.
2. Regularly, and on time, write all letters, thank-you notes, emails, and other correspondence as required to ensure effective communication.

STEP UP TO THE BLACKBOARD

Training and experience in this is key and will assist officers in gaining confidence in their abilities and learn how to 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.

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

THIS IS IT

The training and experiences in this key center on 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:

1. Logistics Management (use of computer and technology, appropriate management of travel, completing reimbursement forms properly and submitting on time and excellent communication with teammates and State Staff).
2. Meeting Management (creating and following agendas, consensus building, bringing people back to task and keeping focus).
3. Life Management (prioritizing, meeting deadlines and timeliness).
4. Financial Management (maintaining your personal finances, understanding and following program budgets).
5. Focus (listening and bridging – connecting conversation topics to FFA key messages/programs).
6. Team (understanding roles on team, following the team code of ethics, following the team mission and following the team vision).

Also:

1. Be willing to commit the entire year to state officer activities and responsibilities.
2. Be willing and able to travel and serve the Virginia FFA Association.
3. Consider FFA officer activities to be your primary responsibility.

PAY IT FORWARD

Service is an important component to an officer's year. The training and experiences in this key, 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 tours, 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.).

1. Strive to improve your ability to carry on meaningful and enjoyable conversation with all individuals of all ages and walks of life.
2. Treat all FFA members equally by not favoring one over another.
3. Conduct yourself in a manner that commands respect without any display of superiority.
4. 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.

1. Evaluate, periodically, your personality and attitudes, making every effort to improve yourself.
2. Serve as a member of the team, always maintaining a cooperative attitude.
3. Work in harmony with fellow FFA officers and state staff.
4. 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 Department of Agriculture, Department of Education, etc. In addition, State FFA Officers will learn advanced workshop and speech design and delivery methods. In addition, growing your knowledge of yourself and that of your team members, will allow the officer to perform more efficiently and effectively.

1. Become knowledgeable of agriculture, of education in agriculture/agribusiness and of FFA.
2. 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 and teachers and through effective delivery of speeches and keynote addresses.

Official Dress Guidelines

1. Officers must be clean-shaven and have an appropriate haircut that looks neat and professional.
 - No beards, mustaches, etc.
 - Any barrettes or hair accessories need to complement official dress. Please be conservative with these accessories.
2. There should be no pins on the State FFA Association Jacket.
3. Pants and skirts need to be black - not faded or gray in appearance.
4. Skirts need to be at the knee or slightly below. Make sure they fit properly.
5. Skirts must be straight and professional looking. -No ruffles. -No high-cut slits.
6. Pantyhose need to be black. (Off-black color is preferred over jet-black).
7. Males need to wear black dress socks.
8. Shoes: Females should wear a solid black pump with a comfortable heel. Males should wear a black leather dress shoe – not a work shoe. Shoes need to be polished at all times.
9. White shirts need pointed collars. Rounded collars are difficult to wear with the scarf or tie properly.
10. Use jewelry in moderation.
 - Males will not be allowed to have any visible piercings.
 - Females are limited to two earrings per ear maximum and no other visible piercings.
 - Only one ring per hand should be worn at the maximum.
 - Females may wear earrings that complement the official dress, nothing too large or distracting.
11. Each State FFA Officer will display their State FFA Degree charm on a gold chain.
 - The Association will provide state FFA officers with chains and charms as needed by the officer.
12. Clothes should be wrinkle free and lint free. Bring along an iron if necessary and a lint brush.
13. Please be aware of your appearance. Make sure shirts are tucked in, scarves and ties are in place, jackets are zipped, etc. You are representing the image of Virginia FFA! Look Sharp!

FFA OFFICIAL DRESS INCLUDES:

An official FFA association jacket zipped to the top
 Black slacks and black socks/nylons or black skirt and black nylons
 White collared blouse or white collared shirt
 Official FFA tie or official FFA scarf
 Black dress shoes with closed heel and toe

After election, the following items will be provided to each officer:

- One pair of khaki pants
- Two FFA polo's
- Two white shirts or blouses

- One black pair of slacks or skirt
- One pair of black dress shoes for men or one pair of black dress heels for women
- One Official FFA Association Jacket
 - An additional jacket will be provided for use at the State FFA Convention
- Ties or scarves as needed
- State FFA Degree charms as requested by officer
- State FFA Degree chains as requested by officer
- Adequate supply of basic office supplies
- Adequate supply of official stationery, envelopes, business cards
- FFA thank-you notes and FFA holiday cards as requested by officer

State Officer Responsibilities and Commitments

An officer travels many miles throughout the year, representing the Virginia FFA Association. They spend many hours preparing workshops, writing newsletters and corresponding with members and advisors. The officer receives training from State and National FFA that helps develop their leadership and presentation skills and offers excellent hands-on education and training for young people.

A State Officer should consider taking the year off from college, given the schedule is hectic and the responsibilities of being an officer are extensive. This is **not** a requirement but a recommendation. We want you to get the most out of your year as an officer and enjoy your time planning, preparing and participating in events. Virginia FFA members and supporters need your full commitment for the entire year.

In addition to attending scheduled events, State Officer candidates should be aware that additional activities and events might arise throughout the year requiring attendance at functions related to local FFA chapters, agricultural business and industry, and/or the local community. State officers also spend a great deal of time communicating with teammates, returning correspondence, writing thank you notes and letters and planning for upcoming events and workshops.

Specific Descriptions of State Officer Activities

State FFA Officers **must** participate in the activities listed below.

A more detailed calendar will be sent to each candidate.

BASE CAMP LEADERSHIP TRAINING – shortly after Convention – After election, officers will convene for a multi-day training for their year of service. This training will assist officers in understanding their roles, responsibilities, the fundamentals of leadership development, and communicating with members and supporters.

FFA CAMP – Second week of July – FFA camp is an opportunity for FFA members from across the state to come together at Graves Mountain Lodge. Officers will interact with members, assist with activities and perform other duties as assigned by state staff and/or the camp director.

STATE OFFICER SUMMIT – July – A three-day advocacy training experience that will focus on serving as an advocate for agriculture and FFA, as well as developing clear and consistent messages related to agriculture and FFA. The State President and State Secretary will complete two additional days of training in, “beginning the delegate process” for the National FFA Convention.

VIRGINIA YOUNG FARMERS EXPO – August – Officers will represent the Virginia FFA Association at this annual conference. Officers will participate in farm tours, interact with supporters and speak on behalf of FFA.

VIRGINIA STATE OFFICER FACILITATION TRAINING – This weekend training provides officers with the necessary information and practice to be able to facilitate quality presentations and workshops, used during chapter visits and other opportunities throughout their year of service.

CHAPTER VISITS – September - May – Chapter visits take up the majority of the year. Officers are expected to set up and attend at least 30 chapter visits. Chapter visits will normally involve the presentation of multiple workshops per day on topics such as leadership, teamwork, and FFA opportunities.

BIG E – Mid - September – This regional fair serves as an opportunity for FFA members to compete in career development events (CDEs) and other activities. Officers will be responsible for assisting with CDEs, other events, and representing the state at various activities.

VIRGINIA STATE FAIR – 10 days in September – The entire team works during the fair to assist with career development events and other activities.

NATIONAL FFA CONVENTION & EXPO – End of October – State officers will have the opportunity to serve as a voting delegate at the National FFA Convention. As a delegate, each officer has the responsibility to represent Virginia on issues concerning FFA on the national level.

FARM BUREAU ANNUAL MEETING – December – Selected State Officers will represent the Virginia FFA Association at Farm Bureau conventions. They will participate in farm tours, meet with FFA sponsors, agribusiness leaders, and participate in a variety of activities and events.

CTSO LEADERSHIP TRAINING – January – The FFA State President will have the opportunity to meet, interact, and work with other career and technical education student organizations.

VIRGINIA YOUNG FARMERS WINTER CONFERENCE – January – Officers will represent the Virginia FFA Association at The Virginia Young Farmers Conference. They will participate in farm tours, meet with FFA sponsors, agribusiness leaders, and participate in other activities.

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP SEMINAR FOR STATE OFFICERS – January – **OPTIONAL** - State FFA officers may participate in this international learning experience. It serves as an opportunity for officers to learn about international agriculture and its role in the United States and Virginia. Participants experience culture, customs, and agriculture of a different country. Officers are responsible for funding this trip.

FARM BUREAU YOUNG FARMER WINTER EXPO – February – Officers will interact with Virginia Farm Bureau Young Farmers to learn about postsecondary opportunities available to them after completing their year of service.

FFA WEEK GOOD-WILL TOUR – February – During FFA Week, officers will travel the state, visiting chapters, speaking with students and sponsors, and participating in a variety of activities to promote the FFA organization.

NATIONAL AG DAY – March – Officers will represent the agricultural industry in Washington D.C. during National Ag Day. They will advocate through interacting with legislators in our nation's capital.

VIRGINIA FARM BUREAU WOMEN'S CONFERENCE – March – Officers will represent the Virginia FFA Association at this conference. They will interact with Farm Bureau members, participate in activities, and represent FFA.

BLOCK AND BRIDLE JUDGING EVENTS – March – Over the course of this weekend, the Block and Bridle club of Virginia Tech will put on the FFA Stockman's, Meats Judging and Evaluation, and Livestock Evaluation, CDEs. Officers will assist with CDEs, scoring and presentation of awards.

AREA FFA LEADERSHIP RALLIES – 5 - 6 Area Conferences in March and April – Leadership Conferences for FFA members across the state. State officers will assist conference participants, facilitate breakout sessions, and perform other duties as assigned by state staff.

VICE - VIRGINIA INSTITUTE FOR COOPERATIVE EDUCATION – April – Sponsored by the Virginia Cooperative Council, this three-day conference provides workshops and activities for students to learn about the cooperative system.

CHAPTER BANQUETS – March - May – State officers receive requests to address FFA Banquets. The officer's duties may vary from bringing remarks on behalf of the association, to serving as the keynote speakers. It is important for officers to meet and interact with parents, school officials, sponsors, and FFA members.

AREA AND STATE CDE'S & LDE'S – Throughout the year – Various Career & Leadership Development Events are held throughout the year. State officers will be responsible for attending these events and assisting advisors and state staff in coordinating each of the events and presenting awards.

CHECK POINT TRAININGS – Dates to be determined – Throughout the year. Additional training will be scheduled as part of National FFA’s State FFA Officer Continuum.

CONVENTION PREPARATION – April-June – During the months leading up to the Virginia FFA State Convention, state officers will be responsible for being at Virginia Tech to assist with the preparation for the FFA State Convention. Officers will work on scripts for each session, prepare for CDEs, and perform a variety of tasks and assignments.

STATE FFA CONVENTION –June – State officers are a vital part of the FFA State Convention. They assist in the planning, preparation, and conducting this highlight event of the year.

FFA CAMP – Second week of July – After retiring, officers will be asked to return to FFA camp to serve as facilitators for the weeks activities. They are expected to assist in the planning and implementation of camp activities alongside the camp director.

Other Responsibilities throughout the year for State Officers include:

THANK YOU LETTERS – This is an absolute must. State Officers are given names and addresses of people and companies to thank throughout the year. Correspondence with sponsors and advisors is vital to the longevity of the organization

COMMITTEE WORK – Officers will be assigned to serve as an Ex-Officio member of a committee at the FFA State Convention. Committee work is key to promoting change within our organization. They will be required to assist the committee with committee work and creating a formal report to present to the delegates during the state convention.

MAGAZINE ARTICLES – All State Officers are responsible for writing articles to be published in the “Vision of Virginia” section of the New Horizons magazine. The articles, assigned by state staff, will highlight important events, upcoming activities, and chapters throughout the state.

SOCIAL MEDIA – Officers will be responsible for updating Virginia FFA social media accounts, sharing their experiences, travels and opportunities throughout the year. Members, advisors, supporters, and the public throughout the state will have opportunities to view the posts.

In addition to the activities and events highlighted above, officers should be prepared for the day-to-day work and rigor of being a state officer. While these are the major events and activities of the year, officers will be required to keep up with correspondence to advisors, staff, and key stakeholders, communicate on a regular basis with the state officer coordinator, and be available for team meetings and activities throughout the year. Officers will need to keep up with their own schedules and be prompt in planning chapter visits. Additionally, officers will need to be able to communicate with teammates on a regular basis to ensure progress is being made, and to plan and coordinate workshops and events.

Tentative State Officer Schedule

This is only an outline; a more detailed calendar will be sent to each candidate.
State FFA Officers must participate in the activities listed below.

June	State FFA Convention	Blacksburg, VA
June or July	Base Camp Leadership Training	TBD
July	FFA Leadership Camp	Graves Mountain Lodge
July	State Officer Summit	Washington, DC
August	Virginia Young Farmers Expo	TBD
	VA State Officer Facilitation Training	TBD
September-May	Chapter Visits	
September	Big E	Springfield, MA
September-October	Virginia State Fair	Doswell, VA
October	National FFA Convention & Expo	Indianapolis, IN
December	Farm Bureau Annual Meeting	TBD
January	CTSO Leadership Training	Richmond, VA
January	Virginia Young Farmers Winter Conference	TBD
January	International Leadership Seminar for State Officers	TBD
February	Farm Bureau Young Farmer Winter Expo	TBD
February	FFA Week Good-will Tour	
March	National Ag Day	Washington, DC
March	Virginia Farm Bureau Women's Conference	TBD
March	Block & Bridle Judging Events	Blacksburg, VA
March-April	Area FFA Leadership Rallies	
April	Virginia Institute for Cooperative Education	Graves Mountain Lodge
March-May	Chapter Banquets	
Throughout the year	Area & State CDE's & LDE's	
TBD	Check Point Trainings	TBD
April-June	State Convention Preparation	Blacksburg, VA



State Officer Code of Conduct

Being elected to Virginia FFA Office is making a commitment to service that is unique to most student organizations. In addition to serving and representing nearly 9,000 FFA members, you will represent the image and direction of the Virginia FFA Association and the National FFA Organization to teachers, agriculture industry representatives, government leaders, the media and the public. You will also be a teammate to other officers.

During my year of service, I will:

1. Be dedicated and committed to FFA and the total program of education in agriculture/agribusiness.
2. Forego alcohol, tobacco and illegal substances at all times during my year of service to the FFA.
3. Avoid places or activities that in any way could raise question as to one's moral character or conduct.
4. Use wholesome and appropriate language in all speeches and informal conversations.
5. Not date active FFA members (grades 6 – 12) during my year of service.
6. Be unwed, nor be the father or mother of a child at the time of serving as a State Officer. Further understood that I will resign my office if there are any changes in marital or parenthood status.
7. Maintain proper dress and impeccable grooming for all occasions.
8. Be willing to take and follow instructions as directed by those responsible for state FFA officers and state and national FFA programs.
9. Regularly, and on time, write all letters, thank-you notes, reports and other correspondence that are necessary and desirable.
10. Accept and search out constructive criticism and evaluation of my total performance.
11. Through preparation and practice, develop into an effective public speaker and project a desirable image of FFA at all times.
12. Be willing and able to commit to all state FFA officer activities.
13. Be willing and able to travel as required in serving the State FFA Association.
14. Consider FFA activities to be my primary responsibility.
15. Strive to improve my ability to carry on meaningful and enjoyable conversations with individuals of all ages and from all walks of life.
16. Treat all FFA members and chapters equally by not favoring one over another.
17. Conduct myself in a manner that commands respect and without any display of superiority.
18. Maintain my dignity while being personable, concerned and interested in contacts with others.
19. Evaluate, periodically, my personality and attitudes, making every effort for improvement.
20. Serve as a member of the team and always maintain a cooperative attitude
21. Work in harmony with fellow FFA officers, and not engage in conversations detrimental to other FFA members, officers or adults.
22. Become knowledgeable of agriculture, agricultural education and the FFA, and keep up to date on current events.
23. Not post inappropriate pictures and/or information on Facebook, Twitter, and any other online websites/mediums.
24. Complete all assignments assigned by the State Staff by the designated deadline.
25. I pledge to be available at convention worksites at designated times prior to convention, to practice sessions, and to assist and/or complete all assigned convention duties.
26. Always uphold the brand of a State FFA Officer and follow the FFA Code of Ethics.

Eligibility and Application Procedure

ELIGIBILITY

- Each candidate must be a dues paying FFA member while serving as a candidate and remain a member for their entire term of service.
- Each candidate must have obtained his or her State FFA Degree or plan to receive it during the state FFA convention he/she will run for state office.
- Each candidate must schedule to attend and participate in the entire state FFA convention while running for state office.
- Each candidate should submit the State FFA Officer Application to the State office postmarked by June 1.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

- Confirm candidacy for the State FFA Degree if not already obtained prior to the convention in which he/she will run for state office.
- Complete State Officer Application form.
- Obtain all signatures, recommendations, and other required information for the State Officer Application form.
- Secure and submit a completed copy of your State Officer Application to the State Association Office, postmarked by June 1.
- Adhere to directions in the application confirmation letter sent by the State FFA Office.
- Attend the selection process as outlined in the letter from Virginia FFA State Staff and chairperson of the nominating committee.

Guiding Principles of the State Officer Selection Process

The primary goal of the Virginia FFA state officer selection process is to select the best student representatives for the Virginia FFA Association.

Selecting a team of officers to represent the Virginia FFA Association for an entire year is no easy task. The process is more rigorous than many interviews you will encounter in your professional career. However, the process presents a tremendous opportunity for personal and career growth. Preparation for the process begins well in advance and will encompass much of what you have learned since you began as an FFA member. One thing is certain, the process will provide an adequate test of your ability to serve in the capacities outlined.

Candidates are evaluated in a number of different ways, testing their ability to serve as a leader and officer of the Virginia FFA Association. It may be cliché, but ask any past state officer and they will share a key component to their success: Stay true to yourself!

The interview process will be composed of various styles of interviews and methods of testing the candidate's ability to serve as a state officer. Each of the interview rounds are outlined below to give you a better understanding of how the process works. The selection process will be administered in a variety of ways, and the following information will give you a better understanding of the potential interview formats that may be used. Additionally, five key competency areas will be used to evaluate the candidates on their potential to serve as a Virginia State FFA Officer. While these competencies will not be the deciding factor in selecting the state officer team, they may help in the deliberation process.

The following information is meant to give you a clear understanding of what you can expect during the state officer selection process and how the nominating committee operates. It should assist you in your preparation for the selection process and aid you in developing yourself into the best candidate that you can be.

Competency Areas

To aid the nominating committee in selecting a group of officers according to the guidelines established by the Constitution and Bylaws of the Virginia FFA Association, state officer candidates will be evaluated on their skill/ability in five key competency areas. These competencies help in the evaluation of state officer candidates and their ability to represent the Virginia FFA Association.

- **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 group and one-on-one settings.
- **TEAM PLAYER** - Demonstrates the ability to work in a team setting, values diversity of opinion, works to be inclusive in the process and is willing to put others above self.
- **AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE** - Demonstrates the ability to articulate the systemic nature of food, fiber, agricultural and natural resources issues, FFA, educational issues and all respective current issues.
- **CHARACTER** - Displays a disposition that is genuine, responsible, honest, mature, confident, respectful, and has a positive outlook on life.
- **INFLUENCE** - Demonstrates the ability to influence others through modeling expectations, building relationships and growing the organization.

These competencies provide for evaluation of state officer candidates and their ability to represent the Virginia FFA Association. The nominating committee should evaluate all candidates equally based upon their skill/ability in each of the five competency areas. A scoring system/rubric will be provided to members of the nominating committee for choosing a slate of officers. Each nominating committee member will provide a rank, 1-10, with 1 indicating a strong evidence of skill/attribute **not** present, and 10 being excellent evidence of skill/attribute being present, for each individual candidate in each of the five competency areas. Results of the scoring system will be used to aid the committee in its determination of a state officer team. The intent of the evaluation areas is to provide direction for the nominating committee members to refer to when determining an individual's ability to represent the Virginia FFA Association as a state officer during discussion.

Outline of Possible Interview Formats

The state officer selection process will consist of multiple interview rounds and components each year in order to get a well-rounded understanding of each candidate. In addition to the application, the nominating committee and committee chair will administer a minimum of five of the below rounds to create a complete interview process. The committee and the committee chair reserve the right to choose the number of rounds conducted above the minimum five rounds, however, the minimum five rounds must include the test and writing rounds.

TEST - State officers must consistently demonstrate an understanding of fundamental knowledge of the Virginia FFA Association and the National FFA Organization. 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 multiple-choice questions and/or short answer questions, may be administered to allow candidates to demonstrate evidence of this desired knowledge set.

WRITING - All candidates will have a uniform time to complete a written essay, paper, magazine article, blog, or any other form of written communication deemed appropriate and relevant to the duties of a state officer. Such topics of written communication shall include agriculture, FFA or agricultural education. The purpose of the writing exercise is focused on the candidate’s ability to convey knowledge and understanding in a different way than allowed through multiple-choice questions and to measure the candidate’s ability to develop and convey a message in a clear and logical manner.

ONE-ON-ONE - This round will consist of seven interviews, each with a different member of the nominating committee. The interview focuses 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 candidate’s ability/skill in the evaluator areas, through structured and follow-up questions.

STAND AND DELIVER - This round allows candidates to express their talent in the areas of communication, problem solving, time management, areas of knowledge, etc. The committee will select the context in which the round will be conducted. The round will consist of a uniform speaking opportunity provided to candidates. The format of this event will be the delivery of an extemporaneous speech. The committee will also select the context in which the speech will be delivered. Details about the specific topic chosen and the context will be provided to candidates at the discretion of the committee chair and the nominating committee.

STAKEHOLDER - The purpose of this round focuses on evaluating the candidate's demonstration of the effective officer evaluators while carrying on a conversation and/or interaction regarding key issues related to a stakeholder. Stakeholders during this round may include administrators, agriculture instructors, business/industry leaders, teacher educators, sponsors, media and parents. All scenarios must be uniform among candidates; however, the scenario may allow the committee/stakeholder to interject specific follow-up questions to probe the candidate's understanding.

CASUAL ACTIVITY - As an opportunity to build rapport, this event will be a game night type event for all candidates, nominating committee members, adult consultants, and others involved in the interview process. This event focuses on providing a setting for nominating committee members and candidates to interact outside of the interview room. The event will NOT be scored; however, the committee can use this opportunity to collect evidence on establishing a sense for candidate behavior outside of the interview room. This evidence will be permitted to be used during the deliberation process.

PERSONAL - The purpose of this interview is to ask a set of questions developed by the committee to address evaluators such as character, passion for success and influence. Each candidate will have a time allotted with all six of the committee members. During this time, committee members will ask questions related to the evaluators for state officers and the candidate's ability or desire to serve as an officer.

Advancement Phase

In order to increase the effectiveness and timeliness of the overall interview process, as well as devote a sufficient amount of time to the deliberation and selection process, an advancement phase may take place at the discretion of the nominating committee and committee chair in the event that there are more than 20 state officer candidates.

Candidates will be notified if an advancement will take place by June 15.

The advancement process, if held, will take place on Tuesday night after Monday and Tuesday's interviews. Only candidates will assemble in a room where, following a short program, letters will be distributed containing the candidate's advancement status. In a separate room, candidates will have the opportunity to gather with their support groups to council, if desired, after the advancement meeting.

PRE-ADVANCEMENT INTERVIEWS

- Personal Round 1
- Written Test and/or Writing Exercise
- One-on-One
- Advocacy Stand and Deliver

POST-ADVANCEMENT INTERVIEWS

- Round Robin Round 1
- Round Robin Round 2
- Personal Round 2

The Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee is responsible for interviewing and evaluating all candidates based on the competencies listed above and the interviews that the candidate participates in. The committee will be chaired by the immediate past state president, who will have the opportunity to select the individuals that will make up the committee. This committee will be composed of six individuals selected by the chair. These individuals can be past state officers, agricultural education teachers, business and industry leaders or others engaged in Virginia Agriculture or the FFA Organization. The individuals serving on the nominating committee must be at least 5 full academic years post high school graduation.

Additionally, non-voting adult consultants will be selected for the state officer selection process. These adults will oversee the interview process to ensure its fairness for all candidates and provide guidance for the nominating committee as requested.

Members of the nominating committee, including adult consultants and the nominating committee chair, may not participate in any candidate training events, either official or unofficial, for the current year of service to the nominating committee. This requirement is to ensure fairness of the process. All members of the nominating committee, including adult consultants, must be approved by the State Advisor and FFA Governing Board chair.

The committee will have the responsibility of selecting the team of officers. The committee will select a minimum of five of the eight possible interview formats to evaluate candidates, of which, the test and writing formats must be included. The committee will decide on how the formats are to be administered. Each interview format may be administered and/or evaluated in a number of different ways; how this is accomplished is at the discretion of the nominating committee.

Deliberations will occur throughout the process and the committee will finalize the slate of officers to be presented and reviewed by the State Advisor and FFA Governing Board chair, after all interviews have been completed. This report will be read to the delegate body for approval, by the chair during the fifth and final session, on Thursday morning of the FFA State Convention.

Tips for Preparation

Below, we have outlined a few tips and a brief timeline to aid you in your preparations for State Convention. This information should be used to help you prepare for running for state office in addition to what you decide is best for you to do to prepare for this process.

The following are a few tips that have proven to be valuable for others who ran for state office.

- Start your preparations early. The earlier you can start, the more you can prepare for interviews, and the more you will grow personally as a candidate for office.
- Thoroughly read all information and directions given in the confirmation letter from Virginia FFA State Staff and chairperson of the nominating committee.
- Thoroughly review everything in the State Officer Candidate Handbook as well as the State Officer Candidate Study Guide.
- Prepare for interviews by setting up mock interviews to practice interviewing.
- Review the information found on the state and national websites and other sources of the resources page to become more informed and knowledgeable about agricultural education, FFA, and the agriculture industry.
- Seek constructive feedback from those that have been in your shoes before and those that are knowledgeable about the skills and abilities needed to be a successful state officer.
- Allow yourself to prepare in a way that concentrates on your candidacy as a state officer as compared with others' experiences. Work hard to not compare yourself to others, rather, compare yourself to your own expectations and the expectations of the nominating committee.
- Having a coach or mentor with whom you meet regularly throughout the preparation process is a great way to stay on track! There are a few things to keep in mind when selecting someone for this role:
 - 1) Select a person you know has time to meet with you on a regular basis
 - 2) Select a person who you know well or is willing to get to know you
 - 3) Find a person who cares about your growth and development, not getting you a state FFA officer position.

Sample Timeline

While each candidate will have their own personal way to prepare for the interviewing process, it is important to start preparing as early as you can and to have a clear timeline for your own personal preparations. Below we have outlined a sample timeline to aid candidates in their preparation for office as well as for coaches and mentors to use to help keep candidates motivated and on track.

BEFORE MARCH

If you have already decided to run at this point, then you are likely ahead of the game. While it is important to enjoy the remainder of the school year, the earlier you focus on running for state office, the better prepared you may be, come convention time. Use this time to truly contemplate your intentions and desires and allow time for self-reflection. Additionally, this may provide an opportunity for you to seek input and advice in areas where others may not be privy, given time constraints.

MARCH

By this point, you probably have decided to run for office and this should be a month to get in the preparation mode by deciding what the next few months will look like. Begin to understand the process by reading the State Officer Candidate Handbook and determining where you stand. Establish time frames to keep you on track and help you prepare yourself for the selection process.

APRIL

During April, candidates should lay out a clear plan of action of how they would like to prepare for state convention. You should review the State Officer Candidate Handbook and Study Guide to become more familiar of what you can expect. Additionally you should begin to communicate with others to set up mock interviews, practice presentations, and discuss agricultural issues and more. This month should also include some skill development as you begin to understand yourself and your motivation to be a State FFA Officer.

MAY

This month should be spent on skill development and staying current on issues. Practice presentations and interviews will help you feel more comfortable, as convention time nears. Seek advice from people with a significant and well-versed understanding of the interview process. Use this month to get some experience by interviewing with others and seeking constructive feedback from those that are knowledgeable about certain components of the process. Continue to develop and hone your communication skills through practicing speeches, presentations, workshops and other activities. Additionally candidates should continue to stay up to date on current issues in agriculture, FFA, and agricultural education.

This month should also be a time for candidates to fill out the application for state office and submit it to the State FFA Office. **The application is due by June 1st.**

JUNE

Use this month to sharpen your skills in as many areas as possible. Prepare for convention by getting any last minute studying done or extra skills that need to be covered. Make sure you understand the convention schedule and that you feel comfortable with the environment and surroundings you will be in. Take time to celebrate the hard work you have put in.

Additional Resources

The following is a list of resources, which may be helpful in preparing you to run for a Virginia State FFA office. These resources should aid you in preparing for the selection process and assist your development as a candidate.

FFA RESOURCES

- Official FFA Manual
- FFA Student Handbook
- FFA New Horizons – Past 12 months
- Virginia FFA Association
 - www.vaffa.org
- National FFA Organization
 - www.ffa.org
- Robert’s Rules of Order (Parliamentary Procedure)

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION AND SAE RESOURCES

- The Agricultural Education Magazine
- FFA Advisors Making a Difference
 - <https://www.ffa.org/ffaresources/publications/makingadifference/Pages/default.aspx#>
- Journal of Agricultural Education
- Local Program Success
 - <https://www.ffa.org/ffaresources/educators/localprogramsuccess/Pages/default.aspx#>
- National Association of Agricultural Educators (NAAE)
 - <http://www.naae.org/>
- SAE Central
 - <http://www.cals.ncsu.edu/agexed/sae/toolbox>
- The National Council for Agricultural Education (The Council)
 - <http://www.teamaged.org/council/>
- Teach Agriculture (by Team Ag Ed)
 - <http://www.naae.org/teachag/>

CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION RESOURCES

- Virginia Department of Education Website
 - www.doe.k12.va.us
- Virginia Career, Technical & Agricultural Education Website
 - http://www.doe.virginia.gov/instruction/career_technical/agriculture/index
- United States Dept. of Education (USDE)
 - <http://www.ed.gov/>
- Assoc. for Career and Technical Education
 - <http://www.acteonline.org>

- National Centers for Career and Technical Education
 - <http://www.nccte.org/>

AGRICULTURE RESOURCES

- Virginia Farm Bureau Federation <http://www.vafb.com>
- Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
 - <http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/index.shtml>
- United States Department of Agriculture
 - <http://www.usda.gov/wps/portal/usdahome>
- National Agricultural Statistical Service with USDA
 - <http://www.nass.usda.gov/index.asp>
- US Farm Report
 - <http://www.agweb.com/USFR/Default.aspx>
- Ag Day
 - <http://www.agday.com>
- American Farm Bureau Federation
 - www.fb.org
- American Farm Bureau Federation: Farm Facts
 - www.fb.org/brochures/farmfacts/
- Farm Bureau Farm Facts Booklet
- Farm Journal's AgWeb.com
 - <http://www.agweb.com/farmjournal/>
- Food and Agricultural Education Information System
 - <http://faeis.usda.gov>
- Farm Progress
 - <http://www.farmprogress.com>
- History of Agriculture
 - <http://www.agclassroom.org/gan/timeline/index.htm>
- National Agricultural Library
 - <http://www.nalusda.gov/>
- National Agri-Marketing Association
 - <http://www.nama.org/>
- National Farmers Union
 - <http://www.nfu.org/>
- Progressive Farmer
 - <http://www.progressivefarmer.com>
- Successful Farming
 - Agriculture Online <http://agriculture.com>