



December 21, 2016

Ms. Corinne Galvin
President, Illinois Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers
Agriculture Instructor, FFA Advisory
West Prairie High School
18575 E. 800th St.
Sciota, IL 61475

Dear Ms. Galvin:

Please find the IHSA position on topics related to the participation of IHSA member school students in FFA/IAVAT activities/events.

Regarding FFA activity start time:

- Per Section 2.060 of the IHSA by-laws, FFA activities and competitions may start as early as 8:00 am on a school day if coordinated as a multiple school section (conference) activity (c) or if coordinated by the statewide organizations of FFA and/or IAVAT (d).
- Invitational activities hosted by post-secondary institutions or industry partners independent of FFA and/or IAVAT shall be governed by the host institution and are subject to their own rules and guidelines.

Regarding requirements of membership for participation:

- The IAVAT and FFA are given autonomy over governing membership requirements for participation in activities hosted by the organization. IHSA supports any restrictions on participation, both by teachers and members, as determined by the IAVAT Board of Directors and the FFA Board of Directors.
- FFA and IAVAT have the authority to require:
 - Teacher membership in IAVAT to participate in events and;
 - Student FFA membership for individuals to compete.

Regarding Eligibility:

- Student eligibility for IAVAT/FFA activities is handled in Section 4 of the IHSA handbook.
- A student has eight (8) semesters of activity high school eligibility in FFA, starting with August 1 prior to the student's freshman year of high school. The exception to this rule is for students participating in national competitions following high school graduation if the student qualified for the event during his or her eight (8) semesters of eligibility.
 - Students completing requirements for graduation in December of their senior year, and who are therefore no longer enrolled in high school, are no longer eligible for FFA Career Development Event participation unless they have qualified for advancement towards state and/or national competition prior to completing graduation requirements.

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- All students who have completed graduation requirements will still be eligible to seek advanced degrees, individual awards, and scholarships following their termination of high school enrollment based on Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) programs and other activities initiated during the student's eligibility window.
- If a school or team is found to be competing with ineligible students, the host organization has the authority to disqualify participants and schools as determined appropriate by the respective Boards responsible for the event in which the infraction occurred.

Regarding separate divisions at competitions:

- Currently, middle school FFA members may compete at events approved by IAVAT/FFA, but must be registered in a separate division from high school in order to align with IHSA rules. No team may consist of both middle school and high school members
- Middle school FFA membership does not start the clock on a student's high school FFA eight (8) semester eligibility. Middle school membership is considered separate from this timeline.
- Host sites wishing to include non-FFA members in competition, such as 4H, shall open a separate division for non-FFA member participants, and scoring and awards will be separated to reflect each division.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig D. Anderson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "n".

Craig D. Anderson
Executive Director

CDA:tb