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Texas FFA Association

Memorandum

To: Area and District Coordinators and Presidents

From: Tom Maynard
Executive Director

Date: April 17, 2009

Subject: Affiliation Fee Adoption

In August, the National FFA Organization Board of Directors approved an affiliation fee plan that allows a chapter to pay a fee based on agricultural education enrollment rather than individual memberships. Under this plan, an agricultural education student in a program which has paid an affiliation fee is an FFA member. This is similar to the University Interscholastic League fee structure. School districts pay an affiliation fee to make all students eligible to participate in all UIL events. Please understand that Texas FFA is not advocating the affiliation fee as the only option. It is an alternative method for affiliating and engaging students.

Implementing an affiliation fee means that districts and areas need to create the same option. We need for districts and areas to take this up as a business item. The National FFA Organization's legal counsel examined the constitutionality of the affiliation fee and determined that because it does not raise dues, but merely provides another option for paying dues, it does not have to be presented to the student body as would be the case in a dues increase. Therefore, this decision can be made by whatever the district or area bylaws names as its governing body.

Therefore, we need each district and each area to determine whether or not they will have an affiliation fee option and report this to our office.

Question/Answer

Q: What would be the amount of the affiliation fee?

A: Please note the spreadsheet that we have included to calculate an affiliation fee. As it is currently structured, there is no significant financial advantage to the affiliation fee.

Q: What is the advantage of the affiliation fee versus individual dues?

A: Making FFA truly integral to the instructional program is the primary advantage of the affiliation fee. Currently, many students opt out of the leadership and personal skill development component of our program that is the FFA. Barriers can be financial.

Often, lack of perspective and understanding keep students from engaging in FFA. When a program pays an affiliation fee, the student is eligible to participate at any point when they choose to engage. Additionally, chapters that pay affiliation fees will not face late charges when adding a student to the roster, since an agricultural education student in an affiliated chapter is an FFA member. Finally, many school districts have policies which prohibit payment of membership dues, but will allow payment of an affiliation fee. The affiliation fee option could allow a chapter to access district monies to cover the cost of affiliating.

Q: What would be the impact on voting delegates?

A: Most likely minimal. Chapters that are currently at or near 100% membership may adopt the affiliation fee as an option. Schools that have minimal membership are not likely to consider this option.

Q: How will enrollment be determined?

A: Pursuant to the provisions of the national program, the previous year's agricultural education enrollment will be used to determine the affiliation fee. FFA reserves the right to verify all enrollment data.

In advance, thank you for your assistance with this matter.