

**Pineywoods District
Area IX FFA Association
Policy Handbook**

Section 1: Active Membership Eligibility

1.1 OPERATIONAL PRINCIPLES

The FFA Organization is an integral part of agricultural education, a leadership development program for students of agricultural science and technology programs. FFA programs are intended to be applied activities related to the classroom and laboratory instructional programs. Thus, membership guidelines should reflect this philosophy and support enrollment in agriculture food & natural resources (AFNR) courses.

A. Constitutional Authority

National FFA Constitution, Section B. To be eligible for active membership in a chartered FFA chapter, a student must be enrolled in a secondary Agricultural Science and Technology program. To retain membership, a student must:

1. Be enrolled in at least one Agricultural Science and Technology course during the school year and/or follow a planned course of study; either course must include a supervised agricultural experience program, the objective of which is to gain experience in agriculture related careers.
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the Association by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership, and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current District, Area, State, and National dues by the date determined by the chapter.
4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the Area IX FFA Association

1.2 MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY

- A. A student may establish initial membership by enrolling in an approved agriculture, food and natural resources course. An approved agriculture, food and natural resources course shall be any course in the agriculture food and natural resources program of study approved by the State Board of Education to be taught by an agriculture, food and natural resources instructor.
- B. After completing two consecutive semesters for high school credit, a student may maintain continuous membership for a maximum of one membership year while not enrolled in a course provided they maintain an approved supervised experience program which is documented in an approved agriculture, food and natural resources record book.

Pursuant to State and National constitutions, the membership year shall begin September 1 and conclude the following August 31. For the purposes of this policy, two one-semester classes taken concurrently count as two consecutive classes semesters. After re-enrolling and completing one agriculture, food and natural resources course, a student will be eligible to maintain one more year of membership without re-enrollment provided an approved, documented SAE is in place.

- C. Local chapters may establish more stringent membership requirements.
- D. More rigorous enrollment standards which apply to competitive events supersede this policy and are enumerated in the respective handbooks.

Section 2: Roster Submission

2.1 OPERATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

- A. The Pineywoods District FFA Association requires each chapter to submit a membership roster annually, a provision which is in harmony with the National FFA Constitution and provides an orderly, consistent record of membership.
- B. Compilation of membership data in a timely and orderly fashion requires a systematic approach to receiving and processing such documentation.

2.2 DEADLINES

- A. Fall Rosters must be posted online no later than November 1 and District and Area dues postmarked no later than November 1 or the next business day if November 1 falls on a Saturday or Sunday.
- B. Spring Rosters must be posted online no later than March 1, and applicable District and Area dues postmarked no later than March 1 or the next business day if March 1 falls on a Saturday or Sunday.

2.3 ALLOCATION OF VOTING DELEGATES

- A. Voting delegates are determined by the number of members on a chapter's roster on December 1 of that year.
- B. The amount of voting delegate numbers for each chapter will be decided on using the state's voting delegate calculations.

2.4 STANDING OF MEMBERS, CHAPTERS, APPEALS

- A. Members who are not in good standing with the District FFA due to missing dues, rosters, or other requirement documentation may be brought into good standing through the correction of all deficiencies. Such remedy shall bring the member in good standing retroactive to applicable deadlines.
- B. Chapters with delinquent dues accounts shall be declared to be “not in good standing” and not eligible for participation in FFA events and may not use the FFA identity and trademarks. All reasonable attempts shall be made to collect the debt. Withdrawal of good standing shall be declared after all means have been exhausted. The Executive Committee shall be briefed of all such pending cases.
- C. Appeals regarding membership, issues of good standing or allocation of delegates may be made in writing to the District Coordinator. The elected District Executive Committee will review all such appeals. A written response to such appeals shall be issued in a timely manner and in a period not to exceed 10 business days from the date of the executive committee ruling.

Section 3: District Officers

- A. The primary responsibility of a district officer is to serve the Pineywoods District FFA Association in local, district, and area activities in a way that will inform, motivate and inspire FFA members, advisors, state staffs, teachers and others to achieve the mission, strategies and core goals of the organization and to represent the district association in meetings according to the direction of the District Executive Committee, District Leadership Coordinator, and District Officer Advisors.
- B. District officers serve under the supervision of the District Executive Committee, District Leadership Coordinator, and District Officer Advisors in accordance with official policy and budget limits. More specific responsibilities include:
 - 1. Participate in training, orientation, continual self-improvement and evaluation of activities as directed.
 - 2. Represent the Pineywoods District FFA Association at chapter, district, and area activities as requested by district advisors within the scope of Pineywoods District FFA Policies.
 - 3. Participate in the planning and conducting of the Pineywoods District Leadership Day.
 - 4. Participate in the facilitation of the Area IX Leadership Camp and Area IX Greenhand Camp under the direction of the Area IX Coordinator, Area IX Leadership Coordinator, and Area IX Officers.
 - 5. Participate in the planning and conducting of the Pineywoods District FFA

Convention as assigned by the District Executive Committee, District Leadership Coordinator, and District Officer Advisors.

6. Keep up to date with all correspondence that comes from the District Executive Committee, District Leadership Coordinator, and District Officer Advisors.
 7. Develop positive relationships with FFA members, advisors, staff, sponsors, and the general public.
 8. Maintain a positive attitude and enjoy your year of service with members, advisors, staff, sponsors and others.
 9. Follow the guidelines in the Pineywoods District Officer Contract.
 10. Perform other duties as instructed by the District Leadership Coordinator.
- C. The Pineywoods District will reimburse each District Officer a maximum of \$50 for supplies purchased for District Leadership Day. An itemized receipt must be submitted to the District Treasurer Advisor for reimbursement.
- D. The Pineywoods District will reimburse each District Officer a maximum of \$20 for supplies purchased for District Convention. An itemized receipt must be submitted to the District Treasurer Advisor for reimbursement.

Section 4: District Officer Discipline Guidelines

- A. The Pineywoods District FFA Association generally recognizes four steps or levels of discipline: verbal warning, written warnings, suspensions, and discharge. Disciplinary action may begin at any step or level of severity and does not have to include each level.
- a. Verbal Warning – should be used for minor violations. A written record should be kept to document the verbal warning, its content, and time frame for improvement, as well as the date of warning.
 - b. Written Warning – should be used for repeated violations or for a more substantial violation. A time frame for improvement should be set by the District Executive Committee, District Leadership Coordinator, and District Officer Advisors. A copy of the written warning will be kept on file. The written warning notice will be discussed with the officer by the District Coordinator, District Leadership Coordinator and the officer's chapter advisor(s) and the district officer will be asked to sign the warning to acknowledge receipt.
 - c. Suspension – will be utilized for serious violations when immediate action is required while an investigation is being conducted to determine if the officer should be discharged. The length of the suspension depends upon the time necessary to investigate the violation. The District Executive Committee must approve all

suspensions. A written notice of suspension and documenting the reasons for the suspension will be provided to the officer, in person or by telephone with written notice to follow in the mail. Suspended officers may not wear the Pineywoods District FFA Officer jacket or represent the district association as an officer in any manner during the suspension.

- d. Removal – will be utilized for the most serious violations such as, but not limited to, alcohol related issues, sexual harassment, inappropriate social media posts, etc. The Pineywoods District Executive Committee must approve all discharges of student officers. If an alleged violation or continued failure to respond to disciplinary action for other violations is reported to or discovered by the District Coordinator or Advisors, upon completion of the investigation and adequate due process, the Committee may discharge the officer with written documentation to explain the reasons for the discharge. This written notice will become part of the permanent operational record of the Pineywoods District FFA Association. The officer will be notified, in person if appropriate, or by telephone and/or registered mail. Removed officers will not be allowed to wear the Pineywoods District jacket after they have been removed from their office.
- B. The District Executive Committee and the District Leadership Coordinator must approve any disciplinary action for a violation, as well as any suspension or discharge of an officer, prior to any action.
 - C. Disciplinary circumstances involving District officers should be dealt with by a progressive discipline system, if appropriate, to assure impartial treatment and acceptable conduct.

Section 5: Officer Selection Process and Candidate Campaigning

5.1 GUIDELINES

- A. The policies related to officer selection are intended to identify individuals who represent a complete, well-balanced agricultural education/ FFA experience.
- B. To run for district officer, the student must be a sophomore or junior at the time they are elected.
- C. Students may not run for district officer if they have previously been a district officer.

5.2 CANDIDATE EVALUATION/ELECTION PROCESS

- A. The Pineywoods District Executive Committee and the District Officer Candidate Committee will be in the balloting room during the scoring of the candidates.
- B. The District Officer Candidate Committee will consist of a minimum of 3 District Advisors

that do not have a candidate running for office.

- C. The District Officer Selection process will be based on 5 areas and certain percentages per area. 40% for popular vote, 30% for the test, 15% for the interview, 10% for the application, and 5% for the writing prompt.
- D. Each chapter can have no more than 1 officer candidate.
- E. The application will be the application developed by the Pineywoods District Advisors that is posted on the Pineywoods District webpage.
- F. Judging rubrics for each section of the District Officer Selection process will be posted on the Pineywoods District webpage.
- G. The test will be developed through QBank by JudgingCard.
- H. The District Officer Candidate Committee is responsible for the writing prompt.
- I. The District officer speech will last no more than 3 minutes. The candidate may not leave the stage during the speech. No props may be used during the speech as well.
- J. District officer candidates must submit a speech outline or abstract with their application. This will not be judged or scored, but if not submitted the student will be disqualified.
- K. District officers are required to answer a thought question on stage upon completion of their speech. The question will be asked by the District President. The thought question will be developed by the District Officer Candidate Committee.
- L. The officers of the Pineywoods District FFA Association shall be as follows: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, Reporter, Sentinel, 2nd Vice President, and 3rd Vice President.

Section 7: Degree and Award Checks

7.1 ADVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. All award candidates will be submitted online to www.theaet.com prior to the District Degree Check. Due date for submission will be set by the advisors.
- B. If applications do not arrive at the district check then they will forfeit advancement to the Area Degree Check.
- C. Every chapter advisor that has an application at degree check must be there to actively participate on a degree check committee. This includes Lone Star FFA degrees.

- D. The location of the Pineywoods District Degree Check will be determined at the annual Agricultural Teachers Conference.

7.2 SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- A. All applications will be submitted on www.theaet.com to the District Degree Check.
- B. All applications submitted to District Degree Check must be complete.
- C. All applications will be judged via www.theaet.com. District Advisors will be required to furnish a laptop to check applications at the District Degree Check.

7.3 ADVANCEMENT TO THE AREA IX DEGREE CHECK

- A. All approved applications and winners declared at the District Degree Check will be advanced on www.theaet.com to the Area Degree Check by the District Coordinator.

Section 8: Speaking Development Events

- A. Each Chapter in the Pineywoods District will enter their speaking event contestants on Judging Card prior to the entry deadline or they must pay the late fee, double the entry, to compete.
- B. If a contestant is not entered by the date of the contest, that contestant will be disqualified.
- C. Rules outlined in the State FFA Speaking Handbook will be followed.
- D. Each chapter can register no more than 1 contestant for each speaking event.
- E. Each contestant will provide 4 copies of the manuscripts for the judges.
- F. The location of the District Speaking will be determined at the annual Agricultural Teachers Conference.
- G. The entry fee for Speaking events will be \$15.00 per team. Double entry fee will be charged for any late teams.
- H. Rotation will be a random draw after registration is complete. This rotation will be sent out to District Advisors via email before the contest.
- I. The District will advance teams based off of what the Area Association will accept.

Section 9: Talent Contest

- A. Each Chapter in the Pineywoods District will enter their talent teams on Judging Card prior to the entry deadline or they must pay the late fee, double the entry, to compete.
- B. If a team is not entered by the date of the contest, that team will be disqualified.
- C. Talent teams will follow rules set forth by the state office.
- D. Each chapter can register no more than 1 team.
- E. Each team will provide 1 copy of the lyrics (if applicable) prior to the start of the District Convention.
- F. The location of the District Talent contest will take place at the Pineywoods District Convention. This location and date will be set at the annual Agriculture Teachers Conference.
- G. The entry fee for talent will be \$15.00 per team. Double entry fee will be charged for any late teams.
- H. Rotation will be a random draw after registration is complete. This rotation will be sent out to District Advisors via email before the contest.
- I. The District will advance teams based off of what the Area Association will accept.

Section 10: Leadership Development Events

- A. Each Chapter in Pineywoods District will enter their teams on Judging Card prior to the entry deadline or they must pay the late fee, double the entry, to compete.
- B. If a team is not entered by the date of the contest, that team will be disqualified.
- C. Rules outlined in the State Leadership Handbook will be followed at the District contest.
- D. The location of the District Leadership Development Event will be determined at the annual Agricultural Teachers Conference.
- E. The entry fee for Leadership Development Events will be \$15.00 per team. Double entry fee for every late entry.
- F. Judges will be current agriculture instructors, former agriculture instructors, or industry professionals. A minimum of 1 judge in the room will be an agriculture science teacher that has experience with the specific contest. District Advisors will try to recruit at least 3 judges for each contest, and 5 judges for Job Interview.

- G. Rotation will be a random draw after registration is complete. This rotation will be sent out to District Advisors via email before the contest.
- H. The District will advance teams based off of what the Area Association will accept.

Section 11: Appeals

- A. Appeals regarding any issue (not limited to but including District Officer Selection, Area Officer Selection, LDE results, SDE results, etc.) may be emailed to the District Coordinator within 24 hours of the District event.
- B. The District Executive Committee will review all such appeals.
- C. A written response to such appeals shall be issued in a timely manner and in a period not to exceed 10 business days from the date of the executive committee ruling.

Section 12: Executive Committee Members

- A. Pinewoods District Executive Committee will consist of the District Coordinator, District Secretary, District Treasurer, and District Leadership Coordinator.
- B. The District Coordinator and District Secretary term will be 2 years.
- C. The District Secretary will move up to District Coordinator at the end of their 2nd year. The District Secretary will be elected at the annual Agricultural Teachers Conference.

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