



## Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education

*Promote education in and about agriculture.*

*Address the changing needs of agricultural education to strengthen its viability and competitiveness to serve industry.*

*Develop investment opportunities involving human and financial capital for the benefit of all groups having interest in agricultural education.*

**Friday, March 13, 2020 ILCAE Meeting      Farm Credit Illinois Office Building, Mahomet**

In Attendance(25) - \*ILCAE member(15), **bold** by phone

**Patrick Barry**

\*Allyn Buhrow  
\*Dave Cattron  
Megan Coy  
\*Al Dietz  
Dean Dittmar  
**Jesse Faber**  
Doug Falk  
\*Jeff Galle

**\*Warren Graeff**

\*Doug Hanson  
**\*Kim Haywood**  
**\*Karen Jones**  
Lucas Maxwell  
**\*Mindy McDermott**  
Theresa Meers  
\*Don Moffitt  
\*Aimee Shasteen

**Jay Solomonson**

**\*Tyler Strom**  
\*Dan Swanson  
**Erica Thieman**  
Jennifer Waters  
**\*Greg Webb**  
\*Michael Zecher

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. by Chairman Doug Hanson.

Aimee Shasteen gave welcome comments on behalf of Farm Credit Illinois.

Introductions were made.

The minutes were reviewed and approved with a motion by Dave Cattron and seconded by Don Moffitt. Passed unanimously.

**Old Business:**

ILCAE sent a letter to teachers reminding them about the advocacy fund. Teachers who have contributed will receive a joint(ILCAE & IAVAT) thank you letter in the near future. These letters will continue to be sent annually.

Ag Legislative Day (March 3, 2020): Greg Webb spearheaded our efforts and represented ILCAE very well. He reported a good turnout of FFA members the night before for training, along with a good turnout of legislators, including Acting Ag Director Costello, participating in a panel. Every meeting the following day went very well. There was not a lot of other things going on that day so most of the meetings were able to go on as scheduled. Kudos to Jake Butcher for his help in coordinating those. Dan Swanson shared that legislators really enjoy seeing the FFA members come through each year and appreciate the commodity baskets as well. The early March date seemed to work very well this year, and we plan to advocate for a similar date in 2021.

Dan Swanson sent a message to fellow state representatives introducing FCAE members as a resource available for ag education and FFA on Ag Legislative Day. Dan indicated that he would reach out to Senator Weaver to do the same with state senators.



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Erica Thieman gave an ISBE report. They are currently grounded until further notice due to COVID-19. The state Perkins plan is up for approval at next week's ISBE board meeting which includes funding for Career and Technical Education. This year, there is an increased emphasis on work-based learning for ag ed which gives a solid footing to further emphasize the importance of SAE programs.

There continues to be strong promotion of middle school CTE programming down to the 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. There is also increased collaboration between community colleges and high schools meaning more dual credit opportunities for students.

Currently, any CTE teacher can get short term approval to teach in another area for up to three years as long as they have some coursework in the other area. Alternative licensing requires 2000 documented hours, and ISBE is looking at ways to qualify that experience in different ways.

Thieman shared a new agriculture course matrix that better aligns with the national framework for ag, food, and natural resources curriculum. She requested ILCAE to review and see what might already be available and what may be missing based on our own experiences in agribusiness. Safety will be a focus in all new curriculum developed. They are pushing for work experience to count whether paid or unpaid. Erica will provide an ILCAE meeting update and Dean will send out to members. Deadline date to submit questions and concerns on the new ag course matrix is March 27, 2020.

ISBE is looking for E-learning materials that could be shared with teachers if widespread school closings occur.

There was a discussion around promoting safety and encouragement to provide materials sooner rather than later due to the current situation of poor grain condition.

GAST grants should be awarded next month. Incentive funding for middle schools has been approved and now moves to the rule making procedure.

A few schools have pulled the Three Circles grant from their teacher mid-year. In most of the cases, administrators did not follow protocol in administering the grant either by not getting school board approval or making sure the teacher's union is aware or both. In all cases, the ag teacher has left or will be leaving that district at the end of the school year. Next year, Thieman will be adding a template of the memorandum of understanding to the application to hopefully help keep this from happening in the future. She is also running into some cases where the school can't afford to match 30 days, but could potentially match 15 or 20. We need to make a decision about whether it must be 30 or nothing, or could a smaller number of days be acceptable? This would require a rules change to implement. Please provide feedback to Erica Thieman in the near future on how to proceed.

Dan Swanson offered to contact IEA to set-up a meeting with Erica to discuss with union representatives that this opportunity is a grant and should be handled that way in hopes of providing guidance to local teacher unions. She also requested help setting up a focus group for rewriting the grant language to make it easier for teachers to participate. Dean Dittmar shared Erica's contact information electronically to ILCAE members during the meeting so we can all contact her with questions or suggestions.



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Allyn Buhrow suggested that FCAE submit a session to for the Illinois School Board Conference in Chicago in November. Dean Dittmar will look into submitting a request. FCAE will continue to have a display in the exhibit hall.

A suggestion was made to Erica and Dean to establish a focus group of ag teachers, administrators, and teacher union representatives to discuss the challenges in moving forward in hopes that solutions could be made for increased ag teacher participation beyond the current 60% rate.

12 pm – 12:45 pm – Complimentary lunch was provided by Farm Credit Illinois.

### **New Business and Committee Reports:**

Patrick Barry and Jesse Faber joined by phone for a legislative update.

SB 3692 – Change in state statute to ensure we do not violate the open meetings act. Changes to the makeup of ICAE were discussed. New and existing ICAE members will be considered in the following roles: three ILCAE members, three agriculturists, 2 high school ag teachers, one Ag in the Classroom educators, one community college instructor, one adult educator, one university agriculture teacher, and one FFA representative. In order to not violate the Open Meetings Act, there can be no more than three ICAE members together outside of an ICAE meeting discussing ag ed which includes electronic messaging.

The main change would be that ILCAE membership on ICAE would be reduced to three members having dual membership vs. six. ILCAE could still encourage more than three ILCAE members to apply for ICAE membership as 'agriculturalists'.

Dave Catron moved and Al Dietz seconded to approve the same language on the issue that ICAE approved. Motion passed unanimously.

Chairman Hanson committed to ensuring ILCAE is in compliance with the Open Meetings Act until the bill is passed.

Becky Ropp is resigning from ILCAE and ICAE. Discussion was held about finding a replacement for her. Dave Catron will approach Karen Schieler to see if she is interested. We are also looking at lists of former ILCAE members to see if anyone who has served in the past might be interested in serving again. Dean Dittmar will take the lead on this with Dave.

Lucas Maxwell updated the group on the research work relating to 'why ag teachers stay in the profession'. Meeting regularly, the research team of Lucas, Steven Still, and Jay Solomonson is requesting ILCAE members to submit research questions for the study.

Dean Dittmar provided the AFNR curriculum plan including a list of lesson revisions and new lessons presented to ICAE. There was good discussion about a reasonable timeline for getting new curriculum created and ready to go. ILCAE members were asked to look at the current curriculum list and help determine priority areas.



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These curriculum suggestions were made:

- Safety lesson plans integrated into each course.
- Precision agriculture
- Information technology
- Data management
- Farm monitoring
- Alternative energy
- Food safety
- Change Urban Ag Production to Community Urban Ag Production
- Pork videos provided by Jeff Galle
- Videos and resources from the Illinois Grain and Feed Association and IL Farm Bureau
- Videos and resources from Asmark Institute, Hazmat and OSHA
- Animal health
- Feeds and nutrition of animals
- Current 4-H resources

Doug Falk from Cutting Edge Curriculum(CEC) formerly CAERT shared an update that they were working with ISBE to continue curriculum writing. A conference call meeting with ISBE representatives and the CEC Board is scheduled for March 18<sup>th</sup>. Doug provided a handout for inclusion of ag safety in several of the Ag Core curriculum lessons.

Thieman reviewed grant information about the pre-service teacher internship program. She mentioned that she is happy with the way it looks and feels that ICAE and IAVAT are also in favor. It will go to a public comment period soon.

365 Advocacy – Paid through December, January is close to being paid, thanks to the letter recently sent to ag teachers encouraging donations. ILCAE members are encouraged to support personally as well.

The next ICAE meeting is June 4. They will set their meetings for the year at that time. Once their dates are set, we will determine the rest of our dates for the year.

The next ILCAE meeting will be Tuesday, June 16, 2020, in conjunction with the IAVAT conference in Decatur. Dave Catron approved and Don Moffitt seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.

Haley Siergiej with Nutrients for Life was nominated as a new ILCAE member by Michael Zecher and seconded by Al Dietz. Motion passed unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:27 p.m. by Don Moffitt and seconded by Dan Swanson. Motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Jones, ILCAE Secretary