



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.

December 9, 2022 ILCAE Meeting Minutes

Held at Kreher Agriculture Center at Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield and via Zoom

In attendance: *virtual

ILCAE Members - 23

*Erica Allen	Allyn Burrow	*Allen Dietz	*Brenda Dismore
Jeff Galle	Warren Graeff	Doug Hanson	*Kim Haywood
*Michael Hmurovich	*Chris Kendall	*William Kling	*Don Moffitt
*Rod Reich	Karen Schieler	*Kay Shipman	*Haley Siergeij
Holly Spangler	Tyler Strom	*Dan Swanson	*Ryan Tate
Greg Webb	*Wyatt Williamson	*Michael Zecher	

Advisory Members and Guests – 43

Lucas Allen	Larry Barry	Kathy Barry	Gordon Bidner
Haley Bode	Casey Bolin	Mindy Bunselmeyer	Jerry Costello II
Megan Coy	Dean Dittmar	John Edgar	Mike Elbe
Gerri Elbe	Amy Elik	*Kirsten Eubanks	*Jesse Faber
Asia Gentry	Isabella Hanson	Maddie Hanson	Bill Harmon
Jason Harper	*Eileen Hart	John Heiser	Rachel Hood
*Chris Hughes	Jason Huseman	Andrew Klein	Matt Hutchison
Donna Kaufman	Katie King	Larry Lovel	Levi Maierhofer
*Charlie Mitsdarfer	Jessica Nardulli	*Donna Page	Derek Sample
Sue Schafer	Susie Scott	Zach Shields	Doris Turner
Jennifer Waters	*Vanessa Wetterling	Kendall Wright	

Meeting host Bill Harmon, LLCC Ag Instructor was introduced to the group and welcomed everyone to their facility.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Allyn Buhrow at 9:36 am. Allyn thanked everyone for attending and declared a quorum present.

A motion to approve the August 30, 2022 ILCAE meeting minutes was made by Warren Graeff. Second by Karen Schieler. Motion passed.

There were no Public Comments.

Old Business

1. Regarding nomination of ILCAE Members for ICAE membership, no further information has been received from the governor's office regarding the following nominations:

Becky Ropp – recommended replacement is Karen Schieler as “ILCAE Agriculturalist”

Nomination paperwork was submitted to Governor in Sept 2020.

Kim Haywood – term expired 3-13-21 and is willing to continue

Aimee Shasteen – term expired 3-12-21 and resigned.

Doug Hanson – term expired 3/13/22 and has reached his term limit

Allyn Buhrow – term expired 3/12/22 and is willing to continue as ILCAE Representative

Erika Allen – term expires 7/26/22 and is willing to continue as ILCAE Representative

The Governor's office has indicated that if existing ICAE members wish to continue in their role, they are welcome to do so until formal appointments have been made. It was noted that ICAE is experiencing difficulty in meeting quorum due to the number of unfilled vacancies. The Governor's office has indicated that it is working on refilling positions so the committee can operate and intended under IL statute.

2. It was reported that the Ag Ed 365 Advocacy Fund has experienced strong donations. A total of \$60,000 per year is used to support legislative lobbying efforts on behalf of Ag Education. ILCAE members were encouraged to support this program by contributing through this website: <http://iavat.weebly.com/advocacy.html> .
3. ICAE Meeting Schedule – November ICAE meeting was not able to meet due to lack of a quorum. All meetings are scheduled to be virtual.
4. Michael Zecher and Ryan Tate reported that during its annual meeting earlier this month, Illinois Farm Bureau modified their Ag Education policy by inserting a statement supporting current funding levels within the ISBE Ag Education Line Item and within the IL Dept of Ag budgets. They also incorporated a new policy supporting the development of an Ag Education Instructor Education program within the Chicago metro area.

New Business

1. Future ILCAE Meeting Dates

Future meetings will be held virtually on January 27, 2023 from 9 am to 12 pm and March 31, 2023 from 9 am to 12 pm. No specific date or location was set for our June 2023 meeting.

2. ILCAE Membership

Michael Zecher reported that the following members terms will expire in December 2022: Erika Allen, Jeff Galle, Warren Graeff, Doug Hanson, Ken Hartman, and Rod Reich. Doug Hanson has requested to leave the committee. Allen and Graeff stated they were willing to be reelected.

Dean will check with other members whose terms expire and include reelection on our January ILCAE meeting agenda.

3. ISBE Update

Andrew Klein provided an update regarding the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE). They are recommending level funding for IL Ag Education for the upcoming fiscal year. Andrew also reported that excess demand in utilization of the 3 Circle Grants caused an initial proration of 93.4% but due to some shifting of funds, that final funding allocation projection is 97%. It was also reported that \$953,135.92 has been transferred from Parkland College to a designated fund

within the state treasury for past royalty proceeds, and that over \$48,000 was collected as royalties within 2022. All three Ag Education Grants have now been awarded, and each winning organization will be reporting on their specific performance measures at future ILCAE meetings. Andrew also stated that state high school graduation requirements will be changing to include a minimum of 2 years of a foreign language for the 2028-29 school year and that a new State Superintendent will most likely be appointed in early 2023.

A discussion was had regarding the current 3 Circle Grant Program. Doug Hanson, Warren Graeff and Dan Swanson volunteered to work with ICAE and IAVAT regarding potential program changes. It was suggested to include a discussion of possible tweaks to the 3 Circle Program during the January ILCAE meeting.

4. AFNR Talent Pipeline Discussion

Tyler Strom of the IL Agri-Food Alliance stated that currently only 5.2% of IL grade 9-12 students have been exposed to Ag Education programs and discussed the need to inform students about the wide variety of career opportunities offered within the AFNR field. Shanell Rainey - Jacob has been hired as full time Careers Coordinator. Chris Hughes, the Business Development Manager for Pathful noted that 68% of corporate HR professionals are struggling to find enough qualified talent to fill their employment needs. He then provided a guided tour of the **Pathful Connect** (formerly known as NEPRIS) platform currently in development as a means of linking students and teachers in metropolitan classrooms with employers wishing to share information about AFNR careers.

5. FFA Center Update

Mindy Bunselmeyer and John Edgar provided an update on IL FFA reporting that record members have been realized for membership and program participation and noted that IL now has the 4th largest FFA membership in the country. State FFA officers provided a summary of their activities up to this point in the school year.

12 noon – break for lunch

6. Annual ILCAE Awards Presentation

FCAE Program Advisors presented ILCAE Advocacy Awards to the following recipients in their respective districts:

District 1	Eileen Hart, Principal, Rolling Meadows High School
District 2	Jason Harper, Superintendent, Rochelle School District
District 3	Mike Elbe, President, John Wood Community College
District 4	Larry Barry, President, Taylorville FFA Alumni
District 5	Larry Lovel, Superintendent, Trico School District

Allyn Burrow and Greg Webb recognized the following individuals for their support of IL Ag Education:

The Bill Johnson Excellence in Education Award was presented to Zach Shields, Executive Director of the Decatur Public Schools Foundation.

The Excellence in Agribusiness Award was presented to Doug Hanson, Seed Specialist for ProHarvest Seeds.

The Excellence in Media Award was presented to Vanessa Wetterling, Owner of WMOI Radio.

The Jim Guilinger Legislative Awards were presented to Doris Turner, IL Senator from the 48th District and Amy Elik, IL Representative serving the 111th District.

Perry Schneider Special Recognition Awards were presented to Jerry Costello, Director of the IL Dept of Agriculture and Megan Coy, FCAE District 4 Program Advisor.

Gordon Bidner, founding Chairman of the ILCAE, made comments regarding the early history of the ILCAE and made a special presentation to Susie Scott in recognition of her many years of service to IL Ag Education.

7. Legislative Update

Jessica Nardulli and Asia Gentry noted that beginning in January, the IL Legislature will have 7 new senators and 21 new representatives. Dan Swanson stated that lots of new committee assignments will be made shortly after new legislators are seated. The Lame Duck Session is scheduled for January 4-7. ILCAE members are encouraged to send thank you notes to key legislators throughout the year. It was also noted that the IL House has a new Minority Leader in Toni McCombie and Deputy Minority Leader in Noreen Hammond – both of whom serve predominately rural districts.

Jesse Faber requested that any ILCAE member who would like to be receive regular updates about IL AG Ed Legislative activity should send an email to jfaber@pontiac90.org.

ILCAE members asked our legislative team about the proposed change in IL high school graduation requirements proposed to require a minimum of 2 years of a foreign language. The team noted that they are currently monitoring the situation.

8. FCAE Report

Dean Dittmar and FCAE Program Advisors reported that IL now has 375 Ag Education programs that include 519 teachers. Information was shared with the group regarding the current Ag Education teacher situation with Program Advisors commenting on potential districts interested in adding an ag ed program within each respective district. It was noted that 69% of Chicagoland Metro area ag ed teachers are currently utilizing a provisional teaching certificate.

The 2024 MANNRS Nation Conference will be held in Chicago in March of 2024.

Dean also informed the group of his intention to retire in June of 2023 and that a posting to find his replacement would be coming out very soon.

A motion to adjourn was made by Karen Schieler. A second was received by Doug Hanson. The motion passed. Meeting was adjourned at 3:10 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Zecher

ILCAE Secretary