

April 22, 1986

Mr. Don Prather  
President IAVAT  
Clinton High School  
Clinton, IL 61727

Dear Don:

Thank you for your letter of April 17. In regards to the activities and accomplishments of the ILCAE, let me say we have been active, with the results of our efforts yet to be determined.

For the record, permit me to review the activities of the ILCAE chronologically.

1. On Nov. 14, 1984 I received a letter from the Illinois Vocational Agriculture Education Joint Staff inviting agri-business representataives to a meeting on December 13, 1984. The purpose: to discuss the formation of the "Illinois Leadership Council for Agricultural Education". The letter was signed by Eldon Witt, Executive Direactor, IAVAT.
2. On Dec. 13, 1984, the first meeting was held with 79 in attendance. Dr. Paul Hemp, University of Illinois served as moderator. Those in attendance were surveyed as to their interest, support and desire to serve on the Board.
3. On March 7, 1985, Dr. Len Harzman, Western Illinois University, Chairperson of the steering committee, met with 25 persons that had earlier expressed interest in serving as members of the Board. At this meeting, we:
  - a) again reviewed the aims and purposes of the Council
  - b) Elected an Executive Committee:  
J. Gordon Bidner, Chairperson  
Lou Hathaway, Vice Chairperson  
Deb Herrman, Secretary  
Bob Howland, Treasurer  
Eldon Witt, Executive Secretary
  - c) Determined 3 priorities namely:
    - 1) Build a relationship with the:  
State Board of Education and the Supt. of Education,  
Dr. Ted Sanders  
The Governor's staff  
Legislators (particularly chairpersons of the Education Committees)

- 2.) Develop a "State Plan" for Agricultural Education K through Adult for Illinois Looking at:

Regionalization  
Science/Math credit for agriculture  
Image

- 3) Review State Mandates

4. Since March 7, the Board has met formally nine times

- (23) April 3, 1985 - IAA, Bloomington  
(26) June 5, 1985 - Illinois Department of Agriculture Building, Springfield, Illinois  
(18) Aug. 13, 1985 - Sangamon County Farm Bureau, Springfield, Illinois  
(23) November 6, 1985 - Growmark, Bloomington, Illinois  
(47) \*Nov. 26, 1985 - Illinois Department of Agriculture Building, Springfield, Illinois  
(19) Dec. 20, 1985 - IAA, Bloomington, Illinois  
(24) Jan. 22, 1986 - Growmark, Bloomington, Illinois  
(24) Feb. 27, 1986 - IAA, Bloomington, Illinois  
(24) April 1, 1986 - Illinois Department of Agriculture Building Springfield, Illinois

(attendance)

\*also our first annual meeting of the Council

5. During the year we have met with or given presentation to:

April 23, 1985 - Sen. Arthur Berman (2nd Legislative Dist., Chicago, Rep. Richard Mulcahey, 69th Legislative District, Durand

April 26, 1985 - Director of Agriculture - Larry Werries, Ms. Karen Witter, Governor Thompson's Staff, Dr. Ted Sanders, Superintendent of Education

June 18, 1985 - IAVAT Conference Report by Jack Stower

Nov. 20, 1985 - Jim Galloway - Ass't. Superintendent and State Director of Voc. Ed., Ms. Fran Boyd Beauman, Mgr. Consultant Service Section

Jan. 2, 1986 - Dr. Ted Sanders, Jim Galloway and Staff Rep. Gordon Ropp, 88th Legislative Dist., Bloomington, Ms. Gail Lieberman and Ms. Karen Witter, from Governor Thompson's staff

Jan 25, 1986 - Illinois FFA Alumni Annual meeting presentation - J. Gordon Bidner

Feb. 10, 1986 - Legislative meeting by Rep. Gordon Ropp

Feb. 25, 1986 - Presentation before the Central States Seminar for Agricultural Teachers at Chicago by Lou Hathaway

Feb. 27, 1986 - Pete Johnson, Exec. Director of Illinois Council on Vocational Agriculture, Dr. Robert Bentz, Associate Director of Cooperative Extension Service

March 18, 1986 - "Brown Bag" Seminar on objectives and activities of the ILCAE, University of Illinois by J. Gordon Bidner (18 in attendance) from the College of Agriculture plus Rep. Helen Satterthwaite, Vice Chairperson of Education Committee

April 1, 1986 - Meetings with Rep. Gordon Ropp, Ed Keen, Minority Staff for Education Rep. Richard Mulcahey

April 2, 1986 - Legislative Breakfast and Display Booth. Visited with Rep. Ropp, Rep. Slater, Rep. Ewing, Sen. Rigney, Sen. Maitland. Left material with: Rep. Breslin, Rep. Braun, Rep. Bullock and Rep. O'Connell. We also decided on specific legislative contacts by other council members.

April 14, 1986 - Testimony and panel member "Agricultural Education: Perspectives from Agribusiness". Committee on Agricultural Education in Secondary Schools, National Research Council, Board on Agriculture, Chicago Board of Trade Building, Chicago, Illinois.

April 15, 1986 - Meeting with Sen. John Maitland, 44th District, Minority Spokesman on Education, also numerous letters have been sent in support of the ILCAE "Plan Proposal" including three to Dr. Sanders. Dr. Bennett, U.S. Secretary of Education was sent a letter on March 4, 1986 expressing concern as to the wisdom of reducing federal funding of vocational education by over 50% for FY 87. Copies were also sent to Sen. Dixon, Sen. Simon, Rep. Madigan, and Rep. Michael.

6. Our purposes have been to:

- a) Make individuals aware of the council, its objectives, purposes, and to solicit support.
  1. Involvement of all facets and levels of the agricultural education profession to provide statewide leadership to improve education in agriculture.
  2. To provide for the organization of agricultural businesses, organizations and governmental agencies so that they may be directly and continuously involved in expanding the total agricultural education process for Illinois.



3. Identification of resources to carry out state efforts in strengthening agricultural education.

Objectives:

1. To serve as an advocate for agricultural educators at the local and state level.
  2. To involve the total agricultural industry in the assessment of vocational agriculture education and in developing quality instructional programs and processes to meet current and future needs.
  3. To provide a forum to identify and address state issues and concerns relative to all aspects of agricultural education.
  4. To facilitate futuristic planning for agricultural education on a state-wide basis.
  5. To establish a state structure to search out resources necessary for expanding and strengthening agricultural education.
- b) To make individuals aware of our concerns for Agricultural Education in Illinois due to:
- Declining enrollments
  - The loss of 14 agricultural departments in secondary schools last year
  - Proposed reduced federal funding for vocational education
  - The severe financial situation that rural districts find themselves
  - Farm economy crisis
  - Image of agriculture
- c) To provide for unified input for quality agricultural education for K through Adult
- d) To get our proposed plan adopted and provide for improved quality of agricultural education and funding support via:
- State Board of Education/Dr. Ted Sanders
  - Governor Thompson - Build Illinois Program
  - Legislative Route (Similar to California)
7. Who are we? See Questions and Answer leaflet approved February 27 (5,000 printed)

8. Where are we?

- a) Adopted ILCAE constitution, August 13, 1985 (See attached)
- b) Passed a resolution "Adopting the Proposed Plan", November 26, 1985 (See attached)
- c) December 1985 - printed the plan proposal with eight segments, namely:

- I Agricultural Basics in Education
- II K-8 Exploration of Agricultural Careers
- III Secondary Vocational Agriculture Programs
- IV Post secondary vocational agriculture
- V Agriculture Teacher Education
- VI Adult Education in Agriculture
- VII State Leadership for Agricultural Education
- VIII Baccalaureate and Graduate education in Agriculture

- d) Proposed funding \$15 million per year for K-6, 7-8, Secondary, Community Colleges, Adult and Teacher Education, Research and Development and State Leadership (2/3's targeted for secondary education category)

- e) Each segment has three basic components:

- Goals
- Rationale
- Quality Indicators

- f) Rules Committee H.B. 3200 4/2/86 - Rep. Ropp  
S.B. 1980 4/10/86 - Sen. Maitland

9. We have had three standing committees:

- Plan Proposal - Lou Hathaway, Chairperson
- Funding/Budget - Len Harzman, Chairperson
- Public Relations - Jack Stower, Chairperson

10. In the May 1985 issue of Deere and Company's Vo-Tech newsletter, Lou Hathaway published an article on the ILCAE and suggested that individuals might contact me for further information. I had requests from 12 individuals representing nine states and the province of Alberta, Canada. These individuals were sent a packet of information on the council and a letter April 12, 1986 (See listing Attached).

11. We have also had articles on the ILCAE in:

- The Daily Pantagraph
- Farm Week (two times) - IAA publication
- Illinois Agri-News
- Illinois Rural Electric News
- Illinois Soil and Water Conservation Newsletter - The Harbinger
- Galesburg Register Mail

12. Rep. Ropp and Sen. Maitland have also introduced bills to amend the school code that are supportive of our efforts e.g.

(two examples)

To require eight period days

To either defer or abolish implementation of Board on Higher Education minimum high school course requirements for state universities

13. The Council has served well as a forum for educators and agri-business representatives to discuss issues facing agricultural education. It also has served as a unifying force for the various sectors involved in agricultural education, including the Extension Service. But, most importantly, it seems to be recognized as a major spokesman for all of the agricultural education in Illinois.

Don, I hope this letter provides the information you requested. I would be remiss if I didn't thank you for your support and recognition that the IAVAT has provided. Also, I would be less than honest if I didn't share with you the genuine appreciation for the support the council has received from agri-business and the various sectors of agricultural educators in Illinois. It has been, personally, a pleasure to serve these past one and a half years as chairperson due to the enthusiasm and cooperation extended.

Sincerely,



J. Gordon Bidner  
Chairperson ILCAE

JGB:jaa  
cc Eldon Witt  
Attachments:

1. ILCAE constitution adopted Aug. 13, 1985
2. Council Resolution adopting the ILCAE Plan "Building Illinois through Quality Vocational Agriculture Education:
3. ILCAE proposal
4. Listing of Educators requesting information on the ILCAE
5. ILCAE, Question and Answer leaflet
6. S.B. 1980 - introduced 4/10/86 by Sen. Maitland