



## December 2024 Meeting Minutes

**Date:** Wednesday, December 4, 2024

**Time:** 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. with awards luncheon from 12:00-1:00 p.m. Optional tours to follow.

**Location:** Sunken Room at the ADM Research and Development Center located at 1001 N. Brush College Road, Decatur, IL.

**Parking:** You will need to enter the gated entrance where you will need to use the phone to call and identify yourselves if the gate is not open.

**Checking In:** Please bring a form of identification to be allowed into the building.

**Attire:** Business/Business casual is recommended.

**Virtual Meeting Link:** <https://zoom.us/j/91804144222>

### Schedule:

9:00 a.m. - 9:30 a.m. Arrival, Refreshments & Networking

9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Business Meeting for Active & Advisory Members

11:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. Break/Award Winners Arrive/Meal Set Up

12:00 p.m. - 1:00 p.m. Awards Luncheon

1:00 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Optional Walking Tour of the Research & Development Center

**Special thanks to ADM and ILCAE Vice President Greg Webb for hosting our event and to The Fertilizer Institute and ILCAE Member Haley Siergiej for sponsoring our lunch!**

## ATTENDANCE

### ILCAE Active Members (Voting) - Need 16 present for quorum

Erika Allen	Rene Barr	Acacia Berg	Jared Brown
Allyn Buhrow	Abby Coers	Al Dietz	Dr. Jeff Galle
Perry Harlow - V	Ken Hartman	Michael Hmurovich	Dakarai Howard
Donna Kaufman	Chris Kendall	Katie King - V	William Kling
Christina Lueking	Mindy McDermott	Dr. Paige Mettler	Mary Moritz
Daniel Reedy	Aaron Schafer	Karen Schieler	Kay Shipman
Haley Siergiej	Holly Spangler-V	Tyler Strom - V	Representative Dan Swanson
Ryan Tate	Cynthia Tucker	Greg Webb	Wyatt Williamson

### ILCAE Advisory Members (Non-Voting) –

Lucas Allen	Andy Baker	Patrick Berry	Allie Bode
Casey Bolin	Mindy Bunselmeyer	Jake Butcher	Megan Coy
Kevin Daugherty	John Edgar	Jesse Faber	Dr. Howard Heavner
John Heiser	Bill Kittinger	Dr. Amy Leman	Dr. Lucas Maxwell
Charlie Mitsdarfer - V	Jason Mott	Jessica Nardulli	Gary Ochs
Trenton Payne	Dr. Seb Pense	Jess Smithers	Dr. Jay Solomonson
Dr. Steven Still	Jennifer Stone	Jennifer Waters	Jenny Wold
Kirsten Wyatt	Leah Stark		

### Award Winners & Their Guests Attending Luncheon -

Representative Jehan Gordon Booth	Grace Clark	Senator Don DeWitte (1 guest)
Tom Doran (2 guests)	Bob Friend (1 guest)	Michael Fumagalli
Jennifer Glover (2 guests)	Lisa Hadden	Darrell Houchin (1 guest)
Minority Leader Tony McCombie	Senator Elgie Sims	Sue Schafer

## AGENDA

**Welcome & Building Logistics** - Allyn Buhrow, ILCAE Chair & Greg Webb, ILCAE Vice Chair

**Approval of [August 2024 Meeting Minutes](#)** – Ryan Tate, Secretary

Wyatt Williamson moved to approve. Al Dietz seconded. Motion passed.

### **Old Business**

#### **FY26 Budget Request**

Level funding of \$7,850,000 has been requested for the Agricultural Education Line Item by ICAE. Testimonies have been provided in person, virtually, and in writing. Awaiting budget approval for FY26.

Testimonies were presented by the FFA State Officers and were well received.

[Ag Ed 365 Advocacy](#) fund requires \$60,000 raised per year for lobbying team support. We invite all ILCAE members to contribute. Please indicate this is an advocacy donation in the memo.

#### **ILCAE Member Nominations to Serve on ICAE**

Follow up with potential candidates Jeff Galle and Haley Siergiej - Jeff has applied. Haley has not at this time.

Allyn is vacating an interlocking position that serves on both ILCAE and ICAE and there needs to be a replacement.

Jason Mott shared there is an adult educator who is close to being approved for one of the other open positions. She works for Extension and is based out of CHSAS. There is also someone from the City Colleges of Chicago that Jason heard something about months ago but has not heard anything further.

## **New Business**

### **Legislative Update - Fulcrum Government Strategies**

-Patrick, Jessica and Jake provided an update. No significant action since spring. Very light veto session following the election. There were no vetoes by the Governor and only three bills moved. There will be a lame duck session between Jan 2-7. Discussions are underway on if they want to do anything. There is a \$3B to 4B budget crunch coming up for the next fiscal year. This is due to the K-12 increased funding ramp and the pension funding ramp (\$600-\$700M between the two), less federal dollars (post-COVID), Tier 2 pension fix, Chicago transit, healthcare/Medicaid costs, economic factors have slowed tax receipt increases, etc. It also looks like 2026 will be even worse. There is the potential for tax and/or fee increases of some sort. Since the last meeting, the decision was made by ICAE and ISBE to ask for level funding due to the budget crunch. Agencies have been asked to review past increases and consider looking at areas to cut. Our goal should be to maintain our existing funding in the Ag Ed Line Item and with the IDOA. They are monitoring potential labor laws that could impact student SAEs.

### **Newly Released [National Career Clusters Framework](#)- FCAE LPS Team**

Side notes - Jennifer has FFA alumni raffle tickets for a John Deere Gator that will be drawn at the FFA convention in June. She also has popcorn from Brandt available - 3 lb bags.

The National Career Clusters Framework came up back in June. We had concerns that ag teachers could be impacted by where welding and some other things fell into a different area but based on the final framework, it looks like this will not be an issue as ag mechanics (including welding) are listed under Agricultural Technology and Automation. Jennifer walked through a handout that detailed the framework. Water systems has been added, which includes things like aquaculture and marine biology.

These are pathways that lead into majors in college. There will need to be some further aligning on both ends that happen over time.

**[College and Career Pathway Endorsements Overview](#)** - Chris Kendall will cover in greater depth at our March 2025 Meeting.

[Link to Presentation](#) from John Heiser

John walked through the presentation that is linked to above. If a school is participating and a student does all of the required things, the endorsement is noted on their transcript. 168 students have done it to date. Schools are required to offer this, beginning with one pathway for class of 2027, two by 2029, and, depending on size, three by 2031. John went through the extensive requirements that a student must fulfill. There is a list of schools who had students earn this in the AFNR pathway. One need is a list of authentic problems. Another is the opportunity for work based learning and mentors. Various questions and discussion following the presentation.

### **ILCAE Membership Status**

Current [Membership](#) (29 members) - Allowed 25-35 members per constitution  
[Member terms](#)  
[Committee Update](#)

Karen had a work obligation but provided a written report. Wyatt Williamson and Paige Mettler gave a verbal report on behalf of the committee. With reappointments and terms ending/resignations, current membership is at 29. The committee shared some thoughts about nominations and future members moving forward. They would like to see future members include agriculturalists and industry leaders from the IL Legislature (targeting a Senate member) and recent college grads who are past state FFA officers. Also a need for an HR perspective and leaders from urban/non-traditional ag. Also think that doing some promotion on social media may be helpful, specifically through LinkedIn.

### **Future Meeting Dates**

March 14, 2025 - 9:00 am. - 11:00 a.m. Virtual Meeting

June 9, 2025 - In Person Meeting, Springfield (Brandt has offered to host) - this would be the Monday of FFA state convention week. Forming a committee of Allie Bode, Katie King and Rene Barr to host a "Welcome to Springfield" event for FFA Chapters arriving in Springfield on Monday.

August 28, 2025 - In Person Meeting at the Farm Progress Show, Decatur

December 2025 - Awards Luncheon & In Person Meeting

### **Reports for Review**

○ FCAE Curricular Resource Management (CRM) - Jennifer Stone - no report at this time as Jennifer was unable to attend today.

- [FCAE Local Program Support \(LPS\)](#) - Jennifer Waters gave a brief verbal report as this is a link to their performance goals.  
  - [September](#), [October](#) & [November](#) Newsletters. Jennifer gave quick highlights from these.
  
- FCAE Work-based Learning (WBL) - Mindy Bunselmeyer gave a brief report. Everything is on track and on target.
  
- PreService Teacher Grant - Jess Smithers. No report as Jess was not in attendance.
  
- Illinois State Board of Education - Jason Mott, Principal Consultant, provided a verbal report. He has been there 8 months. He is writing 4 RFPs currently, which is a large number. He has visited all four of the universities with ag ed programs. The two pre-service RFP applicants should be notified this week. The other RFPs - three parts to the FCAE grant are written but have to be moved to an updated format. Hard deadline of December 17th. Feb 20 - LPS released. Curriculum resource management early Feb. Jan 17 for work based learning. GAS Grant - working on changes, scheduled for Jan 17th. Looking at level funding. Working on downwards amendments (money back \$331K) and nearly \$112K (money out) in upward amendments. The remainder will be reallocated, most likely for incentive funding. Also dealing with annual reports from various districts, community colleges, high schools, etc. Still has 34 who have not submitted and 27 who sent it in but needs to be updated as it was not approved. Started with around 120. He is working to develop a monitoring program for the grants as the money is \$7.5M, which is a lot to monitor as one person. They are also working on some eligibility interpretations based on how things are written - consulting with legal, ICAE, etc.
  
- Legislative Report - Fulcrum Government Strategies. Reported at the beginning of the meeting.
  
- [Illinois FFA Center Report](#) - Mindy Bunselmeyer shared that it was a very successful convention including having the Star in Agriscience and the National FFA President! Biggest news is they are putting before the delegates the opportunity to add a sixth State FFA Officer - it would be the state sentinel and would be in effect immediately. This is largely due to the growth the organization has seen - there is a need for an additional officer to serve the needs of the members. Illinois is 6th in FFA membership nationally. There are 1 million members nationwide. Mindy also walked through several other items in the report. IAVAT also has an increase in participation in membership and in all the CDEs. They are evaluating where their conference will be moving forward. For the alumni convention, Dr. Larry Case will be there with his book "A Thread of Blue Corduroy." John Deere continues to support the alumni by providing a Gator to raffle off.

The Foundation is currently working on the local collection drive and other support. On track relative to past years. The FFA Center will turn 25 in 2025. Plan to do an event/reception with past State FFA Officers. An Advance Team is looking at other state facilities to see what the next 25 years will/could look like in terms of facilities. Visiting Iowa, North Carolina, Tennessee and Georgia. Looking at the facility and operational costs.

There was a good discussion on how to connect Illinois Farm Bureau, county Farm Bureau Managers and FFA Section Presidents and Local Chapter Members. Explore the potential to involve/further involve FFA members in the adopt-a-legislator events as well as to involve county Farm Bureau managers in the FFA/ag state legislative day in Springfield.

- [Illinois Association of Vocational Agriculture Teachers](#) - Kirsten Wyatt was not in attendance. No report beyond what Mindy shared in her report.
  
- Illinois Ag in the Classroom - Kevin Daugherty was not in attendance. No report.
  
- Illinois Association of Community College Agriculture Instructors - Charlie Mitsdarfer provided a recap of their spring and fall conferences and plans for their conferences next year - spring at Univ of IL and fall at Parkland. They also elected their new officers.
  
- University Council Members (Ag Education Preparation Programs) - no reports as none of the representatives from the universities were in attendance.
  - [Illinois State University](#) - Dr. Lucas Maxwell & Dr. Jay Solomonson
  - Southern Illinois University - Dr. Seb Pense & Dr. Steven Still
  - University of Illinois - Dr. Amy Lehman & Gary Ochs
  - Western Illinois University - Dr. Andy Baker

Rep Swanson moved to adjourn and Aaron Schafer seconded. The motion was approved.

### **Awards Luncheon - Toastmaster Greg Webb, ILCAE Member**

Agricultural Education Advocacy Award Winners:

District 1 - Jennifer Glover, Peoria County Ag in the Classroom Coordinator

District 2 - Bob Friend, Glenbard High School School Board Member

District 3 - Lisa Hadden, Cass-Morgan Ag in the Classroom Coordinator

District 4 - Grace Clark, DeWitt County Farm Bureau Manager

District 5 - Darrell Houchin, Richland County High School Principal

Bill Johnson Excellence in Education - Sue Schafer, Taylorville High School  
Excellence in Agribusiness - Brandt, Inc.  
Excellence in Media - Tom Doran, Agri-News  
Jim Guilinger Legislative Excellence Award - Senator Elgie Sims, Senator Don  
DeWitte, Representative Jehan Gordon Booth, and Minority Leader Tony  
McCombie  
Perry Schneider Special Recognition Award - John Heiser, FCAE  
[List of Past Winners](#)