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New Jersey Agricultural Education Advisory Committee
Minutes of the January 18, 2012 Meeting

Call to order

Bill Walker called the meeting to order at 1:43 pm at the Trump Taj Mahal in Atlantic City, NJ.

Introduction of members and guests

Bill Walker, Rich Belcher, Dave Specca, Sue Butch, Jan Traynor, Alec McAlarnen, Amanda Hayes, John Sarcone, Nancy Trivette, Erin Noble, Barry Jesse, Sharon Kinsey, Bill Sciarappa, Dominick Mondì, Frank Yesalavich

Approval of minutes from May 2011 meeting

Motion by Jan Traynor to accept the minutes.

Seconded by Dave Specca. Motion passes.

Chair's Report

No report.

Old Business

Advisory Committee Membership - Nancy discussed the CTEP (Career Technical Education Partnership) grant which funds the state agricultural education program. With the new requirements, she reported that the advisory committee needs to be restructured so that members represent all of the pathways. The committee could use more people in the Power, Structure and Technical Systems, Food Products and Processing Systems, and the Environmental Services Systems pathway. Nancy shared the entire list with the committee. The list is also available at the NJ Office of Agricultural Education Bulletin Board. Bill Walker suggested the farm to school network as being somewhere to reach out for partnerships. School gardens are popular and some of our current programs can help out schools. These schools can help with the education that goes into developing a school garden. Ideas for the Food Products and Processing Systems include M&M Mars, Lou Cooperhouse, and Food Innovation Center.

Special Presentation - Alec presented Bill Walker and Bill Sciarappa with their Honorary American FFA Degrees.

New Business

Articulation Agreements - Barry Jesse spoke about Rutgers current articulation agreements (culinology combining food science and culinary arts). A new building is being built for Food sciences and nutritional sciences. There is an articulation between Gloucester County College and Rutgers in the area of equine science. Rutgers is working toward an articulation agreement for CASE courses. They are looking to give college credit to students who successfully complete the CASE courses/program. Barry met with Tiffany Moray at Essex County Technical School to discuss the option to provide articulated credit for an introductory animal science course once

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students complete CASE Principles of Animal Science course. Tiffany, who is already certified as a CASE Intro to AFNR and Principles of Plant Science (ASP) teacher, will be certified in summer of 2012 in CASE Principles of Animal Science (ASA) providing Essex Tech to expand their program to include Animal Science. Dave Specca reported that Longwood Gardens is looking to articulate with schools in the area of horticulture. Traynor noted that County College of Morris has just signed an agreement with Somerset County Vocational Technical School to provide 3 credits in Plant Science for the CASE Plant Science course being offered at SCVT.

Programs of Study - John Sarcone, Principal at Hackettstown HS talked about how CASE has helped the agriculture program be viewed as a science at Hackettstown. Amanda Hayes shared her school's course catalog, specifically the agriculture program and her school's articulation agreement with County College of Morris. Students who complete three years in the Agriculture Program at Hackettstown HS and earn an overall 85 or better average will be awarded 9 credits once admitted to the County College of Morris and matriculated into one of the Landscape and Horticultural Technology Department programs. The difference between a program and a program of study (POS) is the articulation agreement and coordination of a smooth transition from the secondary to post-secondary programs with, ideally, an easy transition to career opportunities. The NJ Department of Education is the agency that conducts the review, approval, and re-approval of secondary programs and programs of study; determines if a school meets the requirements for each. Nancy shared with John and Amanda that there have been schools that received NCAA approval on some CASE courses. NCAA course designation is very appealing to schools and gives students of these 'value added' courses an advantage when applying for NCAA scholarships. Amanda says the next steps for her school is to educate everyone within the school (guidance counselors, faculty, administrators, parents, students etc.) to make sure there is an understanding about the rigor of CASE courses so they can effectively market their ag program to new and greater numbers of students. Jan Traynor commented about 'image' and how agriculture programs are perceived is one that all ag educators face.

Industry Outlook - Dominick reported that the largest issue facing the nursery industry is labor, specifically in advanced positions. Jan reported that we must think "green." Sustainability will be an important area to focus on. Bill talked about Sustainable Jersey. Dave suggested agritourism might be an area to focus on as well.

Challenges at the secondary level - Some challenges include getting science credit for agriculture courses. Bill Sciarappa recommends offering high school/college science credit to students during the summer through online offerings. Other challenges revolve around SAEs and child labor laws, as well as extended contracts for ag teachers.

End of Program Assessments - All approved programs are required to provide an end of program assessment. A program is defined as a sequence of three courses. There is a hierarchy of four levels of exams that must be followed as defined in state education code.

1. Licensure Exam - the 'state cosmetology exam' is an example; AFNR has no licensure exams

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2. Industry Credential Exam – the automotive exam ASE/NATEF is an example; AFNR has not industry-wide credential exam (While the NJNLA has made some efforts in the development of an exam it is not yet available.)
3. National Validated Test – NOCTI (National Occupational Competency Testing Institute) is an example; some schools use NOCTI exams for some areas of agriculture (floriculture/greenhouse or nursery/landscaping), however the exams seems to be narrowly focused on these areas and many programs teach a broader curriculum than NOCTI tests in these instances.

....If none of the above tests are available or appropriate then schools must go the fourth level of the hierarchy...although this is the least desirable option

4. Teacher Developed Test validated by industry professionals (often the local advisory committee is used to validate the teacher made test; this is often the only option for agricultural educators to use in NJ.

Due to the lack of other options, most of our programs have been relying on the teacher made/advisory committee approved exams. With this in mind, we will need to start thinking about how we can offer state and/or national exams. CASE has end of course assessments (and will have end of program assessments) which are offered online on a per student fee basis. These are national exams and will be accepted as a nationally validated test. The long term goal is to have a CASE End of Program exam to certify students on a national level.

Critical Issues - Nancy reported on the Animal and Plant Biotechnology (APB) CASE course and mentioned that it will be field tested in 2012-13. Rutgers, one of two CASE Institute field test training sites nationwide, will offer the CI at Northern Burlington County Regional High School this summer. Bill Walker recommends that schools utilize the CASE brochures to help market the program. It was also noted that the www.case4learning.org website has excellent promotional materials that can be used by teachers and administrators looking for ways to promote CASE. Bill Walker commented that, in agriculture, we have a tendency to not be as good at promotion and marketing of our products, CASE materials should be used help improve the marketing of CASE.

Erin invited the group to Advocacy and Legislative Leadership Day on February 23, 2012 at TCNJ and the FFA 5k Bunny Hop on March 24, 2012 at Veterans Park, Hamilton, NJ.

Motion by Dave Specca to adjourn.

Seconded by Barry Jesse. Motion passes.

Meeting Adjourned.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:14 p.m.