

The County of Yuba

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



February 25, 2014

TO: Board of Supervisors
FROM: Donna Stottlemeyer, Clerk of the Board of Supervisors
SUBJECT: Resolution Supporting Agricultural Education Incentive Grant Program

Recommendation

Adopt resolution to support continued funding of the Agricultural Education Incentive Grant Program.

Background and Discussion

Supervisor Abe has requested the Board support continuation of the Agricultural Education Incentive Program and if supported forward a copy of the resolution to the Governor. Attached is information regarding impacts if the program were eliminated for your review and consideration.

Committee Action

None. Brought directly to the Board.

Fiscal Impact

There is no fiscal impact by adoption of resolution.

Attachments

**BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
OF THE COUNTY OF YUBA**

RE:

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING)
CONTINUED FUNDING OF)
THE AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION)
INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM)**

RESOLUTION NO. _____

WHEREAS, California's reputation for leadership in a variety of innovative and expanding agricultural industries has been made possible through the availability of well-trained and educated personnel; and

WHEREAS, California, being the leading agriculture-producing state in the nation for over 60 years, has a compelling interest in ensuring that its' school system supports and promotes the continued development of innovative and thoughtful agricultural leaders; and

WHEREAS, The Agricultural Education Incentive Grant program has given clear guidance and direction to school districts throughout California in developing and promoting high-quality program standards; and

WHEREAS, The Agricultural Incentive Grant program has provided financial incentives for districts to embark on a systematic and sustained process for improving the delivery and effectiveness of Agricultural Education throughout California; and

WHEREAS, The Future Farmers of America organization, which is integral to high school instruction, has long proven itself as an outstanding teaching strategy that promotes excellence in agriculture education for students throughout California; and

WHEREAS, The goal of the California Future Farmers of America organization is to teach and promote premier leadership, personal growth and career success among its members; and

WHEREAS, The Future Farmers of America has a long and well-established tradition of providing meaningful, relevant leadership development experiences that have had a positive effect on the lives of thousands of students in their communities; therefore

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Yuba County Board of Supervisors hereby encourages the Governor and all Members of the California State Legislature to support high-quality Agricultural Education in California through continued funding of the Agricultural Education Incentive Grant program.

PASSED AND ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the Board of Supervisors of the County of Yuba, State of California on the 25th day of February 2014.

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

Chairman

ATTEST: DONNA STOTTLEMEYER
CLERK OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

APPROVE AS TO FORM:
COUNTY COUNSEL

Angel P. Mancipanes

Impact of Governor Brown's Proposal to Eliminate Agricultural Education and the FFA Programs in our Schools

Since the inception of current Agricultural Incentive Grant funding, innovative programs and coursework have been developed that are attracting record numbers of students into Agricultural Education programs throughout the state. These programs currently send more students onto post-secondary colleges and training institutions, where they graduate with degrees in larger numbers and in shorter time frames than their peers in general academic programs.

This proposal to eliminate the Agricultural Education Incentive Grant threatens a nationally-recognized delivery model in Agricultural Education that has over 1330 courses approved for admission recognition by the UC and CSU systems, and which provides essential Agricultural Education and leadership training experiences for students interested in careers in Agriculture – a vitally important component of California's economy.

Specifically, this proposal would:

- Remove targeted incentive funding from high schools currently offering Agricultural Education programs and redistribute those funds across the board to all schools in California with total discretion for use at the local level. Schools currently offering Agricultural Education programs would no longer receive those funds, which would be folded into the Local Control Funding Formula base grant for distribution to all schools. **The net impact of adding these monies to the LCFF base would amount to less than 66 cents per student per year.**
- Remove any incentive for districts to continue to offer Agricultural Education programs, since these courses and programs are not part of the state-mandated graduation coursework, and are not part of the computation of current school accountability measures.
- Virtually eliminate the capacity of these programs to carry on programs and activities involving the Future Farmers of America student organization, which currently has over 74,000 members in over 300 local chapters throughout California.
- Eliminate programmatic funding for other Career Technical Education programs such as Specialized Secondary Programs and Regional Occupational Programs, which also make up an important component of Agricultural Education programs statewide.
- Threaten California's economic and agricultural future while producing virtually no benefit to existing educational funding streams.

Important Information Regarding Agricultural Education:

- Enrollment in Agricultural Education has **increased from 21,000 students** in the mid 1980's **to over 74,000 students today** – while enrollment in other CTE sectors has declined during that same time.
- Of the students enrolled in Agricultural Education today in California, **51% are Hispanic, while 35% are White.**
- There are **1,337 Ag Education courses approved by UC/CSU** for meeting the admission requirements of those universities, **representing 45% of Ag courses offered statewide.**
- Ag Education programs have compiled graduate follow-up data for their graduating seniors since 1984. If students complete a minimum series of 3 courses in Ag Education during their high school tenure, they **enter postsecondary education at a 76% level**, which is substantially higher than the general high school population.
- Several studies have demonstrated that students nationwide that complete a series of 3 CTE courses graduate from high school in higher numbers, go on to postsecondary education in higher numbers, graduate from college in greater numbers, and complete their degrees in less time than their peers who do not take CTE coursework.
- The California Future Farmers of America student organization is a nationally-recognized model of excellence for developing leadership, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills in high school-age youth. Nearly 5,000 students attend the State FFA Leadership Conference held annually in Fresno, making it the largest student organization conference in California and the largest convention gathering in the city of Fresno.
- Given that California is the leading agricultural state in the United States and a major component of our state's economic well-being, it is important that strong and vibrant Agricultural Education programs exist within our schools to attract talented and motivated people to seek careers in this vital industry. Agricultural Education programs have produced many leaders at the State, National, and International levels who credit those programs with motivating them and developing their leadership potential.
- Agricultural Education programs combine rigorous academic instruction with learn-by-doing strategies – resulting in greater understanding and relevance to students. In an era that far too often emphasizes rote memorization and standardized testing strategies, Ag Education offers a unique and compelling opportunity for students to develop both their academic and personal life skills.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK