



2026

Creed Speaking

2026 Updates

Below is a summary of updates to the Livestock Evaluation CDE Handbook for the 2026 convention cycle. We plan to release handbook changes that may impact instruction in June of the year prior but may finalize smaller updates through February of the competition year. All updates and changes aim to provide a positive, relevant experience for all competitors.

HANDBOOK UPDATE:

JULY 2025

JANUARY 2026

Policies and Guidelines

I. Eligibility of Students

Added — Eligibility is based on the **National FFA membership year (August 1–July 31)**—not a school’s academic calendar or “rising grade” designation.

Rationale: Clarifying that a student must be a 7th-grade member on the date of the qualifying event to compete or qualify at a state qualifying event. A student who is still a 6th-grade member on that date is not eligible to qualify and may compete for 7th-grade consideration only in qualifying events held on or after August 1.

Refer to the National FFA Career and Leadership Events webpage on [FFA.org](https://ffa.org) for the most up-to-date career and leadership development handbook edition.

CONTACT

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FFA VISION

Growing the next generation of leaders who will change the world.

FFA MISSION

FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for premier leadership, personal growth and career success through agricultural education.

FFA CODE OF CONDUCT

FFA members participating in National FFA programs understand and agree to abide by the National FFA Code of Conduct at:
<https://ffa.app.box.com/s/x6l2lkovv4x9tgiegqy73mei30zvlip5j>

Guiding Principles

National awards and competitive events should:

1. Inspire members to explore, learn, and be prepared for future careers related to the AFNR career pathways and FFA AFNR Value Chain.
2. Recognize achievements in skill development and knowledge, including:
 - a. leveraging relevant technologies
 - b. utilizing creative problem-solving
 - c. meeting developmentally appropriate learning objectives (Bloom's Taxonomy)
 - d. utilizing employability skills (teamwork, communication, collaboration)
3. Be accessible and engaging for all students and FFA members.
4. Provide awards and recognition opportunities for students at all levels.
5. Work with other groups to utilize or partner with existing experiences.
6. Provide feedback that promotes personal and professional growth.

Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (AFNR)

Career Cluster Content Standards

The National Council for Agricultural Education has provided permission to the National FFA Organization to use the National AFNR Career Cluster Content Standards in the development of their educational resource materials. The National Council for Agricultural Education is the owner and developer of the National AFNR Career Cluster Content Standards © 2016 and reserves all rights to the original material used here with permission. In addition, the National Association of State Directors of Career and Technical Education/National Career Technical Education Foundation (NASDCTE/NCTEF) has provided permission to use the Common Career and Technical Core (CCTC) Standards in support of this project. NASDCTE/NCTEF are the owners and developers of the Common Career and Technical Core (CCTC) Standards © 2012 and reserve all rights to the original material used here with permission.

The National FFA Organization has adopted the AFNR Career Cluster Content Standards and integrated them into the national award and recognition programs for the benefit of members, school administration, and agriculture as a whole. For a complete set of the standards, please visit the [2016 AFNR Career Cluster Content Standards](https://ffa.app.box.com/s/hrxlqv7g6zo54xfi5x5ktylusqjhy0). You may access the standards alignments for this event at: <https://ffa.app.box.com/s/hrxlqv7g6zo54xfi5x5ktylusqjhy0>.

Professional Integrity

FFA members participating in national FFA programs and events understand and agree that all work must result from their own effort and ability, created, and completed alone (except for partner or chapter applications). When outside sources (direct quotes or phrases, specific dates, figures, or other materials) are used for a project, document, or application, the required reference citation must be completed according to the rules specified by the applicable handbook.

While participating in National FFA programs, FFA members are prohibited from:

- Plagiarizing
- Violating copyright
- Cheating
- Falsifying information
- Using another person's results or thoughts as their own, even with this person's permission. This includes work done by a family member or a mentor.
- Using information or data obtained from the internet without proper citation.

Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage will not be tolerated. Non-compliance represents plagiarism and will automatically disqualify a member.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for National Programs and Events

Artificial intelligence (AI) refers to computer systems capable of performing complex tasks that historically only a human could do, such as reasoning, making decisions, or solving problems. As AI continues to evolve, it can be a tremendous tool to help companies, organizations and individuals enhance their productivity and work. Therefore, the National FFA Organization allows the use of AI tools. FFA members may use AI tools, such as ChatGPT, Gemini, and CoPilot, to assist them in their learning.

Appropriate uses of AI may include:

- generating ideas for any FFA-related assignments, projects, contests and award applications
- checking facts of a phenomenon
- checking for and correcting grammatical errors in a paper written by a member

For more information, please see the [Standard Operating Procedures on the Use of Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) for National Programs and Events document](#).

Member Safety

At National FFA, we're committed to creating a safe, inclusive, and supportive environment for all members— students, educators, and families alike. We believe in fostering premier leadership, personal growth, and career success, and that starts with a community built on respect and professionalism. These guidelines outline the expectations for behavior and conduct across all FFA activities and spaces. By upholding these principles, members help ensure FFA remains a place where everyone can thrive.

Please take a moment to review these policies, [here](#) (Member Safety at FFA.org), which includes an agreement to abide by the [National FFA Code of Conduct](#). Adherence is essential—violations may result in disciplinary action, including restricted access to events.

2026 CAREER AND LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT EVENTS GUIDELINES

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES

I. Eligibility of Students

- a. Eligibility is based on the **National FFA membership year (August 1–July 31)**—not a school's academic calendar or "rising grade" designation.
- b. Each student must be a student FFA member on the current roster in good standing with the local chapter, state FFA association, and the National FFA Organization during the school year in which the student qualified to participate at the national level.
- c. If a student's name is not on the chapter's official roster, please work with the National FFA membership team to update the membership before the national event.
- d. The student, at the national event, must be:
 - i. A secondary education (grades 7-12) FFA member during the school year in which the participant qualified to participate at the national level as determined by the roster at the time of qualifying.
 - ii. A graduating senior is eligible to compete in state and national career and leadership development events up to and including their first national convention following graduation.)
 - iii. Participants in the Creed Speaking and Conduct of Chapter Meetings LDEs must qualify as a 7th, 8th, or 9th grade member.
- e. If a student moves to a different chapter or a different state once the student has qualified as a state representative in an event, that student may be allowed to compete in the national event with the school they qualified with during the qualifying year.
- f. A student may only participate in the same official CDE/LDE once. No student may participate in more than one National FFA event each year.
- g. Each student participating in a national event must complete an online Waiver and release of Liability through the convention registration system.

II. Selection/Certification of State Teams

- a. Each state will submit a team declaration form by July 1, before the national FFA convention. Participation in each declared event will incur an entry processing fee. [State Staff Declaration Instructions](#).
- b. Each team will be composed of the number of members determined by the specific event rules and formats. The members of a state team must be from the same chapter.
- c. All students must be certified online by the designated deadline of Sept. 1 or within 10 days of the qualifying date if after the deadline. Advisors or state staff must certify members in each event by the certification deadline [How to certify a team or member Instructions](#).
- d. Once the original certification has been completed, no member may be added without first deleting a member. (See III. Drop/Add Process).
- e. State staff shall approve students are eligible (See I. Eligibility of Students). [State Staff Certification Approval Instructions](#) If an ineligible student participates in any career or leadership development event, the member will be disqualified, which may also impact the team's ranking.
- f. States may approve teams comprised of fewer members than the required members.
- g. Substitutions of any student or team are subject to the determination and approval of the state association.
- h. If reputable international competitions invite teams to competition the national organization will certify National FFA Career and Leadership Development Event winners for international competition when states request. This is with the understanding that the state team will provide their travel expenses.

III. Drop/Add Process

- a. If a student needs to be substituted or dropped, the online drop/add process must be used to substitute or drop the team member. A team member must be dropped before another team member may be substituted. [How to Drop/Add a team member Instructions](#)
- b. The Drop/Add must be submitted one hour before the first event component or official activity of an event as listed in the schedule of events. Changes will not be permitted after this time.
- c. Members added to any team must meet all the eligibility and membership requirements described in this Guide's other sections.
- d. Substitutions may be allowed after the online document submission date (See individual Event Handbooks for details).

IV. Disqualification

- a. FFA members participating in national FFA programs and events understand and agree that all work must result from their effort and ability, created and completed alone (except for partner or chapter applications). Details about Professional Integrity, the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for National Programs and Events, and the National FFA Code of Conduct are included in event handbooks.
- b. Any verbal or non-verbal communication between students during an event that is not part of the event will be sufficient cause to eliminate the team member involved from the career development event.
- c. Teams or students arriving after the career development event has begun may be disqualified or penalized. This includes a zero or lower score for that team or student for the missed section of the career or leadership development event.
- d. Any assistance given to a student from any source other than the career development event officials or assistants will be sufficient to disqualify that student from the career and leadership development event.
- e. Event superintendents may stop any student if they deem their manner hazardous to themselves or others. Such action may result in a zero or lower score for that student for that section of the career or leadership development event.
- f. Students who start an event and do not complete it without notifying event officials at the time of departure may be disqualified. This can affect the overall team rank and position; in some events, it could also disqualify the entire team.
- g. Students will not be allowed to utilize personal electronic communication devices other than those approved by the event officials during the entire event. Students who access personal electronic communication devices without prior approval from the event officials may be disqualified from the national event.
- h. Any CDE/LDE student, team, advisor, or coach who is proven to have gained access to event materials intended for or utilized by the event committee during the competition will be disqualified from the national event.

Purpose

The FFA Creed outlines the organization's beliefs regarding the industry of agriculture, FFA membership and the value of citizenship and patriotism. The Creed is recited by FFA members as part of the requirements to earn the Greenhand FFA Degree. The purpose of the Creed speaking leadership development event is to develop the public speaking abilities of seventh, eighth and ninth grade FFA members as well as to develop their self-confidence and contribute to their advancement in the FFA degree program.

Event Rules

Review the Career and Leadership Development Event Policy and Guidelines for information on eligibility, selection, certification, team member changes, disqualification and more.

[General Information for National Competition](#) can provide general guidance on preparing for national competition.

The National FFA Creed Speaking Leadership Development Event will be limited to one participant per state. The participant must qualify in grades 7, 8 or 9. The participant must compete at the next national convention following their state qualifying round.

- It is highly recommended that participants wear FFA Official Dress for this event.
- Three to five competent and impartial people will be selected to judge the event. At least one judge should have an agricultural/FFA background. Any advisor who has a student competing in a speaking event may not serve as a judge for that respective speaking event.
- Each state association is to provide a judge for the preliminary and potentially semifinal rounds of the event.
- Any participant in possession of any electronic device is subject to disqualification.

Event Format

The event will include an oral presentation and answering critical thinking questions directly related to the Creed.

Members will present the Creed from the current year's [Official FFA Manual](#).

The event will be a timed activity with four minutes for presentation. After four minutes, the participant will have one point deducted for every second over the set time.

Following their recitation, each participant will be asked three questions per round with a five-minute total time limit. The questions used will change as the participant progresses to the semifinal and final rounds of the event. The questions will be formulated annually by the Creed speaking leadership development superintendent and will avoid two-part questions.

The national event will be conducted in three rounds: preliminary (consisting of five to eight speakers per section), semifinals (two sections of eight speakers each) and finals (four participants). The top two speakers from each preliminary section will advance to the semifinals. The top two speakers from the semifinal sections will advance to the final round. No ranking will be given except for the final four. Feedback for all participants will be distributed at the awards function.

Event officials will randomly determine the speaking order. The room facilitator will introduce each participant by participant number and state association in order of the drawing. No props are to be used. Applause shall be withheld until all participants have spoken.

Each participant must recite the Creed from memory. Each participant shall begin the presentation by stating, "The FFA Creed by E.M. Tiffany." Each CDE participant shall end the presentation with the statement, "... that inspiring task. Thank you." Additional introductory or concluding remarks will result in accuracy deductions as indicated on the scorecard.

Participants will be held in isolation until their presentation. Participants will not be allowed to have contact with any outside persons.

At the time of the event, the judges will be seated in a designated section of the room in which the event is held. They will score each participant on the delivery of the Creed and responses using the rubric provided.

Timekeepers will be designated to record the time used by each participant in delivering his/her speech. Content accuracy judges will record the number of recitation errors during delivery.

When participants have finished the presentation and answering of questions, each judge will total the score of each speaker. The timekeepers' and accuracy judges' records will be used in computing the final score for each participant. The judges' score sheets will then be submitted to event officials to determine final rankings of participants.

Participants will be ranked in numerical order based on the final score to be determined by each judge without consultation. The judges' rankings of each participant will then be added, and the winner will be the participant whose total ranking is the lowest. Other placings will be determined in the same manner (use the low-point score method of selection).

During preliminary and semifinal rounds, recording of presentations is permitted by one person from each participant's association for that participant only.

Tiebreakers

Ties will be broken based on the greatest number of low ranks. Participants' low ranks will be counted, and the participant with the greatest number of low ranks will be declared the winner. If a tie still exists, then the event superintendent will rank the participants' responses to questions. The participant with the greatest number of low ranks from the response to questions will be declared the winner. If a tie still exists, then the participants' raw scores will be totaled. The participant with the greatest total of raw points will be declared the winner.

Awards

Awards will be presented at the awards ceremony to individuals based on their rankings. Advisors of cash award recipients will receive information about claiming their award following the convention. Guidelines for amounts and recipients of cash awards can be found [here](#).

Awards are sponsored by cooperating industry sponsors as a special project and/or by the general fund of the National FFA Foundation.

References

This list of references is not intended to be all-inclusive.

Other sources may be utilized, and teachers are encouraged to make use of the very best instructional materials available. Make sure to use discretion when selecting website references by only using reputable, proven sites. The following list contains references that may prove helpful during event preparation. The most current edition of resources will be used.

- Past finals hall footage are available by logging in to FFA.org/participate/ides/creed-speaking.
- Current year's [Official FFA Manual](#)

THE FFA CREED SPEAKER SCRIPT

THE FOLLOWING IS EXACTLY WHAT MUST BE RECITED:

“The FFA Creed by E.M. Tiffany

I believe in the future of agriculture, with a faith born not of words but of deeds – achievements won by the present and past generations of agriculturists; in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years.

I believe that to live and work on a good farm, or to be engaged in other agricultural pursuits, is pleasant as well as challenging; for I know the joys and discomforts of agricultural life and hold an inborn fondness for those associations which, even in hours of discouragement, I cannot deny.

I believe in leadership from ourselves and respect from others. I believe in my own ability to work efficiently and think clearly, with such knowledge and skill as I can secure, and in the ability of progressive agriculturists to serve our own and the public interest in producing and marketing the product of our toil.

I believe in less dependence on begging and more power in bargaining; in the life abundant and enough honest wealth to help make it so – for others as well as myself; in less need for charity and more of it when needed; in being happy myself and playing square with those whose happiness depends upon me.

I believe that American agriculture can and will hold true to the best traditions of our national life and that I can exert an influence in my home and community which will stand solid for my part in that inspiring task.

Thank you”

ALL RECITATION ERRORS (MISSED WORDS) MUST BE CIRCLED

Total # of Recitation Errors

(missed, added or switched words)

Question Time:

Determination of Deductions

Number of errors ____ x 2 = _____



The creed was written by E.M. Tiffany, and adopted at the 3rd National Convention of the FFA. It was revised at the 38th Convention and the 63rd Convention.

Creed Speaking Presentation Rubric

100 points

Chapter	State			Number		
Indicators	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Oral Communication — 30 points						
Pace	Speaks very articulately at rate that engages audience.	Speaks articulately but occasionally speaks too fast or has long unnecessary hesitations	Speaks too slow or too fast to engage audience		X 2	
Tone	Voice is upbeat, impassioned and under control	Voice is somewhat upbeat, impassioned and under control	Voice is not upbeat; lacks passion and control		X 2	
Volume	Emitted a clear, audible voice for the audience present	Emitted a somewhat clear, audible voice for the audience present	Emitted a barely audible voice for the audience present		X 2	
Non-verbal Communication – 30 points						
Eye contact	Eye contact constantly used as an effective connection Constantly looks at the entire audience (90–100 percent of the time)	Eye contact is mostly effective and consistent Mostly looks around the audience (60–80 percent of the time)	Eye contact does not always allow connection with the speaker Occasionally looks at someone or some groups (less than 50 percent of the time)		X 2	
Mannerisms and gestures	Hand motions are expressive and used to emphasize talking points No nervous habits	Sometimes exhibits nervous habits Hands are sometimes used to express or emphasize	Displays some nervous habits Hands are not used to emphasize talking points; hand motions are sometimes distracting		X 2	
Poise	Portrays confidence and composure through appropriate body language (stance, posture, facial expressions)	Maintains control most of the time; rarely loses composure	Lacks confidence and composure		X 2	

Indicators	Very strong evidence of skill 5–4 points	Moderate evidence of skill 3–2 points	Weak evidence of skill 1–0 points	Points Earned	Weight	Total Points
Question and Answer—40 points						
Response to questions	Responds with organized thoughts and concise answers	Speaks effectively and sometimes gets off topic Answers lacks organization	Response fails to answer question		X 2	
Support	Always provides details that support answers/basis of the question	Usually provides details that are supportive of the answers/basis of the question	Sometimes overlooks details that could be very beneficial to the answers/basis of the question		X 3	
Knowledge of agriculture	Answer shows knowledge of agriculture	Answer shows limited knowledge of agriculture	Answer shows no knowledge of agriculture		X 3	
Gross Total Points						
Time Deduction*						
Accuracy Deduction**						
Net Total Points						
Rank						

* -1 point per second over 4 minutes, determined by the timekeepers

** - 2 points per word, determined by the accuracy judges