

**Minutes
NAAE Board of Directors
Meeting
February 6-7, 2026**

The NAAE Board of Directors conducted a board of directors meeting in person at the NAAE Office in Lexington, Kentucky on February 6-7, 2026. Board members in attendance included: Cameron Dale (OK), President; Kyle Stapleton (ID), President-Elect; Sharon Metzger (AZ), Region I Vice President; Lauren Emerson (LA), Region II Vice President; Paul Aarsvold (MN), Region III Vice President; John Hammond (KY), Region IV Vice President; Nelson McCracken (GA), Region V Vice President; Darla Romberger (PA), Region VI Vice President; Bill Newsom (TN), Past President; and Alissa Smith (KY), NAAE Chief Executive Officer. NAAE Membership Committee Chairs and guests joined the meeting virtually for limited time frames.

The minutes of the meeting are as follows:

1. **Call to Order** –President Cameron Dale called the board meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. Eastern time on Friday, February 6, 2026 at 8:00 a.m. EST.
2. **Review and Approve Agenda** – Bill Newsom moved, Kyle Stapleton seconded, to approve the agenda with flexibility. Motion carried.
3. **Review and Approve Minutes** – Paul Aarsvold moved, Kyle Stapleton seconded, to approve the following minutes of the meeting: NAAE Board Meeting-January 12, 2026. Motion carried.
4. **NAAE Board of Directors and Staff Reports** – President Cameron Dale invited each director and staff person to present an update on their activities since the last Board meeting in early January.
5. **NAAE Board of Directors Orientation** – Chief Executive Officer Alissa Smith led the NAAE Board of Directors training to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the Board and staff. NAAE staff and board also signed their annual Conflict of Interest Policy and Disclosure Statement.
6. **CEO Report** – Alissa Smith presented the CEO report of what has been occurring with staff and in the office since NAAE Convention.
7. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings**
 - **Finance** – The NAAE Board Finance Committee meeting was called to order by chair John Hammond at 11:24 a.m. Marty Jones, NAAE Membership Committee Chair for the Financial Review committee joined virtually. Alissa Smith provided an update on the financials including the hotel bill and the schedule for the 2025 audit as well as the final numbers from ACTE registration revenue and National FFA Foundation grants.

Cameron Dale moved, Kyle Stapleton seconded, to adjourn the NAAE Finance Board Committee meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 11:43 p.m.

8. **NAAE Representative on Ag Ed Board Reports- National FFA Board of Directors** – Paul Aarsvold and Marty Jones updated the Board on information from the FFA Board of Directors meeting early during the week. Paul and Marty shared about the trademark as well as provided information regarding the recent Ways and Means investigation involving the National FFA Organization.
9. **Membership Report** – Alissa Smith shared the updated NAAE Membership numbers as of January 31, 2026, and discussed the need for states to submit their final rosters withing the next couple months.
10. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings cont.**
 - Policy & Bylaws - The NAAE Board Policy & Bylaws Committee meeting was called to order by chair Bill Newsom at 1:34 p.m. Discussion from the Board committee centered around NAAE Membership committees. Kyle Stapleton moved, John Hammond seconded, to not required a signed MOU for members to apply to be on a committee. Chair and Secretary would still be required to submit a MOU for leadership positions. The change of the policy required a 2/3 majority vote. Chair Bill Newsom asked for a standing vote. Motion passed with 9 in favor and 0 against. There was further discussion that MOU's should be due September 15th to keep it uniform. A new committee timeline was also discussed, and Alissa Smith will bring an outline to the board at the next meeting to discuss. Additionally, Lauren Emerson moved, Kyle Stapleton seconded, that Members can only serve on one committee at a time. The change of the policy required a 2/3 majority vote. Chair Bill Newsom asked for a standing vote. Motion passed with 9 in favor and 0 against. Dates for summer committee meetings were also discussed, and the following was agreed upon:
 - Advocacy in Ag Ed - August 12, 2026; 6:30 pm EST
 - Financial Review – August 6, 2026; 6:30 pm EST
 - Member Experience - August 5, 2026; 6:30 pm EST
 - Professional Development - August 11, 2026; 6:30 pm EST
 - Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition - August 10, 2026; 6:30 pm EST.

John Hammond moved, Paul Aarsvold seconded, to adjourn the Board Policy and Bylaws meeting. The board committee meeting was adjourned at 2:15 p.m.
11. **Regional Conference Planning** – Alissa discussed the upcoming Regional Conferences and shared what will be provided. She also shared that Ashley Hood will be the contact for regional conferences this year.
12. **ACTE Ag Ed Business Division Update** – Lavyne Rada, ACTE Ag Ed Business Division Representative joined the group virtually and shared an update from ACTE. She shared

that Rachel Knight from New Mexico will be the next Ag Ed Business Division representative and will take over in July 2027.

13. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings cont.**

- Strategic Planning – Chair Cameron Dale called the NAAE Board Strategic Planning committee to order at 2:55 p.m. The Board reviewed the compiled data and feedback from their Board SWOT and Strategic Planning survey. The board discussed weaknesses and threats to the organization and agreed on many of the strengths and opportunities. The board looked over and discussed their survey results and discussed those results. Alissa provided the Board the NAAE Membership Strategic Planning survey results and feedback and asked them to review it for tomorrow. Chair Cameron Dale recessed the committee meeting until the next day, February 7, 2026 at 4:23 p.m. EST.

14. **2026 NAAE Convention Planning** – Alissa shared with the Board the overview of the attendees' demographics and evaluation and the board discussed feedback from the evaluations. The 2026 schedule was reviewed and Alissa shared that until the site visit it will remain as a draft version. The board discussed limited Regional meeting time because of pictures and has agreed that the pictures will be for Wednesday meeting, Region 1, 3, and 5. And for Friday's meeting, Region 2, 4, 6. The group also agreed to plan on President-Elect candidates coming to visit the Regions during Friday's regional meeting. Additional ideas to improve the convention were shared.

15. **National #TeachAg Day Overview** – Alissa shared that National #TeachAg Day will be on September 17th, and the plan is to host a Breakout 2.0 Challenge in 2026. More information will be provided as we get closer to the date.

16. **Executive Session** – Kyle Stapleton moved, Paul Aarsvold seconded, for the NAAE Board of Directors to go into Executive Session to discuss the annual evaluation of the NAAE Chief Executive Officer. The Board went into executive session at 4:24 p.m. Nelson McCracken moved, Paul Aarsvold seconded, the NAAE Board of Directors close executive session at 5:56 p.m.

President Cameron Dale recessed the meeting until Saturday, February 7, 2026.

The meeting was call back to order at 8:00 am on Saturday, February 7, 2026, by President Cameron Dale.

17. **NAAE Representative on Ag Ed Board Reports** –

- **National FFA Foundation Board of Trustees** – Cameron Dale updated the board on the last meeting that occurred earlier in the week. Cameron provided details notes on the meeting and shared discussion points from the meeting and the Joint Board meeting.
- **National Council for Agricultural Education** – Jeff Voris updated the board on the

latest related to the Council and shared the Council will be hiring an Director this year.

- **National FFA Alumni & Supporters Council**–Nelson McCracken shared his notes from the National FFA Alumni meeting he attended virtually in January.
- **Ag Ed Managing Board** – Aaron Geiman did not provide a report as they have not met since the last time he updated the board.

18. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings cont.**

- Strategic Planning – Chair Cameron Dale called the meeting back to order at 9:22 a.m. The Board discussed the membership survey results and talked about a plan moving forth for strategic planning. The Board will see a first draft of the plan at the March 30th Board of Directors meeting. Kyle Stapleton moved, Sharon Metzger seconded, to adjourn the NAAE Board Strategic Planning committee at 10:09 a.m.

19. **Executive Session** – John Hammond moved, Paul Aarsvold seconded, for the NAAE Board of Directors to go into Executive Session to at 10:10 a.m. Darla Romberger moved, Paul Aarsvold seconded, the NAAE Board of Directors close executive session at 10:28 a.m.

20. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings Cont.**

- **Advocacy in Agricultural Education**

Bill Newsom, Board Chair for the Advocacy in Agricultural Education Committee, conducted the meeting. Mary Handrich, Wisconsin, Advocacy in Agricultural Education Membership Committee Chair, joined the meeting via Zoom. (Refer to the committee report for the details of the committee meeting.

- **Member Experience**

Cameron Dale and Kyle Stapleton, Board Chairs for Member Experience Committee, conducted the meeting. Erica Whitmore, Washington, Member Experience Membership Committee Chair, joined the meeting via Zoom. (Refer to the committee report for the details of the committee meeting.

- **Professional Development**

Paul Aarsvold and Darla Romberger, Board Chairs for the Professional Development Committee, conducted the meeting. Emily Sewell, Oklahoma, Professional Development Membership Committee Chair, joined the meeting via Zoom. (Refer to the committee report for the details of the committee meeting.

- **Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition**

Nelson McCracken and Lauren Emerson, Board Chairs for the Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition Committee conducted the meeting. Annette Weeks, Washington, Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition Membership Committee Chair, joined the meeting via Zoom. (Refer to the committee report for the details of the committee meeting.

21. **Committee Reports Approval** – Paul Aarsvold moved, Kyle Stapleton seconded, to approve the committee reports as posted. Motion passed.

22. **New Business –**
 - Paul Aarsvold moved, Sharon Metzger seconded, to approve the Board of Directors addendum to the NAAE Chief Executive Officer’s contract. Motion passed.
 - Alissa Smith shared a hiring timeline for a new NAAE Program Manager for the Board of Directors to review. The Board will plan to discuss at the March 30th Board of Directors meeting.

23. **Adjournment –** With no further business to be transacted at this time, Kyle Stapleton moved, Sharon Metzger seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 11:53 a.m. Eastern time.