Minutes
NAAE Board of Directors
Meeting
September 19-20, 2025

The NAAE Board of Directors conducted an in-person board of directors meeting at the NAAE Office in Lexington, Kentucky on September 19-20, 2025. Board members in attendance included: Bill Newsom (TN), President; Cameron Dale (OK), President-Elect; Kyle Stapleton (ID), 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; Aaron Geiman (MD), Region VI Vice President; Eric Tilleman (MT), Past President; and Alissa Smith (KY), NAAE Chief Executive Officer. Multiple guests joined virtually for a portion of the meeting and are noted in the minutes below.

The minutes of the meeting are as follows:

1. **Call to Order** –President Bill Newsom called the board meeting to order at 8:30 a.m. on Friday, September 19, 2025.

2. **Reflection and Pledge** – President-Elect Cameron Dale provided a reflection for the meeting and led the Board in the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. **Approve Meeting Agenda –** Eric Tilleman moved, Kyle Stapleton seconded, to approve the meeting agenda with flexibility. Motion carried.

4. **Approve Board Minutes** – Nelson McCracken moved, Lauren Emerson seconded, to approve the minutes of the following meetings: January 29-February 1, 2025, and July 29, 2025. Motion carried.

5. **NAAE Board of Directors and Staff Reports –** President Bill Newsom invited each director and staff person to present an update on their activities since the last Board meeting and the beginning of school.

6. **NAAE Membership Report** – Alissa Smith provided the monthly membership report as of September 18, 2025, that included regional and state breakdowns of membership and comparisons of last year as well as student membership info. Alissa reported that we have approximately 64% of membership into the office as compared to last year's membership numbers.
   Additionally, Alissa reported the 2025 NAAE Convention Official Delegate Report. Aaron Geiman moved, Eric Tilleman seconded, to accept the Official Delegate Report. Motion carried.

7. **CEO Update** – Alissa Smith provided a report on the staff and the most recent summer and National #TeachAg Day as well as information from the TIE Annual Meeting, The Council Meeting, and meeting with National FFA Foundation.

8. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings**
   - Finance – The NAAE Board Finance Committee meeting was called to order by chair John Hammond at 10:30 a.m. The Financial Review committee chair, Marty Jones, was in attendance as well as the current NAAE Board of Directors. Alissa Smith provided an update on the financials including the sponsorship payments from National FFA Foundation and the Ag Ed Relief Fund balance. Alissa also shared the Investment Policies that were approved in 2012 and asked the Board to review for discussion at the Board Meeting at NAAE Convention. John then discussed the NAAE Financial Review committee meeting and shared the motion from their latest meeting in August. The NAAE Financial Review Committee recommended to the NAAE Board of Directors an increase of $25.00 to active membership. Marty Jones provided a detail of their discussion and how they came to the amount for the increase and provided the overview of the last year's discussion. The Regional Vice Presidents provided insight to the discussion from each of the NAAE Regional Conferences this summer and they reviewed the NAAE Member Survey that was sent out to the entire membership to gain feedback. Eric moved, Paul Aarsvold seconded, to increase active membership dues by $25.00 to begin the 2026-2027 NAAE membership year. Motion carried. The NAAE Board will prepare information to provide to the membership about the membership dues increase and it will be voted on by the delegates at the 2025 NAAE Convention. The meeting was adjourned at 11:52 p.m.

President Bill Newsom recessed the board meeting for lunch.

9. **National FFA Strategic Plan Focus Group-SWOT Analysis –** Jen Fischer from Fischer Focus Forward was in-person and walked the Board of Directors through the SWOT analysis for the National FFA Organization strategic plan.

10. **NAAE Convention Update** – Alissa presented to the Board of Directors the updated schedule along with their draft agenda for the week. The outline for the State Leaders Training was also presented.

11. **ACTE Ag Ed Business Division Update** – Lavyne Rada, ACTE Ag Ed Business Vice President, joined the meeting virtually and provided an update to the Board on ACTE Ag Ed Business. She also shared there are three candidates for Ag Ed Business Division Vice President – Rachel Knight, NM; Robin McLean, NJ; and Shannon Boswell, MT.

12. **National FFA Convention Update** – Alissa presented the schedule for the week including the NAAE Educators Lounge, #TeachAg Booth, the workshops for teachers and students, as well as our engagement with NASAE and ATA Conclave.

13. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings cont.**
    - Policy & Bylaws Board committee was called to order by Bill Newsom at 4:30 p.m. Dr. Daniel Foster from Beyond the Gavel joined the meeting virtually. The committee discussed a proposal to update the language in the Bylaws as well as a recommendation to consider changing the term of President-Elect to be three-year term with the President Elect succeeding President and then to Past President, with each position serving a one-year term. Kyle Stapleton moved, Aaron Geiman seconded, to accept the Bylaws Amendments as presented. President Bill Newsom called for a standing vote to insure 2/3 majority of the Board of Directors. Motion carried. The Board of Directors will notify the membership of the Bylaws amendment within sixty days prior to voting at the business meeting at the 2025 NAAE Convention. The committee was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.
    - Strategic Planning Board committee was called to order with Cameron Dale presiding at 4:45 p.m. Alissa presented the overview for the development of the 2027-2031 NAAE Strategic Plan and reported on upcoming strategic planning items that will happen in early 2026. Additionally the committee discussed timeline to select a new NAAE representative for the National FFA Board of Directors. The meeting was adjourned at 4:58 p.m.

14. **NAAE Representative on Ag Ed Board Update** –
    - **National Council for Agricultural Education** - Jeff Voris joined the meeting virtually to present and update from the recent National Council for Agricultural Education meeting. The Council is also working on strategic planning and will be hiring a new managing director as Melissa Rekeweg has resigned.
    - **Advanced CTE** – Eric Tilleman reported on Advanced CTE work related to the career pathways and announced there will be eight pilot states to release the new career pathways this coming year.

President Bill Newsom recessed the meeting until Saturday, September 20, 2025.

The meeting was call back to order at 8:31 am on Saturday, September 20, 2025, by President Bill Newsom.

15. **NAAE Membership Committees** – The NAAE Board determined dates for Winter committee meetings:
    - **Advocacy in Agricultural Education –** January 21st, 6:30 pm EST
    - **Financial Review –** March 3rd, 6:30 pm EST
    - **Member Experience -** January 29th, 6:30 pm EST
    - **Professional Development -** January 22nd, 6:30 pm EST
    - **Teacher Recruitment, Retention, and Recognition -** January 20th, 6:30 pm EST

    The NAAE Board also discussed committee attendance and makeup of the committees. Lauren Emerson moved, Nelson McCracken seconded, to create a new membership committee attendance policy that states "NAAE Membership Committee members who incur two consecutive non-communicated absences will be removed from their position and replaced." Motion passed.

16. **NAAE Representative on Ag Ed Board Reports** –
    - **National FFA Foundation Board of Trustees** – Cameron Dale updated the board on her meeting in August and provided an overview of their priorities discussed.
    - **National FFA Board of Directors** – Paul Aarsvold updated the board his board meeting and that he will also have another board meeting at National FFA Convention.
    - **National FFA Alumni & Supporters Council**–Nelson McCracken shared his notes from the National FFA Alumni meeting he attended this summer.
    - **Ag Ed Managing Board** – Aaron Geiman provided a report from the last Ag Ed Managing Board meeting including insight of the upcoming themes.

16. **NAAE Board Committee Meetings Cont.**
    - **Advocacy in Agricultural Education**
      Bill Newsom, Board Chair for the Advocacy in Agricultural Education Committee, conducted the meeting. (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**
      Aaron Geiman and Paul Aarsvold, Board Chairs for the Professional Development Committee, conducted the meeting. Rob Yates, Montana 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.

17. **Committee Reports** – Paul Aarsvold moved, Nelson McCracken seconded, to approve The committee reports as presented. Motion carried.

18. **New Business** – no new business was discussed.

19. **Adjournment** – With no further business to be transacted at this time, Nelson McCracken moved, Lauren Emerson seconded, to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m. Eastern time.