

Agriculture Program Philosophy and Objectives

The philosophy of a local agriculture department developed within the guidelines of the state and local school philosophy must be clearly defined and understood by the instructor(s), school administration, parents, and students. It will include responsibilities to the community, the groups to be instructed, the areas of instruction, and direct objectives of the program. The philosophical base should embrace the importance of the relationship between knowledge to the effective use and application of such knowledge. This gives the program stability and a sense of direction. The following example of a philosophy for a comprehensive high school agriculture program is offered to provide teachers and students with a clear and understandable view of a program:

Sample Philosophy for a Comprehensive High School Agriculture Program

The agriculture teachers of Model High School are dedicated to the development of an educational environment that will help each student grow into a creative, sensitive and thinking adult. Agricultural Education is a part of the career development continuum, which includes education for agricultural occupations ranging from career motivation, career orientation, and career exploration through career development. The goal is to teach students who pursue entry-level jobs and entrepreneurship in agriculture. Students will develop awareness that work is society's way of creating, preserving, changing and improving its environment. Provisions will be made to allow for individual differences in all cooperative, on-the-job, and classroom experiences. Adult education is an important part of the total program.

It is essential to help students develop self-understanding and the ability to evaluate themselves, and, as a result, to initiate change when necessary. The teacher strives to instill in students self-respect and personal values, which will help them become more effective and happy people. The teacher acknowledges and encourages student participation and interaction in accomplishing needed change while encouraging students to accept responsibility for their actions.

Student participation and interaction is provided through planned leadership activities in FFA. FFA provides opportunities for cooperation, citizenship, and leadership development at the local, state, and national levels. Students gain experience in decision-making, learn to accept responsibility for their actions, and participate in activities that may lead to more purposeful use of leisure time.

The development of wholesome, community-school relations is essential in the establishment, planning and evaluation of the Agricultural Education program. Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) visits and parent conferences must be used to interpret the needs of students as well as visits to employers and prospective employers. By nurturing a close relationship with students and by observation of both their work and classroom achievements, students will achieve a critical awareness and respect for their community, country, and its democratic principles.

The second example is a short philosophy, which states the purpose and aim of the agriculture program in broad terms. If an outsider can read your philosophy and understand the end goals and direction of your program, the length is not important.

Sample Model School High School Agriculture Program Philosophy

The purpose of Model High School's agriculture program is to provide a sound, broad education in the agriculture, food, fiber and natural resources sector, which meets the needs of the secondary students, and adults in the Model High School district. Instructional areas will include leadership, agricultural experience, careers in agriculture, animal production, plant production, agricultural construction, agricultural structures, agricultural power and machinery, soil and water management, farm management, agribusiness, forestry, and horticulture.