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NATIONAL STUDENT TEACHER CONFERENCES 1952 - 1967

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The late J. N. Weiss, former member of the teacher education staff at the University of Illinois, is credited as original sponsor of the conference for Student Teachers held annually since 1952 in connection with the National F.F.A. Convention at Kansas City, Missouri.

In 1950 and 1951 Professor Weiss took delegations of students from the University of Illinois to the National F.F.A. Convention and thereafter proposed that the activity be extended to include an organized program for student teachers at other training institutions. The proposal was discussed at the North Central Regional Conference of state supervisors and teacher trainers in March 1952 and a committee was appointed to plan a definite agenda for student teachers at the F.F.A. Convention in October. Members of the committee were Howard Bradley, Kansas State College; Raymond Clark, Michigan State College; C. V. Roderick, University of Missouri; Roy Dillon, Teacher, Malden, Illinois; J. N. Weiss, University of Illinois. It was also requested that a copy of the agenda be sent to Head Teacher Trainers and Supervisors of Student Teaching in the Region. Action taken at the Kansas City conference in 1953 included a resolution for "holding the Student Teacher Conference on a National Scale."

It was quite logical that special conferences for prospective teachers of vocational agriculture be held in connection with the National F.F.A. Convention. By manipulation of schedules the trainees have access to special convention features including the National F.F.A. Speaking Contest and the awarding of American Farmer Degrees. A substantial number of the student teachers are members of the Alpha Tau Alpha fraternity which holds an annual conclave during the F.F.A. Convention week.

Typically, agenda items for Student Teachers Conference includes a reception and coffee hour sponsored by the National Vocational Agriculture Teachers Association, opportunities to meet National F.F.A. officers and award winners, talks by experienced and beginning teachers, and round-table discussions of student teaching experiences.

Approximately two-hundred persons have registered annually for the National Student Teachers Conference since the activity was organized in 1952 in connection with the National F.F.A. Convention.

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