



Policy Manual for the Agricultural Career Technical Education Incentive Grant

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CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Agriculture Education & Family Consumer Sciences Office

PREFACE

Agriculture is California's single most important industry. Agriculture production and agribusiness industries are dependent upon a constant source of qualified, employable individuals. The California State Legislature declared in Senate Bill 187 in 1981, that it is within the best interests of the people that a comprehensive education program in agriculture be created and maintained by the state public schools' system to ensure an adequate supply of trained and skilled individuals.

This legislation, SB 187, established a committee to develop standards to be presented to the legislature for review and to the State Board of Education for approval and adoption.

At its July 1983 meeting the State Board of Education accepted a report from the SB 187 committee which recommended a set of fifteen program standards and accompanying compliance criteria. Since a program, which operates within the framework of these standards, is viewed as being exemplary, progress towards meeting the standards or actual accomplishment of them will be considered as "program improvements" which is the focal point of the Agricultural Education Career Technical Education Incentive Grant Program (Ag Incentive Grant).

The Ag Incentive Grant originated with provisions in SB 813 in 1983. The program was developed in response to a need noted by the legislature to assist local educational agencies in their attempts to implement the reforms in Agricultural Education which were embodied in SB 187 and the recommendations of the State Advisory Council for Agricultural Education which was provided for in that Act. The State Agricultural Education Unit developed the process by which the Ag Incentive Grant funds are distributed and administered.

Each agriculture education department participating in the Ag Incentive Grant shall be evaluated each year with a California Department of Education (CDE) Agriculture Education Program Review instrument. This review instrument is based on the original 15 quality standards.

This policy manual is to be used by administrators, career technical education directors, agriculture teachers, and state staff to answer questions pertaining to the Ag Incentive Grant.

POLICY

THE PURPOSE OF THE INCENTIVE GRANT PROGRAM IS:

- To provide local education agencies with funds to be used to improve the quality of the Agricultural Career Technical Education Program.

TO QUALIFY FOR FUNDS A SITE MUST:

- Be operating an approved Agricultural Career Technical Education Program in their school(s).
 - ROC/P's are not eligible for Ag Incentive Grant funds.
 - ROC/P classes, which are an integral part of the school site's total agriculture program, may be counted towards funding.
 - Private/Parochial Schools are not eligible for Ag Incentive Grant funds.
- Submit an application for each school site requesting funds.
 - One copy of the application must be submitted annually to the CDE Regional Supervisor of Agricultural Education.
- Have qualified Agriculture teachers.
 - Log onto the [California Commission on Teacher Credentialing \(CTC\)](#) and provide printout of credentials or provide a copy of current credentials.
- Be offering all three instructional components of an Agricultural Career Technical Education Program
 - Classroom Instruction
 - Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE) Program
 - Leadership Development (FFA)
- Provide professional development opportunities for all agriculture teachers.
 - Provide printout from teacher journal in Agriculture Experience Tracker (AET) verifying professional development activities.
 - Each teacher (with at least 50% of their teaching load in agriculture) must have participated in six state-approved professional development activities during the previous school year.
 - A minimum of four must come from the [state-approved list](#).
 - The remaining two can be from the [state-approved list](#) or can be alternate activities (provided they are related to agriculture course content standards and/or specific areas of identified need and pre-approved by the Regional Supervisor).

- Maintain at least one agriculture pathway.
 - Provide evidence of at least one two-year course sequence in agriculture.
- Provide alternative credits.
 - Submit description of at least one agriculture course meeting UC “a-g”, Dual Enrollment, Articulation, etc.
- Be affiliated with the Agricultural Education Career Technical Student Organization (FFA).
 - Provide a copy of the current FFA Chapter Constitution & Bylaws with the language relating to the election of officers highlighted.
 - Use meeting manager in AET or provide minutes for a minimum of six chapter meetings held during the previous school year.
- Grading of Future Farmers of America (FFA) and Supervised Agricultural Experience Participation (SAE).
 - Provide a copy of each course syllabus identifying the grading policy for FFA and SAE.
- Graduate Exit Survey
 - Submit completed exit surveys in AET for all graduates from the previous year.
- Have an Agriculture Advisory Committee.
 - Provide a current roster of the committee members with their roles and contact information. *(Note: Ag teachers and administrators are ex officio/non-voting members of the Advisory Committee.)*
 - Provide minutes for two local Agriculture Advisory Committee meetings held during the previous year.
- Submit the Ag Incentive Grant Expenditure Report to the Regional Supervisor by the specified due date.
- Provide matching funds to their agriculture programs.
 - Matching funds must be from non-salaried budget categories 4000, 5000 & 6000.
- Certify that the Ag Incentive Grant funds will be used to supplement, not supplant, the District’s regular on-going expenditures for the Agricultural Education Program.

TO QUALIFY FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDS, A SITE MUST:

To qualify for Part B funding, a site must show evidence of meeting the following. If any item is not met, the program is not eligible to apply for Part B funding.

- Each teacher (with at least 50% of their teaching load in agriculture) must have participated in eight state-approved professional development activities during the previous school year.
 - A minimum of six of these must come from the [state-approved list](#).

- The remaining two can be from the [state-approved list](#) or can be alternate activities (provided they are related to agriculture course content standards and/or specific areas of identified need and pre-approved by the Regional Supervisor)
- Minutes for three Agriculture Education Advisory Committee meetings held during the previous year.
- Classroom Section: Using the annual ACTEIG Report in the AET, enter the total percentage earned for each qualifier. If the applicant meets or exceeds the minimum percentage in all required areas, they qualify for the additional funds in that section.
- Leadership Development (FFA) Section: Using the annual ACTEIG Report in the AET, enter the total percentage earned for each qualifier. If the program meets or exceeds the minimum percentage in all required areas, they qualify for the additional funds in that section.
- Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) Section: Using the annual ACTEIG Report in the AET, enter the total percentage earned for each qualifier. If the program meets or exceeds the minimum percentage in all required areas, they qualify for the additional funds in that section.

TO APPLY FOR FUNDS, A SITE MUST:

- Complete the application and submit with all required documentation by the due date.
- Submit a Variance Request Form for each criterion which was not checked in Part A as being met.
 - A variance is a proposed plan to bring your program into compliance with the given criteria's requirements prior to the ensuing year's application.
 - The CDE may grant a variance for good cause, which as a general rule includes reasons that are fair, honest, in good faith; not trivial, arbitrary, capricious, or pretextual; and reasonably related to legitimate needs, goals, and purposes. The CDE will make its determination on a case-by-case basis, considering all facts and circumstances.
- Agree to participate in the Ag Incentive Grant process.

DISTRIBUTION AND WITHHOLDING OF FUNDS:

- A grant application system is used to determine who is eligible and the degree of funding available.
- The degree of funding to eligible schools is based upon the size of the agriculture staff, students enrolled in the program as reported on the Program Data Enrollment Report (R-2), the number of teachers meeting the class size requirements, the number of teachers that have either an extended contract or a Supervised Agriculture Experience (SAE) Period, and the compliance of the school site in meeting the Quality Criteria as verified and approved by the Regional Supervisor.

- The allocation of funds is based on the approved amount requested by the school and the amount of funds available.
- The allocation will be processed and released to the County Schools Office of Education in December – January.
- Failure to comply with any Quality Criteria may result in the school's forfeiture of future funds.
- Future funding will be contingent upon the Agricultural Career Technical Education Program and District meeting the following criteria:
 - Student and teacher data is updated in the Agricultural Experience Tracker (AET) by October 15.
 - Ag Incentive Grant Expenditure Report for the previous year is submitted to the Regional Supervisor by October 15.
 - Affiliation with the Agricultural Career Technical Student Organization (FFA) completed by October 15.
 - Appropriate revisions or updates to the Program Plan are submitted to the Regional Supervisor by December 15.
 - Self-Review Document or Program Improvement Plan submitted to the Regional Supervisor by December 15.

USE OF FUNDS:

- Funds received as part of the Ag Incentive Grant may only be expended to improve the Agricultural Career Technical Education Program at that site.
- Ag Incentive Grant funds will be used to supplement, not supplant, the school district's ongoing expenditures for the Agricultural Career Technical Education Program.
- Use of equipment purchased with Ag Incentive Grant funds for a non-agriculture department activity, which interferes with the availability of that equipment by the Agriculture Department is not appropriate.
- Funds can only be used for equipment. Equipment is defined as **any non-salaried item of expenditure** in budget classifications 4000 (Books and Supplies), 5000 (Services and Other Operating Expenses), and 6000 (Capital Outlay).
- Budget revisions of 20% or more between budget categories must be submitted in writing to the Regional Supervisor for approval before April 1.

MATCHING FUNDS:

- Applicants are required to provide matching funds from non-salaried Agricultural Career Technical Education Program expenditures.
- The cost of each Ag Incentive Grant item or service in budget classifications 5000 and 6000 must be matched by non-Ag Incentive Grant funds.

- Item-by-item matching is not required for Ag Incentive Grant fund expenditures in budget classification 4000; however, the total cost for items purchased in this category must be matched by non-Ag Incentive Grant funds.
- The Superintendent of Public Instruction may waive the matching requirement if it is found that the cost associated with complying with the Quality Criteria would create a financial hardship for the school district. The amount to be waived may not exceed the amount expended in meeting Quality Criteria 11 (Full Year Employment).
- Requests for waivers must be made by the District Superintendent, by letter, to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The request must be submitted at the same time the Ag Incentive Grant application is due to the Regional Supervisor. The waiver request should be attached to the Ag Incentive Grant application.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

1. *Who is eligible to receive Incentive Grant funds?*
 - Schools operating approved Agricultural Career Technical Education Programs may apply (excluding private/parochial schools). An application is required from each school site requesting funds. (See Education Code: Article 7.5, Section 52460.)
2. *When are applications available?*
 - Ag Incentive Grant applications and instructions are posted on the CDE website by June 1.
3. *When are applications due?*
 - Completed Ag Incentive Grant applications (including all required documentation) are due to the Regional Supervisor no later than July 15.
4. *When and how does the Local Education Agency receive notification of its allocations of Incentive Grant funds?*
 - Each October, the CDE notifies the LEA of its allocated funds for the year. The LEA is sent a Grant Award Notification (GAN) listing the amount of funds that have been allocated to the LEA for support of its Agricultural Career Technical Education Program. The Superintendent (or their designee) must sign and return the GAN accepting the allocated grant funds.
5. *What is the method and timing of the payment of the LEA's allocation of Incentive Grant funds?*
 - Upon the CDE's receipt of the signed Grant Award Notification, allocated funds will be sent to the County Office of Education to be credited to the applicant, via a warrant, within approximately 120 days.
6. *What happens if an LEA receives an allocation and then fails to comply with the Quality Criteria?*
 - Failure to comply with the criteria may cause allocations paid to the district to be refunded to the State. The CDE will bill the LEA for the amount due.

7. *What is the LEA's deadline for submitting a budget revision?*
 - Budget revision requests of 20% or more of any budget category (4000, 5000, or 6000) are to be received by the Regional Supervisor prior to April 1. Revisions are not authorized until approved by the Regional Supervisor.
8. *What is the LEA's deadline for submitting Final Expenditure Reports?*
 - Final Expenditure Reports are due to the Regional Supervisor's office by October 15 of the following year showing how the Ag Incentive Grant funds were used to support the Agricultural Career Technical Education Program.
9. *What sources of funds can be used to meet the matching requirement for Ag Incentive Grant funds?*
 - Examples of sources that can be used to meet the matching requirement include, but are not limited to: Perkins, District, ROC/P, CTEIG, K-12 Strong Workforce, Partnership Academy, and Lottery funds.
10. *Can a LEA request a waiver in meeting the matching requirement of the grant?*
 - The Superintendent of Public Instruction may waive the matching requirement if it is found that the cost of meeting the Quality Criteria would create a financial hardship for the school district. The amount waived may not exceed the amount expended in meeting Quality Criteria 11 (Full Year Employment). The District Superintendent requesting the waiver must make the request by letter to the Superintendent of Public Instruction. The request must be submitted with the Ag Incentive Grant application. (See Education Code: Article 7.5, Section 52461.5.)
11. *May a waiver be granted for the line-item match requirement for 5000 and/or 6000 budget categories?*
 - No. A waiver cannot be granted releasing the district's commitment to meet the line-item match requirement for budget classifications 5000 and 6000.
12. *May the LEA expend Ag Incentive Grant funds to support the administration of its grant?*
 - No. Ag Incentive Grant funds may not be used for direct administration.
13. *Is there an applicable indirect cost rate?*
 - No. Indirect costs are not allowable expenditures using Ag Incentive Grant funds.
14. *Is carryover of funds allowed?*
 - No. Ag Incentive Grant funds must be expended or encumbered by June 30. Under special circumstances, with the approval of the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education, an extension may be granted. Under no circumstances will funding extend beyond September 30.
15. *May Ag Incentive Grant funds be used to pay FFA stipends or summer salaries?*
 - No. Ag Incentive Grant funds may only be used for non-salaried items or services. (See Education Code: Article 7.5, Sections 52460, 52461, and 52461.5.)

16. *May Ag Incentive Grant funds be used to pay for substitutes or salaries?*
- No. According to the grant language, funds cannot be used for any salary. This includes substitute salaries.
17. *Must the LEA maintain audit trails for Ag Incentive Grant funds and matching funds?*
- Yes. The LEA must provide an audit trail for all funds reported in the annual Expenditure Report.
18. *Must the LEA report all of its matching funds on its annual Expenditure Report?*
- No. The LEA must report only the amount of matching funds that is required to meet the matching requirement. The LEA is encouraged to report all of its expenditures.
19. *What are the reporting requirements that an LEA must comply with on an annual basis?*
- Two documents must be submitted annually to the Regional Supervisor: (1) Application for Ag Incentive Grant Funds (with all required documentation) and (2) Ag Incentive Grant Expenditure Report.
20. *Must the LEA match each item purchased with Ag Incentive Grant funds?*
- Funds purchased in the 4000 classification need not be matched item-by-item. However, the total Ag Incentive Grant funds expended in the 4000 budget classification must be matched by other sources. Items purchased in budget classifications 5000 and 6000 must be matched on an item-by-item basis.

Example:

	AIG GRANT	MATCHING	TOTAL
4000 Account:			
Instructional Supplies	\$ 8,836	\$ 8,836	\$ 17,672
TOTAL	\$ 8,836	\$ 8,836	\$ 17,672
5000 Account:			
State FFA Conference	\$ 500	\$ 800	\$ 1,300
State CATA Conference	\$ 1,500	\$ 1,800	\$ 3,300
Tractor Lease	\$ 2,500	\$ 2,500	\$ 5,000
TOTAL	\$ 4,500	\$ 5,100	\$ 9,600
6000 Account:			
Trailer	\$ 4,200	\$ 4,200	\$ 8,400
Welder	\$ 3,425	\$ 3,425	\$ 6,850
Plasma Cutter	\$ 10,375	\$ 10,375	\$ 20,750
TOTAL	\$ 18,000	\$ 18,000	\$ 36,000
GRAND TOTAL	<u>\$ 31,336</u>	<u>\$ 31,936</u>	<u>\$ 63,272</u>

21. *Must the LEA's expenditures of matching funds meet the same conditions/requirements as the Ag Incentive Grant expenditures?*
- Yes. (See Education Code: Article 7.5, Section 52461.)

22. *How long must records be retained by the LEA?*

- Ag Incentive Grant records must be retained for five years or longer if any litigation, claim, negotiation audit, or other action has been started before the expiration of the five-year period.

23. *What is the minimum credential and professional requirements for an Agriculture Teacher?*

- The teacher must hold a valid California teaching credential authorizing the teaching of Agriculture. (See Education Code: Article 4, Sections 44258.5 and 44260.)

24. *What credentials are needed for an individual to teach agriculture courses?*

- In California, a teacher must possess either a Single Subject & an Agriculture Specialist Credential or have a CTE Credential in Agriculture.

25. *Must the LEA meet selected property management standards when it purchases equipment with Ag Incentive Grant or matching funds?*

- Yes. The LEA is required to establish property management policies and procedures and to maintain equipment inventory control records on all equipment purchased which has an acquisition cost of \$300 or more. Copies of the inventory should be kept at the district office and school site. The following minimum equipment inventory record requirements must be included:
 - A description of the equipment, including the manufacturer's name and/or model number, if any.
 - An identification number, such as the LEA's inventory control number or a manufacturer's serial number. This identification number, when included on the inventory and invoice, provides a clear and traceable audit trail. The identification number also helps to ensure effective property control to prevent loss or misuse of equipment items, especially those items purchased with Ag Incentive Grant funds and non-Ag Incentive Grant matching funds for Agriculture Education.
 - Acquisition date of the equipment purchased.
 - Acquisition cost and the amount of Ag Incentive Grant funds used to purchase the equipment item.
 - Equipment location, including name of the school site, room, other area, and date the above information was verified.
 - Equipment use, including a current "use" justification statement if the equipment is used for a purpose(s) other than that for which it was originally purchased and date the justification statement was prepared.
 - Current equipment condition and date when equipment was inspected.

26. *What equipment inventory, maintenance, and control activities must the LEA conduct?*

- The LEA must conduct the following activities:
 - Conduct a physical inventory of equipment and the results reconciled with equipment inventory at least once every two years to verify the existence of

current utilization and continued need for the equipment. Any differences between quantities determined by the physical inspection and those shown on the inventory must be investigated to determine causes of the differences and reconciled. A statistical sampling of equipment is acceptable in conducting the inventory.

- Implement adequate maintenance procedures to ensure that all equipment is kept in safe and operating condition.
- Maintain a control system to ensure adequate safeguards to prevent loss, damage, or theft of equipment. Any loss, damage, or theft of equipment must be investigated and fully documented.

27. *What procedures must the LEA follow to remove equipment which has been lost, damaged, or deemed to be obsolete from its equipment inventory control records?*

- The LEA must submit a list of such equipment to the local LEA governing board. Upon approval of the governing board, verified in the board minutes, the LEA may remove the equipment from its inventory control records. (See Education Code: Article 14, Section 39521.)

28. *Must the LEA's governing board appoint an advisory committee to develop recommendations for the expansion and improvement of the Agricultural Career Technical Education Program and provide liaison between the LEA and potential employers?*

- Yes. The advisory committee shall consist of individuals that represent segments of the agriculture industry in the community and servicing area. (See Education Code: Article 3, Section 8070.)

29. *Who is the contact person regarding the Ag Incentive Grant program?*

- The first line of technical assistance is the Regional Supervisor. Additional assistance may be obtained by calling the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education.

30. *What is the appeal process that the LEA must use when it disagrees with CDE's staff decisions regarding the approval of the LEA's Ag Incentive Grant application or Expenditure Report?*

- First, the LEA may file an appeal with the State Supervisor of Agricultural Education. Second, the decision of the State Supervisor may also be appealed by using the CDE's formal complaint process.

31. *What is expected to meet the course sequence requirement?*

- To meet the minimum qualifications for funding, an LEA must have at least one two-course sequence in agriculture (it may have more than two courses). All other sequences may be two courses, three courses, or four courses.

32. *What are the Professional Development requirements for the Ag Incentive Grant?*

- Requirement to be Eligible for Part A funding:
 - Each teacher (with at least 50% of their teaching load in agriculture) must have participated in six state-approved professional development activities during the previous school year.
 - A minimum of four must come from the [state-approved list](#).

- The remaining two can be from the [state-approved list](#) or can be alternate activities (provided they are related to agriculture course content standards and/or specific areas of identified need and pre-approved by the Regional Supervisor).
- Requirement to be Eligible for Part B funding:
 - Each teacher (with at least 50% of their teaching load in agriculture) must have participated in eight state-approved professional development activities.
 - A minimum of six of these must come from the [state-approved list](#).
 - The remaining two can be from the [state-approved list](#) or can be alternate activities (provided they are related to agriculture course content standards and/or specific areas of identified need and pre-approved by the Regional Supervisor).