#### Orion FFA Chapter Constitution

**Article I - Name and Purpose**

**Section A-** The name of this organization shall be the Orion FFA Chapter. The letters, "FFA" and/or the words “Future Farmers of America” may be used to designate the chapter, its activities, or members thereof.

**Section B-** The FFA Mission is: FFA makes a positive difference in the lives of students by developing their potential for *premier leadership, personal growth and career success*.

**Section C-** The purposes for which this chapter is formed are as follows:

1. To develop competent and assertive agricultural leadership.
2. To increase awareness of the global and technological importance of agriculture and its contribution to our well-being.
3. To strengthen the confidence of agriculture students in themselves and their work.
4. To promote the intelligent choice and establishment of an agricultural career.
5. To encourage achievement in supervised agricultural experience programs.
6. To encourage wise management of economic, environmental and human resources of the community.
7. To develop interpersonal skills in teamwork, communications, human relations and social interaction.
8. To build character and promote citizenship, volunteerism and patriotism.
9. To promote cooperation and cooperative attitudes among all people.
10. To promote healthy lifestyles.
11. To encourage excellence in scholarship.

**Article II - Organization**

**Section A-** The Orion FFA Chapter is a chartered local unit of the Illinois FFA Association, which is chartered by the National FFA Organization.

**Section B-** This chapter accepts in full the provisions in the constitution and bylaws of the Illinois FFA Association as well as those of the National FFA Organization.

**Section C-** The FFA is an intra-curricular component of the Orion High School agriculture education program. Students will be given extra credit through schoolwork on all FFA events except field trips, and state and national FFA conventions. Certain FFA activities might be required for a particular agricultural class.

**Article III - Membership**

**Section A-** Membership in this chapter shall be of three kinds: 1) Active, 2) Alumni, and 3) Honorary, as defined by the National Constitution.

**Section B-** The regular work of this chapter shall be carried out by the active membership.

**Section C-** To become an active member and retain membership, a student must:

1. While in school, be enrolled in at least one agricultural education class per school year or have taken all agriculture classes possible.
2. Show an interest in the affairs of the organization by attending meetings, striving for degrees of membership and participating in other organized activities of the chapter.
3. Pay all current chapter, district, state and national dues.
4. Display conduct consistent with the ideals and purposes of the National FFA Organization.

**Section D-** Alumni Membership

1. Alumni membership shall be open to former active members, collegiate and honorary members, present and former professional agricultural educators, parents of FFA members, and others interested in and supportive of the FFA.

**Section E-** Honorary Membership

1. Honorary membership shall be limited to the Honorary Chapter Degree. Honorary Members will have no voting rights at any chapter function.
2. The Honorary Chapter Degree should be given to farmers, school superintendents, principals, members of boards of education, chapter advisors, teachers, staff members in agricultural education, business people and others who are helping to advance agricultural education and the FFA and who have rendered outstanding service to the chapter.
3. Those earning the Honorary Chapter Degree will be determined by a majority vote of the members present at any regular meeting.
4. The Honorary Chapter Degree should be presented at the annual Chapter Banquet.

**Article IV - Emblem**

**Section A-** The emblem of the National FFA Organization shall be the emblem for the chapter.

**Section B-** All members shall be entitled to display the emblem.

**Article V - Membership, Degrees, and Privileges**

**Section A** There shall be 2 degrees of active membership based on individual achievement in the chapter. These degrees are the Greenhand Degree and the Chapter FFA Degree,

**Section B-** Greenhand Degree, Minimum qualifications for election:

1. Be enrolled in agriculture education and have satisfactory and acceptable plans for a supervised agricultural experience program.
2. Learn and explain the FFA Creed, motto, salute, and FFA Mission Statement.
3. Describe and explain the meaning of the FFA emblem and colors.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the FFA Code of Ethics and the proper use of the FFA Jacket.
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the history of the organization, the chapter constitution and bylaws and the chapter Program of Activities.
6. Own or have access to the *Official FFA Manual* and the *FFA Student Handbook.*
7. Achieve a passing grade on the Greenhand test.

**Section C-** Chapter FFA Degree. Minimum qualifications for election:

1. Must have received the Greenhand FFA Degree.
2. Must have satisfactorily completed at least one year of instruction in agricultural education at or above the 9th grade level, have in operation of a Supervised Agriculture Experience Program and be enrolled in an agriculture education class.
3. Must have participated in the planning of at least one official function in the chapter Program of Activities.
4. Have earned and productively invested at least $150 by the member’s own efforts or worked at least forty-five hours in excess of scheduled class time, or a combination thereof, and have developed plans for continued growth and improvement in a supervised agricultural experience program.
5. Have demonstrated five procedures of parliamentary law.
6. Show progress toward individual achievement in the FFA award programs.
7. Have a satisfactory scholastic record with at least a 2.0 GPA.
8. Must have participated in at least one Career Development Event at or above the chapter level each year.
9. Must have participated in one leadership activity since in FFA.
10. Have participated in at least 10 hours of community service activities that are not a part of the member’s supervised agricultural experience hours

**Section D-** Degree Process

1. The executive committee shall review the qualifications of the members and make recommendations to the chapter concerning degree advancement.
2. The committee’s recommendations must receive a majority vote at any regular meeting before degrees can be granted.

**Section E-** Pins

1. Greenhand FFA Degree Recipients are entitled to wear the official bronze emblem pin.
2. Chapter FFA Degree recipients shall be entitled to wear the silver emblem pin.
3. Members who attain the State FFA degree will remove all pins from their jacket and wear the state FFA degree pin above their name.
4. Only 3 FFA pins may be worn on the FFA jacket at any time. The member may high their highest office, highest award, and highest degree on the jacket.

**Article VI - Officers**

**Section A-** The officers of the chapter shall be as follows: President, Secretary, and up to 7 Vice Presidents. The local Advisor(s) shall be the teacher(s) of Agricultural Education in the school where the chapter is located. All officers must be enrolled in at least one year long (1 credit) Ag class during their term in office.

**Section B-** The Chapter President must hold the Chapter FFA Degree.

**Section C-** Chapter officers must be passing **all subjects** for the current year and the previous year and have at least a C average (2.0/4.0) in all coursework. If a student fails one class, they will be put on a probationary period for the remainder of their term. As part of the probation they will not be allowed to attend FFA events where they would miss class during the school day. If a student fails more than one class, they must resign their officer position.

**Section D-** Election process for officer positions is as follows:

1. Candidates must go through the outlined officer selection process as follows:
   1. Fill out the required application and paperwork, get the proper signatures, and turn it in on time.
   2. Must go through an interview process with the nominating committee. A selection committee composed of 5-9 individuals shall compose the nominating committee. This is done during the spring semester. The committee may consist of alumni members, an administrator or teacher in the Orion School District, a section officer, agriculture industry personnel, and advisory council members. No relatives of officer candidates may be on the selection committee.
      1. During this process, the candidate must express their goals, objectives, and qualifications. They will also be asked numerous questions regarding their qualifications and reasons why they want a FFA office. The nominating committee will rank the candidates (with 1 being their first choice, then so on) and give their rankings to the chapter advisor(s). If all candidates are not ranked by a nominating committee member, that particular ballot will be considered spoiled.
   3. Chapter members will rank candidates at the monthly meeting corresponding to the nominating committee.
      1. Candidates will have an opportunity to give a speech (up to 3 minutes) expressing their goals, objectives, and qualifications to the membership. The chapter members in attendance in that meeting will rank the candidates (with 1 being their first choice, then so on) and give their rankings to the chapter advisor(s). If all candidates are not ranked by a FFA member, that particular ballot will be considered spoiled.

2. A combination of the nominating committee and chapter FFA members ranking will determine those on the FFA

officer team for the upcoming year. A weighted score of 50% nominating committee and 50%chapter membership rankings will be utilized. The member receiving the lowest overall score will assume the responsibilities of the

President, second lowest score Secretary, and up to the next seven applicants- Vice Presidents.

1. In the case of an election because of an officer resignation or removal, the current FFA officer team and the FFA advisor will have the following options- 1- Leave the office vacant and the current officer team would divide those duties amongst themselves, 2- Hold a special election whereas the nominee(s) would fill out an application, interview with the FFA officer team in which they will determine the top two applicants (if applicable), present a candidate speech in front of the chapter, followed by an election during the next scheduled chapter meeting. Current officers are not allowed to run for the vacant office.
2. Officers who have resigned from office, will not be eligible to run for future officer teams unless a verifiable reason (example- health issues) is deemed by the FFA officer team and officer.

**Section E-** Chapter officers must give 24 hour notice to missing any officer or regular meeting. Officers should inform the advisor of an absence unless they are ill the day of the meeting (this is assumed). Accumulation of 2 absences or the equivalent will be terms for dismissal from the officer team. Work is not an excuse to miss a meeting.

**Section F-** All Chapter FFA officers must sign and follow the FFA Code of Ethics and Commitment Form. If a student breaks any of the rules on the code of ethics or commitment form, the advisor has the right to remove that officer from the officer team without approval from the chapter.

**Section G-** The major officers shall constitute the chapter executive council. This executive committee shall have full power to act as necessary for the chapter.

**Section H-** Officer Responsibilities. If a member fails to complete any of their assigned responsibilities as stated in the constitution or by the FFA advisor, the executive council has the right to remove that individual from the officer team.

**Chapter officers serve a vital role in our organization. The following are general duties expected of all officers:**

* Attend **all** chapter meetings. Arrive *30 minutes early* to set up and prepare.
* Attend **all** officer meetings.
* Attend **all** officer retreats and training sessions.
* Wear official dress as needed.
* Help prepare the chapter’s budget.
* Financial oversight of the organization.
* Be on time to all activities.
* **Participate in ALL fundraisers.**
* **Complete a SAE project each year.**
* **Attend the Section LTS and Section Banquet**
* Be committed to your position and work with others on your team.
* Be willing to accept responsibility.
* Have a sincere desire to work with all chapter members in meeting their leadership, personal and chapter goals.
* Lead by example.
* Have a knowledge and understanding of the chapter, state and national FFA constitutions and bylaws.
* Have a working knowledge of parliamentary procedure.
* Read FFA publications.
* Show interest, alertness, and proper attitude by volunteering to do your share of the work.
* Have a good personality, morals, honesty and good manners
* Have poise and confidence – Speak up!
* Be patient.
* Give credit where credit is due.
* Carry out all duties of your specific office.
* Be willing to discuss any problems or concerns with the advisor at any time!

**President**

1. Preside over meetings and the FFA banquet according to accepted rules of parliamentary procedure.
2. Prepare and post the agenda for each chapter meeting.
3. Coordinate the activities of the chapter and evaluate the progress of each division of the Program of Activities. The President is responsible for completing the Preliminary POA and working with the Vice Presidents’ on the National Chapter Award Application.
4. Represent the chapter in public relations and official functions.
5. Work with the advisor to determine meeting dates and times.
6. Coordinate officer meetings and retreats as needed.
7. Assist other officers in completing their responsibilities.
8. In charge of revisions of the chapter constitution and its bylaws.
9. Fill out the Outstanding Chapter President’s Award Application.
10. Assist by helping plan, organize, and execute activities of the Orion FFA Chapter.

**Secretary**

1. Prepare and present the minutes of each chapter meeting.
2. Be responsible for chapter correspondence. (all mailings)
3. Maintain member attendance for all FFA events and issue membership cards.
4. Update the FFA monthly planner and FFA point system. (By the end of each month)
5. Present the FFA chapters financial account balance at each meeting. Also, the secretary will sign and issue receipts when needed.
6. Assist by helping plan, organize, and execute activities of the Orion FFA Chapter.

**Vice President**(s)

1. Plan, organize, and execute all activities of the Orion FFA Chapter. Specific officer duties will be chosen/assigned at the chapter FFA officer retreat.

**Article VII - Committees**

**Section A**- There shall be 3 standing committees in the chapter. These will be the following:

1. Growing Leaders
2. Building Communities
3. Strengthening Agriculture

Sub-committees will correspond to those areas outlined on the National Chapter Award application.

**Section B-** Special committees can be formed at any regular or officer meeting if a majority vote for the motion has been passed.

**Article VIII - Meetings**

**Section A**- Regular chapter meetings shall be held once a month during the school year at such time and place as designated by the Chapter Executive Council. Special meetings may be called at any time.

**Section B-** Delegates shall be selected annually by the advisor to represent the chapter at Section FFA Banquet, State FFA Convention, and other events as necessary to have proper representation at other meetings.

**Section C-** Standard meeting paraphernalia and agenda shall be used at each meeting. All regular meetings shall open and close with the official ceremonies. Parliamentary Procedure shall be used in transacting all business at each meeting.

**Article IX - Dues**

**Section A-** Local dues of this chapter shall be fixed annually by the advisor.

**Article X - Amendments**

**Section A-** The constitution may be amended or changed by a two- thirds vote of the active members present, providing it is not in conflict with the State Association Constitution or that of the National FFA Organization.

**Section B-** Bylaws may be adopted to fit the needs of the chapter at any regular chapter meeting by two- thirds vote of the active members’ present providing such bylaws conflict in no way with the constitution and bylaws of either the state association or the national organization.

**Article XI- Bylaws**

1. **Awards.** The Orion FFA Alumni will select awards given out at the annual FFA banquet. Students will fill out applications and interview with the selection committee. Awards will be as follows:
   * **STAR Greenhand**- This award will go to the outstanding first year member. Judging criteria will include FFA participation, leadership ability, scholarship, and citizenship.
   * **Chapter STAR**- This award will go to the outstanding chapter member that has the best record books in the following areas: Placement, Farmer, Agribusiness, or AgriScience. The student will also get scored on FFA participation, scholarship, and leadership abilities. A student may only win an area once while a member.
   * **Outstanding Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, and Senior Award-** This award will be given to the member with the most FFA points accumulated in each grade.
   * **Blue and Gold Award**- This award will go every 4 year high school FFA member in good standing. Requirements include being either a chapter officer or committee chairman, attended at least two CDEs every year, and at least one leadership conference or convention while in high school.
   * **Dekalb Award-** Outstanding Senior in Agriculture
   * **Raymond C. Kuhn Award-** Outstanding Senior with best scholastic average.
   * **Tommy and Lindsay Nicholson Leadership Award**- Junior or Senior Leaders
   * **Scholastic Awards-** Given to the top GPA in grades 9-11.

\*Last Updated in August 2017

#### Orion FFA Chapter Policies

**How to Become a FFA Member**

Membership is open to all students enrolled in an approved agriculture education class. Students enrolled in an agricultural education class at Orion High School are automatically members of the FFA. FFA membership dues are covered through the course fee paid at the beginning of the school year. Students’ wishing to remain FFA members after graduation, (those wanting to attain their state or American FFA degree or apply for scholarships) will need to pay their dues before graduating their senior year.

**(It is required by the National FFA Organization that all members be enrolled in *at least* a one- semester course each year to maintain FFA membership.**)

**Participation in FFA Events**

Participation in FFA events is optional. Unlike athletics, students do not have to attend every FFA contest, meeting, practice, activity, etc.. Students in FFA get to pick and choose what events they would like to participate in. If they are interested in certain contests or leadership events, they may choose to only do those activities. However, the more active a student becomes the more opportunities for awards and scholarships will be presented to them.

Most FFA activities do not limit the number of members that may attend, but in some instances they do. Most FFA leadership conferences, conventions, camps, and certain CDEs only allow a certain number of members from each chapter to participate. For most FFA activities there will be a sign- up sheet in the agriculture classroom for members to sign up for events. It is important students only sign up if they truly plan on attending and participating in the event, especially in the case that the chapter has to limit the number of participants. It also impacts the contest or event host and registration fees if students back out on events. If students cross their name off a sign-up sheet or fails to show up to any FFA event that requires them to sign up, they will lose the equivalent points on the FFA Points System and will be responsible for reimbursing the chapter the costs incurred on their behalf before they are eligible to sign up for another FFA event as well receive any extra credit.

In the case where the number of individuals signed up exceeds the number that can attend, the following criteria will be utilized to determine the members that get to attend:

1. Students who are failing any classes or the semester during the selection process will automatically be removed from the list.
2. FFA Officers in Good Standing. Since the FFA officers take on more responsibility than other members, the officers will get priority over regular members on the following leadership events: leadership conferences, camps, conventions, FFA Week official functions, and Agricultural Legislative Day.
3. FFA Points System. The more active students will get first chance to participate in these activities since they have put more time and effort into becoming an active member. The most recent total of the FFA points system will be used.

**FFA Calendar of Events**

A calendar of events of all FFA activities (CDEs, leadership conferences, meetings, etc.) will be distributed the first week of school. It may also be found on the department website.

**Eligibility Requirements for FFA**

FFA is considered an intra-curricular activity at Orion High School. Since academic concepts taught in class are directly correlated to FFA and SAE activities, activities of the FFA can be used to reinforce and assess the objectives set in the agricultural curriculum. All FFA activities are **optional**, but they can help **raise the students’ grade through extra credit**. Since there is a possible grade connected to the activities of the FFA, there will be a different set of eligibility requirements for FFA members than for students on school athletic teams or other extra- curricular activities. Students may participate in any FFA activity at any time of the year except for the four reasons stated below.

1. Students failing any subject may not participate in any FFA activity where they would miss class during the school day. This would include contests, conferences, and conventions during the day. (Convention and Conference eligibility would take place during the registration period for the event.) While FFA is considered an intra-curricular activity, the organization still stresses academics in all coursework. Students may still participate in these events if they are held after school, on a weekend, or in the summer.
2. The student in question has received an in school or out of school suspension the day of a FFA event.
3. Has been reprimanded for tobacco, alcohol, or drug use at anytime during the school year. (1/3 of remaining FFA activities for the year- if FFA is their only activity). This includes students who failed to abide by or submit to the random drug testing at school.
4. Has not followed the FFA Code of Ethics at any time during the school year.

**Overnight Trips**

The Orion FFA Chapter takes several overnight trips during the school year. Orion High School FFA policy governs all trips taken by FFA members. Any student found in violation of these policies will be disciplined accordingly.

* Students will follow directions given by Advisors, as well as adult chaperones.
* Students will conduct themselves in a proper manner at all times.
* Students will stay with the group at all times.
* Students will not leave the hotel or site of activity for any reason without permission.
* Students will follow all curfew times. Lights out will be at the discretion of the advisors.
* Students must stay in the room assigned to them.
* Female students will not be allowed in rooms of male students and male students will not be allowed in rooms of female students unless it is during the day and there is consent of the advisor.
* At any time the advisor or other adult chaperones may conduct student bag checks.
* Students will wear official dress, except when notified by the Advisors. OHS dress code is in effect at all times.

*Violations to these guidelines will not be tolerated. Parents may be asked to come and get their students at their expense if guidelines are broken.*

**Recent Graduates Participation in Trips**

On certain occasions FFA members that have recently graduated may choose to participate in FFA activities after their high school graduation (specifically state and national FFA convention). If students choose to participate in those activities, the following guidelines must be followed:

1. Graduates electing to go to the State or National FFA Convention must be receiving an award, earning their State/American FFA degree, or competing in a CDE or other contest. If a recent graduate is wanting to attend (state convention only) but not receiving any of the previously mentioned items they may only do so if they meet the following criteria:
   1. They may not take the available spot from a high school member wanting to attend.
   2. Must have been a FFA officer their last year.
   3. Must follow all regulations stated below.
2. Members that have recently graduated (in May in the same calendar year) may ride with the chapter to the event. Those receiving the American FFA Degree will be responsible for arranging for their own transportation.
3. Regulations for Graduate Students Attending the State or National FFA Convention
   1. If the graduate breaks any school rules or is in breach of the FFA code of ethics, they will be sent home at their own expense as well receive additional punishment by the school administration and FFA advisor upon arrival home.

**FFA Code of Ethics**

The code of ethics is a statement of action set forth by the National FFA Organization. It outlines the basic beliefs of the organization and sets a standard for conduct among all members on all FFA activities. Through our chapter, you will be required to sign a code of ethics/conduct for all FFA activities. The code of ethics reads as follows:

We will conduct ourselves at all times in order to be a credit to our organization, chapter, school and community by:

1. Dressing neatly and appropriately for the occasion.
2. Showing respect for the rights of other and being courteous at all times.
3. Being honest and not taking unfair advantage of others.
4. Respecting the property of others.
5. Refraining from loud boisterous talk, swearing, and other unbecoming conduct.
6. Demonstrating sportsmanship in the show ring, judging contests and meetings, and being modest in winning and generous in defeat.
7. Attending meetings promptly and respecting the opinion of others in discussion.
8. Taking pride in our organization, activities, supervised experience program, exhibits, and the occupation of agriculture.
9. Sharing with others experiences and knowledge gained by attending district, state, and national meetings.
10. Strive to establish and enhance my skills through Agricultural Education in order to enter a successful career.
11. Appreciate and promote diversity in our organization.



**FFA Points System**

\*Meetings & Local Activities 5 pts

\*Career Development Events 10 pts

\*Leadership Conferences or Workshops 10 pts

\*Chapter FFA Banquet 15 pts

\*Section FFA Banquet 5 pts

\*Proficiency Interviews 15 pts

\*Fundraisers 10 pts

\*FFA Points are used to determine award winners for the chapter banquet, extra credit for all agricultural classes, and participation in several FFA events.

\*\* FFA Points are not given for officer meetings, committee meetings, officer retreats, or State and National Conventions.

\*\*\* The Point System starts at the conclusion of the FFA banquet the previous year and will run till next year’s banquet.

* All policies are set forth by the Illinois Association FFA, National FFA Organization, and our local school administration. Changes for certain policies would need to be ratified by all groups.