

Selected Documents Related to the Merger of the FFA and NFA

Some of the following documents have been retyped because the originals were of such poor quality, they were hard to read.

<u>Document</u>	<u>Page Number</u>
Note from Wm. Paul Gray to A. W. Tenney (early July of 1963).....	2
Memo from Arthur L. Harris to Dr. Walter Arnold (July 10, 1963)	4
Memo from Walter Arnold to Commission Francis Keppel (July 26, 1963)	5
Letter from Francis Keppel to A. W. Tenney (September 22, 1964)	6
Excerpts from FFA Board Minutes (October 11-12, 1964).....	8
Letter from A. W. Tenney to Commissioner Keppel (February 4, 1965)	10
Appendix 1 from FFA Board Minutes (July, 1965)	12

NOTE

Sent to: A. W. Tenney, Director, Agricultural Education Branch

Sent by: W. Paul Gray, National Executive Secretary, FFA

Subject: Meeting to discuss the future of segregated components of FFA and NFA

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Arthur Harris, Associate Commissioner of Education. Those in attendance were Dr. W. M. Arnold, Miss Edna P. Amidon, Mr. R. E. Naugher, Mr. D. Seeley, Miss Mildred Reel, Miss Ata Lee, Miss Betty Joyce, Mrs. Virginia Thomas and myself. After opening remarks by Dr. Harris the following questions were raised and discussed:

1. What are the possibilities of accelerating integration of the FFA and FHA with counterpart organizations?
2. Have all possibilities of integrating the organizations been exhausted?
3. What is the significance of the reference to the FFA and the NFA in the George Barden Act?
4. Are we behind times in integrating the organization? (The White House, Secretary Celebrezze, and Commissioner Keppel have indicated their dissatisfaction with the progress that is being made since the integrating is only as rapid as schools are becoming integrated).
5. Is it true that in some States a Negro student of vocational agriculture cannot belong to the FFA and FHA?
6. What States are moving most rapidly toward integrating these two organizations?
7. What can be done to speed the integration in: a. Border States, b. States in the deep south?
8. What adjustments will be necessary relative to employment of Negro State staff members, as well as teachers of vocational agriculture?
9. What leadership should the National Organization provide to smooth the transition of the present two organizations into one?
10. How strong is the feeling in the NFA (both adults and students) toward integrating the FFA?
11. If an Executive Order should be given to integrate the two organizations, what are the next steps.
12. What plan seems most advisable and workable?
13. How should State Directors and State Supervisors in States concerned by involved?

We were requested to discuss the matter, and to make proposals to Dr. Arnold. It is proposed that:

1. The problem of integrating the organizations be discussed with both the Board of Directors of the FFA and the Board of Trustees of the NFA at their forthcoming meetings this summer, and to explore the steps to be taking in integrating these two organizations

2. The Board of Directors of the FFA and the Board of Trustees of the NFA determine if a policy statement is advisable; and if it is, such a statement should relate to how and when integration should take place in the national organization.
3. A meeting of State Directors of Vocational Education, State Supervisors of Vocational Agriculture and Home Economics, and State Advisors of NFA and NHA be called by Dr. Arnold to explore the next steps and possibilities for integrating these youth organizations.

Dr. Walter M. Arnold
Assistant Commission, DVE

July 10, 1963

Through: Commissioner Keppel
Arthur L. Harris
Associate Commissioner, EAF

Future Farmers of America-Future Homemakers of America meeting July 1, 1963

At the meeting in my office on July 1, to discuss FFA-NFA and FHA-NHA, it was proposed that the following suggestion be presented to each of the national advisory boards for these organizations on their earliest respective meeting dates:

That the _____ Association consider the adoption of a policy of withholding from membership or affiliation State associations which discriminate on the basis of race in their membership policies.

Staff members of the Division of Vocational and Technical Education in attendance at the meeting were not in complete agreement as to the presentation of such a proposal at this time, although there was no disagreement with the basic principle involved.

We believe that it is desirable and appropriate that the Office of Education proceed without delay to make its position clear with reference to discriminatory practices in these associations.

We shall be glad to discuss the matter with you at your convenience.

cc:
Mr. Seeley
Commissioner
Dr. Arnold (4)

MEMORANDUM

Office of Education

To: Francis Keppel
Commissioner of Education

Through: A. L. Harris, Associate Commissioner, EAF

From: Walter M. Arnold, Assistant Commissioner
Vocational and Technical Education

Subject: Youth Organizations Sponsored by the Division of Vocational and
Technical Education

July 26, 1963

This is in reply to a memorandum of July 10 from Dr. Arthur L. Harris concerning the Future Farmers of America and the Future Homemakers of America.

Our staff has met and discussed thoroughly the proposal in the memorandum. It was the unanimous opinion of our staff that the next logical step would be to call a meeting, in Washington, D.C., of State Directors of Vocational Education, Supervisors of Home Economics and Agricultural Education, and National and State officials of the FFA, NFA, FHA and NHA from those States concerned. We believe it would be advisable to prepare a series of specific proposals to present to this group concerning the eventual complete integration of these organizations and that consideration be given to future dates for the completion of various phases of this process. Such a procedure might produce a faster action than the other limited step.

It appears to us inadvisable at this time to seek the withholding from membership of certain State associations that are not integrated. The FFA and FHA now accept all persons who are qualified as members. As State associations and local chapters become integrated, they leave segregated organizations and enter fully into the activities of the FFA and FHA.

We would like to discuss this further with you at your convenience.

WMArnold:va
Files
Dr. Harris
Dr. Arnold
Dr. Tenney

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
Office of Education
Washington, D. C. 20202

C O P Y

September 22, 1964

Mr. A. W. Tenney
Director, Agricultural
Education Branch Office
of Education Washington,
D. C. 20202

Dear Mr. Tenney

As you know, I have been concerned for some time with the continued existence of separate farmers youth organizations for white and Negro students in some of the States. I realize that you have been considering this problem. The passage of the Civil Rights Act now gives an additional emphasis to the need to eliminate the separate agencies.

In title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 the Congress has established the following policy:

"Section 601. No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."

It is clear that the FFA, chartered by Congress, financed in part by the Office of Education funds, receiving services and other assistance from the Office of Education pursuant to Federal statute, and guided by policy decisions of members of the Office of Education is within the purview of title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

While the implementing regulations have not yet been issued, it seems clear that such regulations will require assurance from each authority responsible for federally assisted program operations that the services and benefits of such programs will be provided without distinction on the basis of race, color, or national origin. In terms of the operational structure and functions of the FFA, this means that not only must privileges and benefits of membership and participation in local chapters be available to vocational education students without distinction as to race, color, or national origin, but also that the policies and practices of each State association chartered by the national FFA, governing the chartering and participation of local chapters in FFA programs, must be such as to draw no distinction predicated upon the racial composition of any school or local area.

This letter is being sent to you at this time with the thought that your preparations on the forthcoming national convention of the FFA may afford an opportunity for early planning on your part to insure a smooth and constructive course of progress as the FFA carries out its responsibilities.

The FFA has become a major influence on the lives and attitudes of thousands of our school pupils, It has developed outstanding programs to meet the changing needs of such young people. There is every reason to believe it will find in the responsibilities embodied in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 new opportunities to further purposes for which it was founded and to which it is dedicated.

Sincerely yours,

(signed) Francis Keppel

Francis Keppel
Commissioner of Education

NFA Officials -
Consultants on
Integration of
FFA and NFA

The Chairman reconvened the meeting at 1:00 p.m. Dr. Tenney welcomed E. M. Norris, W. T. Johnson, and G. W. Conoly to the Board meeting. He explained that they had been invited, as administrative officials of the New Farmers of America, to sit in on the meeting to review some of the latest developments, on the National level, with respect to the forthcoming merger of the FFA and NFA, and that their counsel would be quite valuable in helping to solve some of the problems which may be encountered.

Latest
Developments On
National Level
- Re:
Integration of
FFA and NFA

Dr. Tenney read a memorandum, prepared by the Legal Counsel of the Office of Education, pertaining to legal aspects of the FFA and NFA Constitutions, as well as Public Law 740. He also reported that we have been cooperating closely with the Civil Rights Commission on the integration of the FFA and NFA organizations, in compliance with the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Dr. Tenney also read a letter, dated September 22, 1964, from Francis Keppel, U. S. Commissioner of Education, on the matter of merging the two organizations.

Report by
Dr. Norris
On NFA
Convention

Dr. Norris gave a report on the 1964 NFA Convention, which was held in Atlanta, Georgia, October 4-8. He thought it was a most successful convention, with very good attendance and participation. On the last day of the convention, however, it was announced by Dr. Gaar that there very probably would be no further NFA Conventions. This came as a shock to those concerned. Messrs. Conoly and Johnson joined Dr. Norris in expressing the hope that permission may be granted to hold one more NFA Convention, so that final awards may be presented, and the "closing-out" period may be accomplished in a business-like way. Dr. Tenney agreed to put such a request in the form of a letter to the Commissioner of Education,

Discussion
On Steps For
Integration

The Chairman then asked for serious discussion on concrete recommendations for accomplishing the merger of the two organizations. Suggestions were placed on a blackboard and discussed, item by item, by members of each Board. After a lengthy discussion, unanimous approval was given to the following:

RECOMMENDATIONS BY THE FFA BOARDS OF STUDENT
OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS ON INTEGRATION OF THE FFA-
NFA

1. States concerned should set up State Committees to study and work on the problem of merging the NFA with the FFA.
2. Have professional Negro educators serve as consultants at meetings of the FFA Board of Directors during the merging of the NFA with the FFA.
3. NFA members, meeting the qualifications of the National FFA Constitution, will begin FFA membership, at comparable degrees, on July 1, 1965, where administratively permissible, and in accordance with approved State Plans for Vocational Education.
4. The last National NFA Convention will be held not later than October, 1965, for presentation of final awards and for completion of the merging of the NFA with the FFA.
5. Selected former NFA officers, or members, should attend the 1965 National FFA Convention for special activities which will be held in connection with the merging of the two organizations.

Recommendations
For Merging The
FFA and NFA

Dr. Tenney stated that the above recommendations would be submitted to the Commissioner of Education, along with the request for an extension of time for closing out the NFA. He also stated that these recommendations would be mimeographed and presented to the State FFA Advisors at their meeting in Kansas City on Tuesday, October 13.

The Chairman then called for reports from the Regional members of the Board, asking for ideas and suggestions they have received from the States in their respective Regions, relative to the FFA. These suggestions, along with those offered by members of the Board of Student Officers, were placed on the blackboard, and the agenda was revised accordingly. These matters will be discussed later.

Reports from
Regional
Representatives
And Student
Officers

The meeting was recessed at 5:30 p.m.

C
O
P
Y

February 4, 1965

Mr. Francis Keppel
Commissioner of Education U.
S. Office of Education
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Keppel:

Your letter of January 27 concerning the relationship of the Civil Rights Act to the Future Farmers of America and the New Farmers of America was received last week during the National meeting of the FFA Board of Student Officers and the Board of Directors. The letter was read to the Boards. Careful consideration was given to your recommendations. After considerable study the Board of Student Officers and the Board of Directors approved the following recommendations:

- 1, States concerned should set up State Committees to study and work on the problem of merging the NFA with the FFA.
2. The merger will be developed jointly by members of the Boards of Directors of the FFA and the NFA.
3. NFA members will become FFA members July 1, 1965.
4. A convention will be held at Atlanta, Georgia in October, 1965 for the final presentation of NFA awards.
5. Since NFA members will become FFA members July 1, 1965 they will be eligible to attend the 1965 National FFA Convention.

The merger has been discussed with the Board of Directors of the NFA several times. The Board agreed to the merging. An official statement will be sent to you as soon as I receive one from the Board. Recommendation Number three implies that NFA members automatically become FFA members July 1, 1965.

The four degrees in the New Farmers of America Organization are comparable to the four degrees in the Future Farmers of America Organization. There are some variations in requirements. An NFA members will enter the FFA at a comparable degree level. The advancement to additional degrees is based entirely on achievement. We have never received a protest from any NFA member in the States where these two organizations have been merged, concerning the privileges of advancement to the different degrees.

According to the practices which have been followed during the recent years in the gradual merging of the two organizations I do not believe that article V of the FFA Constitution that specified that applicants of the various degrees must receive a majority vote of all members present will be a problem. If this doss prove to be a problem we will make every effort to have the constitution changed.

Recommendation number five will make it possible for any NFA member to be eligible to attend the 1965 National FFA Convention. Since there seems to be genuine interest on the part of the NFA to hold one more National Convention, in all probability many of the boys who have been In the NFA will choose to go to the Atlanta convention rather than the FFA Convention in Kansas City this year. This will be their decision, however.

Your counsel and assistance is of value to us as we strive to merge the New Farmers of America and the Future Farmers of America in a manner that is fair to all and in keeping with the intent of the Civil Rights Act.

Sincerely yours,

A.W. Tenney, National Advisor
Future Farmers of America

AWTenney:bew
Files

APPENDIX 1

RESOLUTION OF THE NATIONAL
ADVISORY COUNCIL AND THE
NATIONAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF
THE NEW FARMERS OF AMERICA

Resolution No. 1

WHEREAS, the National Constitution and Charter of the FFA will have to be remedied to coincide with the reorganization of the U.S. Office of Education, and for proper constitution of Board and staff personnel

BE IT RESOLVED that the reconstitution of these Instruments provide for equitable representation of the two groups Included In the merger.

Resolution No. 2

WHEREAS, the NFA was created as a parallel organization to FFA in an educational climate of legal Interpretation that "separate but equal" facilities provided justice under the Constitution of the United States;

WHEREAS, representatives of the U.S. Office of Education in the year 1941 met with State representatives of NFA and Instructed this group that In order to "legalize" NFA the organization would have to be subjected to the authority of general administration by the U.S. Office of Education - which instructions were agreed to and followed;

WHEREAS, during a period of 24 years of the above-mentioned legal interpretation, there remained an unfulfilled promise of assigning to the U.S. Office of Education a Civil Service professional position of NFA origin, with responsibilities for the general administration of affairs pertaining to the national level of the organization;

WHEREAS, the legal justification of separate but equal facilities in the education of the races is now null and void in the USA;

WHEREAS, In the merging of the two organizations there is additional administrative burden at the national level for which there are no apparent additional Civil Service provisions at this time;

BE IT RESOLVED that a portion of the NFA funds in the national treasury be dedicated to creating a temporary arrangement for personnel and other necessary appurtenances In bearing this burden; and be it further resolved that the Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare be petitioned in regard to setting in motion the establishment of a permanent Civil Service position to replace this temporary position within twelve months after Its creation.

Resolution No. 3

WHEREAS, former NFA chapters in the retirement of paraphernalia and the acquirement of FFA paraphernalia will have the burden of a double investment in chapter paraphernalia,

BE IT RESOLVED that State Association treasuries of NFA be authorized to give whatever relief that may be allowable to local chapters of FFA who are in this wise double burdened.

Resolution No. 4

WHEREAS, the merging of NFA and FFA is a wholesome product of the Civil Rights Act passed by the U. S. Congress and signed into law by the President of the USA, in the year 1964,

BE IT RESOLVED that the U. S. Department of Justice be asked for a legal review of the resolutions Numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4, above and herein stated.