

Supervised Agricultural Experience as part of the Premier Educational Delivery System

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### ***Introduction***

The Career and Technical Education Model, the premier educational delivery system, is the preferred technique in agricultural education's combination of classroom learning, hands on application, and real world experiences through supervised agricultural experiences (SAE). Part of the SAE model involves a deeper involvement in the student's achievements outside of the classroom, including getting to know each student's family through SAE visits. SAE visits are known to increase participation and achievement.

The problem is that many overwhelmed agricultural educators are passing over this key aspect of the premier education delivery system. For Career and Technical Education to continue to grow and help students reach their potential this aspect must be emphasized. Administrators often see the outside of the classroom work agricultural educators perform as justification for year round contracts and higher salaries. Therefore, many solutions are being developed to help educators continue taking full advantage of the premier education model for student growth as well as continued higher than average compensation by streamlining the SAE visit process.

### ***Methods***

During the 2007 Teacher Turn the Key (TTTK) professional development seminar at the National Association of Agricultural Educators conference top agricultural educators from around the United States were given electronic radio responders. With these responders participants were asked to answer a series of questions related to practices in their program. Data was collected and basic descriptive statistics were run to analyze the data.

### ***Results***

Analysis of the data collected during the TTTK workshop showed that 30% of the top agricultural educators with 3-5 years experience from around the country had not done any SAE visits during the first half of the 2007-2008 school year. While another 30% of participants had done 1-5 in the first semester. The remaining 40% had done greater than 5 SAE visits in fall term.

### ***Advice to Others***

Experiential learning has been referred to multiple times by various names within the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation. Some call it skill building, adding relevance, developing psychomotor skills, and the classic favorite, hands-on learning. Within our discipline it has been and continues to be Supervised Agricultural Experience (SAE). The main keys to the proper utilization of SAE is the extended student/teacher interaction and teachable moments that occur during the SAE visit. SAE visits, when planned and executed properly, become an educational tool that can enhance both agriscience skills and enrich academic success within all students. The idea is to share amongst ourselves, the strategies that best make SAE visits a reality within

agricultural education programs. Following the agricultural education model requires that SAE and SAE visits be a critical piece for future success.

### ***Conclusions***

The trend of 60% of the top agricultural educators completing less than 5 SAE visits a year implies a need for greater assistance in using the premier education delivery system. If these numbers continue to grow administrators facing tighter budgets will reconsider year round contracts and even the future of agricultural education programs. Therefore, systems and best practices need to be shared with educators and implemented.

Student involvement is often an excuse for the lack of SAE visits; this can be overcome by simply giving extra credit for students that sign up for early visits. To help manage the time required to complete SAE visits many educators have developed forms and systems that can be shared and tailored to individual needs. Proper record keeping and student will improve the quality and quantity of SAE visits completed by agricultural educators.

### ***References***

Elliot, J. (2006). *The Premiere Educational Deliver System: The 2006 ACTER Presidential Address*. Atlanta: ACTER National Convention