

## FLORIDA 4-H DISTRICT BOARD PILOT

### QUICK FACTS & FAQ

Councils and boards provide a link between all levels of programming (local, county, district, and state) and offer steppingstones for further development in civic engagement and leadership. A consistent structure at all levels allows our youth to gain experience and know how to engage with little to no barriers or learning curve.

Our District Board Pilot aims to create this consistent structure and offer an engaging and impactful way for youth to be involved beyond their county.

#### EXPLORE NEW WAYS TO LEAD

- Discover innovative approaches to be an active and thriving leader in your district.
- Engage in new ways to promote deep and productive conversations that amplify youth voice.
- Explore the Executive Board model at the district level, having committees plan specific events and initiatives.

#### MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUR 4-H DISTRICTS

- Focus on one event or initiative, built from the needs of you and your peers.
- Develop your event or initiative from questions like:
  - What knowledge, skills, and/or experience do you bring to this experience?
  - What content or experience do you hope to take away from this experience?
  - What are the hot topics that you'd like to know more about?
  - What challenges are you currently facing?

#### EXPAND THE IMPACT OF YOUR LEADERSHIP

- Create a positive impact for up to 15 counties beyond your own.
- Explore bringing your peers together that represent Florida Cooperative Extension's administrative Districts.
  - [Ext Admin District Map \(ifas.ufl.edu\)](http://ifas.ufl.edu)
  - Northwest, Northeast, Central, Southwest, Southeast
- Forge the future of Florida 4-H and leave your legacy, using your voice to create a positive impact for many years to come.

#### ENGAGE FULLY IN PLANNING AND COORDINATING

- Shape the vision and impact the future of your district.
- Determine the most relevant needs of your 4-H community and work as a leadership team to meet those needs.

#### CONTACT YOUR COUNTY 4-H PRO FOR MORE INFORMATION

- You can access a recording of our Q+A session at [Ask 4-H about District Board Recording \(ufl.zoom.us\)](https://ufl.zoom.us).
- We are recruiting up to two youth per county.
- Selection of these two youth will vary per county, so contact your county 4-H professionals to let them know that you'd like to participate.
  - UF/IFAS Extension: [Find Your Local Extension Office \(ifas.ufl.edu\)](http://ifas.ufl.edu)
  - FAMU Cooperative Extension: Sabrina Hayes, [sabrina.hayes@famuedu](mailto:sabrina.hayes@famuedu)
- There will be opportunities for more 4-H'ers to engage once the initial direction has been set.

## THE WHAT

### 1. What is the pilot program?

- We are exploring a new model for structuring and delivering FL 4-H's district leadership programming. This pilot program will test three different things:
  - District Boards that represent our five administrative districts instead of our current District Councils representing our 13 4-H districts
  - Youth developing and implementing events or initiatives based on the needs of themselves and their peers.
  - The Executive Board model at the district level that has programming committees focused on one event or initiative rather than a council that's trying to do all the things.

### 2. What does the proposed change look like visually with the district maps?

- [Current Florida 4-H district map with 13 districts](#)
- [Proposed administrative district map with 5 districts](#)

### 3. What do you mean by initiative?

- We are using initiative here to mean a plan or action to improve something or solve a problem.
- This could be an event, fundraising, service project, curriculum, or anything that meets the assessed needs of the district.
- As opposed to starting with a shell of an event that we fill with programming, we want to teach the critical thinking and decision-making skills that go into program development.

### 4. Will we revert to our current District Council model?

- No. We are moving away from the current model and not going back.
- The path forward starts with this exploration and the possibilities are endless.
- If what we're testing does not work, then we'll continue testing until we find something that does work.

## THE WHY

### 5. How did this pilot program come about?

- 4-H professionals completed an online survey back in Fall 2021 to see how well council programming was working in Florida 4-H.
- From the 24 responses, the survey discovered that most were not functioning very well or at all. 100% of respondents reported that their District Council was "dysfunctional", "not working", or "needs improvement".

### 6. Were youth members surveyed?

- Not formally through an online survey.
- However, the idea has been brought up with state officers and Executive Board members. Most of the youth involved in the discussion mentioned their current District Councils not being functional and were in favor of trying this new idea.

## YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

### 7. What age divisions would this be open to?

- Intermediate and senior 4-H'ers

## 8. Why are intermediates and seniors included together?

- For intermediates, we see this as a great opportunity to tap into their desire to lead and work to retain them into their senior years.
- For seniors, not everyone is meant to be on the Executive Board due to various reasons, but we still think they should have the opportunity for leadership development beyond their county level.

## 9. How many youth can be involved?

- Two youth for the first couple meetings to determine expectations and leadership.
- Beyond that, however many youth are needed to bring the District Board's vision to life.
- We will be testing a model like our State Council where two youth from each county would be the voting delegates on the District Board that could be elected to a chair position.
- From there, each admin district could allow more youth to participate as they see fit. Keeping in mind that they should only bring on the amount of youth needed to get the work done. We do not want youth participating that don't have a direct purpose in supporting the District Boards.

## 10. How are the youth selected?

- Counties may select their two youth however they see fit.
- This is a great opportunity to specifically identify youth that have leadership potential but may not be involved with any upper leadership opportunities yet.

## 11. Are there new pathways, district to state, this year? Will youth in the pilot program have a district to state structure?

- We are exploring ways to adjust as needed for 2024-2025 Executive Board to ensure the same number of opportunities are available for our youth.
- Not sure exactly what that looks like yet, but we will work with the professionals involved and the State Council to create the best plan.

## TIME COMMITMENT AND TIMELINE

### 12. How and when will the District Boards meet?

- Any regularly scheduled meetings will take place virtually.
- District Boards may add any in-person opportunities as they see fit.
- We will encourage all District Boards to only meet when business needs to be discussed and decisions made. No one should just be meeting to meet.

### 13. What does the time commitment look like?

- As a higher estimate, a 4-H'er can expect:
  - 3.5hrs per monthly virtual meeting with full District Board
    - ◆ 1hr planning, 1.5hr meeting, 1hr follow-up
  - 5hrs between meetings to follow up and collaborate with peers and adults
- If your District Board were to implement in May and you had a meeting every month:
  - 8.5hrs per meeting x 10 meetings = 85hrs (just over two additional weeks' worth of work)
- This certainly all varies, but this is a solid estimate to base your decision to participate.

### 14. What is the timeline for program rollout?

- *February 20, 2024:* Ask 4-H About District Boards
- *Spring 2024:* Two youth per county virtually gather for the inaugural District Summit where the District Board planning will kickoff

- *Fall 2024*: District Boards individually meet and plan their initiatives; more youth invited, as needed
- *Spring 2025*: District Board initiatives are implemented
- *Spring 2025*: All involved parties will meet and discuss viability of transitioning all district council programming to this District Board model
- There will be additional opportunities throughout the process to discuss strengths, weaknesses, and areas of growth of the structure and process.

**15. Does this pilot replace district councils?**

- Not yet. If all goes well with this pilot, we plan to eventually transition over to this model. If it fails though, we will continue working to find something that is successful.
- For now, anyone can choose to continue with regular district council programming.
- If an admin district chooses to take part in the pilot and there are some 4-H districts that still want to operate, that is fine. More opportunities for more youth!
- Be aware of your capacity and time commitments if you're considering participating in both your current District Council and this District Board pilot.

**16. What will be the carryover plan if/when the transition happens? i.e., was elected in their district as a state rep or other officer.**

- We will work to communicate well enough so that a decision can be made before any district councils hold elections.

**17. When will we know if this pilot model will become the model?**

- Under current plan, all involved parties would meet in Spring 2025 to discuss viability of transitioning all district council programming to this District Board model in 2025-2026 4-H year.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

**18. What will happen to current district constitutions that have previously been ratified?**

- Once a structure is deemed viable and transition time determined, all district constitutions will become null and void.
- We are not focusing on governing documents to start. We want to determine a viable structure and then build out governing documents that support that structure.
- When the time comes, District Boards will be provided with templates to ratify new governing documents.
- The State Council constitution and bylaws will be amended, as needed.

**19. Will this effect District Events or other District type programs?**

- No. This pilot is for District Councils only. No other district level activity will be affected at this time.