

Hello, my name is Aaron Gates and I teach Agriscience at Clear Fork High School. I am contacting you because I am concerned about the funding set aside for 5th Quarter grant this year. Each year, agriculture teachers from around the state fill out this grant to help cover the time they spend outside of the classroom. To put it in context, my school pays for five extended days. Those are used up within the first week of our summer camp. After that, we have officer training (3 days), Richland county fair (6 calendar days, there for two 8 hour shifts each day to equal 12 days), our street fair (4 days), home visits (roughly 4 days when added all together), weekend contests (roughly 8 days added together), state convention (2 8-hour shifts after normal school hours), our annual banquet (1 day), three parades (3 days), and many others including community service, working with students after hours, etc. Because of our schedule, most Agricultural instructors are very limited on time for a part time job in the summer to supplement their income, and schools struggle to give us minimal time to keep within their budget. The fifth quarter grant allows us to help our kids find their potential, help them find meaningful careers, and become productive citizens. I hope that this insight helps showcase how important this funding is, and I urge you to add your voice when allocating funds to the budget. Thank you for your time and have a great weekend!