

## Beyond the Classroom: SSSH FFA, Dan Froneberger receive Award of Excellence

Written by By FAITH HUFFMAN, News-Telegram News Editor  
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Sulphur Springs High School's agriculture department is a thriving program with about 200 students enrolled in classes, including about 80 in shop-type classes.

The program includes agriculture mechanics, animal science and horticulture programs which offer numerous opportunities for students to learn valuable skills through hands-on practice, prepare for the work force and put to use many of the lessons they've learned in other classes, and chances to earn scholarships.



"In education, what some don't understand is that we bridge the gap," said Dan Froneberger, who along with Dannie Johnson and Amber Norris teach the agriculture classes at SSSH.

For instance, in math they use the Pythagorean theorem to plot points for projects, then cut them out of metal. They use science in welding; they use and have to have knowledge of different gases. They use their English skills to detail all of the stages of their projects.

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“They have to know how to express themselves,” Froneberger noted.

It helps prepare some students for the workforce, often giving them a leg up against the competition who has no prior experience. For some it’s a temporary job at a higher pay while they work their way through college, for others it means a step above entry level and entry level pay. Some jobs can include manufacturing products like trailers.

Students learn to build projects; landscape, grow and care for many types of flora; as well as vehicle repairs; compete with projects at state shows and events; and be good employees.



“We teach them what we call soft skills — first skills. Be the first on and last off and all the things in between. You’ll be a good employee,” Froneberger said.

These departments this weekend were able to show off their projects and skills along those participating in family and consumer science and health science departments at Saturday’s Career and Technology Education Extravaganza.

The animal sciences students compete in local and regional shows and sales, while the ag mechanics students have opportunities to compete with their shop projects at six different shows and fairs each year, including the San Antonio Livestock Show.

Often each competition calls for a different project or modification to existing projects, as each have their own rules, categories and specifications.

Last month, SSHA FFA came home with two awards and received recognition for six projects.

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