MISSION STATEMENT FAQ

SkillsUSA MISSION STATEMENT:
SkillsUSA is America’s proud champion of the skilled trades. Our mission is to empower students to become skilled professionals, career-ready leaders and responsible community members.

1. What was SkillsUSA’s previous mission statement?

The previous SkillsUSA mission statement was:
“SkillsUSA empowers its members to become world-class workers, leaders and responsible American citizens. We improve the quality of our nation’s future skilled workforce through the development of SkillsUSA Framework skills that include Personal, Workplace and Technical Skills Grounded in Academics.”

2. Why was the previous statement changed?

From a broad perspective, these changes were made to accomplish several goals related to our organization’s strategic plan. Those goals include:

1. Elevating the perception of the skilled trades.
2. Highlighting the leadership development component of the organization, which complements the development of technical skills.
3. Removing any real or perceived barriers to SkillsUSA membership by making it clear that all students are welcome to join and reap the benefits that membership provides.

Our new statement accomplishes those goals. Below are more detailed explanations for some of the specific changes.

• “SkillsUSA is America’s proud champion of the skilled trades” is a statement that reaffirms the patriotism on which our organization was founded. In this context, the word “champion” refers to “one who passionately defends, promotes or fights for a cause.” For SkillsUSA, that cause is building the future skilled workforce our nation depends on with graduates who are career ready, day one. Now more than ever, the skilled trades need champions, and
SkillsUSA is uniquely positioned to claim that role while promoting the inexhaustible value of skills to the current generation and generations to come.

- Students represent the future of our communities, nation and world. The change from “empower its members” to “empowers students” locks our mission in laser focus on shaping that future while acknowledging the crucial role all our stakeholders play — advisors, partners, administrators, parents and more — in our life-changing work.
- “Skilled professionals” encapsulates the high level of technical expertise our students develop through our programs and reflects the dignity, pride and value inherent in skilled trades careers.
- “Career-ready leaders” highlights the organization’s commitment to develop graduates who exemplify the skills found in all three components of our SkillsUSA Framework: Personal Skills, Workplace Skills and Technical Skills Grounded in Academics. This phrase also positions SkillsUSA as a vital solution to the skills gap that continues to threaten U.S. industry.
- Over the past few years, members have shared more vigorously that the “responsible American citizens” line from the previous statement often led students who were not U.S. citizens to feel as if they were ineligible to join SkillsUSA. This has never been the case. The change to “responsible community members” removes that potential barrier while preserving our public commitment to develop servant leaders and difference-making members of our communities nationwide.

3. Did you consider the opinions of members and stakeholders before making this change?

Absolutely. In fact, it was our members who sparked initial discussions for change several years ago when it was shared that the “American citizens” phrase was being misinterpreted by some students who were not U.S. citizens. These students were interested in joining the organization but mistakenly believed they were ineligible based on the wording of the previous mission statement.

That initial feedback prompted further discussions with our board of directors and state directors in 2021. Students were then consulted during delegate committees at our 2022 national conference, and they were asked specifically to offer feedback on a potential change from “responsible American citizens” to “responsible community members.” Overwhelmingly, students in those sessions expressed support of that change.

SkillsUSA sought further feedback on the change in 2022 through branding-related research conducted with our three main stakeholder groups: students, teachers and industry partners. We also conducted larger and anonymous online surveys with students, advisors, state directors, partners, national staff, former national officers and SkillsUSA corporate members. Of the total group of stakeholders surveyed, 60%...
responded in favor of the proposed change, 15% responded as neutral and 25% responded as not in favor.

4. Should the old mission statement be replaced with the new statement right away?

Yes. We are asking all our members to please update to the current mission statement on all materials, websites, social media platforms, etc. as soon as possible. SkillsUSA will also be providing more resources featuring the new mission statement that members may freely download and use to promote the change and spread the word. Look for those resources soon on the SkillsUSA Brand Assets page.

5. I still have questions or feedback. Who can I contact?

If you have any further questions or feedback on this change, please reach out to our Customer Care Team.