



CENTER FOR
FUTURE EDUCATORS AT
THE COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

Chapter Handbook

2023-24



New Jersey Future Educators Association



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**The New Jersey Future Educators Association
is organized and operated by the
Center for Future Educators at The College of New Jersey.**

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Introduction

The Center for Future Educators at The College of New Jersey is an organization dedicated to growing and diversifying the teacher pipeline in New Jersey. Our mission is to provide engaging, pre-collegiate learning experiences that introduce middle school and high school students to the rewards of teaching and inspire them to pursue a teaching career. The New Jersey Future Educators Association, directed by CFE, is the organization under which the statewide network of school chapters operates. The center works with this growing community to:

- Engage and inspire future educators from diverse racial, ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds
- Bring about excellence in young aspiring teachers by promoting academic achievement, leadership, and a positive self-image
- Encourage students to consider teaching in high-need subject areas such as special education, STEM, and world languages and at hard-to-staff schools
- Foster an appreciation for teaching by promoting a positive image of educators to students, parents and guardians, and the greater community



Roxbury High School's NJFEA chapter (left) at an NJFEA regional conference

NJFEA Preservice panel sharing insights with NJFEA members



NJFEA State Director

The CFE executive director also bears the title of NJFEA state director, a role that entails promoting the welfare of the NJFEA and its members by working to:

- Assist chapter advisors in fulfilling the general mission and goals of their school chapters
- Provide and coordinate opportunities that allow students to explore teaching and instill in them a sense of leadership that is competent, assertive, and collaborative
- Recognize outstanding achievement in individual or group scholarship and leadership activities
- Facilitate higher education and pre-professional networking opportunities to encourage the transition from secondary to post-secondary education
- Collaborate with state and academic agencies to address critical issues affecting teacher recruitment and retention

NJFEA Membership

NJFEA membership is open to middle school and high school students in New Jersey who are interested in exploring the teaching profession. NJFEA is an inclusive organization; therefore, membership shall not be restricted on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, or disability. Members must meet the standards required by their school for participation in extracurricular activities.

Membership remains active for the academic year and is \$10 per student (which may be covered by Perkins or Title IV funding). If your students are economically disadvantaged (receive free or reduced lunch) and your school is unable to cover the fees, please contact the State Director at cfe@tcnj.edu. There is no fee for advisors and no chapter registration fee. If a student belongs to a school without an NJFEA club or Tomorrow's Teachers course, they can join NJFEA as an individual member and participate in regional meetings. Individual members are also welcome to attend regional conferences as long as they are chaperoned by a school employee.

Membership Benefits

NJFEA membership helps:

- Teachers take a leadership role in influencing the direction and perception of the education profession in New Jersey
- Students learn about the career paths and opportunities in the field of education

Free resources and materials, including:

- NJFEA chapter handbook
- Membership cards
- Chapter banner
- Freebies from CFE, NJEA, and partnering colleges and universities

Opportunities to:

- Receive early notification of NJFEA conferences
- Attend the New Jersey Education Association Convention in Atlantic City
- Engage with the NJEA Preservice community

School Administrators

The principal's support of an NJFEA chapter, especially in its early stages, greatly affects its success. In addition to facilitating the approval process for the chapter, the principal is encouraged to be as supportive as possible in approving field trips, fundraisers, etc., and in creating opportunities for students to tutor, shadow, practice teach, and more.

Chapter Advisors*Basic Responsibilities*

- Expose students to the perspectives of those in the education profession. Allow them to hear from early-career, mid-career, and fully experienced educators (whether during field trips, guest lectures, or NJFEA conferences) to learn what it takes to be a teacher.
- Introduce students to the different areas of education (e.g., K–12 education, higher education, special and gifted education, bilingual education, coaching, counseling, and library science).
- Provide your students with the opportunity to work with their peers. Adopt projects and activities that allow them to regularly collaborate with their fellow chapter members, potential members, and members from neighboring school chapters.
- Don't do it all yourself. Encourage your students to exercise their voice in important decisions to foster a sense of ownership and belonging.

Recommended Steps for Starting a Chapter

1. Set your goals. What does your NJFEA chapter wants to accomplish? Why is it being created? This will form the basis of your organization.
2. Plan a tentative calendar of activities to meet your goals. When you ask people to join the organization, have some definite projects in mind so you can tell prospective members about them. Include chapter activities focusing on several different project areas, such as community service and outreach, teacher appreciation, fundraising, and educational awareness.
3. Prepare a budget. You will need to determine ahead of time how much money your chapter will need and how you will go about earning that money.
4. Plan a membership drive. The following are a few suggestions:
 - Ask teachers and counselors for recommendations of students who have expressed an interest in teaching, and issue invitations to those students.
 - Advertise in your school newspaper or during morning announcements.

- Post and distribute flyers.
 - Host a booth/table at events (e.g., club fairs) at the beginning of the year.
 - Encourage teachers to put up bulletin board displays in their classrooms.
5. Host a terrific first meeting! Don't let this meeting just happen; plan it well ahead of time and prepare a meeting agenda (refer to the sample agenda at the end of this handbook). If the NJFEA chapter sounds fun, well-organized, and involved, students will be more likely to join. Make it attractive using invitations, door prizes, etc. Get students involved from the very beginning; make them feel wanted, needed, and part of the group.
 6. Participate in professional development for advisors during NJFEA conferences and view our [resources library](https://futureeducators.tcnj.edu/resources) (futureeducators.tcnj.edu/resources) for ideas on how to develop your chapter. You can also join the [NJFEA Facebook Group](https://facebook.com/groups/njfea) (facebook.com/groups/njfea) to connect with fellow advisors and share tips.

Student Leadership

All active chapter members in good standing (demonstrating regular attendance to chapter meetings and active participation in chapter activities) are eligible for office. Officers are elected by a majority vote of the student members present during the chapter's election meeting. The term for a chapter officer is one membership year; however, officers may serve consecutive terms.

The responsibilities of each position are determined by the rules or guidelines set by each NJFEA chapter. Some suggested offices are as follows: president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, and communications officer. The size and needs of each chapter vary; therefore, officer positions should be chosen bearing this in mind. If an office is vacated, the remaining officers will decide how to divide the position's duties among themselves until the chapter can hold an election to fill the office.

Meetings

Chapter meetings are carried out on dates designated by the chapter's advisor(s) and announced in advance to members. To facilitate chapter recruitment, meetings should be open to interested nonmembers. *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised* should serve as a guide for conducting meetings. The agenda below is derived from *Robert's Rules for Dummies*, 3rd Edition, by C. Alan Jennings, PRP.

1. Call to order (record meeting start time)
2. Roll call (record attendance)
3. Approval or correction of minutes from previous meeting
4. Reports from officers and committees
5. Special orders (high-priority items of business)
6. Unfinished business (postponed or pending items of business)
7. New business
8. Announcements
9. Adjournment (record meeting end time)

The normal order of business may be altered to accommodate special programs, activities, guest speakers, etc. Special activities requiring travel must follow school guidelines related to release forms, permissions, etc.

Record-Keeping

Each chapter is required to maintain accurate and up-to-date records, which will be provided to the CFE periodically or upon request. This information includes:

- Advisor name(s) and contact information
- Student members
- Student media release forms
- Number of chapter meetings (per membership year)
- Number and type of chapter activities (per membership year)

Chapter Activities

The following are examples of activities that chapters have done in the past. Work with your students to identify and take on projects that are right for your chapter.

*Community Service and Outreach**

- Organize donation drives for a school, library, shelter, etc.
 - Carry out a neighborhood cleanup.
- * Find more ideas on online platforms such as dosomething.org.

Teacher Appreciation Projects

- Host a special event (e.g., a breakfast, luncheon, car wash).
- Maintain and update a “teacher spotlight” section on school bulletin boards.
- Write letters to thank current or former educators.
- Write articles for the school newspaper or segments for morning announcements about the types of important work that teachers do.

Fundraising

- Plan a special event and sell tickets (e.g., a teachers vs. students game, talent show, movie night).
- Hold a car wash, bake sale, snack sale, etc.
- Partner with local businesses.

Educational Awareness

- Attend regional NJFEA conferences and/or the NJEA Convention.
- Hold education forums and panels and invite guest speakers.

- Schedule a visit/campus tour at a college or university that has an educator prep program.
- Meet with NJEA representatives to learn about their work and about the importance of unions.

Chapter Promotion

- Utilize the school newspaper, morning announcements, etc.
- Launch poster and flyer campaigns throughout the year.
- Create and regularly update an NJFEA bulletin board.
- Submit photos to the school's yearbook and social media accounts.
- Create chapter scrapbooks or yearbooks to bring to tabling events.

Suggested Chapter Meeting Topics

- Challenges facing hard-to-staff schools
- The role of guidance counselors
- Using modern technology for instructional excellence
- The college search and application process
- Ways to finance higher education
- Teaching special education
- Bullying/harassment and its effects on learning
- The journey to becoming a school principal
- The importance of social-emotional learning across grade levels



Networking activities at NJFEA conferences



Suggested Guest Speakers

- Activist/advocate
- Adult educator
- College/university student majoring in education
- Governor’s Educator/Educational Services Professional of the Year
- Librarian
- NJEA representative
- Professor
- School nurse
- School administrator
- Social worker
- State-level education representative
- Teacher (all grade levels/subject areas/specialties)

Suggested Field Trips

- College/university with an educator preparation program
- Community-based organization
- Head Start preschool
- Events at a public/private school (K–12)

Teaching Experience

- Tutor peers and/or younger students.
- Serve as a teacher aide or volunteer.
- Participate in Teacher Shadow Day/Teacher Switch Day.
- Visit a local elementary school and engage the children in pre-planned activities.



Future Educators Academy student teaching a STEM lesson to elementary students