



15.008
8/26

Secretary of the Year

Purpose

The New Jersey FFA Secretary of the Year event is designed to stimulate the keeping of complete and accurate records of the chapter's activities. An opportunity is provided members and others to observe the record books maintained by chapter secretaries.

Objectives

Through participation in this event, participants will be able to display their ability to:

- Keep a record of correspondence sent and received.
- Maintain meeting agendas.
- Keep an accurate record of chapter and executive meetings.
- Maintain committee and officer reports.
- Maintain complete and accurate membership records.
- Maintain current chapter documents such as the Constitution and By-laws and Program of Activities.

Event Rules

- This event is open to all current Chapter Secretaries. Each chapter may submit one (1) entry.
- Participants must preregister prior to the event through the State Convention Registration via JudgingCard.
- The Secretary's Book must be created by members of the FFA chapter under the guidance of the FFA advisor. The Secretary's Book must not be developed by a professional.
- Book Guidelines:
 - The book must be contained in an 8½" x 11" binder that is no more than 3" thick.
 - Each section must be clearly labeled using tabs.
- All contents must be contained in one Secretary's Book.
- The book must include activities representing one full year, from State Convention to State Convention.
- The book must include a title page containing the following:
 - Chapter Name
 - Year and Dates Covered
 - Advisor(s) Name
 - Secretary's Name
- The following items must be included in the Secretary's Book:
 - State and Chapter Officer List – this list should include the officers currently serving the chapter and state association.
 - Chapter Constitution and Bylaws – include a copy of the most up to date constitution and bylaws.
 - Membership Roster and Record of Participation – an accurate record of all members and the activities they participate in should be included.
 - List of Standing Committees, Chairs, and Members – this list should include names of the standing committees of the chapter, the chairperson for each

and the members involved.

- Program of Activities - include a copy of the most up to date Program of Activities.
- Committee Reports – compile all committee reports throughout the year and include in the Secretary's book.
- Treasurer's Report – compile all Treasurer's reports throughout the year and include in the Secretary's book.
- Meeting Agendas and Minutes (include reports given at meetings) – includes copies of the agenda and minutes of every meeting. If members or officers give reports, include in the Secretary's book.
- Correspondence – a record of all correspondence throughout the year should be included.

Scoring

Chapters will be ranked in numerical order based on the final score determined by each judge, without consultation.

The judges' rankings of each chapter shall then be added. The winner will be the chapter whose added total is the lowest. The lower totaled score indicates the higher chapter ranking. Other placings will be determined in the same manner (ranking method of selection). All event scorecards are at the end of this chapter of the handbook.

Secretary's books will be judged at the State FFA Convention. Chapters should drop off their secretary's book to the CDE Coordinator at the time and location designated in the state convention program. Please have the person placing the book initial the **yellow official entry list** to verify the book is there. If your chapter is scratching the book, please have a person cross out the entry on the yellow official entry list and initial.

TIEBREAKER

Ties will be broken based on the greatest number of high chapter rankings. As teams are ranked in numerical order, lower numbers indicate a higher ranking. Chapter ranks will be counted, and the team with the greatest number of high ranks will be declared the winner.

Awards

Awards will be presented to the top individual during the 3rd general session of the New Jersey State FFA Convention. Awards are sponsored by the New Jersey FFA Foundation, Inc. and the New Jersey FFA Association.

1st Place: \$50

This is a state-level event; therefore, the first-place individual will not advance to further competition.

Tips for Success

- **Stay organized.** Keep one reliable system for meeting dates, agendas, minutes, deadlines, correspondence, and action items.
- **Take clear, concise minutes.** Focus on decisions, motions, votes, assignments, and important discussion points—not every word spoken.
- **Record action items.** Always note **who is responsible, what needs to be done, and by when.**
- **Send minutes promptly.** Getting minutes out while the meeting is still fresh helps everyone stay accountable.

- **Know your bylaws and procedures.** Understanding the organization's rules will help you accurately document motions, elections, votes, and other official business.
- **Prepare before meetings.** Have the agenda, previous minutes, reports, supporting documents, and any necessary forms ready.
- **Keep accurate records.** Develop consistent naming and filing practices so documents can be found quickly.
- **Be a strong communicator.** Respond professionally, confirm important information, and make sure everyone receives what they need.
- **Protect confidentiality.** Know which information should remain private and handle records appropriately.
- **Create a deadline calendar.** Track reports, submissions, renewals, elections, events, and other recurring responsibilities.
- **Follow up.** A great secretary doesn't just document what was decided—they help ensure follow-up happens.
- **Stay neutral and objective.** Minutes and official records should reflect what happened, not personal opinions.
- **Build good relationships.** Be approachable and helpful while maintaining appropriate boundaries.
- **Have a backup system.** Keep important records backed up and know who can access them if you're unavailable.
- **Look ahead.** Review upcoming meetings and deadlines regularly so you're prepared before something becomes urgent.

Request for Reasonable Accommodations

The New Jersey FFA Association is committed to providing equal access to our events and activities for all people. Use this form to request a reasonable accommodation or assistance at least 3 weeks before any state-level events: <https://form.jotform.com/NJFFA/accommodations-request>. A new form will need to be submitted for each event in which a reasonable accommodation is being requested. This information will be kept confidential and will be used only to process the request. Our staff will review the request upon receipt and contact the requestor with additional information. The association cannot guarantee accommodations or assistance if a form is received less than 3 weeks before an event. Accommodations being requested that require the assistance of another person (nurse, interpreter, scribe, reader, etc.) is the responsibility of the school/requestor. It is also the school/requestor's responsibility to provide any approved equipment to aide in the accommodation process, if applicable. This also includes **any food allergies** a student/advisor/chaperone may have that is attending this Career/Leadership Development Event/Conference/Convention.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy and Guidelines

The standard operative procedures allow FFA members to use AI tools to assist them in their learning. Appropriate uses of AI may include generating ideas for any FFA-related assignment, project, contest and award application; checking facts of a phenomenon; or checking for and correcting grammatical errors in a paper written by a member. Specific guidelines for appropriate use, including examples, is provided in the policy. To ensure clarity, a statement outlining ethical AI utilization will be added to program handbooks. Non-compliance with this policy represents plagiarism and will automatically disqualify a member.

Please visit the State Activity Guide, [Artificial Intelligence \(AI\) Policy 1.007](#) to view the full guidelines and best practices.

Professional Integrity

FFA members participating in New Jersey FFA programs and events understand and agree that all work must result from their own effort and ability, created, and completed alone (except for partner or chapter applications). When outside sources (direct quotes or phrases, specific dates, figures, or other materials) are used for a project, document, or application, the required reference citation must be completed according to the rules specified by the applicable handbook.

While participating in National FFA programs, FFA members are prohibited from:

- Plagiarizing
- Violating copyright
- Cheating
- Falsifying information
- Using another person's results or thoughts as their own, even with this person's permission. This includes work done by a family member or a mentor.
- Using information or data obtained from the internet without proper citation.

Any attempt to gain an unfair advantage will not be tolerated. Non-compliance represents plagiarism and will automatically disqualify a member.

Secretary of the Year Scorecard

1,000 POINTS

Chapter Name: _____

Disqualification Determination		Yes	No
Size	Was a binder 3" thick or less used?		
Records	Were the records kept by the Secretary and do they show evidence of having been kept up to date during the year?		
Time Period	Does the records start when the Secretary took office and continue until the entry is due at the State Convention in May?		
If any of the above statements were answered "No," then the book is disqualified, and you should stop scoring it.			
ITEMS TO BE SCORED		Possible Points	Points
COMPLETENESS AND ACCURACY		800	
Names of State and Chapter Officers		50	
Membership roll and record of participation		50	
Minutes of Chapter Meetings, including committee reports given at chapter meeting and on which chapter took action (reports should be written by secretary or be those prepared by the committee)		500	
Committee Reports		50	
Chapter Correspondence		50	
Chapter Program of Activities		50	
Copy of Chapter's Constitution		50	
NEATNESS, PERMANENCE, AND LEGIBILITY		200	
TOTAL POINTS (1,000 POINTS)			

Notes/Comments:

Judge's Name

Judge's Signature

Date