



eNews Capsule

New York State Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Education
Vol. 8 Issue 8
April 2013



President's Message

I hope you have all enjoyed some rejuvenating time off in the last few weeks, but now is the time to buckle down and get back to the business of FACS. With the end of the school year in sight this is often a stressful time for schools as budgets votes are looming in the near future and administrators struggle with tough decisions if program cuts must be made. Unfortunately this has become the new normal for many districts. As Perkins funding is cut next year, tax caps are applied and costs rise, school budgets cannot meet all program needs. Now is a good time to remind your administration and school boards of the positive things that are happening in your classroom. I know it is a cliché but “a good offense really is the best defense”. What have you been doing to let the decision makers in your district know about the things happening in your classroom? I would love to hear your ideas and be able to post them on the website so that we can share them and learn from each other. It doesn't have to be a grand idea, but just the things you do to let people know what is great about your classroom. Did you write an article for your school newsletter? If you can share this it will give others inspiration. I am especially interested in your ideas on how to use social media to promote FACS. I have personally signed up for a Twitter account, one of my goals for this year, but I have not yet begun to tweet. My district uses both Facebook and Twitter so I am considering a FACS classroom page that I can post to without using my personal account. Has anyone done anything like this? As many FACS teachers work alone this is a perfect way for us to work together and support each other.

It is also time to take a look at your program. How are you perceived in your school? Do others still see you as “Becky Homecky” or are you known for teaching “21st Century Skills”? In a previous eNews message I discussed the idea of incorporating more career exploration into your courses. This is the direction that State Ed is still moving toward, and you need to be evaluating your curriculum to that end. The more work you do now to add more careers to your program the less overwhelmed you will feel when the changes are finalized at State Ed. Speaking of State Ed, what is happening with the CTE advisory panel recommendations? The short story is they decided that if they were going to make changes to regulation that they should make them all at once. What this means is that they have not changed the mandate, nor have they made recommendations to change the curriculum at this time. According to the new timeline it looks as if some decisions will be made at the end of this calendar year. All of the news coming out of State Ed indicates that they will seek a seamless integration of CTE 5-12. They are not looking to reduce CTE; as a matter of fact they are looking at ways to incorporate more CTE into 9th and 10th grade. The good news for now is that regulation 100.4 the Home and Career Skills mandate is still in full force.

Constance Costley, NYS AFCSE President
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Ask a Pro

Dear Pro: Thanks for the ideas for March. Do you have any suggestions for April? LB

Dear LB: April is Consumer Education Month and also Financial Literacy Month. Since the need for students to learn money management skills has been in the news lately, tying into these areas is a good way to stress the importance of FACS and get good PR at the same time. After all, we are Family & **Consumer** Sciences.

In addition to analyzing ads and teaching unit pricing like we usually do, why not have students interview their parents or other adults on their favorite money management tips. These could be discussed, compiled and added or linked to your school webpage. That way when you let local media or the school newsletter or the PTO know what the students have done, people will see your FACS page on their way to checking it out.

One of my favorite activities is assigning students an educational level based on their averages. (A's get graduate degrees, B's Bachelors or Associate degrees, C's high school and F's HS dropouts.) Using local papers or career center sites, they must find a job they could get with their educational level, research salaries for that job and then find an apartment and make a budget based on that salary (minus withholding). Real-world expenses are an eye-opener for students and lead to great discussions.

Earth Day is also in April and provides a nice tie-in with consumer skills. The winter 2012 AAFCS Journal had a great article on Environmental Sustainability in FACS. In addition to Reduce, Reuse and Recycle that we're all familiar with, there is also Refuse, Redesign, Repurpose, Repair, Restore, and Reclaim. Challenge students to be better consumers by coming up with ways to do all the R's and you'll be amazed at their ideas. Don't forget to share what they've done with others.

April is also the Month of the Young Child, National Child Abuse Prevention Month, Community Service Month and Stress Awareness Month. April 1-7 is National Youth Violence Prevention Week, the 14th-20 is Shaken Baby Awareness Week, the 21st -27th is TV Turnoff Week. Just about anything we do in FACS ties in with one of these areas. Challenge your students to use their learned skills in a real-life arena and don't forget to let administrators, parents and the local media know what great things students are doing in Family & Consumer Sciences.

As always, send your questions and frustrations to phillip3@twcny.rr.com and we'll see if we can help you find answers. We're all in this together! NYS AFCSE is there for YOU!

The *eNews Capsule* is edited by Ann Coleman and sent monthly to our paid membership. If you know of a teacher who could benefit from our organization ask him or her to contact Kim DeHart, FACSmembership@nycap.rr.com
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