



Get the FACS

New York State Association of Family and Consumer Sciences Education
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Presidents Message:

Mary Long is our NYS AFCSE board liaison for New Teacher Mentoring and Recruitment. As such she emails a monthly letter to beginning FACS teachers. She recently wrote to them:

“As we enter another year of school budget cuts and two percent increase tax caps, we are finding that FACS programs across the state are again in danger of being reduced or cut altogether, especially at the high school level. For those of you who are employed, you need to ask yourself and your colleagues if you are doing everything possible to make your programs relevant to all students and in such high demand that administrators would never consider cutting your program. Are you regularly publicizing your program's accomplishments in both the school and local media? This is the time of year when budgets are created and approved (or not), so make your best efforts now to convince the powers that be that your program is indispensable.”

I couldn't have said it better myself. She has focused on the heart of the problem that many of us are facing, and challenging us to do some self-evaluation. Many of us do as much as possible to make our programs relevant, to publicize what we are doing, and to put forth our best efforts. And even then it is not always enough when it comes down to a dollars and cents issue. I can't stress enough the importance and value of:

- working to get your high school program on track to be a CTE approved program;
- establishing an advisory council for your FACS dept. or CTE dept. (this is also a required part of being a CTE approved program);
- having your students involved in as many service learning projects as possible so that the broader community regularly sees the contributions our FACS discipline is making;
- employing the “drip” method of constantly having our name and valuable curriculum components out there in the public eye – with the students in our school, their parents, our colleagues, administrators, school board members, state and U.S. congressional representatives, etc. It's not enough to say something just once – they need to hear our message over and over, in different ways.
- working to infuse the common core state standards into your classroom lessons and work in collaboration with math and ELA/English teachers to build recognition of how our students can apply these core standards in the skills for life that they learn in our classrooms.

This is time-consuming and exhausting work. It is one more thing on our plates. But we need large helpings of these things if we are going to nourish our programs so they are life-sustaining. Remember that many hands make light work; you may wish to plan some work sessions in your own areas to brainstorm a plan of action and tackle the work as a team. I also think it's important that we each pull this article out next August and get ready to hit the ground running on the first day of school next year so that we have our message front and center all year long

and we can address issues like recruitment for our courses as early as possible.

Times are changing faster than ever; we have amazing support for CTE right now at the state and national level while at the same time our local school districts who do value us are struggling with the very real budget constraints that are not just threatening the survival of important courses of study but the survival of the school districts themselves. This is not the time to be complacent. We need to stay abreast of all the changes and be the CTE leaders in our own school districts that our students so desperately need us to be. Be positive and a team player in the face of trials and be vigilant about telling all those you cross paths with about the critical importance of Family & Consumer Sciences to our society.

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What Happened at the Regents Meeting?

Career and Technical Education is in front of the Regents again this spring. For the next couple of months, I will provide you with a summary of the Regents meeting agenda items that are important to us as Family and Consumer Sciences educators.

February 13, 2012

The Board of Regents devoted the morning session of the P-12 Education Committee to a discussion of career and technical education (CTE). This was the first time CTE has been discussed by the Regents since May 2011. There were two CTE items before the Regents; each is available at www.regents.nysed.gov/meetings/:

1. Career and Technical Education and Student Achievement Measures

This item posed the question of whether CTE students who earn a technical endorsement and who earn a passing grade on all required

Regents exams could be “counted with full credit for accountability purposes” by school districts. In other words, should these CTE students be deemed “college and career ready?”

The item reviewed the

- CTE Approval process,
- steps being taken to insure CTE content is aligned with the Common Core State Standards, and
- information on technical assessments which are required in each approved program.

The Board was interested in whether the rigor of approved CTE programs is comparable to the rigor of other high school programs, and if we say it is, then how do we know?

The Board decided to appoint an expert panel to investigate these issues (i.e., whether CTE endorsement + passing grades = college and career ready, and how districts will be able to use CTE data in accountability reports). The panel will be appointed and will meet over the next year. The panel will make recommendations to the Board in March 2013.

2. Career and Technical Education Programs and College and Career Readiness Measures

This item introduced a panel of NYS CTE experts to the Board of Regents. Panelists were asked to share their expertise and examples related to the questions in the first item. The panelists were:

- Bernard Pierorazio; Superintendent, Yonkers Public Schools
- Thomas Rogers; District Superintendent, Nassau BOCES
- George Zion; Affiliate Director Rochester Institute of Technology (Project Lead the Way)
- Hans K. Meeder; former Undersecretary in the USDOE and currently President of Meeder Consulting, LLC.

Although the panelists came from a variety of CTE positions, their message was quite

unified. High quality CTE programs can make a real difference in solving the achievement and engagement crisis we are facing in education today. CTE programs develop our “end product” (students) in the three areas they will need for future success: academic readiness, career readiness, and personal/life skills readiness.

- Regent Bendit asked if there is consistency in quality across CTE programs statewide; whether there was enough quality teacher training; and how New York’s CTE approved programs compare to international models.
- Regent Phillips mentioned that he knew of an experimental middle school CTE program and asked if similar models were being considered statewide. (Note- Unfortunately, no one jumped in to remind him that all middle school students are involved in CTE programs.)
- Regent Young asked if the department had data to show that CTE programs reengage students who might be at risk of dropping out. He also said that, “part of access is knowledge” and wondered how we could make the benefits of CTE known to a wider audience.
- Regent Bennet asked the panelists what they would suggest about changing the graduation requirements and suggested they send their ideas to him.

So it seems the Board is in favor of maintaining and expanding high-quality (read approved) CTE programs. The question the Board is seeking to answer (with the input of the department and the upcoming expert panel) is how to increase student access to CTE programs so all students can reap the benefits.

Next Steps:

The CTE team will provide suggestions for members of the expert panel. The team will also produce an item for the March 19-20, 2012 meeting revisiting the question of increasing integrated academic credit through CTE programs. We expect there will be an April item on CTE teacher certification.

What action might the FACS field take?

Please read the Regents items referenced above so that you can speak with confidence and authority about them. Help your colleagues, administrators, and community leaders know about the Regents discussions so that school conversations are based on facts rather than rumors.

Work on getting CTE approval for your FACS program! The Board sees the approval process as a quality-control measure. Future flexibility in meeting graduation requirements is more likely for students in approved programs.

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Ask a Pro

Dear Pro: The ideas sent for CTE this month were great. Are there any other special months or weeks coming up?

There certainly are! Here's a partial list along with some relevant web sites.

March

-National Nutrition Month

www.eatright.org

-Women’s History Month

-National Talk with Your Kids About Sex Month

-National Frozen Food Month

-6-10 National School Breakfast Week

www.schoolnutrition.org

-15-April 30 Nationwide Candlelight Vigil for Eating Disorders Awareness
www.anad.org

-19-25 National Poison Prevention Week
www.poisonprevention.org

-21 American Diabetes Alert Day
www.diabetes.org

April

-Consumer Education Month

-Financial Literacy Month

-Alcohol Awareness Month

www.mentalhealth.org

-Sexual Assault Awareness Month

www.nsvrc.org

-National Child Abuse Prevention Month

-3-7 National Youth Violence Prevention Week

www.violencepreventionweek.org

-7 World Health Day

www.who.int/world-health-day/

-21-27 TV Turnoff Week

www.tvturnoff.org

-3rd week Shaken Baby Awareness Week

-22-29 National Infant Immunization Week

www.cdc.gov/nip/events/niiw

-23-29 National Volunteer Week

May

-Better Sleep Month

www.bettersleep.org

-Clean Air Month

www.lungusa.org

-National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month

www.nof.org

-Older Americans Month

www.aoa.gov

-6-13 National SAFE KIDS Week

www.safekids.org

-14-20 Food Allergy Awareness Week

www.foodallergy.org

-14-20 National Alcohol and Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Week

www.ncadd.org

-17 National Employee Health and Fitness Day

-25 National Missing Children's Day

www.childfindofamerica.org

-31 World No Tobacco Day

www.wntd.org

June

-Dairy Month

-Home Safety Month

www.homesafetycouncil.org/homesafetymonth

-5 World Environment Day

If you're interested in special months or days for the rest of the year, just email me and I will send them to you. These are a great way to energize students.

Ask a Pro appears monthly. If you'd like information, suggestions or advice from a seasoned FACS veteran, just email phillip3@twcny.rr.com. If you'd like an answer sooner than the next month's issue, just ask. NYS AFCSE is there for YOU!

Get the FACS (eNews) 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 visit www.NYSFACSE.org for membership details.

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