

Celebrating FCS Educator Day

To: OSU Extension, FCS Educators and those who collaborate and support the work of FCS

From: Patrice Powers-Barker, powers-barker.1@osu.edu

Re: FCS Educator Day - **Wednesday, February 15, 2023** – and the rest of the year!

Good news: Family and Consumer Sciences has some excellent resources from national, professional partnerships to help describe, promote, and market our valuable field of study and work. The American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS) defines FCS as the science and art of living and working well in a complex world.

The complexity: The word “complex” can mean different things like difficult, complicated, involved, intricate, and multifaceted. When looking at all of the online resources offered by our national organizations, I have found it to be difficult and complicated for a few reasons. Each organization has different emphasis, role, members, leaders, etc. So, while they are all passionate and proactive about marketing FCS, they have different audiences (advocates, students, funders, professionals to and in the workforce, etc.), different scale/reach (a classroom verses a national campaign), different terms, words and definitions, different resources, and different ways to access their online material (some more user-friendly than others). It can be complex.

My personal/professional goal is to make this national material less complicated and more accessible to use in my county. I would also like share a summary with my colleagues to make it as useful as possible to all of us in our roles as county FCS Educators.

This summary toolkit will highlight some of the free, professional resources that are available to us. Most of the material comes from AAFCS, National Partners (which NEAFCS is part of) and NCFR. I cannot recommend a single “grab and go” resource – they all have their strengths and limitations.

The practical: Family and Consumer Sciences Educator Day is an annual, national celebration. Let’s use it to our advantage! You can do as basic or elaborate as you’d like.

The opportunity! We get to:

- Define and share what local FCS work really looks like
- Reach specific audiences in our community
- Use what tools fit best into our plan of work and county needs



COLLEGE of FOOD, AGRICULTURAL, and ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Real-world* connections: At the end of the day, what really matters in FCS is the connections between people. Last year our colleague Shannon Carter wrote a blog on [“intentional connections”](#). A promotional campaign like FCS Educator Day is one of many ways to share and highlight these intentional, real-world connections.

Just for fun! AAFCS has invited us to “Celebrate and Elevate” Family and Consumer Sciences. That sounds like an on-going party! They use balloons on their printed material and the sky is the limit our celebrations and fun. I can’t wait to see what my colleagues do in Ohio to celebrate and elevate FCS!

Thank you for all your work in FCS and thank you for considering how you will share your story.

The following suggestions are from the National Partnership for Recruiting, Preparing, and Supporting FCS Educators, Marketing Playbook, <https://www.fcsed.net/recruit/recruit-marketing> (p11)

Sensitivities (instead of this, say that)

EDUCATOR, NOT “TEACHER” – our educators deliver content in secondary and post-secondary education as well as in community Extension programs. The word “teacher” implies strictly a school setting while the word “educator” encompasses the many locations where educators work.

BALANCE BETWEEN DIFFERENT PROGRAMS – it is important to remember that FCS is a wide umbrella with many programs underneath it! We should be sharing and working together with our colleagues. (Note: This fits nicely with OSU Extension FCS balance between Healthy People, Healthy Relationships, and Healthy Finances topics)

***REAL-WORLD SKILLS, NOT “LIFE SKILLS”** – most of the skills that would be terms as “life skills” actually fall under the category of real-world skills, our preferred term. (p 11)