

SUSTAINING FAMILY AND CONSUMER SCIENCES EDUCATION

Resolution of the American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences

Approved June, 2011

WHEREAS, family and consumer sciences is the comprehensive body of research, knowledge and skills that helps people make informed decisions about their well being, relationships, and resources to achieve optimal quality of life; and

WHEREAS, family and consumer sciences education—with a unique focus on families, work, and their interrelationships—empowers individuals and families across the life span to manage the challenges of living and working in a diverse global society; and

WHEREAS, in order to support family and consumer sciences education, legislators, parents, and the public need to recognize the term “family and consumer sciences” and connect it with the body of knowledge founded as “home economics” and represented since 1994 by the term “family and consumer sciences”; and

WHEREAS, national, state, and local policy makers, education administrators, and the public need an understanding of the scope of family and consumer sciences and its direct relevance to serious societal concerns today such as obesity, food safety, financial literacy, the complexities of family life, and the role of parents/caregivers and other adults in preparing children for school readiness; and

WHEREAS family and consumer sciences education provides relevant content for students preparing for careers in teaching, human services and a variety of other careers; and

WHEREAS, federal and state legislation strongly influences allocation of funds for family and consumer sciences education as well as administrative and curricular structure at all levels; and

WHEREAS, access to family and consumer sciences education in middle schools, high schools, and higher education across the nation is increasingly at risk due to severe budget constraints and curricular priorities on math, science, and traditional “academics;” therefore be it

RESOLVED, that AAFCS and the Communities and other entities within AAFCS support the development and implementation of initiatives to promote uniform name recognition of family and consumer sciences and greater understanding of the important role of family and consumer sciences education in preparing students to successfully manage the many and varied challenges of everyday life; and be it further

RESOLVED, that AAFCS and the Affiliates, Communities and other entities within AAFCS support and facilitate the development and implementation of national, state, and local intervention strategies to sustain family and consumer sciences education in the current economic and education environment.

RATIONALE

Given the conditions identified above and the current economic and political climate, sustaining student access to FCS education may be impossible without a well-constructed and coordinated plan for building support.

Name recognition and an understanding of the contributions of FCS education to addressing current economic, health, safety and other societal concerns are critical for program recognition and legislative support.

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IMPACT

Increased name recognition will benefit both FCS education and FCS as a whole.

Continued and increased demand for FCS education in middle and high schools will sustain demand for FCS teacher education programs in colleges and universities.

Education of national, state, and local decision-makers is basic to obtaining their recognition of the value of FCS education and legislative, curricular, and economic support.

The role of AAFCS in influencing public policy will be visibly enhanced adding to the benefits of membership considered by potential members.

Cost is an important variable to be considered during the development of the initiatives and intervention strategies identified in this Resolution. Given limited AAFCS resources, solicitation of outside resources would expand possibilities. Coordination with current Association initiatives and ongoing activities will help minimize cost.

SUGGESTED IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

AAFCS Implementation Strategies

1. Promote FCS education as a priority focus of the Association utilizing existing initiatives and groups—such as the Annual Conference, “Take it to the Streets,” the Branding Tool Kit, the FCS Alliance, the FCS Education Effectiveness Task Force, and interested AAFCS Communities—for a synergistic effect.
2. Utilize the Annual Leadership Conference and/or convene a working conference of the FCS Alliance and family, health, and consumer-related professional and other like-minded organizations to utilize the work of the FCS Alliance and the FCS Education Effectiveness Task Force and recommend specific actions needed to sustain FCS Education.

State Affiliate and District Implementation Strategies

1. Form a state FCS Education Promotion Task Force to develop and implement a state plan in support of the national campaign to support and promote FCS education in middle schools and high schools; enlist active support of influential individuals, e.g., Dr. Roizen, Cleveland Clinic; solicit foundation and corporate financial support for developing promotional materials to use with policy makers; and plan state activities to facilitate member contact with legislators and state board of education members.
2. Partner with supportive coalitions of FCS organizations and like-minded organizations within each state to foster mutual goals (e.g., healthy life styles, getting children ready to learn) and heighten recognition of and support for FCS education.
3. Review FCS representation on websites of state departments of education and recommend revisions to better support FCS education.

Individual Member Implementation Strategies

1. Identify personal ways to support the national/state campaign to support and promote FCS education in middle schools and high schools, such as offering to serve on FCS advisory committees.
2. Promote FCS education when talking with family and community members, including influential individuals, organizations, and corporations.
3. Recruit new FCS teachers.
4. Encourage participation of local FCCLA chapters.
5. Establish regular contact with local school board members, school superintendent, and state legislators.

Submitted by the Ohio Association of Family & Consumer Sciences for approval by the AAFCS Senate. Co-sponsored by the Elementary, Secondary, and Adult Education Community of AAFCS.