

# **FACS to the Max 2026 Workshop Options**

## **GROUP #1**

**10:30 a.m. – 11:15 a.m.**

### **Knife Skills:**

How do chefs make slicing, chopping, and dicing look so effortless? Join our fast-paced, hands-on 45-minute Knife Skills Workshop and discover the secrets behind a chef's most essential tool! You'll learn the correct way to hold and control a knife, sharpen your understanding of safety, and practice real culinary cutting techniques. And the best part? You'll put your new skills to the test by creating your own fresh, flavorful bruschetta—a delicious reward for your focus, precision, and growing confidence in the kitchen! (Andrew Freeman, Brainerd High School)

### **From Fourth Grade to FACS: Using Playful, Relationship-Driven Teaching to Energize Your High School Classroom:**

As a seventh-year teacher, I've learned that building strong relationships and creating a comfortable, engaging classroom environment are the keys to student success. I'll share how taking a "fourth-grade mindset", using creativity, playfulness and empathy—can transform the high school FACS classroom. Hoping to have listeners walk away with strategies to meet students where they are, build connection, and make learning meaningful (and fun) for every student who walks through your door. (Taylor Drewes, former fourth grade teacher turned FACS teacher. Seven years of expertise: Frazee High School)

### **Dementia Friends:**

Along with the Dementia Friends Certificate, attendees will learn some activities to do with loved ones living with dementia and coping skills to share with caregivers like storytelling, journaling, gratitude jars, making collages, making fidget blankets, healthy eating and will also be able to participate in the Virtual Reality Beatrice Lab. Our State Officer, Ava Ryan, is hosting a workshop about the Family Life Cycle and Aging and my three FCCLA members, Eli Jewell, Serenity Dahl and Maria Carter will be providing the "Human Slot Machine" as part of the workshop and fun activity during the conference. The "Human Slot Machine" entertains senior citizens as a fun and intergenerational activity. Attendees will each receive a token to play the slot machine and win prizes. By taking a quiz, participants can earn more chances. Other conference attendees will find tokens hidden around the venue to play the slot machine and win additional chances by rolling a dice and answering quiz questions about aging and FCCLA trivia. (Angela Koster-Sorenson, FCS Educator & FCCLA Advisor, Pine Island Schools)

### **Cooking Up Financial Literacy: A Recipe for Meeting the Graduation Requirement:**

In this session, I will share how I prepared, designed, and taught a Personal Finance: Dollars for Dishes course that successfully integrates the state's personal finance graduation requirement into a high school level foods and nutrition class. I will begin with a brief introduction of myself, my district and department, and the context that led to this innovative, engaging, hands-on course design. Participants will learn what the personal finance requirement includes, why it matters for all FCS educators, and how embedding financial literacy into existing classes can expand learning opportunities without adding new standalone courses (unless you want to). I will share how culinary labs naturally connect to budgeting, cost analysis, food waste reduction, decision-making, and real-world financial habits. Throughout the session, I will highlight practical, ready-to-use resources, including free curriculum from Next Gen Personal Finance (NGPF) and the Minnesota Council on Economic Education's (MCEE) training. I will also share the engagement tools I use to bring financial concepts to life—such as "dollars for dishes" lab pricing, Edpuzzles, personal finance portfolio template, instructional video lessons, menu planning challenges, and scenario-based activities. Finally, attendees will receive my resources for simple, organized, interactive guest speakers and community partners who came to enrich classroom learning and connect students with authentic

financial expertise. Educators will leave with adaptable strategies, classroom examples, and resources they can immediately implement to blend financial literacy into their own foods and nutrition program. (Yvonne Dripps, FACS Teacher at Armstrong High School and Robbinsdale Virtual Academy, Modern Classrooms Project Expert Mentor)

### **Level Up Your FCS Program: Using FCCLA to Make Your Class Their Favorite Hour:**

Learn how FCCLA can enhance what you're already doing in the classroom. With competitive events, workshops, projects, and activities aligned to FCS frameworks, FCCLA gives you ready-made resources that help students connect with the content like never before. Through partnerships with business and industry experts, students gain tangible, hands-on learning experiences that link FCS directly to the real world. Beyond lightening your curriculum load, FCCLA opens doors for students to network with the best and brightest in the field—and can help you rediscover your own passion for teaching (Patrick Mitchell, MN FCCLA Executive Director)

### **Families First:**

One Family--Explore how families evolve and learn practical ways to strengthen relationships and support wellness throughout the family life cycle with a strong focus on aging. This workshop is aligned with the FCCLA National Program, Families First. (Ava Ryan, FCCLA State Officer)

**GROUP #2**  
**11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.**

**Food Innovations:**

Hands-on lab in our culinary kitchen with MSU, Mankato students. Specific topic details will be released closer to the date. (Emma Smith, Nutrition & Dietetics Professor at MSU, Mankato)

**15-Minute Fast Talk Sessions:**

- FCS Concurrent Enrollment through MSU, Mankato Certification process and course alignment (FCS 150 & FCS 270) (Rachelle Hoffman, HS FCS Teacher, New Prague Public Schools)
- The Power of Question of the Day: Learn how taking ten minutes to ask a simple question of the day can transform your classroom culture. I'll share how I use daily questions that are silly icebreakers all the way to thought-provoking questions to spark conversations, build relationships, and create a positive, welcoming environment. The goal is to have listeners leave with ready-to-use examples and tips for making this small routine a big part of building connection in your classroom. (Taylor Drewes, former fourth grade teacher turned FACS teacher. Seven years of expertise: Frazee High School)
- How We Used the Human Slot Machine to Teach Youth About Aging. We have been using the Human Slot Machine as an intergenerational activity with FCCLA Members and Senior Citizens this year. We are also using the slot machine as an educational tool at the FCCLA Fall Summit and State Conference. (Eli Jewell, HS Student and FCCLA Member)

**Inspiring Future Teachers through FCS and Leadership:**

This session equips teachers with strategies to encourage students to explore teaching as a meaningful and rewarding career. Participants will learn how to introduce students to the profession early, showcase the impact and purpose of educators, and connect classroom experiences—in FCS and leadership courses—to real-world teaching opportunities. The session also provides practical ways to promote these courses, highlight skills that prepare students for education careers, and create supportive environments that motivate students to consider teaching. By applying these approaches, teachers can help develop the next generation of passionate, skilled, and well-prepared educators. (Mia Battistone, CFCS, FCS Teacher at Eastview High School)

**Hidden Losses: Supporting Students Through Complex Grief:**

Your students may be grieving, and you might not know it. Middle and high school students often face hidden losses from family changes, divorce, moving schools, bullying, illness, or cultural disconnection. FACS teachers can notice these experiences and respond effectively. This workshop helps educators recognize different types of grief, understand how developmental stage and culture shape students' reactions, and apply practical strategies to support them. Through case examples, classroom scenarios, and reflection, participants will leave with tools to create supportive learning environments that honor students' hidden losses. By the end of this workshop, participants will be able to: Identify hidden forms of grief in adolescents, explain how developmental and cultural factors affect grief expression, and apply practical strategies to support students experiencing complex loss. (Dan Moen, Child Development & Family Studies Professor at MSU, Mankato and Clinician for 20 years)

## Financial Resilience: Advancing Financial Education & Life Satisfaction in Personal Finance:

This session introduces the emerging concept of financial resilience as an essential dimension of personal finance. While financial literacy has traditionally emphasized knowledge and skills, resilience highlights the ability to navigate uncertainty and maintain stability in the face of financial shocks, uncertainty, and life transitions. Participants will explore how resilience relates to financial literacy and life satisfaction, and how it can be strengthened through financial education, practical strategies, and supportive systems. This session also discusses how financial resilience contributes to overall life satisfaction. (Jae Min, Professor of Consumer Studies at MSU, Mankato)

**GROUP #3**  
**1:30 p.m. – 2:15 p.m.**

**Food Innovations:**

Hands-on lab in our culinary kitchen with MSU, Mankato students. Specific topic details will be released closer to the date. (Emma Smith, Nutrition & Dietetics Professor at MSU, Mankato)

**Service Learning 101:**

Through this 45-minute session we will talk and show multiple ways and places to show service learning in your class for many different courses you teach. From Culinary Arts to Child Development to Sewing/Clothing Tech. Classes. We will even have a few hands-on projects to complete while we are here. (Stephanie Love, Family and Consumer Educator at St. Paul Public Schools)

**Allergen-Free Cooking Class:**

Engaging students with food allergies in our Culinary Arts & Hospitality Management Pathway at Burnsville High School. We created an allergen-free cooking class at Burnsville High School. I struggled with a gluten intolerance for a time, and while discussing this with students, I learned that there were many students who would not take any culinary classes due to not being able to eat what we made. Our team discussed the idea of an allergen-free cooking class and decided to give it a try. Our third year has shown strong interest and registrations with 2 full classes! In our class we discuss the importance of understanding allergens, what they can be, how to cook for those with allergies, obtaining the ServSafe Allergen Certificate, and discussing not only the top 9 but also other emerging allergens. And we learn HOW to taste, explore flavors and textures in food, and how to experiment with our recipes to make food that everyone likes and is safe to eat. Attendees will be able to participate in a tasting lab lesson about substitutions. Handouts will include: Our WHY & course description links to a few recipes, links and descriptions to recommended cookbooks, and websites Tasting lab lesson and student form. (Sandi Holman: FCS Teacher, Burnsville High School)

**Creative Teaching Strategies for Teaching Child Development & Family Studies Theories:**

Discover creative and interactive ways to teach child development and family studies theories in your FCS classroom. This session highlights playful instructional strategies that spark curiosity, deepen understanding, and make theory accessible for high school learners. (Heather VonBank, Child Development & Family Studies Professor at MSU, Mankato)

**Kindness, What?:**

Do you want to learn strategies to teach your students how to spread kindness (SEL)? If so, then join me to learn a simple lesson that is fun and exciting! It will surely spread kindness in your school community. The world needs more kindness. (Sara Brownen, Middle School FCS Teacher in Worthington)