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GETTING STARTED

WITH

STAR EVENTS



Updated November, 2024

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Full details from National FCCLA
regarding Competitive Events can be
found on the [National FCCLA website](#).

WHAT IS WHAT?

01

Online Challenge Tests

Online Challenge Tests provide opportunities for FCCLA members to demonstrate college- and career-readiness skills in Family and Consumer Sciences and related occupations. Members will demonstrate skills learned in their FCS courses and through their involvement in FCCLA by taking one of many online challenge tests covering state and national FCS standards.

STAR Events

Students Taking Action with Recognition (STAR) Events are Competitive Events in which members compete at the regional/district, state, and national levels. Students are recognized for proficiency and achievement in chapter and individual projects, leadership skills, and career preparation. STAR Events allow students to compete individually or as a team. There are more than 30 STAR Events students can choose to compete in, all of which recognize participants who demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and abilities to actively identify an issue concerning families, careers, or communities, research the topic, and develop and implement a project to advocate for positive change.

Skill Demonstration Events

Skill Demonstration Events provide opportunities for FCCLA members to demonstrate college- and career-readiness skills in Family and Consumer Sciences and related occupations. Members will use event criteria to demonstrate skills learned in their FCS courses and through their involvement in FCCLA. These events may serve as an introduction to FCCLA's competitive events and require a shorter time commitment than STAR Events projects.

Online STAR Events

FCCLA offers four online STAR Events focused on integrating Family and Consumer Science (FCS) content through digital delivery. The following events also have an online preliminary round of competition at the national level.

Chapter advisers must register member entries by February 1 in the FCCLA Portal under the Meetings & Event tab to compete in the preliminary competition round.

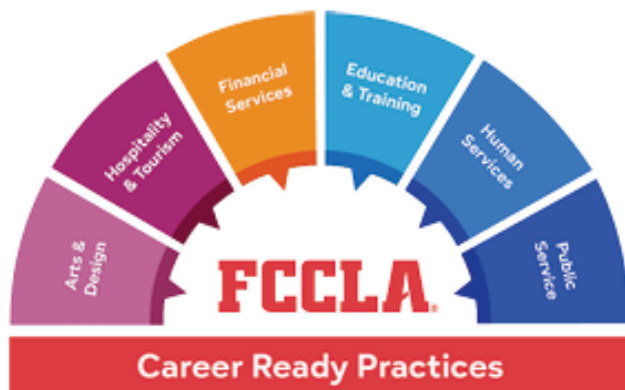
The fee per participant is \$25. During registration, active project URLs must be provided, and all projects must be ready for evaluation at that time. The chapter's responsibility is to ensure that all project content is public and/or available to anyone with the link. FCCLA will not be reviewing the accessibility of individual project components.

WHAT IS WHAT?

01

	Online Challenge Tests	Online STAR Events	Skill Demonstration Events	STAR Events
Where and when is it held?	Members register online and complete the testing during the assigned times.	Preliminary competition round is completely online. The top 15 entries in each level and event are invited to compete at NLC.	National Level: Held at the National Fall Conference State Level: Held at SLC in March	Held at SLC in March
How to register?	FCCLA Portal	FCCLA Portal	National Level: FCCLA Portal State Level: Register with your chapter's SLC at the link on the MT FCCLA Website	Register with your chapter's SLC at the link on the MT FCCLA Website
Levels of competition?	Only national level; all is held online	Upload competition materials to a link by February 1; the top 15 entries in each level and event are invited to present at the National Leadership Conference in person	National level: members compete at the National Fall Conference; they advance to NLC Competition. Not all SDE are offered every year at the national level. Check the Competitive Event Guidelines every year for current information. State level: members compete at the State Leadership conference. All are offered each year, but none of the state level SDE advance to NLC Competition.	The top two entries earning 85 or higher advance to NLC Competition. For Culinary Arts, three entries may advance

FCCLA CTE CAREER CLUSTER OPPORTUNITIES THROUGH FCS



Explore Career Clusters supported by FCCLA through FCS education, showcasing career opportunities that build real-world skills and prepare students for success in their future careers.

ARTS & DESIGN

The Arts & Design Career Cluster offers creative careers in fashion, interior design, visual and performing arts, and entertainment, focusing on functional, inspiring, and artistic designs that enrich and enhance lives.

Possible Careers Include:

- Art Therapist
- Commercial Designer
- Costume Designer
- Event Designer/Coordinator
- Fashion Designer
- Interior Designer
- Personal Stylist
- Residential Designer
- Space Planner
- Textile Designer

HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

The Hospitality & Tourism Career Cluster offers careers in managing restaurants, lodging, attractions, events, and travel, focusing on creating memorable experiences, exceptional service, and supporting the dynamic dining, travel, and entertainment industries.

Possible Careers Include:

- Event Planner
- Head Cook
- Hotel Manager
- Human Resources Specialist
- Nutritionist
- Park Ranger
- Restaurant Manager
- Sous Chef
- Theme Park Manager
- Travel Consultant



FINANCIAL SERVICES

The Financial Services Career Cluster offers careers in advising, planning, and managing personal finances, including budgets, investments, insurance, and retirement, helping individuals and families achieve financial security and navigate financial systems.

Possible Careers Include:

- Accountant
- Certified Financial Planner (CFP)
- Credit Counselor
- Digital Banking Specialist
- Financial Literacy Educator
- Insurance Agent
- Personal Banker
- Personal Financial Advisor
- Portfolio Manager
- Tax Advisor

EDUCATION & TRAINING

The Education & Training Career Cluster offers careers in teaching, administration, and instructional support, inspiring learners of all ages, fostering growth, and shaping future generations through knowledge and workforce readiness.

Possible Careers Include:

- Academic Dean
- Behavior Specialist
- College or University Professor
- Curriculum Developer
- Education Researcher
- eLearning Specialist
- Guidance Counselor
- School Principal
- School Teacher
- Superintendent

HUMAN SERVICES

The Human Services Career Cluster offers careers in counseling, mental health, personal care, and advocacy, addressing personal and societal needs to improve well-being and make a meaningful impact on individuals and communities.

Possible Careers Include:

- Art or Music Therapist
- Childcare Worker
- Cosmetologist
- Hairstylist
- Life Coach
- Nonprofit Director
- Personal Trainer
- Psychologist
- School Counselor
- Social Worker

PUBLIC SERVICE

The Public Service Career Cluster offers careers in public health, emergency services, social services, and government, focusing on community needs, vital resources, and improving quality of life with leadership and compassion.

Possible Careers Include:

- Accessibility Specialist
- City Planner
- Disease Prevention Specialist
- Environmental Health Specialist
- Epidemiologist
- Housing Specialist
- Human Services Director
- Social Worker
- Transportation Coordinator
- Youth Program Director

*This poster reflects information effective August 2023. Please review this chart in the Competitive Events Guide for the most current information.

For more information, visit fcclainc.org or email us at competitiveevents@fcclainc.org.

WHICH STAR EVENT?

02

With over 30 different STAR Events, choosing the best one can be a bit overwhelming. All are linked to specific career pathways (see previous page), and often, students have very clear ideas about what they want their project to look like. Other times, students know they want to participate but do not really know where to begin. For those students, one approach might be to take FCCLA's [online quiz](#).

Another option is the “[Would You Rather](#)” activity, which takes students through a series of questions, then recommends specific events based upon the responses received.

Although there are many differences among the various events, there are also many commonalities. In the pages that follow, we will explore strategies for success in the rubric elements that are commonly found in STAR Events. The guidelines shared here can be helpful in a generalized way. However, once a decision is made about a specific event, **it is very important to review the specifications and rubric for that event**. It's important that your project aligns with the event description.

Projects are always stronger when there is a demonstrated need-- (statistics, personal contacts, etc.). Once you have the need and a project that fits, closely follow the rubric for your event.

Pro tip: Start a Google Folder for each entry:
Add the event guidelines/rubric
Create a document for EACH piece of info the need for a file folder and/or display

- To ensure you have the most current copy of the Competitive Events guidelines, download your copy from the FCCLA portal by **November 1** each year.
- Log in, then look for the Resources tab. Click on Competitive Events, then download the 2025-26 STAR Events folder.
- Each event also has a separate resource folder for additional items.
- After November 1, only chapters that have affiliated will have access to the guidelines.

WHICH STAR EVENT?

02

Which Level?

In addition to finding the right “fit” for an event, it is essential to ensure your member is entering the correct level. Both Skill Demonstration and STAR Event levels are determined by the current academic grade:

Level 1: Up to and including grade 8

Level 2: Grades 9 and 10

Level 3: Grades 11 and 12

Team or Individual?

Determining how many members may compete in a given event is also essential. Team events may have one, two, or three participants from the same chapter, with the exception of Parliamentary Procedure, which may have four to eight participants from the same chapter.

- A team composed of members of mixed grade levels (through grade 12) must enter at the level of the highest participant member’s grade level.
- Team events with only Level 2 (grades 9-10) or Level 3 (grades 11-12) may not include members through grade 8.
- Team events with only Level 3 (grades 11-12) may not include members through grade 10.

For state-level requirements and information, be sure to consult the Montana FCCLA Competitive Events Manual, found on the Montana FCCLA website. For details about event guidelines, download the Competitive Events Guidelines from the FCCLA Portal.

Events for Individuals Only

Baking and Pastry
Career Investigation
Culinary Arts
Early Childhood Education
Fashion Construction
Job Interview
Leadership
Personal Finance
Say Yes to FCS Education
Teaching Strategies
Teach or Train

Special Event Requirements

Baking and Pastry, and Culinary Arts, require entrants to complete the ServSafe Food Handler Certification, and space is limited for these events! Be sure to register early to secure your spot!

WHICH STAR EVENT?

02

Foundational and Leadership Events Recommended for the Beginning Member

Career Investigation
Chapter In Review Portfolio
Chapter Service Project Portfolio
Focus on Children
National Programs In Action
Promote and Publicize FCCLA

Chapter In Review Display
Chapter Service Project Display
Event Management
Leadership
Professional Presentation
Repurpose and Redesign

Foundational and Leadership Events Recommended for the Experienced Member

Food Innovations
Job Interview
Parliamentary Procedure
Say Yes to FCS Education
Teach or Train

Interpersonal Communications
Nutrition and Wellness
Personal Finance
Sustainability Challenge

Career-Focused Events Requiring ServSafe Food Handler Certification

Baking and Pastry
Culinary Arts

Career-Focused Events for Members with Advanced Content Background

Early Childhood Education
Entrepreneurship
Fashion Construction
Fashion Design
Hospitality, Tourism &
Recreation
Interior Design
Sports Nutrition
Teaching Strategies



BEGINNING BASICS

Pro tip: Print event guidelines: Have members highlight, make notes, create questions

COMMUNICATE EXPECTATIONS

Clear, consistent communication regarding expectations makes it easier for both parties to understand the commitment involved with participation in STAR Events. Before project work begins is the best time to discuss and develop clear, written expectations regarding deadlines and procedures. When developing these expectations, be sure to include any requirements expected by your school (documentation, paperwork, chain of command for approvals, etc.).

Many advisers develop a written contract, including signatures from parents, students, and advisers, to clearly communicate what is expected, how it will be accomplished, and when it needs to be completed. **Be sure to secure administrative support when utilizing a contract.**



BEGINNING BASICS

SET DEADLINES

One component of expectations are deadlines. One successful approach for complex projects includes breaking the project down into smaller chunks, with a deadline for each of the smaller pieces. One example of deadlines for a STAR Event might include:

November:

- 1: Return signed STAR Event commitment form and State Conference deposit.
- 15: Submit completed first draft of the Planning Process form.
- 30: Schedule event activity with chapter adviser; complete school district required approval forms.

December:

- 1: Submit your written activity plan to your adviser
- 10: Complete the activity, following your plan.

January:

- 1: Write thank-you cards and send to project partners and those who assisted you.
- 1: Write a media release; share with local press and post to social media.
- 15: Write the first draft of your STAR Events speech, using the rubric as a guideline. Submit to your adviser.

February:

- 1: Complete your project display sketch to your adviser, including all major components of the display.
- 1: Schedule an appointment with your adviser to assemble the display.
- 15: Complete the display assembly and final draft of the speech; begin rehearsing the speech daily, twice each day.

March:

- 1: Schedule your presentation rehearsal with your adviser; prepare for the rehearsal as though you were presenting at the State Leadership Conference. Be sure to wear FCCLA official dress and have all supplies needed. You will be scored by volunteers using the rubric for your event.
- 1: Submit permission slips for State Leadership Conference and any fees owed to your chapter adviser.

Immediately following your rehearsal, adjust your speech and/or display as needed; memorize your speech to prepare for your presentation at the State Leadership Conference.



BEGINNING BASICS

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The Planning Process is something you will see in many FCCLA documents. It is a five step process designed to help students in planning and organizing projects. Nearly all STAR Events rubrics include a large amount of points related to the use of the Planning Process.

For optimal results, deliberately state the steps of the Planning Process in your project, in order, using the related graphics, if possible. Also, remind your members to explain each step of the Planning Process during the speech portion of the presentation, if applicable.

Identify Concerns: This is the first step of the process, where students describe why this is an important and relevant project. A great way to begin is to brainstorm ideas, then research ideas, evaluate options, and narrow the focus to one project idea. Consider including information from local news articles, data from community reports or surveys---this is where the audience learns why this is an important project for your community.

Set a Goal: This step will guide the rest of your project. You want to get a clear picture of exactly what you will do. Be sure to use a SMART goal as your guideline for this step.

S: Specific--tell exactly what you want to accomplish

M: Measurable--quantify your goal. This tells a number that will help you determine if the goal was reached. For example, how many people will you reach? Or how many cans of food will you collect?

A: Attainable--this is the how. What are the smaller steps you will take in order to accomplish the goal?

R: Realistic--explain how this goal is a reasonable one that could be accomplished by your group.

T: Timebound--what is your deadline? Setting a specific date will keep you on track



BEGINNING BASICS

THE PLANNING PROCESS, CONTINUED...

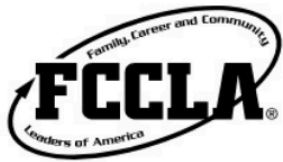
Form a Plan: The third step involves specific details of all aspects of your project. Be sure to include the who, what, where, when, and how of your project. Other essential details to include are the costs of the project, resources you used, and how you evaluated the project success.

Act: This is when the project happens. Use the dates of the project here.

Follow Up: A really strong Follow Up will relate back to the concerns identified in step one.

- What were the results of the project?
- What impact did the project make? Consider surveying participants or those served in the project for their feedback and perspective.
- Also include the strengths of the project, and areas for improvement. Think about what went well, what you learned, and what you might change if you did it again.
- An important component of the follow up includes thanking your sponsors and partners, and submitting a media release.

Many of the STAR Events rubrics also include points for increasing awareness of FCCLA and FCS. This is another benefit of submitting a media release. Check out the media release section later in this resource for assistance with that element.



FCCLA Planning Process **Worksheet**



IDENTIFY CONCERNS



SET A GOAL



FORM A PLAN

- who
- what
- where
- when
- why
- how



ACT



FOLLOW UP

What could
have gone
better/what
did you
learn?



BEGINNING BASICS

RELATIONSHIP TO FCS

For many STAR Events, points are assigned on the rubric for "relationship to family and consumer sciences". Some methods for addressing this rubric item could include:

- Referencing the National Standards for Family and Consumer Sciences. Find one or two standards which relate to the project. List the full title of the standard (not just the number), and a sentence linking it to the project..
- Consider the same approach with FCCLA's purposes
- Another strategy might be to relate a Family and Consumer Sciences course from your district to the project.



GETTING GOOGLY

- Consider using Google Drive to share templates and other documents that your members can utilize to help them create requirements
- Perhaps Google Classroom would help you push out deadlines and templates to your members,. Explore how this resource might be helpful for you.

THANK-YOUS

Most STAR Event projects include partners and assistance from others. It's important to remember (and thank) those who helped you research, or provided donations, supplies, or information to help your project become a success. Be sure to mention your efforts at thanking your partners in the "follow up" portion of your project.

PROMOTING

An important part of the "follow up" step to the Planning Process is sharing what you learned and accomplished. This is easy to do with a media release (tips on page 14) which can be shared with local newspapers, on your school website, and on social media sites. For best results, complete this step within a week of finishing your project.

PROOFREAD

This might seem like something that most would already know, but sometimes a new set of eyes will see something that has been missed. Consider sharing the project with someone who has zero knowledge of FCS or FCCLA. The questions they generate will help you know what information is missing.

Another great tip is utilizing people with proofreading skills--the yearbook sponsor, the language arts teacher--these people are skilled at finding ways to improve the written word.

THE NEXT STEPS



MEDIA RELEASES

This template may help you when creating your own media release. Be sure to send to all local news sources, director@mtfccla.org, and national@fccla.org

Local Youth Feed Families

Contact: Annie Adviser, adviser@leadershipfccla.com.
Phone: 406-555-1234

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 30, 2025

Include a title and the adviser's contact info, as well as the date. Send within two weeks of the activity

Leadership City, MT

Open by telling the point of the story

Members of the Leadership City FCCLA Chapter don't only talk about service in their community, they put it into action. For the past two weeks, members of the Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) Chapter at Leadership City High School, have been coordinating a school-wide food drive, resulting in donating 48 holiday dinner kits to local families.

Be sure to include details like who, what, where, when, why and how

The idea was born as students studied meal planning in their Nutrition and Wellness class. As they learned more about the importance of family meals, students shared concerns about those in the community who might not have the resources to participate in holiday meals as a family. The group began researching local organizations serving families in need, and reached out to learn more. For the project, Leadership City FCCLA members partnered with three local agencies and asked their fellow students for help.

Include a quote from a chapter adviser, or other adult involved

"Once the students began their initial planning, the enthusiasm became contagious," said Mrs. Annie Adviser, the chapter's adviser and FCS teacher. "Many students recruited help from their local churches and civic organizations, as well as family employers." The chapter's initial goal was to collect 30 dinner kits and was exceeded.

Include a member quote, if possible

"We learned a lot about working together and making sure all parts of our project got completed, but we also really enjoyed being able to help local families enjoy a better holiday than they might have otherwise," commented Mollie Member, a sophomore and officer of the Leadership City FCCLA Chapter.

Be concise! Limit the entire release to one page

For more information on Montana FCCLA, visit www.mtfccla.org.

Family, Career and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) is a dynamic and effective student-led nation-based organization supporting youth on their journey to become the leaders of tomorrow and helping them address important personal, family, work, and societal issues through Family and Consumer Sciences education. FCCLA has over 237,000 members and more than 5,100 chapters across the nation. FCCLA: The Ultimate Leadership Experience is unique among youth organizations because its programs are planned and run by members. It is the only career and technical intracurricular student organization with a central focus on careers that support families. Participation in national FCCLA programs and chapter activities aids members in becoming strong leaders in their families, careers, and communities. For more information on FCCLA, please contact (Annie Adviser) at (406-555-1234) or (adviser@leadershipfccla.com).

Include photos as an attachment if possible

Include this FCCLA description at the end of all releases

MEMORIZE

Although it is not required that students memorize the speaking parts of the presentation, this can often make a huge difference in the overall results. For most events, notecards are allowed. For best results, make a strong effort to memorize.

THE DETAILS

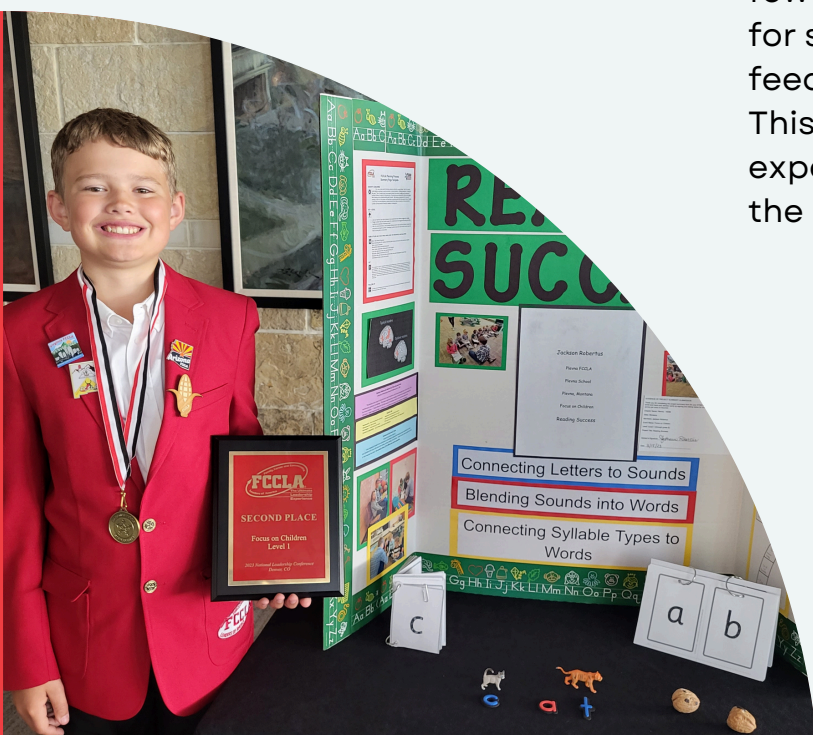
Rubrics for the specific event have been mentioned multiple times in this document--that's how important the rubric is! Once the student considers the project to be finished, sit down with the rubric and review the project, presentation, and speech. Make sure items are discussed following the order of the rubric and are fully explained.

FINISHING TOUCHES

Consider holding a “practice night”, where students present their project and speech to volunteers who use the rubric to score and offer feedback. Holding the practice night a few weeks prior to the competition gives time for students to make adjustments based on feedback.

This is also a great time to reinforce expectations regarding appropriate attire for the presentation.

MAKE IT SHINE



MAKE IT SHINE

PORTFOLIO

- Include your Planning Process sheet (limited to 2 slides if electronic).
- Make a subtitle for each area listed on the scoring guide.
- Include a copy of your media release/news article.
- Include your Project Identification Page.
- Double check spelling and grammar.
- Include at least three-four photos or graphics. Cite sources.
- The layout should be clean and uncluttered.
- Double check the slide minimum/maximum requirements.
- Use bullets instead of sentences.
- Have someone proofread it
- Include your proof of submission page.
- If using a binder, be sure it is an official FCCLA binder.

DISPLAY

- Use some statistics/data to emphasize the importance of your project (place in the Identify Concerns section).
- Refer to the rubric for your event. Use the language in the far right column and think about that box as a question you must answer about your project.
- Place items in the order they appear on the rubric.
- Use the headings on the rubric to guide your display. Make a section for each one, then type up a little about that section. Include applicable photos and write short captions.
- Be sure all words are typed and printed, or cut with a Cricut.
- Choose 2-3 colors for your display. Use one of these colors consistently to add a border to photos and text. Measure and cut the border evenly around each item.
- Have all items laminated for the board

SPEECH

- Double check it against your rubric. Follow the order of the rubric and use the language in the highest scoring column of the rubric in your speech.
- All participants should share equal amounts of speaking.
- Use proper grammar.
- Have someone proofread.

IMPORTANT DETAILS

By early February:

- Your students have worked so hard! **Be sure to correctly register them for competition at the State Leadership Conference.**
- Visit the SLC portion of our website, then register each student for the corresponding event. Please double check to be sure each student is entered for the correct event and level. Once participants are registered for an event, those participation numbers are used to organize event evaluators and rooms. Competition schedules are based on information provided during registration.
- **Remember to double check your chapter's entries so that your student is listed in the correct level and event. Entries cannot be changed after February 10.**

By March 1:

- **After** submitting SLC registration, be sure to complete the Competitive Event Online Orientation! Use the video and form found on this website to complete this step of the participation process
- One requirement for events is the Online Project Summary Form. Only one form per project entry (not per participant) is required.
 - To find it, log in to the portal. Choose "Surveys/Applications", then "Competitive Events", then "Online Project Summary Form"
 - Once the form is completed and submitted, a confirmation email will be sent to the student and adviser. This is the portion that is to be printed and included with the project.
- Prior to SLC, advisers with culinary event entries will receive an email with the presentation schedule. Those events are held on Thursday, with results announced at Thursday evening's session.
- For non-culinary events, advisers will receive a schedule Thursday evening at SLC, with events held on Friday. Those results will be announced at Friday evening's session. **Students will indicate if they wish to advance to the National Leadership Conference within one week of the results announcement.**

While at State Leadership Conference, the top two entries in each event and level scoring 85 or higher will be invited to represent Montana at the National Leadership Conference. Please speak to students and parents about this opportunity prior to SLC. This decision will need to be made no later than one week after State Leadership Conference.

More details regarding the 2026 National Leadership Conference are coming soon! For some perspective about past conferences, please review materials posted on the National Meetings tab of our website.

TIPS FROM CHAPTER ADVISERS

Set a consistent work night and time.

We try to make a list of what needs to be done by the next month during this time.

KIM KNOCHE

FORSYTH FCCLA ADVISER

Following the rubric is key to success.

Have administrators, board members and other teachers listen to presentations. This is a great way to education policy makers on the value of our program and the travel that goes with it.

ADELE STENSON

WIBAUX FCCLA ADVISER

Use the planning process to develop the project. There is always the opportunity to fine tune the planning process as the project progresses but if you don't use it from the beginning it is harder to focus the kids on meeting the requirements of any project.

CATHE FELZ

THREE FORKS FCCLA ADVISER

I recommend having kids solidify their project between Thanksgiving and Christmas break and really hit the ground running once we get back from Christmas break. But the best advice I can give is read the rubric. While it should primarily be on the students to do this, sometimes they don't understand it all and it will save the students a lot of heartache if you take the time to review the rubric and their project together before leaving for state.

MANDY EIKE

MOORE FCCLA ADVISER