

# SECOND-CAREER TRANSITIONS INTO FCS TEACHING

What ACTE FCS Division members told us

Last school year, the ACTE FCS Division invited second-career FCS teachers to share their experiences. Their responses give us a clearer picture of who is entering the profession, what motivates them, and what support can help them thrive.

**85**

second-career FCS teachers  
responded

**52%**

had five or fewer years of FCS  
teaching experience

**47%**

felt well prepared for the transition  
into teaching

## WHO IS MAKING THE TRANSITION?

### Previous professional backgrounds

- 40% previously worked in education
- 18% came from healthcare and human services
- 16% came from business and professional services
- 14% came from accommodation and food services

### Why they chose FCS

- Purpose and impact was the leading motivation
- Passion for FCS was another major reason
- Work-life balance and new opportunities also mattered
- Their varied careers bring real-world relevance to students

## THE BIG MESSAGE

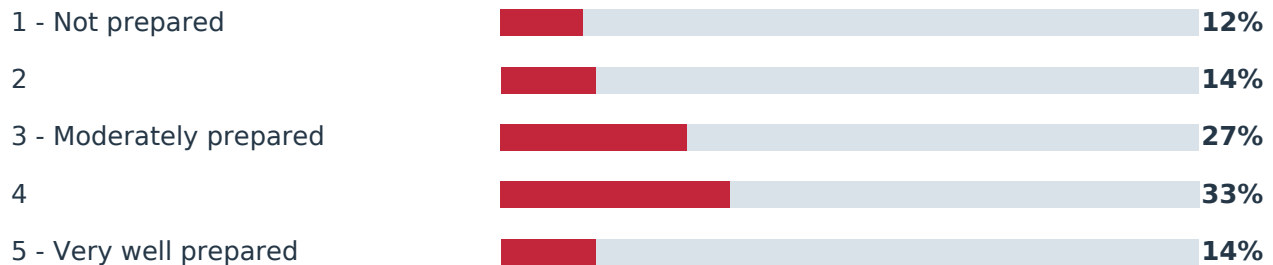
Second-career teachers bring experience, passion, and purpose to FCS classrooms. The opportunity is not simply to recruit them—it is to make sure they are supported once they arrive.

# A CLOSER LOOK AT THE RESULTS

Preparation, pathways, and the breadth of the FCS teaching role

## PREPARATION FOR THE CLASSROOM

Respondents rated how prepared they felt when they transitioned into FCS teaching. Ratings of 4 or 5 were considered well prepared.

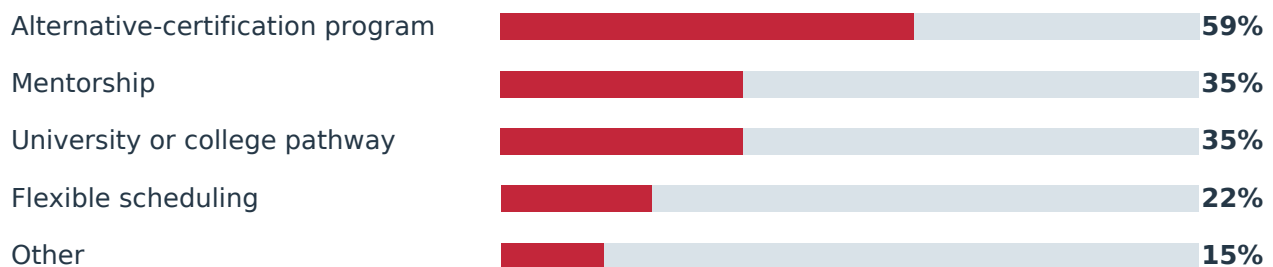


**47%**

felt well prepared, while 53% reported moderate or low preparation. This points to uneven readiness and a clear opportunity for stronger practice-based preparation.

## PATHWAYS AND TRANSITION SUPPORT

Respondents could select more than one resource that helped make their transition possible.



## WHY THIS MATTERS FOR UNIVERSITIES

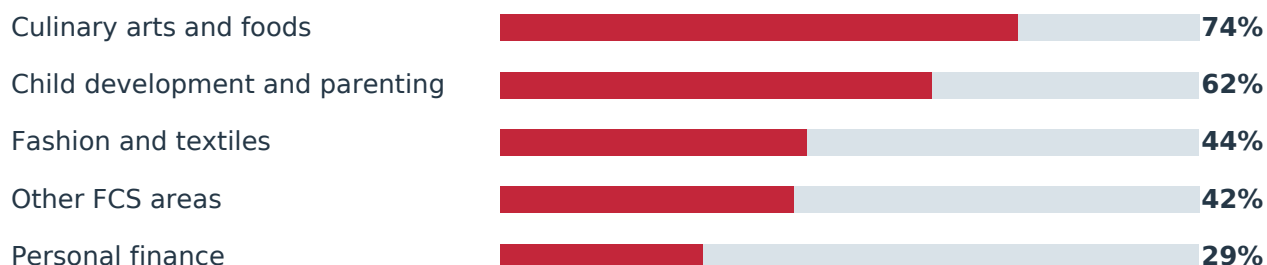
University faculty and FCS teacher-education programs have an important opportunity to reach second-career candidates—including those using alternative-certification pathways. Short courses, bridge programs, coaching, mentorship partnerships, and practical classroom experiences could help candidates turn industry expertise into effective instruction.

# THE FCS TEACHING EXPERIENCE

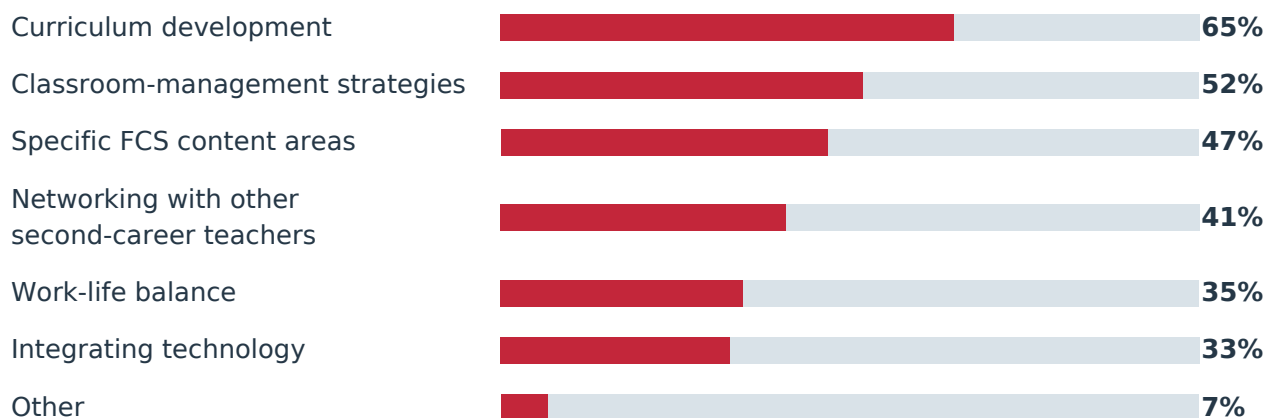
Multiple content areas, advising responsibilities, and the support teachers requested

## SUBJECT AREAS TAUGHT

Respondents could select multiple areas, reflecting the broad responsibilities many FCS teachers carry.



## PROFESSIONAL-DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES



**67%**

serve as CTSO advisers; 26% reported that they do not, and 7% selected not applicable. Advising support should be included in preparation and induction—not treated as an extra detail.

## WHAT TEACHERS TOLD US

Their advice centered on six themes: the rewarding impact of the work, the demanding nature of the role, community and connection, a growth mindset, instructional skills, and personal adaptability.

“It is an extremely challenging but also extremely purposeful and rewarding career!”

“You can know the subject area, but that does not necessarily mean you know how to teach it without support and classroom-management learning.”

# WHAT SECOND-CAREER TEACHERS NEED

The most-requested professional development topics show where support can make the greatest difference.

|                        |                      |                                |
|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| 65%                    | 52%                  | 47%                            |
| Curriculum development | Classroom management | Specific FCS content knowledge |

67% of respondents also serve as CTSO advisers—adding another important layer to their role.

## HOW WE CAN HELP

- 1

**Strengthen readiness**  
Provide hands-on preparation in classroom management, curriculum development, and instructional practice.
- 2

**Build mentorship**  
Connect every second-career teacher with consistent, high-quality support from experienced FCS educators.
- 3

**Create community**  
Make networking and collaboration easy across pathways, schools, states, and experience levels.
- 4

**Support the whole role**  
Include guidance for multiple subject areas, workload, and CTSO or FCCLA adviser responsibilities.
- 5

**Connect certification to reality**  
Ensure alternative pathways include practical learning that reflects the day-to-day FCS classroom.

PLEASE SHARE!

Use these findings with school leaders, teacher educators, state associations, FCS colleagues, and anyone involved in recruiting or supporting future FCS teachers. Together, we can help second-career educators feel prepared, connected, and ready to succeed!

For more information or a copy of the complete survey report, please contact Karin Davis, ACTE FCS Division Vice President.

About the survey: Distributed by email and the ACTE mailing list; open approximately six months. Findings are based on self-reported experiences and may not represent all second-career FCS teachers.