

# *Adapt -A-Chapter*



*Created by Team 63*

## ADOPT-A-CHAPTER

Dear DECA advisors and members,

At the beginning of our wonderful journey as National Officers, Team 63 had a vision. In our mind, there could be nothing better than to establish a program where DECA advisors and members alike could have a hand in the organization's membership development. Thus, the Adopt-A-Chapter Program was born.

Sometimes, all it takes to get students and teachers excited about DECA is to hear directly from those who experience the organization on a daily basis. So many members, including ourselves, have gained so much from participating in DECA, and having the ability to provide other students with similar encounters is the most rewarding feeling one could ever know. The Adopt-A-Chapter Program encourages established chapters to take the hand of inactive or new chapters and lead them to success.

Members and advisors, you are the strongest resource our organization has; your words go straight to the ears and hearts of students who currently do not have the privilege to partake in DECA. Within the following pages, you will find specific requirements, tips, and suggestions on how to reach out to schools in your area whose DECA chapters have faltered along the way or have not yet had the chance to experience DECA. We hope that you take this information and use it to ensure an even brighter future for our organization. Thank you for everything you have contributed to DECA!

Best Wishes,

*National Officer Team 63*

Uzo N. Ogu, President

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Mission Statement and Objective.....	3
Criteria.....	4
Finding New or Inactive Chapters.....	5
Founding New Chapters.....	6
Reviving Inactive Chapters.....	8
Timeline .....	9
Frequently Asked Questions.....	10
Checklist.....	11
Recruitment Case Studies.....	12
Kudos to You.....	13

# MISSION STATEMENT AND OBJECTIVE

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

To encourage chapters to become more involved in DECA's membership development by founding, mentoring, and revitalizing new or reactivated chapters.

## **OBJECTIVE**

The Adopt-A-Chapter program is intended to recruit active members by establishing more chapters to further the success of DECA on a local and international level. Participation in this program will provide a rewarding and enriching experience to both the DECA members and advisors who adopt a chapter as well as the new DECA members and advisors.

## CRITERIA

- Adopt a local chapter that does not have a DECA program, but does offer Marketing Education or courses that allow the high school to participate in DECA. Or, adopt a local DECA chapter that has become inactive. A list of inactive chapters is available upon request from the DECA Membership Department, 703-860-5000.
- Provide one recruitment presentation to the potential or inactive chapter. Recruitment material is available on DECA's Web site at [www.deca.org/recruitmentmaterial.html](http://www.deca.org/recruitmentmaterial.html)
- The adopted chapter must register its members with National DECA.
- The adopted chapter must attend and have one member compete in their District/Area Career Development Conference.

# FINDING NEW OR INACTIVE CHAPTERS

## I. Finding a chapter

- A. The existing chapter should look for an adoptee that is a new or inactive chapter. A list of inactive chapters is available upon request from the DECA Membership Department, 703-860-5000.
  - 1. *Tip: Aim for a new or inactive chapter within your district to better coordinate activities and goals.*
- B. Contact the school by calling their main office - contact information may be obtained through your school district's Web site - and ask to speak with the head of their Marketing or Business Department.

## II. Finding an advisor.

- A. Inform the Department head of the importance as well as benefits of DECA and the Adopt-A-Chapter program. When asked about the time restraints of this program, be honest, so that he or she may recommend an ideal teacher for the organization.
- B. Contact the teacher who was referred to you and recruit your adopted advisor by sharing some personal triumphs with DECA!
  - 1. *Tip: Some teachers are not as easy to convince as others; you may want to offer to make a presentation for their students so that you might understand their program well and talk with your future adopted advisor in person!*

## III. Finding support

- A. Students: Show the business or marketing students at schools without DECA chapters how they will utilize their skills in competition. Also, explain how DECA incorporates business and marketing skills that correlate with their current curriculum. Most importantly, don't forget to mention how much fun DECA can be and all the opportunities the organization offers to its members.
- B. Marketing Educators: It is crucial to help marketing teachers realize that DECA is an organization that fits perfectly into the marketing curriculum. Although it can be considered an extracurricular activity, the students who are involved are often students who are enrolled in business or marketing classes.
- C. Administration: When approaching a school's administrators about starting a new chapter, you must show them how their students and school will benefit, because this is their first priority. Give many examples of how DECA has improved your high school experience and how it has prepped you for college, your career, and life in general.
  - 1. *Tip: It does not hurt to mention the many awards and recognitions the school can gain through competition and community service.*

# FOUNDING NEW CHAPTERS

- I. Lead by example
  - A. When helping a newly founded chapter, you must be prepared for plenty of questions. The chapter understands what DECA is and realizes what the final goals are, but may not be very familiar with the process of how to obtain those goals. Some helpful information for these chapters would be:
    1. Examples of your Program of Work.
    2. Potential DECA Week activities or events.
    3. Fundraising ideas.
    4. Example of past projects and presentation boards.
    5. Calendar of all DECA meetings, socials, elections, and events.
- II. Keep the members excited
  - A. Plan joint socials to allow the members to meet new people and learn more about DECA through the eyes of veteran DECA members.
    1. *Tip: Socials can always be planned around sports activities or holidays!*
- III. Keep the members informed
  - A. One way to keep your adopted chapter informed without imposing on their classroom time is by producing a Newsletter. You can use this as a marketing practice in your classroom by allowing students to write their own article in the Newsletter. They can write articles on, but are not limited to, the following subjects:
    1. Membership Recruitment: It is imperative to make every attempt to recruit as many members as possible in order for the DECA program to have a future at the particular school. The more members, the better!
    2. Fundraising: The last thing that you want the advisor and the members stressing out about during their first year is money. Invite the new chapter to join forces with your chapter in participating in fundraising activities. Be sure to share with the new advisor what works and what does not when it comes to fundraising, and why those specific methods do or do not work. You could also help the adopted chapter run its own fundraising activities. This can be done by volunteering to help out at their fundraising event.
    3. Competition Preparation: This is what DECA is all about. Do your best to prepare the new members and advisor for their competition. It is important that you go over every aspect of competitive events: format, guidelines, topics, penalty points, performance indicators, scoring rubric, and judging rubrics. This would also be a good time to do present and practice role-plays with the students. Be sure to frequently check in with the members and the advisor to see if they have any questions regarding their projects. If they are adequately prepared and

ready for competition, they will enjoy and benefit from the entire process and they will want to do it again! Make yourself available to your adopted chapter so that you can help them with the necessities of competition, such as being able to write their project or effectively presenting in front of a judge. If you can sell the new members and advisor on DECA's competitive events, then they will likely want to continue participating in DECA in the future.

#### IV. Career Development Conferences

- A. The first competition will be one of uncertainty for your adopted chapter. Offer to share a bus to the conference with the adopted chapter to reduce the stress on the advisor for the first conference. At the conference, introduce them to other DECA members and try to get them to participate in whatever social activity is being held.

## REVIVING INACTIVE CHAPTERS

- I. Solve the problem
  - A. Chapters usually become inactive for two reasons: there is a new marketing or business teacher, or administrator, or there was a problem within the chapter.
  - B. Ask your inactive chapter three questions?
    1. Where you the advisor of the previous chapter?
    2. What did your chapter encounter that became your downfall?
    3. What can we do to keep this from happening in the future?
- II. Assess DECA knowledge
  - A. Depending on the answers you receive to the three questions and the time that has passed since they became an inactive chapter, you may have to begin fresh like a new chapter or jump right back into the swing of things
    1. *Tip: To ease the process of reviving an inactive chapter, refer to Founding New Chapters on page 4 and provide your adopted chapter with a completely fresh start.*

# TIMELINE

## **June-July**

- Research local schools that can be adopted.
- Initiate contact with the Marketing or Business Department head.

## **August-September**

- Begin making recruitment presentations to the new or inactive chapter.
- Design joint social activities between your current chapter and the adopted chapter.

## **October**

- Make sure that the adopted chapter and its members are registered with National DECA.
- The members within the adopted chapter should begin choosing their competitive event.
- Implement DECA Week activities with your adopted chapter.
- Attend a Fall Leadership Conference.

## **November**

- Attend a Regional Leadership Conference
- Begin fundraising for Career Development Conferences.

## **December**

- Assist the members within the adopted chapter with preparation for their competitive event.
- Congratulate the adopted chapter for the progress it has made throughout the semester.

## **January-March**

- Continue competition preparation and fundraising.
- Assist your adopted chapter with a chapter officer election process.
- Assist your adopted chapter in beginning their own socials and DECA traditions.

## **April-May**

- Attend the International Career Development Conference as a proud parent to a new DECA chapter.
- Congratulations for all of your hard work! It is because of DECA members and advisors like you that the organization's future continues to shine so bright!

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

## **How can we help without interfering?**

Try to put yourself in the shoes of the advisor and members of the adopted chapter in order to determine if you are helping too much. Think of when you were a new DECA member or advisor; what were your biggest concerns and needs? Make sure that what you are telling them is important and beneficial to them, don't be afraid to be forthright and ask them if what you are doing is helping or if they can do this on their own. You must always keep the lines of communication open so that you may both feel comfortable in expressing opinions throughout the program.

## **When has the Adopt-A-Chapter Program ended?**

There is no set end date for this program. Because each new or reactivated chapter is its own situation, use your best judgment when determining the proper time to allow your adopted chapter to prosper on its own. You want to make sure that the advisor of the adopted chapter feels comfortable in running their DECA chapter on their own. Make sure to communicate the progress of the program with your adopted chapter advisor to determine what end date would be appropriate.

## CHECKLIST

- Adopt a local chapter that does not have a DECA program, but does offer Marketing Education or courses that allow the high school to participate in DECA. Or, adopt a local DECA chapter that has become inactive.
- Provide one recruitment presentation to the potential or inactive chapter.
- Assist the adopted chapter in registering its members with National DECA.
- The adopted chapter must attend and have one member compete in their District/Area Career Development Conference.

# Recruitment Case Studies

"I talk to middle school teachers about prospective members. Either I, myself, or one of my state officers makes a presentation to 8th graders. Once you get your program going, you'll be surprised how many siblings of former members will want to get on board, especially if the older ones have had some successes with competition or scholarships.

Kids love rewards—even little things. Right now we have a class competition going on to raise money for MDA. If they meet their goal, the whole class gets a pizza party! The top money raiser gets \$25.00. A lot of the kids I see have never had much success, so any that I can give them through DECA is a plus!

I am also sure to get lots of pictures in the local newspaper during the year. Take pictures of everything—shirt day, professional dress day, officer installation, new member induction, MDA projects—even if it doesn't seem very important to you. It is important to the kids, their parents, grandparents, etc., and that is a program builder for sure!"

**Allen Gancarz**, retired advisor from **Syracuse-Minoa H.S.** in New York: "During the course of your career as a DECA advisor you will have high and low times. (I recall having as few as 13 members and as many as 130 over the years.) Generally speaking, programs sag because advisors allow it to happen.

Your enthusiasm as an advisor will dictate how your program operates.

Suggestions:

1. Enlist another adult to serve as a co-advisor with you. The new personality will bring new students.
2. You have to make presentations and use techniques that will pique student interest. (Sell them on travel and the opportunity for adventure.) Be careful what type of students you bring in. Somewhere along the line they will realize the hard work that is necessary to get to the next level.
3. Go to your guidance department and ask them to assist you with increasing enrollment. (Bringing them food generally helps.)"

## Kudos to You

If you are successful at adopting a chapter, national DECA wants to know. You and your chapter and your adopted chapter will be highlighted on the DECA Web site and in the "Chapter Clips" section of *Dimensions*. Just contact the National Officer Advisor (703-860-5000) with your story.