The Innovation Plan involves the idea generation and opportunity recognition needed to take advantage of market opportunities to introduce a new business, product or service. Any type of business, product or service may be used.

Participants in the Innovation Plan will:
• prepare a brief concept paper
• present the opportunity that exists in the marketplace and how their innovation will meet the needs of consumers

**KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS DEVELOPED**

Participants will demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to address the components of the project as described in the content outline and evaluation forms.

Participants will also develop many 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills, in the following categories, desired by today’s employers:
• Communication and Collaboration
• Creativity and Innovation
• Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
• Flexibility and Adaptability
• Information Literacy
• Initiative and Self-direction
• Leadership and Responsibility
• Media Literacy
• Productivity and Accountability
• Social and Cross-cultural Skills

Many Common Core Standards for Mathematics and English Language Arts & Literacy are supported by participation in DECA’s competitive events.

Crosswalks that show which 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills are developed and which common core standards are supported by participating in each competitive event are available at deca.org.
WRITTEN ENTRY GUIDELINES

The written entry must follow these specifications. Refer also to the Penalty Point Checklist and the Written Entry Evaluation Form.

WRITTEN EVENT STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY. This must be signed and submitted with the entry. Do not include it in the page numbering.

TITLE PAGE. The first page of the written entry is the title page. It must include in any order, but is not limited to, the following:
- Innovation Plan
- Name of high school
- School address
- City, State/Province, ZIP/Postal Code
- Names of participants
- Date

Title page will not be numbered.

TABLE OF CONTENTS. The table of contents should follow the title page. The table of contents may be single-spaced and may be one or more pages long. The table of contents page(s) will not be numbered.

BODY OF THE WRITTEN ENTRY. The body of the written entry begins with Section I, Executive Summary, and continues in the sequence outlined here. The first page of the body is numbered “1” and all following pages are numbered in sequence. Page numbers continue through the bibliography (required) and the appendix (optional).

This outline must be followed. Points for each section are included on the Written Entry Evaluation Form. Each section must be titled, including the bibliography and the appendix.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
   One-page summary of the business model

II. PROBLEM
   Describe the top problems the product/service is addressing.

III. CUSTOMER SEGMENTS
   Who are the target customers?

IV. UNIQUE VALUE PROPOSITION
   What is the single, clear, compelling message that states why the product/service is innovative and satisfies a market need?

V. SOLUTION
   Describe the top features of your product/service that solve the problem.

VI. CONCLUSION
   Summary of key points and feasibility of the business venture.

VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY
   A bibliography is required. Include a list of the sources of information used in the written document.

VIII. APPENDIX
   An appendix is optional. If additional material is appended, all pages must be numbered as noted previously. Include in an appendix any exhibits appropriate to the written entry, but not important enough to include in the body. These might include sample questionnaires used, letters sent and received, general background data, minutes of meetings, etc.
In addition to the Written Entry Guidelines, participants must observe all of the standards on the Penalty Point Checklist on page 54. These standards are designed to make competition as fair as possible.

PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

• Prior to the presentation, the judge will evaluate the written portion of the entry. The major emphasis of the written entry is on the content. Drawings, illustrations and graphic presentations (where allowed) will be judged for clarity, not artistic value.

• The participants will present the project to the judge in a 15-minute presentation worth 100 points. (See Presentation Judging.)

• The presentation begins immediately after the introduction of the participants to the judge by the adult assistant. Each participant must take part in the presentation.

• Each participant may bring a copy of the written entry or note cards pertaining to the written entry and use as reference during the presentation.

• If time remains, the judge may ask questions pertaining to the project.

• Only visual aids that can be easily hand carried to the presentation by the actual participant(s) will be permitted. The participants themselves must set up the visuals. Wheeled carts, moving straps or similar items may not be used to bring visuals into the area. Set up time is included in the total presentation time. Participants must furnish their own materials and equipment. No electrical power or internet connection will be supplied. Alternate power sources such as small generators are not allowed. Sound may be used, as long as the volume is kept at a conversational level.

• Materials appropriate to the situation may be handed to or left with judges in all competitive events. Items of monetary value may be handed to but may not be left with judges. Items such as flyers, brochures, pamphlets and business cards may be handed to or left with the judge. No food or drinks allowed.

• If any of these rules are violated, the adult assistant must be notified by the judge.

PRESENTATION JUDGING

Participants will make a 15-minute presentation to you. You are role-playing a venture capitalist who is determining if the concept is viable to satisfy a market need and is worthy of further exploration for feasibility. You may refer to the written entry, or to notes, during the presentation.

At the beginning of the presentation (after introductions), the participants will describe the proposal and the feasibility of the business venture. Allow the participants to complete this portion without interruption, unless you are asked to respond. Each participant must take part in the presentation.

If time remains, you may ask questions that seem appropriate, based on your notes or on the written entry itself (to which you may refer during the presentation).

At the conclusion of the presentation, thank the participants. Then complete the Presentation Evaluation Form, making sure to record a score for all categories. The maximum score for the presentation is 100 points.
**CONCEPT PAPER AND PRESENTATION EVALUATION FORM**

Please refer to the Written Entry Guidelines for a more detailed explanation of these items.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY</th>
<th>LITTLE/NO VALUE</th>
<th>BELOW EXPECTATIONS</th>
<th>MEETS EXPECTATIONS</th>
<th>EXCEEDS EXPECTATIONS</th>
<th>JUDGED SCORE</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. One-page summary of the business model</td>
<td>0-1-2-3-4-5</td>
<td>6-7-8-9-10</td>
<td>11-12-13-14-15</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Description of the top problems the product/service is addressing</td>
<td>0-1-2-3-4</td>
<td>5-6-7-8</td>
<td>9-10-11</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. Description of target customers</td>
<td>0-1-2-3-4</td>
<td>5-6-7-8</td>
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<td>4. Description of the single, clear, compelling message that states why the product/service is innovative and satisfies a market need</td>
<td>0-1-2-3-4</td>
<td>5-6-7-8</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Description of the top features of the product/service that solve the problem</td>
<td>0-1-2-3-4</td>
<td>5-6-7-8</td>
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<td>6. Summary of key points and feasibility of the business venture</td>
<td>0-1-2-3-4</td>
<td>5-6-7-8</td>
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<td>7. Professional standards (appearance, poise, confidence), presentation technique, effective use of visuals and participation of all</td>
<td>0-1-2-3</td>
<td>4-5-6</td>
<td>7-8</td>
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**PRESENTATION TOTAL POINTS (100)**

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JUDGE _________