

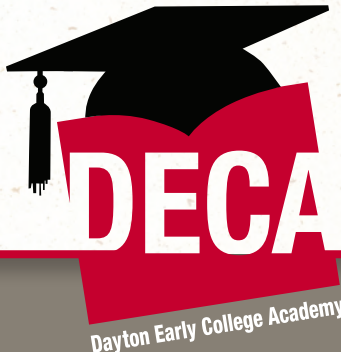


"She believed she could, so she did."

—R.S. Grey

# college

BOUND





## Dear Friends of DECA

DECA continues to fulfill its mission of turning urban learners into college graduates. We tell our story in this annual report, not just through statistics and numbers, but through the stories of our students and graduates.

Joyfully, as our school doors opened this academic school year, Phase 1 of our high school renovation was nearly complete. It truly was a thrill to see our high schoolers' faces as they entered the third floor of Fitz Hall on UD's campus greeted by a bright new school entrance, renovated 9th grade classrooms, and flexible learning and presentation spaces. Thanks to our generous donors, we have been able to continue with Phase 2 which will replicate the same floor plans for the 10th grade. We'll soon have more details to share on the remaining phases.

Consistent with each year of DECA's 16-year evolution, last year's test profile indicates areas of excellent growth and strong results. Our high school continues to outperform the state average in each tested area—no small accomplishment. We are especially pleased with the growth in Algebra I and Geometry.

Some of the Ohio State Test (OST) results at other grade levels were low in both English Language Arts and Math. We refuse to make excuses and blame our learners for the scores. We spent many hours over the summer analyzing data and developing lesson plans to teach weak skills differently. We resolutely believe our students can achieve at higher levels with impactful teaching and support from home. You can read more about the changes we are making to improve academic performance in the latter pages of this annual report.

Our leadership team and teachers are tackling other weighty issues. Providing engaging, safe and orderly learning environments is fundamental to good teaching. However, as you will read, we continue to graduate students who go to college, complete degrees, and develop professional careers.

**The promise of an equitable education is a cornerstone of our vision for a healthy, thriving society. As we look into the future we are hopeful, not because our work is easy, but because our work is important, and because our students and families depend on us.**

With gratitude for every investment in DECA learners,

**Dr. Judy Hennessey**  
Superintendent

**Dave Taylor**  
Assistant Superintendent

**DECA**

Free. Public. Open to all living within the boundaries of the Dayton Public Schools.

## Mission

To prepare future college graduates today to become the leaders of our community tomorrow.



"FOR MOST AMERICANS THE PATH TO  
ECONOMIC SUCCESS LIES THROUGH  
THE SCHOOLHOUSE DOOR."

*Creating an Opportunity Society*  
Ron Haskins and Isabel Sawhill



Students from K-12 visited over ten colleges across the country!



## We LEARN about College

*At DECA, we know that early exposure to a college campus makes a difference. From the moment our students enter the DECA school system in kindergarten, they begin touring universities.*

Jonathan Cain, Student Program Director at DECA, knows from personal experience how vital college visits are for kids, especially those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, to be able to see themselves as future college graduates. Cain himself grew up in Dayton's inner city, and it was a college visit as a high school sophomore to Alabama A&M through the Upward Bound program that changed the course of his life.

"Stepping foot on that college campus was a transformative moment," Cain said. "No one in my family had gone to college, so it never occurred to me that college might just be my ticket up and out of my neighborhood. Visiting Alabama, I learned I had a chance."

Inspired by his own experience as a young man, this past school year Cain, along with six adult mentors, took a group of 37 DECA fifth through eighth grade students on a road trip to tour Duke University, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, and North Carolina A&T. Cain said each time the group pulled up to one of the campuses, a hush came over the otherwise lively van of students.

"Up until this trip, these were just places the kids had seen on their television screens. Suddenly, there they are, feet firmly planted in the same places many of their idols have stood. There is so much power in that—it's a little bit of magic to see an animated group of young students suddenly fall quiet, mouths drop open. You can see it sinking in that going to a Duke or a Chapel Hill is something they can see themselves achieving; it's right within their grasps."

While they were in Raleigh, Cain took the group to visit the International Peace Museum where they learned about the four African-American North Carolina A&T students who, in 1960, took a seat at their local Woolworth five-and-dime counter. When they were asked to leave in adherence with the diner's strict all-white policy, they refused to budge from their seats.

The Woolworth sit-in, as it's historically known, started a movement. For DECA students, seeing the preserved diner had huge significance, reflected in an exchange Cain witnessed between a sixth-grader and his mentor.

As Cain describes it, the student gave his mentor a big hug, nestled his head into the man's chest, and thanked him for providing such an incredible opportunity.

"I want to be a difference-maker," he said. "I want to be like those four A&T students who stood up for what's right."

"How many bright, motivated students are missing opportunities to attend college because they don't think it's an option?" Cain asked. "These visits plant that seed and, who knows, just maybe a leader will emerge."



“We are intentional about everything we do. From the time our students are in kindergarten to the time they graduate and go off to college, **we light the path for them to find their way to and through college.** It’s never a sprint at the end. It is a constant, steady walk along the college-going path.”

–Ashley Overman, DECA College Liaison

## Fast Facts

**1,250**

Students attending K-12

**160**

Outstanding Educators and Staff

**3**

Campuses

**\$0**

Cost to attend

**6%**

Dayton Public School market

## We PREPARE for College

### Community Connections

We understand the importance of connecting our students with hands-on, project-based learning experiences that bring together what they’re learning in school with real-world career pathways.

To that end, we have garnered community support from all corners of the city. Since opening our doors, DECA students have completed over **2,500 job shadows** and **over 500 unpaid internships** all with local Dayton businesses. Students have also volunteered over **75,000 hours of community service** in the Dayton area.

### Gateways

Our Gateway framework requires students to take an active role in their own education to best prepare them for college and beyond. Simply put, we have high expectations. In addition to their regular coursework, all DECA students must complete the following to graduate:

- 100+ hours of community service
- 3 job shadows
- 2 non-paid internships
- Take the ACT twice
- Maintain 95% attendance, where missed time is made up at a 2:1 ratio
- 7 literary analysis papers
- 20-page autobiography
- College visits and college applications
- Minimum of three college courses

### On-site ACT Prep

All DECA students are **REQUIRED** to take the ACT twice. In preparation for this important test, we provide a free, tailored course where all Juniors receive ACT preparation twice a week from a certified instructor on-site during the regular school day.

Always thinking outside of the box, DECA Middle utilizes friendly competition to reinforce behaviors that prepare students for college.



## We PREPARE for College

In true Harry Potter fashion DECA Middle students are assigned to one of five houses named after historic game changers:

- Angelou House
- Chisholm House
- Malala House
- Mandela House
- Obama House

The underlying goal is to foster a sense of community across DECA Middle grade levels and create a culture of positive peer pressure.

Houses compete against one another throughout the year, earning points for academic achievement, doing the right thing without being told, demanding success of one another, and finding joy. The Houses provide continued opportunities for leadership and encourage students to raise each other up every single day.

The winning House is announced at the end of each academic year and presented with the coveted House Cup.





*"My name is Kasuan Kimball and I'm going to the University of Dayton!"*

"For PREP kids, these seniors in their crimson and black gowns are symbolic of how far they can go. And for our seniors, the cheers of their young PREP counterparts, are symbolic of how far they have come."

—Elton Griffith, DECA High World History Teacher, Advisor

## We GO to College

### College Signing Day

In keeping with our college-going mindset, at the end of each school year all DECA seniors take-part in a college-signing day tradition. In true pep-rally fashion, the entire DECA High family crowds around as our graduating seniors stand front and center, and one at a time announce where they will be attending college in the Fall. They each sign a large canvas that hangs in our hallway as a reminder to current students where hard work can take them.

### Senior Clap-out

Two years ago staff got together to brainstorm how we could make the idea of college more tangible for our younger students. At DECA, we talk a lot about going to college, but what does that really mean or look like to a 5-year-old?

When we put our heads together to answer this question, Adairia Kelly, '02 Deca Alum and PREP's City Connects Coordinator, came up with a uniquely DECA program we have coined our Senior Clap-out.

The day after our seniors graduate, they descend on DECA PREP in their cap and gowns and parade around the school, led by PREP students holding signs decorated with seniors' names and where they are headed off to college in the Fall. The morning culminates with a pep-rally where each senior announces to a roaring crowd of K-4th graders where they are attending college.

It is a truly powerful event—a chance for our littlest students to see, in the flesh, the end goal—to see, from the people they idolize so much, people that look like them and come from their same neighborhoods—that at DECA, we really do go to college.



“DECA is the great equalizer. It’s a school made for a person like me—a Tiffany who needs DECA to help her move beyond her circumstances and see herself as a scholar.”

—Tiffany Smith, DECA Class of 2008  
B.A. Bowling Green University, M.A. Kennesaw State University



# college BOUND

## Fast Facts

**75%**  
at or below the poverty rate

**100%**  
accepted to college

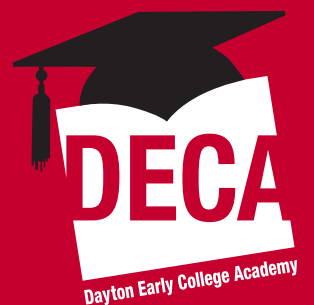
**81%**  
first generation college students



Students at the Senior clap-out

### AT A GLANCE—Class of 2019

- 55 students
- \$7.1 million in University scholarships
- 35% of the class earned a full-tuition scholarship





## We GRADUATE from College

As a rising seventh grader, Dahla Bruce sat in the audience at the 2008 Sinclair Community College Graduation ceremony to cheer on her mother, who was receiving her associates degree. As Dahla watched student after student approach the stage to accept their diplomas, she noticed something—some of them were still in high school.

That very night Dahla began to research where those high school students were from, and how she could become one of them.

She quickly learned they were part of a new early college high school called DECA and, as timing would have it, DECA had just announced they would be opening their doors to seventh graders.

Being the go-getter she is, Dahla immediately applied to DECA and started her journey as part of the school's first seventh grade class that Fall; a decision, she says, that was the single best she has made in her lifetime. As she reflects back on her time at DECA, Dahla says it was the required internships and job shadows that had the biggest impact on her, as well as a course she was required to take called Corporate Etiquette.

"At the time I'm not sure I appreciated it, but looking back in hindsight, the course I took in corporate etiquette gave me the tools I needed to get where I am today. I learned how to behave in a corporate setting; how to brand myself. At one point we even had a woman come in and show us how to eat properly at corporate lunches. Most importantly, I learned the value of networking. Networking has been everything for me."

Dahla attended Bowling Green University where she was the only female to graduate with a degree in Construction Management. During the latter part of her studies she was

hired as a paid intern at Shook Construction, a job she earned because of her uncanny ability to network.

After she graduated from college, Shook did not have an open position in their Dayton office, so Dahla did what she does best—she made her own way. She asked the owner of Bilbrey Construction, Rob Lemaster, out to lunch, and she told him why he needed her on his team.

Rob hired her as a Project Engineer nearly on the spot.



A few months ago Dahla learned that Bilbrey Construction had been invited to bid a large renovation project in the very building that taught her so much, DECA High.

"I went to Rob and told him how passionate I am about DECA, and he guaranteed me we would put our best foot forward to win the work."

Bilbrey Construction did, in fact, win the renovation job at DECA High based on their bid, a bid hand-delivered by none other than Dahla.



Shortly thereafter, Rob handed her the DECA High Renovation binder, and named her project manager on the job.

"It has been amazing being back and in the building," said Dahla. "When I started in 7th grade we barely had a cafeteria—there were a couple of tables in each classroom, and we had low-wall partitions, so you could literally look over the wall into the classroom next door. Now I'm back in the space helping to transform it into something beautiful and functional."

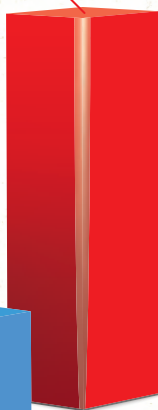
## DECA High Renovation

We are excited to announce we have completed Phase 1 and started work on Phase 2 of our four Phase high school renovation. The primary goal of our campaign is to increase enrollment at the High School level, allowing us to serve students already in the DECA pipeline.

Phase 1 began in January of this year and was completed this Summer with the support of a Ohio Facilities Construction Commission Grant. Ruetschle Architects and Billbrey Construction have led renovation efforts. Keep an eye out in the coming month about how you can join in our campaign to transform DECA High!

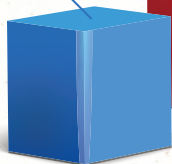
**54%**

DECA Alumni



**10%**

National Average



Percentage of students graduating from College within 6 years.

"To be able to give back to a place that has given so much to me is truly an honor."

—Dahla Bruce





# DECA's Scores and Highlights

## What We Did Well

We saw record low attrition and record high enrollment across all schools in 2019.

2019 RETENTION		2019 ENROLLMENT	
Prep	97.1%	Prep	523 +5.23%
Middle	96.7%	Middle	397 +4.75%
High	95.2%	High	351 +10.03%
DECA	96.5%	DECA	1,271 +6.36%

**A in Value-Added**  
Both schools earned A's for second year in a row

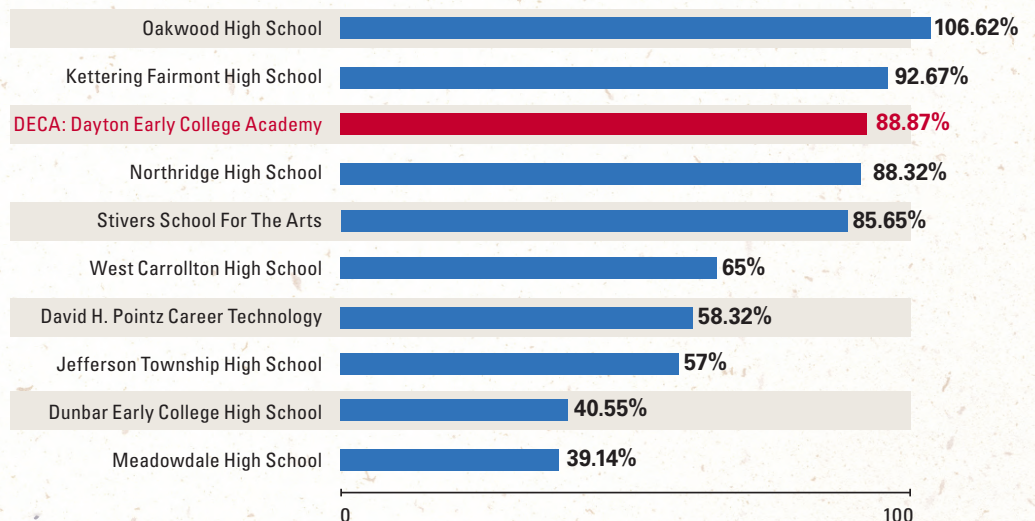
35% of 2019 grads earned a full-tuition scholarship

**Dayton Mayors Award Education Champion**

**OST Math Exceeded State Average grades 7-12**

Dayton Business Journal Non-Profit of the year

## Performance Index





### Where We Can Improve

While DECA High students did very well and are on par with their suburban counterparts or better, unfortunately we can not say the same for PREP and Middle. Our test scores in K-8 are stronger than Dayton Public Schools, which draws from the same demographic as we do; however, our objective is always to equal or exceed the growth and results of the suburban schools in our community. We've done it at the high school level, and we want all of our supporters to know we are taking action and making the changes needed to do it in the lower grades, too.

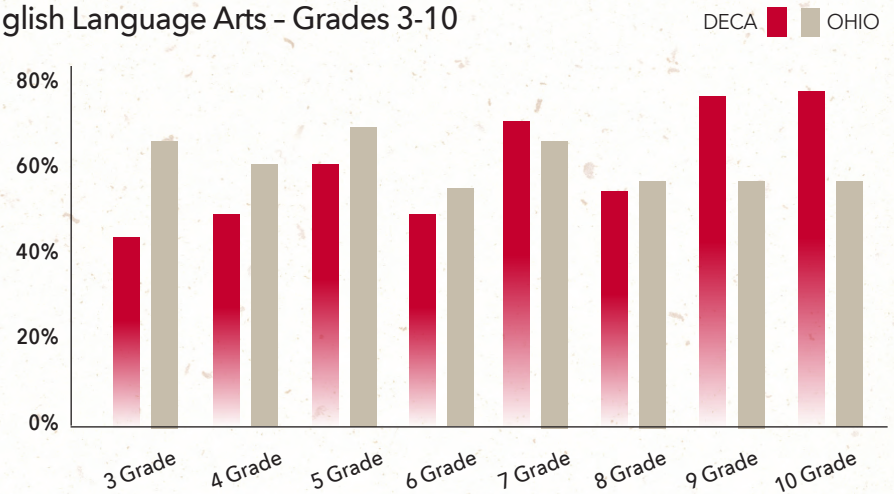
### What We Are Doing

Our team took a long hard look at what led to the disappointing results at DECA PREP and the 5th-6th grades at DECA Middle. Some of the steps we are taking to improve academic performance include:

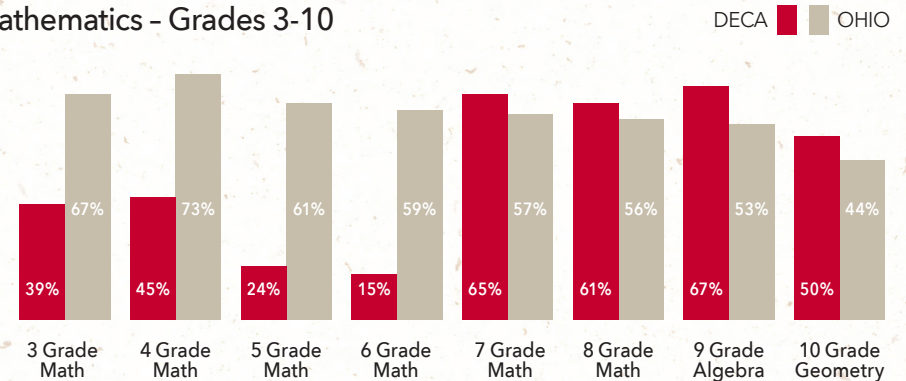
- Embedding a block for intervention every day to reteach specific skills in small groups
- Piloting a more intensive phonics program as a companion to the current reading program
- Doubling up the math classes students take in the 5th grade; and the same for language arts in 6th grade
- Meeting individually with each parent to review their child's level of performance and address deficits
- Constructing common incremental assessments in math and literacy to ensure that no skill is missed
- Implementing classroom structures that promote learning, and executing a consistent plan and place for students to "reset" when they misbehave, disrupting the learning of others

At DECA, we have a laser-like focus on college. We know our model works because our graduates are earning college degrees at FIVE TIMES the rate of their peers who have similar economic backgrounds.

### English Language Arts - Grades 3-10



### Mathematics - Grades 3-10



"As we look into the future we are hopeful, not because our work is easy, but because our work is important, and because our students and families depend on us."

—Dr. Judy Hennessey, Superintendent



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## Financial Report and Board of Trustees

Thanks to the generosity of our donors, DECA is able to continue to invest in our teachers and facilities to meet the needs of all our students, and provide them with a rigorous education to which many would not otherwise have access.

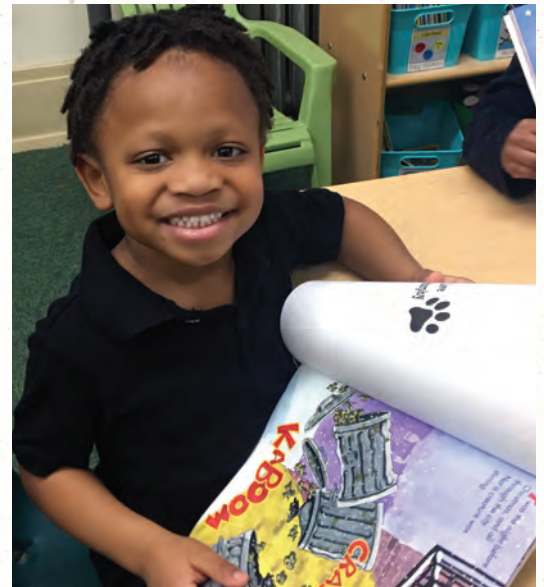
We are happy to report that annual independent financial audits by Auditor of State Keith Faber verify DECA's strong fiscal practices. Careful stewardship ensures that **over 87 cents of every dollar** goes directly to classroom instruction and student support services, reflecting the district's priorities to put students first.

For the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019 sources of funds for recurring operating purposes totaled \$11.96 million and uses of funds for recurring operating purposes totaled \$11.92 million, which resulted in a small surplus of \$46K.

DECA manages its financial decisions through the use of a long-range financial planning model that considers changes in student enrollment, state funding, and federal funding. Maintaining a competitive compensation structure for our teachers remains a top priority in the coming years, along with providing safe and nurturing facilities for our students. We benefited from having full classrooms, very low attrition, and conservative spending.

Our cash balance of \$2.6 million exceeded our goal of 120 days of cash on hand and remains strong in the short-term. Our financial focus is long-term financial sustainability, and the current financial position provides a firm foundation upon which to build.

**Steven Hinshaw, Ph.D.**  
Chief Financial Officer & Chief Operating Officer



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### Board of Trustees

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**Vanessa Ward** | Board Member  
**Thomas Whelley II** | Board Member  
**Sherry Wilcoxson** | Board Member & Parent Rep.

## Operating Funds

# BOUND COLLEGE



“At DECA we really do go to college!”

	FY 2018	FY 2019
Beginning Balance	\$1,367,000	\$2,157,000
Recurring Revenue	Consolidated \$11,927,000	Consolidated \$11,967,000
Expenditures	\$11,899,000	\$11,923,000
Balance	\$28,000	\$46,000
Non-Recurring Revenue	Consolidated \$1,015,000	Consolidated \$1,745,000
Expenditures	\$255,000	\$1,337
Balance	\$760,000	\$408,000
Ending Balance	\$2,157,000	\$2,611,000

*Report does not reflect the impact of the construction project at DECA High.*

### Total Expenses for DECA and DECA PREP

87%	6%	5%	2%
Instructional and Support Services	Special Projects	Shared Services	Other

### Total Revenue for DECA and DECA PREP

68%	15%	12%	5%	3%
State Funding	Federal Grants	Other Grants/Misc.	Nutrition	Donations

Save the Date

# Lives Changed LUNCHEON 2020

**TUESDAY, APRIL 21**

11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Sinclair College | Ponitz Center



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