

ANNUAL
REPORT 21

DECA



ACCELERATE

To increase the rate of growth by adapting quickly to all opportunities and challenges.

ACCELERATE

DEAR FRIENDS OF DECA

The past year has been a challenging one for most of us, but if there is one thing that is true about DECA, it is that in difficult times, we accelerate our efforts, aspiring to continually raise the bar.

When times get tough, we do not stop, give up, and wave the white flag, especially when it comes to our kids. We buckle down, get creative, and pull out every single stop until we've created something that makes kids feel both comfortable and challenged; safe and seen.

The onset of COVID-19 precipitated a chain reaction. We were fast to adapt mentally to the new reality, and this allowed us to quickly unlock the energy that would drive us into action. We were amazed by, and very proud of, the agility our staff showed in embracing new ways of working to educate our students. The DECA team showed that change is tough, but that those who confront it proactively can turn it to their advantage.

In the midst of a public health crisis, we turned school into something that students could access

from a distance. It certainly wasn't easy and it didn't happen overnight. It was the result of DECA teachers and staff doing what's right and giving their all for kids.

While we've recognized amazing things that have come out of every single classroom, a sobering truth remains: our students did not make the academic gains we expected during the 2020-2021 year. We are not going into the 2021-2022 academic year with blinders on, and we will not use the pandemic as an excuse or adopt an anti-testing philosophy and approach. That's not in our DNA.

To that end, we have been working tirelessly to put plans in place to help our scholars recover the learning they missed and ensure that every child continues to have access to a rigorous, college preparatory curriculum. Throughout the pages of this report we will share with you our plans. This year, our goal is to maintain incredible expectations for our students' success, always keeping in mind our ultimate accountability is to them because we know that education, more than anything else, is the gateway to building a better life.

Dave Taylor

“WE ARE NOT GOING INTO THIS ACADEMIC YEAR WITH BLINDERS ON, AND WE ASSURE YOU WE RECOGNIZE THAT USING THE PANDEMIC AS AN EXCUSE OR ADOPTING AN ANTI-TESTING PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH IS A CRUTCH FOR FAILURE. THAT'S NOT IN OUR DNA.”

—Dave Taylor, DECA Superintendent

DECA
ACCELERATE

- 1,300 STUDENTS K-12 ACROSS THREE CAMPUSES
- FREE. PUBLIC. ENROLLMENT IS FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED
- 76% STUDENTS LIVE AT OR BELOW THE POVERTY LINE
- SERVE 6% OF THE DAYTON PUBLIC SCHOOL MARKET
- 100% OF STUDENTS ARE ACCEPTED TO COLLEGE

MISSION

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

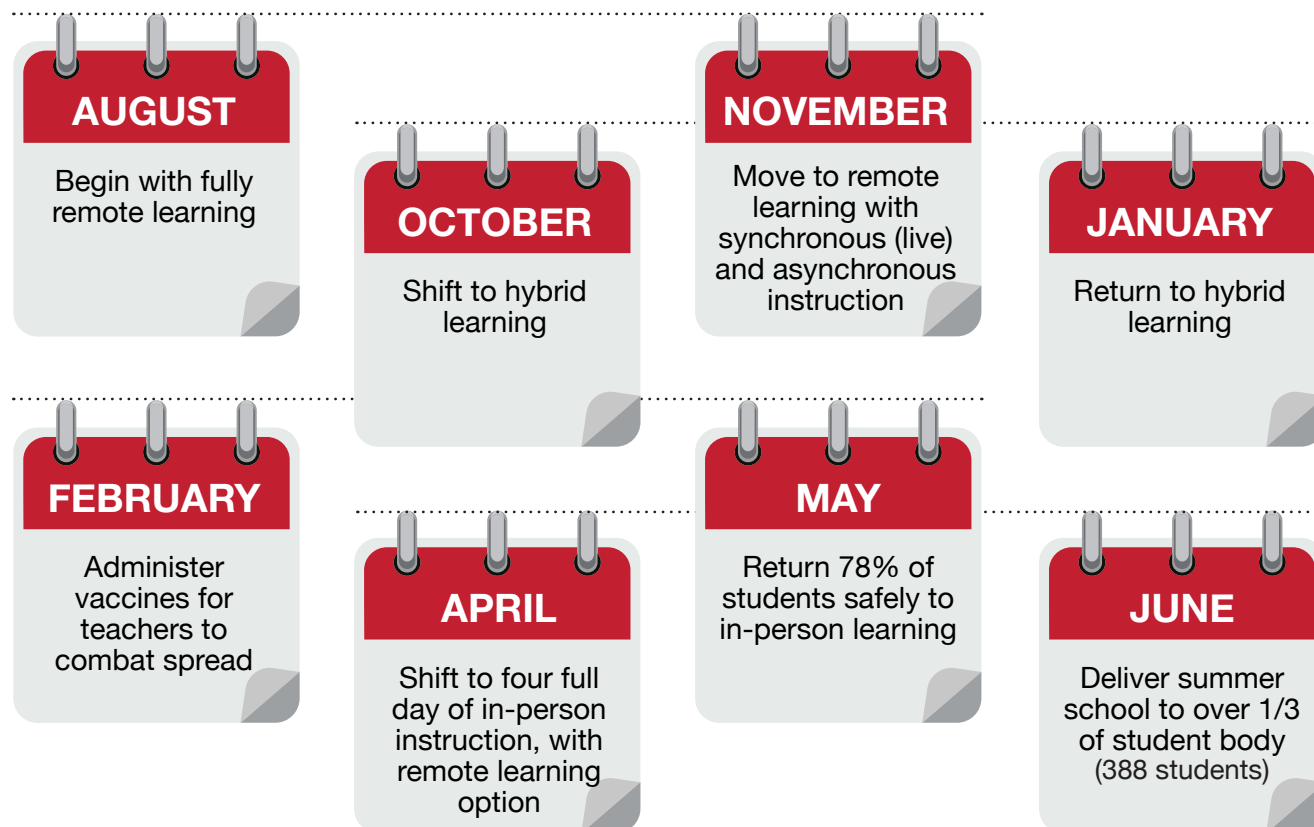


ADAPT QUICKLY

The 2020-21 school year was the most challenging year in our history. Despite the adversity we faced, we are proud to say we stayed true to who we are, what we do, and the core values that guide us. Whether we were delivering remote, hybrid or full in-person instruction, our teachers and staff worked unrelentingly to deliver quality, rigorous instruction.



The Life of DECA Students and Staff in 2021



Day after day our team continued to adapt to the changing dynamic and do what's right for our students and our families. We have:

- Implemented virtual home visits where teachers and advisors met with every family in the district
- Invested in technology, purchasing 1,100 chromebooks, 128 hotspots, and hundreds of new apps, webcams and ring lights so teachers could provide synchronous and asynchronous virtual lessons with high production quality
- Provided intensive training to teachers and staff to equip them with the knowledge to utilize new technology

“OUR TEACHERS ARE SOME OF THE MOST NURTURING AND ENCOURAGING PEOPLE THAT I KNOW. WHEN THEY WEREN'T TEACHING THEY WERE SEEKING OUT STUDENTS TO MAKE SURE WE WERE SAFE, FED AND HAD THE RESOURCES WE NEEDED TO LEARN.”
—Jordan Pettigrew DECA Class of 2022



EMBRACE NEW WAYS OF WORKING

We attribute a large part of our ability to navigate the pandemic successfully to the strong relationships we had in place with our students and families before the outset of the pandemic. These relationships have proven to form the building blocks for improved academics moving forward.

With some out of the box thinking, we are happy to report we were still able to provide uniquely DECA experiences for our students, while maintaining safety as our top priority.

What New Ways of Working Looks Like:

At DECA PREP we accelerated the college going mindset of our youngest learners with virtual Harambe/Pep Rally. Through YouTube Live, we did house chants honoring each of our HBCU's, celebrated famous black Americans, and recognized student achievements.

Throughout the final weeks of the 2020-2021 academic year we were able to hold in person ceremonies outside to recognize kindergarten, fourth grade and eighth grade promotion.

We were able to keep our uniquely DECA Senior Clap-out tradition where graduating seniors descend on DECA PREP in their cap and gowns and parade around the school and end with a pep-rally where each senior announced to a roaring crowd of K-4 graders where they will be attending college in the fall!

Right before holiday break, DECA High teachers drove to students' houses to personally deliver donuts, juice, and a certificate for all students who had perfect attendance and/or were on the honor roll. Students who were struggling received a handwritten letter from a DECA teacher offering words of encouragement for improvement next semester and to let them know they were missed.

“ LAST YEAR WAS ABOUT IMPROVISING. THE BALANCING ACT OF IN-PERSON AND REMOTE TEACHING WITH HYBRID LEARNING FORCED US TO VIEW THE WAY WE DELIVER INSTRUCTION DIFFERENTLY. CLASSES WERE HELD OUTDOORS. HALLWAYS WERE USED FOR ONE-ON-ONE INSTRUCTION. ONE THING THAT DIDN'T CHANGE WAS OUR TEACHERS' DEDICATION TO THEIR STUDENTS AND THE PRIDE THEY PUT INTO THEIR WORK. ” —Aileen Ernst, DECA PREP Principal

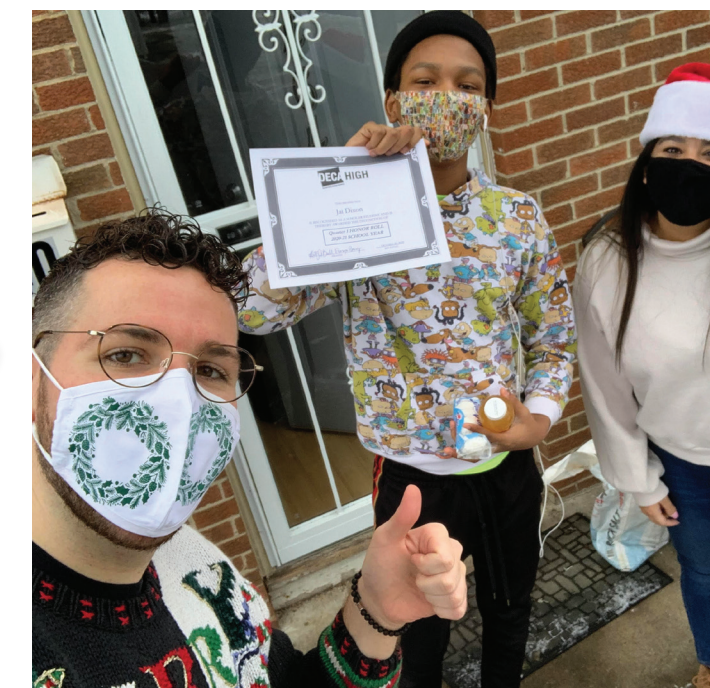
We graduated the largest senior class in DECA history! The class of 2021 was able to shine through the challenges this year with:

- 74 graduates
- 46 students graduating with honors
- Over 11 million dollars awarded in scholarships
- 1/3 of the graduating class earning full tuition scholarships

Several of our 2021 graduates are heading off to top tier, highly selective schools:

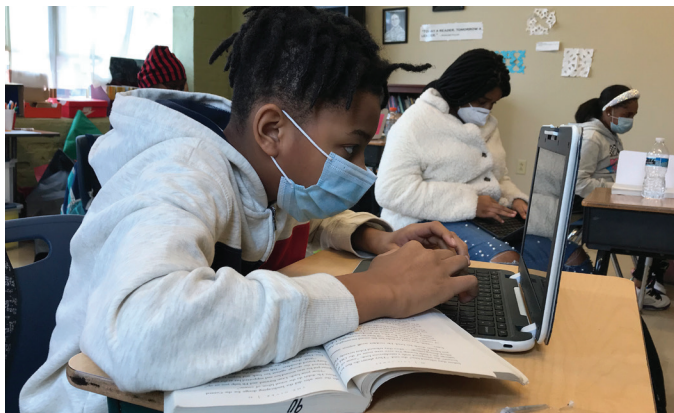
- 2 awarded near full ride scholarships to Johns Hopkins
- 2 winning full ride scholarships to Skidmore
- 2 accepted to New York University
- 1 awarded a full tuition scholarship to Tennessee State with guaranteed acceptance to Meharry Medical College
- 7 University of Dayton Flyer Promise Scholarships

We are #DECAPROUD of all of our students and can't wait to see all of the amazing things the Class of 2021 does in college and beyond!



DRIVE INTO ACTION

Even before the end of the 2020-2021 school year, our staff drove into action, asking ourselves how we were going to limit the loss of learning our students experienced as a result of the pandemic. Our first move was to totally revamp our summer school program district-wide making it full day in-person instruction delivered by DECA teachers.



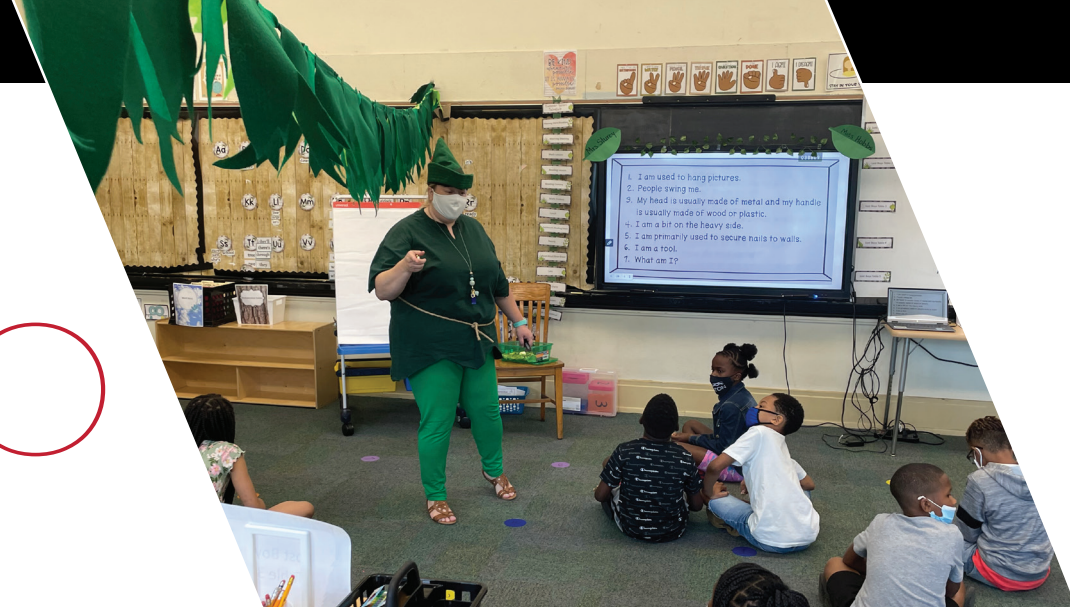
We are happy to report over **1/3 of students in the district enrolled in summer school, getting 200 additional hours of learning time.** Students from all grades also had the opportunity to apply their knowledge through several enrichment field trips.

In addition, at the high school level, we partnered with the community. Many of our students completed job shadows and internships at Caresource, Boonshoft, Adopt-A-Park, Netdemics, the University of Dayton, and more, providing opportunities for students to explore potential career fields and areas of interest.

Students also had an opportunity to take their learning and service out into the world. Mr. Griffith led a group of students on our annual community service project at Woodland Cemetery, where students cleared the site and hiked to the highest elevation in the city, while Ms. Soehner and the sophomores went to Caesar's Creek to dig for fossils after exploring connections to what they learned in their Biology class.

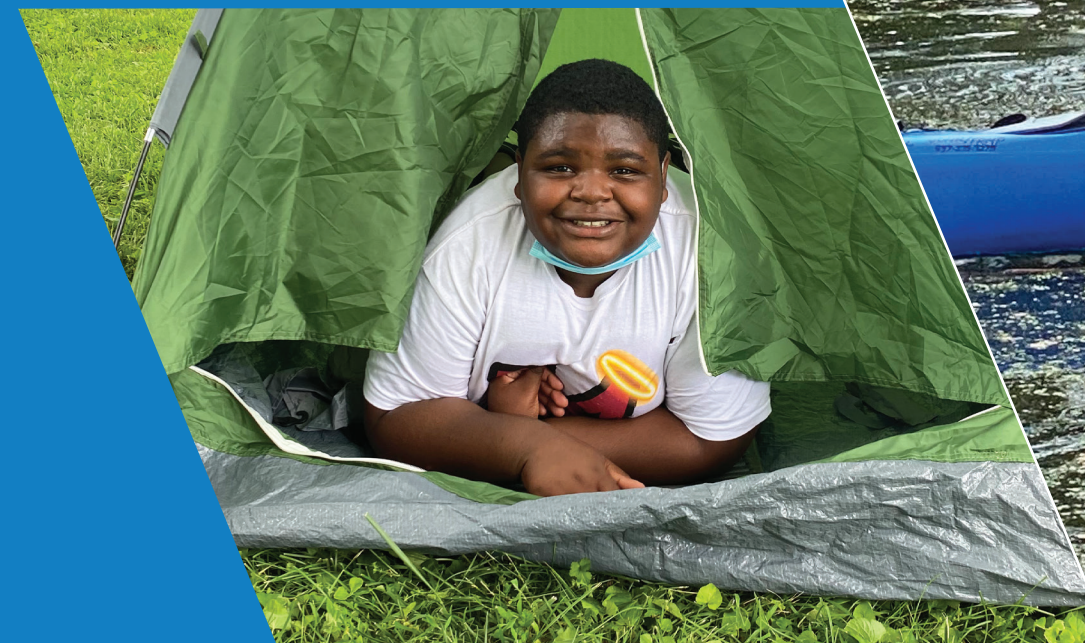
Summer School Progress at a Glance

- 388 STUDENTS COMPLETED SUMMER SCHOOL
- K-5 STUDENTS SHOWED SIGNIFICANT GROWTH ON MATH STANDARDS
- 70 GRADE "BUMPS"
- 22 DECA HIGH STUDENTS MOVED TO "ON TRACK" TO GRADUATE
- 32 INTERNSHIPS COMPLETED
- 22 GATEWAYS PRESENTED



“SUMMER SCHOOL ALLOWED STUDENTS TO MAKE SOME INCREDIBLE GROWTH AHEAD OF THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR. TEACHERS ACROSS THE DISTRICT COMMITTED FIVE WEEKS OF THEIR SUMMER TO ENSURE THAT STUDENTS WERE AS PREPARED AS POSSIBLE FOR THE NEXT GRADE COMING OFF THE PANDEMIC YEAR. IT WAS A LOT OF HOURS AND A LOT OF WORK BUT IT WAS SO WORTH IT.”

—Lane Clegg, Director of Curriculum & Instruction



CALL ON FRIENDS

With the inability to have in-person fundraising events like our annual **Lives Changed Luncheon**, we had to reinvent what “giving” looks like inside of a pandemic. This past year our supporters showed up in big ways for students.

Last September, DECA supporter and faithful volunteer, Molly Cobb, celebrated a milestone birthday. Her friend and fellow DECA volunteer, Karen Spina, threw her a surprise birthday party. In lieu of gifts, guests were asked to make a donation to DECA to support Molly’s volunteer efforts as a book club leader and her passion for our mission at DECA.

“This gift was created to celebrate the special bond Molly had with the book club and to allow other DECA students to have impactful literary experiences,” said Karen Spina.

Molly’s birthday party resulted in several thousand dollars raised for a literacy fund at DECA. Random surprise donations came in through the end of the school year as a tribute to Molly and the kindness she continually shows to others.

The nearly \$20,000 collected was used to get three new books into the hands of each DECA student for summer vacation.

Birthday fundraising didn’t just happen at parties. Longtime faithful DECA supporter Theresa Gasper turned to Facebook and social media to help raise money for DECA. In honor of her birthday, Theresa asked friends via a Facebook post to make a donation to DECA. Her request generated a \$1,000 gift to DECA! This summer her husband Dave followed suit and again utilized Facebook to collect money for DECA in lieu of personal gifts and raised \$1,000 more!

After rescheduling our 2020 Lives Changed Luncheon twice, we realized that we would not be able to safely gather together in person to celebrate our amazing schools and students. The DECA Development Department decided to organize a virtual event and the first annual DECA Day of Giving was held May 6, 2021. The event was a huge success, and we want to extend a heartfelt thank you to all of you for supporting and contributing to our first DECA Day of Giving. What a testament it is to all of you to be able to report that we raised just over \$54,662 in 24 hours.

Photo above: We livestreamed our College Signing Day tradition as part of the first ever DECA Day of Giving. Each graduating senior announces to DECA High staff and students where they will be attending college and then signs a large canvas that hangs in the halls as a reminder to future students where their hard work can take them.



ACCELERATE FORWARD

As the fourth quarter came to a close, we were left with a sobering truth—our students did not make the academic gains we typically would have expected during the 2020–21 school year. Despite our best efforts, our students struggled with remote and hybrid learning and did not make expected gains.

Our team is entering the 2021–22 school year with a clear commitment: we will continue to maintain incredible expectations for our students’ success. We know that we will see students grow by giving them access to grade level assignments and strong instruction—not by lowering our expectations of what our scholars can do.

Our plans will take hard work and dedication, but we will stay the course because the work we do is absolutely essential. Our capable faculty and staff remain resolute in their commitment to provide instruction that is challenging but engaging as well as continuing to provide the connection and support that our scholars and their families have come to expect.



“ THIS IS A BIG MINDSET SHIFT FOR ALL OF US. TRADITIONALLY WE HAVE BEEN FOCUSED ON MEETING KIDS WHERE THEY ARE. BUT THE FACT IS, REMEDIATION JUST ISN’T CATCHING OUR KIDS UP. IN FACT, WE HAVE SEEN THAT OVER TIME, IT EXACERBATES THE LEARNING GAP AND WHAT HAPPENS IS SUDDENLY YOU HAVE A THIRD GRADER LEARNING FIRST GRADE CONTENT. WE ARE COMMITTED ACROSS THE DISTRICT TO PROVIDING OUR STUDENTS WITH GRADE LEVEL CONTENT AND THE TOOLS THEY NEED TO ACCESS IT.”

—Dave Taylor, DECA Superintendent

Our Plan to Accelerate Every Student Forward

High Dosage Tutoring:

We have hired an army of tutors to provide individualized instruction for all students K–4. Every student will receive small group (one adult for every three children) literacy instruction every day as part of their school day for 25 minutes.

High Quality Instructional Materials:

We have adopted new, rigorous instructional materials that will provide teachers with grade-appropriate, culturally relevant materials to use daily with their students.

Progress Monitoring:

We administer surveys to our families, our students, and faculty to learn what is working and where changes are needed. Also our administrators and instructional coaches have dedicated extensive time norming on academic expectations and conduct observations to provide practical, actionable feedback to teachers on an on-going basis.

Interventionists:

To support our youngest learners’ math and literacy development, we have hired an additional teacher at each grade level at DECA PREP.

Social Emotional Learning:

As part of our ongoing efforts to support our students’ positive social/emotional development in the middle grades, we have created small group advisories and developed an intensive curriculum geared at building healthy habits and a sense of belonging.



Creating Moments:

Since the start of the pandemic, our students have missed out on so many important events, rites of passage, and milestones that they typically would have experienced. We are committed to providing as many experiences—from college visits, to internships, to hikes, field trips, and many more things—for our students as possible.



DECA ALUMNI ON THE MOVE

We are proud to share that DECA alum **Lyric Fields**, graduating class of 2014, has been appointed to the board of trustees at the University of Dayton. She is a relationship banker for Bank of America in Columbus and previously worked in development for the Pink Ribbon Girls and annual giving with The Ohio State University alumni association. Fields received a bachelor's degree in entrepreneurship in 2018 and completed a student internship with UD advancement that led to the establishment of the university's student council.



"As a board member I am excited to engage in the highest level of strategic leadership at the University and ensure that the voice and experiences of recent

graduates are heard and factored effectively into our future as a higher education institution," said Fields.



Sakinah Ali, also part of DECA graduating class of 2014, has made it part of her life's mission to give back to the school that gave her so much. This year, after saving a little bit of her paycheck every month for over 13 months, Ali started a generous scholarship, providing a year of book money to three deserving DECA students.

"My mom always taught us that when you make it, you have to reach back and help those in whose shoes you once walked," said Ali. *"I chose to give back by creating a scholarship because it's something I can do every year and, as a former college student, I know the impact a financial boost can have,"* said Ali.

Ali earned a B.S in Cognitive Computational Neuroscience from The Ohio State University in 2019. She currently works full time at an outpatient psychiatry clinic and is enrolling in higher education to become a Physician Assistant.

"CONGRATULATIONS LYRIC AND SAKINAH! WE COULDN'T BE MORE PROUD OF YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS!"

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE

TAKE A TOUR OF OUR NEW SPACE!

Contact Lesley Jones at 937-608-7045 or Jenny Schade at 937-470-6840 to schedule a tour.

DECA High has been in the process of a complete renovation for the last two years. We are excited to announce that we are nearing completion of Phase 5 in our \$8 million renovation.

Our brand new space includes:

- 29 CLASSROOMS
- 7 OFFICES
- 9 STUDENT SUPPORT AREAS (GATEWAY, NURSE, COMMUNITY SERVICE, ETC.)
- 3 STUDENT EXTENDED LEARNING AREAS
- 3 MECHANICAL ROOMS
- 2 SECURE VESTIBULES/ENTRANCES
- 2 BOOKROOMS
- 2 SETS OF RESTROOMS
- 1 MAKERSPACE

Thank you to all of our friends and community partners for your support in helping us create an incredible space for our high school students to thrive. *We can't wait for you to see it!*



MAINTAIN A STRATEGIC VIEW

DECA continues to create a financial structure that promotes short-term agility with long-term sustainability. As we emerge from the pandemic, this focus has been more important than ever. The federal Covid-19 funds are providing much needed support to our students and teachers as they will accelerate to make up lost ground during 2020-2021. However, the new state funding plan created mixed results for DECA.

Federal Funding

DECA and DECA PREP will receive over \$13 million in one-time federal Covid-19 relief funds over the next three years. Over \$1 million has already been spent on 400 Chromebook computers to provide remote instruction to our students, 22 hotspots for our families to access the world wide web, 23,585 pieces of personal protective equipment, two additional nurses so each campus has a nurse on-site, and four additional custodians for extra cleaning services.

The remaining \$12 million will be invested over the next 3 years in these areas:

- \$9 million toward lost learning recovery support and operating budget items such as hiring high dosage tutors, intervention specialists, and support teachers
- \$3 million toward safe learning environment initiatives such as personal protective equipment and indoor air quality upgrades.

State Funding

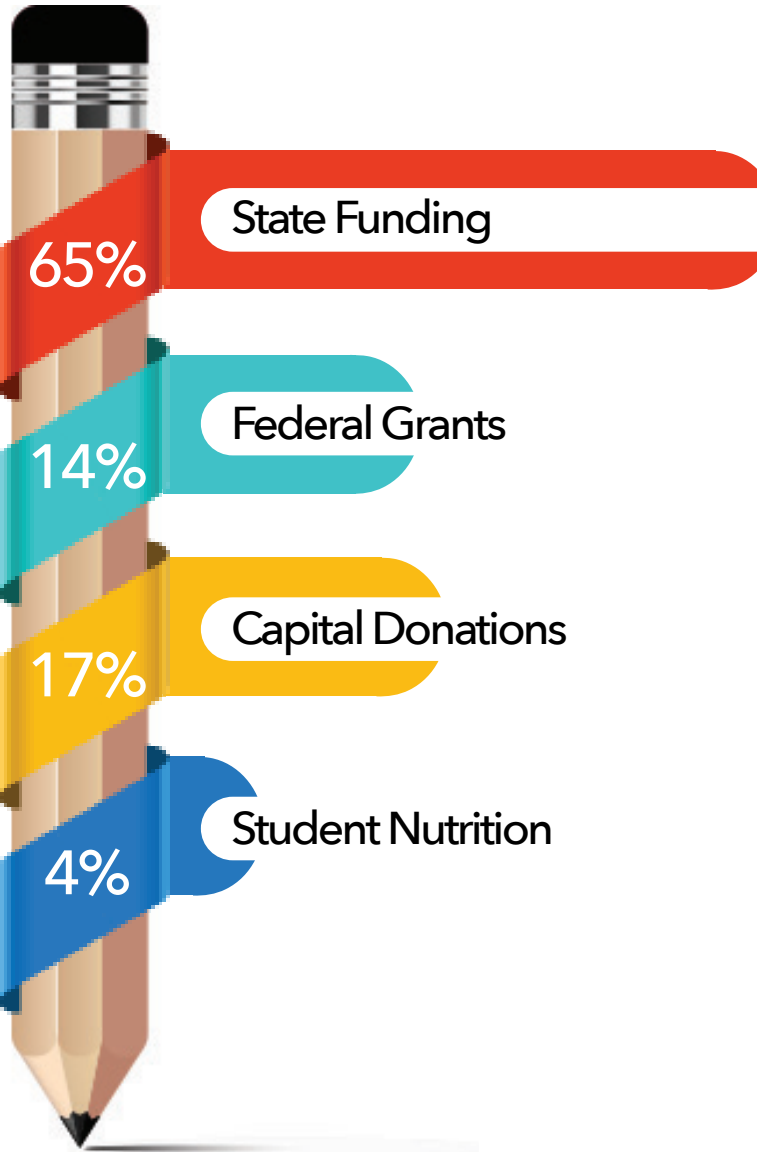
The new state funding plan was heralded as a long overdue revamp for school funding. The state moved to a “direct funding model” to provide funds directly to charter schools rather than have the money pass through the traditional local school district. Initial estimates indicate that DECA will **lose \$107 per student** while DECA PREP will gain \$464 per student over the previous state funding plan. The good news is the legislature approved Governor DeWine’s recommended increase in Quality Charter School funding, which is a special line item outside the school funding plan. Both DECA and DECA PREP are expected to continue to qualify for those quality funds in the upcoming years.

DECA is committed to allocating its money where it’s needed the most: in the classroom and with student support systems. DECA’s finance committee, which consists of some of Dayton’s best business minds, remains active in guiding our long-range financial plans to keep DECA stable today and well into the future.

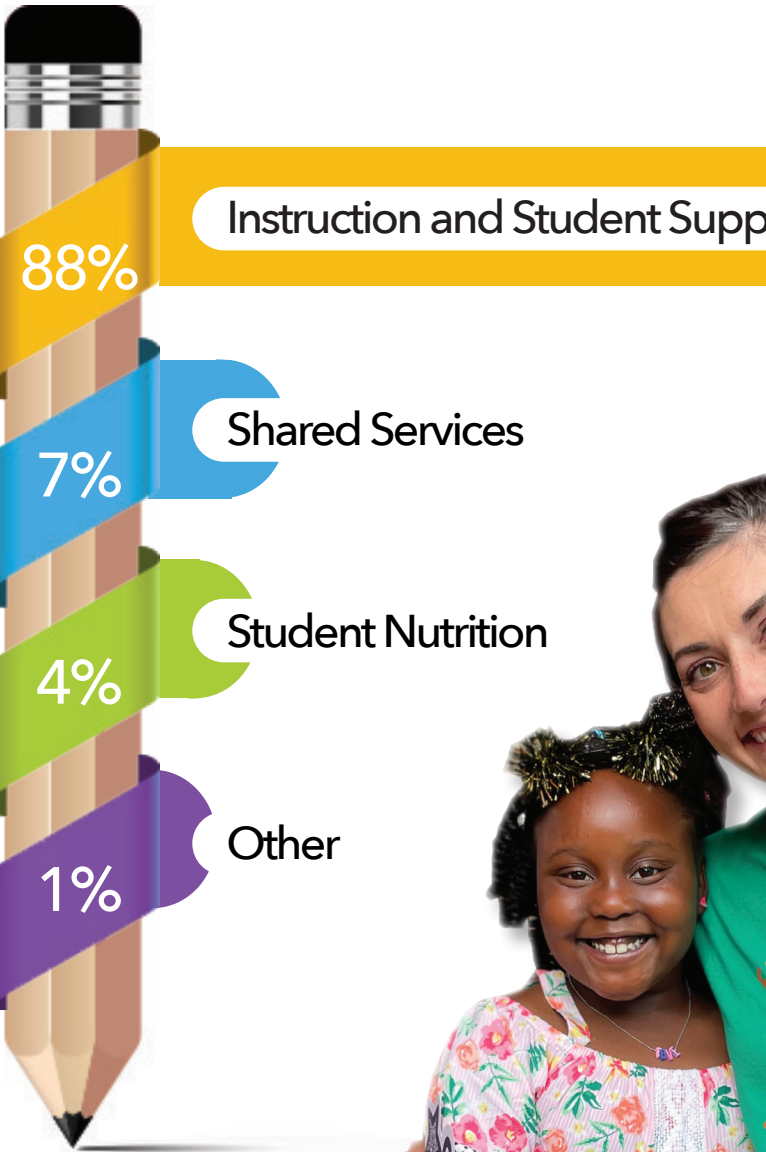
Through the ongoing support of our generous donors, DECA has a solid financial foundation even when the state is cutting funding and the pandemic-related expenses are increasing.

Total Revenue for DECA and DECA PREP Totals \$15,774,077

DECA received special funding during the year that may not be recurring. We therefore decided to preserve those funds for careful investment over future years.



Total Expenses for DECA and DECA PREP Totals \$13,988,956

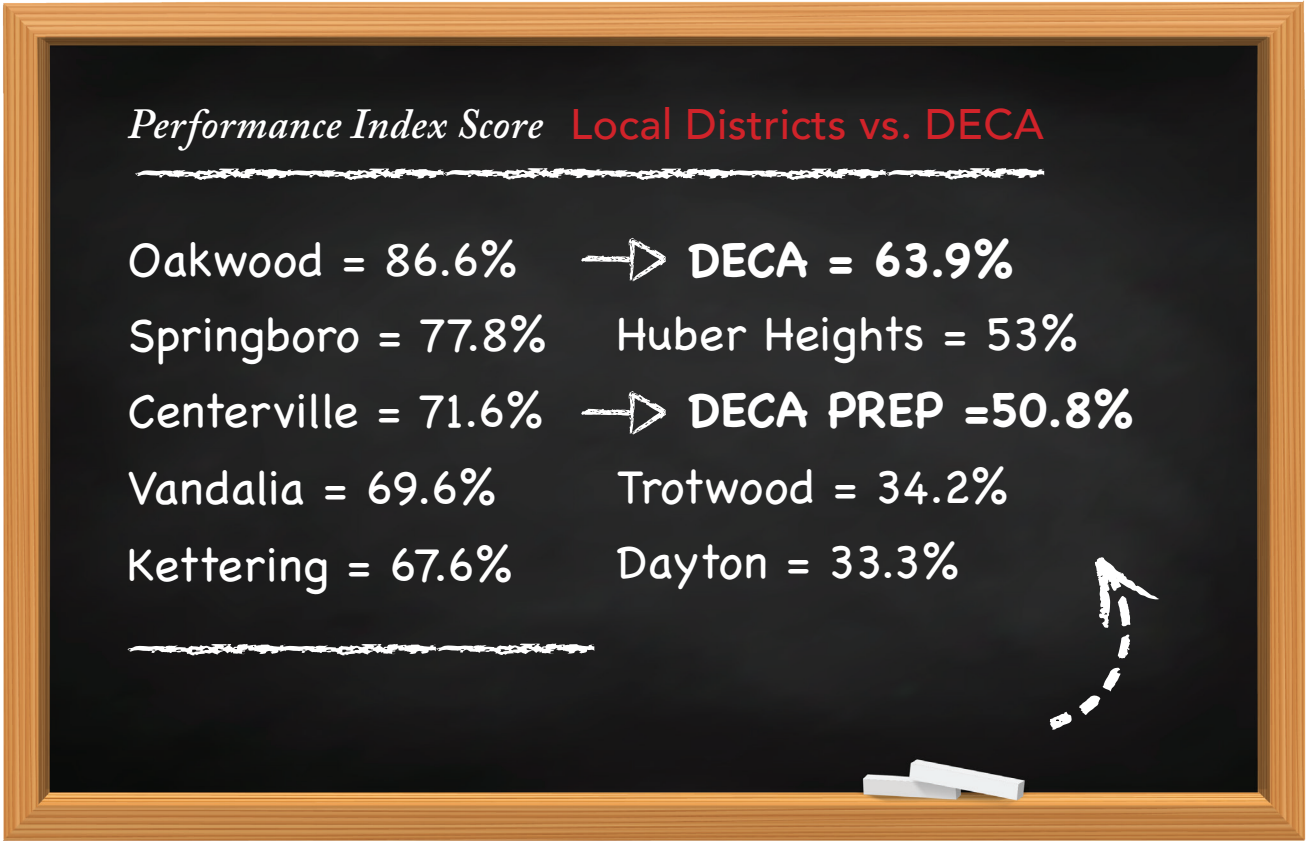


FOCUS ON ACADEMICS



Our expectation is always that our students perform at or above grade level, and our scores this year tell us we are not there. We have launched a full scale, concerted effort across the district to get our students where they need to be. We realize there is no quick, easy fix, and we are invested in accelerating learning for every single one of our 1,300 learners.

DECA PREP’s (3rd-8th grades) Performance Index dropped by 17% and High (9th-11th) dropped by 14% from 2019. While this is disappointing, it’s important to note that the average traditional school in the Big 8 dropped 32% and charters dropped by 29%. In other words, schools serving similar demographics to ours on the whole lost significantly more ground than our students did. Our ability to be agile and remain in school as much as possible during the pandemic played a large part in our students’ performance.



Widely considered the most useful aspect of statewide testing, the performance index (PI) reveals a composite index of how well students performed on the complete battery of K-12 state-mandated tests. Scores are weighted according to various levels above and below proficiency. The higher the PI, generally the more students passed the tests at the higher levels.



FORDHAM SPONSOR GOALS				
	Dayton Early College Academy (9-12)		DECA PREP (K-8)	
	Rating	Calculation/Notes	Rating	Calculation/Notes
Primary Academic Indicators				
Performance Index (PI)	Meets	63.9	Meets	50.8
Value Added (VA)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate (4 Year)	Exceeds	94.1	N/A	N/A
Graduation Rate (5 Year)	Exceeds	98.2	N/A	N/A
K-3 Literacy Improvement	N/A	N/A	Meets	34.3
Performance v. Local Market (PI)	Exceeds	Top 20%	Exceeds	Top 20%
Performance v. Local Market (VA)	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Performance v. Statewide Charters	Exceeds	Top 20%	Exceeds	Top 20%
Performance v. Statewide Charters	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Secondary Academic Indicators				
Value Added: Overall	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Performance Index: Overall	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Value Added: Gifted	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Value Added: Disabilities	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Value Added: Lowest 20%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AMOs	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dual Enrollment Credits		95.2%		N/A
Industry Credentials		0.0%		N/A
Honors Diplomas Awarded		5.6%		N/A
AP Score		0.0%		N/A
IB Score		0.0%		N/A
College Admission Test		19.2%		N/A
Regularly Administers Internal Growth Assessment	Meets	At least 80% of tested students will meet their math goal.	Meets	At least 80% of tested students will meet their math goal.
Met Majority of Internal Goals	NR	No Data Submitted	Did Not Meet	Math % at or above grade level were 45% or less, Reading % at or above grade level were 43% or less.
Financial Measures of Success (Current Year)				
Ratio of Assets to Liabilities	Exceeds	16.0 ratio	Exceeds	2.64 ratio
Days Cash	Exceeds	174 days	Exceeds	220 days
Enrollment Variance	Exceeds	101.74%	Exceeds	100.13%
Financial Measures of Success (Prior Years)				
Multi-year Ration of Assets to Liabilities	Exceeds	Ratio is \geq to 1.1 for 2 most recent years	Exceeds	Ratio is \geq to 1.1 for 2 most recent years
Cash Flow	Exceeds	Positive & Positive	Exceeds	Positive & Positive
Operations/Governance Primary Indicators				
Records Compliance	Meets	80%	Meets	78%
On-Time Records Submission Rate	Falls Far Below	27%	Falls Far Below	29%
Financial Records Submitted	Exceeds	12/12 100%	Exceeds	12/12 100%
Annual Audit	Meets	FY19 1 Finding FY20 No Findings	Meets	FY 19 1 Finding FY 20 No Findings
LEA Special Education Performance Determination (most recent annual)	Exceeds	Meets FY21 Determinations	Exceeds	Meets FY21 Determinations
Operations/Governance Secondary Indicators				
Five-Year Forecasts Submitted by Deadline	Meets	Submitted 5/21/21 and 11/17/20	Meets	Submitted 5/21/21 and 11/17/20
Pre-opening Assurances Documentation	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Annual Report	Meets	Submitted 10/27/20	Meets	Submitted 10/27/20
Safety Plan and Blueprint Submitted to OAG (last three years)	Does Not Meet	In compliance through 5/23/2021	Does Not Meet	In compliance through 5/22/2021 and 7/14/2021
Family Survey Results	Exceeds	95.5% Values opinion and feels like they belong	Exceeds	95.7% Values opinion and feels like they belong



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