

Dear Parent/Guardian,

So, I hear that your student has an interest in DECA. I also understand that you may be skeptical in letting your student join because you don't really understand fully what it is and they may not be able to explain it super well at this point since it's their initial introduction. That is completely okay! I'm here to explain to you a little bit about what DECA is and what we do as a part of it.

First, I want to be able to highlight some of the benefits that your student may receive by joining. One amazing thing is that it can help to form better communication skills, which will then lead to helping your student in feeling more comfortable with going up and presenting their ideas no matter where they are in life. Second, there is a professionalism aspect about DECA that helps as an advantage over other activities. Some of what we learn is how to think quickly, how to interview, and how to come up with convincing ways to help you problem solve. Overall from what I've just stated, it helps to give us a little bit of a head start in the business field in terms of experience. Another huge thing is that colleges love to see that DECA is something that your student was a part of during high school because it helps to show that they are hard working and have been taught things to help them later in life. My personal favorite thing that DECA can help students with is scholarships, there are plenty of scholarships that your student can apply for that come from DECA, as well as this, some schools will give scholarships to students that they see were in it. As an example, UMKC is a huge supporter of Missouri DECA students and are willing to give scholarships to students involved in it. UMKC loves our students so much that they actually sponsor our state competition here in Kansas City at Crown Center.

On that note, what do we do in DECA? We do plenty of different things. Here at the Blue Springs High School Chapter (my chapter), we have different meetings here at the school during Wildcat Hour (our free period/lunch) once a month to go over different events going on as well as to recognize students for doing great things. As well as this, we also get to travel and compete. Competitions are all during the school day and that means that your student doesn't have to stress about an after school practice or something of the like. This does mean that they may miss a few days of school, but these absences will be excused and the work they missed can be made up. For competitions, this really is a test of what we've learned in class and how we can best apply it in a real world setting. For most events, you're given a prompt of an issue with a business and your student will help to explain their best way to solve it, based on how well you do, a student may continue on to state competition or even international

competition after that. For traveling, these trips are based to help your student learn more. They focus on workshops for team building as well as leadership building with some competition prep sprinkled in as well.

I would lastly like to share a little bit of my testimony as a DECA member. Not only has this organization helped me to grow as a person, but it has truly made me a more passionate person about what I love. I've enjoyed my time here so much that I've run for state office twice and I have the opportunity to lead as Missouri DECA President and the Vice President of Communications this year. If there's any more that you have questions about that I can help with, I am more than willing to answer them for you. You can always contact me at Mariah@lawrences.us . I hope this has helped to explain to you what DECA is and I encourage you to get involved and support your student in this decision of joining.

P.S. if you think that you would like to support either this organization or even our chapter, send me an email about how you can be a professional member or even maybe a sponsor (it's super inexpensive and it benefits all of us greatly.)

Best wishes and thank you for your time,

Mariah Lawrence

2018-2019 Missouri DECA District 3 Vice President

2019-2020 Missouri DECA President and VP of Communications