



MONTANA
DECA
STRATEGIC PLAN
2025-2028

LOOKING BACK TO LOOK FORWARD

Dear Partners:

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that we present the Montana DECA Strategic Plan — a guiding framework designed to shape the future of our organization, empower our members, and strengthen our impact across the state.

Montana DECA has a proud tradition of preparing emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management. Rooted in our commitment to innovation, inclusivity, and excellence, this strategic plan outlines our priorities for the coming years, aligning our goals with the evolving needs of students, educators, and industry.

In coordination with detailed research and market analysis performed by DECA Inc., this plan reflects the voices and insights of many — from our student leaders and advisors to alumni, board members, and partners.

This is more than a roadmap; it is a commitment to continuous improvement and bold leadership. By embracing the strategies outlined here, we are positioning Montana DECA to thrive in the years ahead and to inspire the next generation of business leaders.

We invite you to join us on this journey. Together, we will shape a stronger future — for our members, for our communities, and for Montana DECA.



JOHN STILES
State Director
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INTRODUCTION

Montana DECA Inc. is committed to shaping the next generation of emerging leaders and entrepreneurs by providing students with dynamic opportunities to develop their skills, confidence, and career readiness. To continue delivering on this mission, we have developed a bold and strategic road-map that will guide our efforts over the next three years.

Our strategic plan is built around four key objectives:

- **Elevated Brand Awareness** – Expanding DECA’s reach by sharing its impact and value with broader audiences, ensuring increased engagement from students, educators, business leaders, and the community.
- **Impactful Partnerships** – Strengthening and growing relationships with industry partners, educational institutions, and community stakeholders to enhance opportunities for our members.
- **Excellence in Educational Programs** – Continuously improving our resources, competitions, and experiential learning opportunities to empower teacher-advisors and equip students with the skills needed for future success.
- **Organizational Strength** – Ensuring strong governance, sustainable infrastructure, and operational excellence to support long-term growth and success.

Through these objectives, Montana DECA aims to create a lasting impact, elevating the student experience and reinforcing our role as a leader in career and leadership development. This strategic plan serves as our blueprint for innovation, growth, and continued excellence.

ORGANIZATION STRENGTH

Strong governance and infrastructure exceed the needs of our key stakeholders while enhancing our programs and services.

In 3 Years, Montana DECA Will....

- Have a higher functioning governance structure and advisor participation.
- Have improved engagement with key stakeholders using omni-channel marketing and communications.
- Have elevated capacity to be data-informed and data-driven by technology improvements.

BY.....

- Implementing the proposed DECA Inc. Affiliation Agreement.
- Improving and Creating new technology systems.
- Investing in resources to scale infrastructure to support the new capacity.
- Implement a governance review task force to recommend modifications and additions to Montana DECA Inc.s governing documents and structure.

EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

DECA programs, resources, and platforms empower teacher-advisors to effectively prepare students for a successful professional future.

In 3 Years, Montana DECA Will....

- Be a recognized leader as a provider of educational resources.
- Have programs aligned to current and anticipated needs of career-readiness and educational initiatives.
- Provide comprehensive resources that support all advisors.

BY.....

- Evaluating and designing the structure and process by which DECA continually creates curricula and resources that advisors and members need to succeed.
- Provide dynamic advisor professional learning experiences.

A colorful icon consisting of four stylized human figures in orange, green, blue, and purple, arranged in a circle to form a larger shape.

IMPACTFUL PARTNERSHIPS

Montana DECA thrives on strong community partnerships that drive collaboration at every level of the organization.

In 3 Years, Montana DECA Will....

- Have partnerships that reflect mutually beneficial relationships that can be customized to pair the strengths and interests of a partner with the mission-focused needs of the organization.
- Have a strong portfolio of brands partner with Montana DECA to build a career pipeline for our members.

BY.....

- Evaluating the structure of our corporate partnerships to determine alignment to a thriving future.
- Utilizing the refined structure to construct and execute a new campaign to align existing partners and seek new prospects.

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ELEVATED BRAND AWARENESS

The value and impact of DECA are frequently and enthusiastically shared by all community audiences. Expand awareness among current and prospective stakeholders through new channels of brand promotion and communication.

In 3 Years, Montana DECA Will....

- Share the story of the value and impact of DECA frequently and enthusiastically by all community audiences.
- Increase current and prospective stakeholder awareness through new avenues of brand promotion and communication.

BY.....

- Creating and implementing resources and training to grow the capacity of DECA Champions to advocate for the organization to all stakeholders at all levels.
- Creating longitudinal data efforts to track the positive impact of DECA curricula and resources on students and advisors.

Chapter Advisor Profile

What are the most important reasons you became a DECA chapter advisor?

It was a requirement of my job.	50%
I was a member of DECA as a student.	17%
To support DECA's mission.	50%
To inspire students to learn about business and marketing.	67%
To integrate DECA into my classroom instruction.	67%
To promote leadership development to my students.	50%
To travel to conferences.	33%
Other reason	0%

Years of Service

How many total years have you been involved with DECA in any capacity?	11.0
How many total years have you been a DECA Chapter Advisor?	8.5
How many years do you expect to stay in your role as a DECA Chapter Advisor?	14.3
Total years served and anticipated	25.3

How many total years have you been involved with DECA in any capacity?

0-2 years	17%
3-5 years	17%
6-10 years	17%
11-19 years	33%
20+ years	17%

How many total years have you been a DECA Chapter Advisor?

0-1 years	17%
2-3 years	17%
4-6 years	17%
7-10 years	17%
11-19 years	33%
20+ years	0%

How many years do you expect to stay in your role as a DECA Chapter Advisor?

0-2 years	0%
1-3 years	0%
4-5 years	33%
6-10 years	0%
11-20 years	33%
>20 years	33%

Professional Background

Which best describes your professional background?

I have been an educator my entire career.	67%
I began my career in business and became an educator later in my career.	33%

DECA has helped me continue to stay in my role as a classroom teacher.

Strongly Agree	0%
Somewhat Agree	33%
Neutral	33%
Disagree Somewhat	17%
Strongly Disagree	17%
No opinion	0%
Average (5-pt scale)	2.83

Approximately what percentage of your chapter's members are?

Upper Class	28%
Middle Class	60%
Low Income	12%

Which best describes your geographic location?

Suburban	17%
Urban	33%
Rural	50%

Rating Chapters, Chartered Association and DECA Inc.

Chapter Rating

Please rate your chapter for the following qualities.

My chapter creates a positive culture for our students.	5.00
My chapter helps members develop key business and life skills.	4.67
My chapter is interested in developing a middle level chapter in our community.	4.67
My chapter is successful in developing strong relationships with our local business community.	3.67
My chapter is successful in engaging members in DECA beyond competition.	4.00
My chapter is successful in recruiting members from other CTSOs.	4.33
My chapter is successful in recruiting new members.	4.17
My chapter is successful in recruiting students from lower income backgrounds.	2.80

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
My chapter creates a positive culture for our students.	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
My chapter helps members develop key business and life skills.	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%
My chapter is successful in recruiting new members.	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
My chapter is successful in recruiting students from lower income backgrounds.	33%	17%	33%	17%	0%	0%
My chapter is successful in recruiting members from other CTSOs (career & technical student organizations).	17%	67%	17%	0%	0%	0%
My chapter is successful in engaging members in DECA beyond competition.	33%	67%	0%	0%	0%	0%
My chapter is successful in developing strong relationships with our local business community.	17%	83%	0%	0%	0%	0%
My chapter is interested in developing a middle level chapter in our community.	17%	0%	33%	17%	17%	17%

Recommending DECA

How likely would you be to recommend being a DECA Chapter Advisor to another business, marketing, hospitality, or finance teacher?

Extremely Likely (10)	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Not Likely (0)
50%	17%	17%	0%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Promoter			Passive			Detractor				
67%			17%			17%				

Chartered Association Rating

Please rate your chartered association for the following qualities.

My chartered association provides quality programs and services.	4.67
My chartered association provides my chapter quality resources.	4.67
My chartered association provides quality support when needed.	4.67
My chartered association works hard to resolve challenges when they arise.	4.67
My chartered association is friendly and responsive.	4.67
My chartered association communicates regularly with its chapters.	4.67
My chartered association is effective in their leadership of DECA.	4.67
I understand the role and responsibilities of my chartered association advisor.	4.67

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
My chartered association provides quality programs and services.	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
My chartered association provides my chapter quality resources.	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
My chartered association provides quality support when needed.	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
My chartered association works hard to resolve challenges when they arise.	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
My chartered association is friendly and responsive.	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
My chartered association communicates regularly with its chapters.	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
My chartered association is effective in their leadership of DECA.	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%
I understand the role and responsibilities of my chartered association advisor.	83%	0%	17%	0%	0%	0%

DECA Inc. Rating

Please rate DECA Inc. for the following qualities.

DECA Inc. provides quality programs and services.	4.67
DECA Inc. provides my chapters quality resources.	4.17
DECA Inc. delivers quality support when needed.	3.83
DECA Inc. works hard to resolve challenges when they arise.	3.50
DECA Inc. provides ample training to chapter advisors.	3.33
DECA Inc. programs are superior to that of other CTSOs.	4.20
The DECA Inc. staff is friendly and responsive.	3.67
I understand the role and responsibilities of DECA Inc.	4.33

	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree Somewhat	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion
DECA Inc. provides quality programs and services.	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%	0%
DECA Inc. provides my chapters quality resources.	67%	17%	0%	0%	17%	0%
DECA Inc. delivers quality support when needed.	33%	33%	17%	17%	0%	0%
DECA Inc. works hard to resolve challenges when they arise.	33%	17%	17%	33%	0%	0%
DECA Inc. provides ample training to chapter advisors.	17%	0%	83%	0%	0%	0%
DECA Inc. programs are superior to that of other CTSOs.	50%	17%	0%	17%	0%	17%
The DECA Inc. staff is friendly and responsive.	33%	33%	17%	0%	17%	0%
I understand the role and responsibilities of DECA Inc.	50%	33%	17%	0%	0%	0%

DECA 2024

Strategic Planning Research Report

Prepared by VistaCova June 23, 2024

Chapter Survey Advisor Findings

- Likely to Recommend Being a DECA Chapter Advisor
- Most Important Reasons for Becoming a DECA Chapter Advisor
- History with DECA
- Agreement: DECA Helped me Continue to Stay in Classroom Teacher Role
- Percentage of Time Spent per Week by Function, Professional Background
- Number of Advisors in DECA Chapter
- Other Business Related CTSOs and Other Activities That Compete with DECA for Student Participation
- How DECA is Run
- School Provides Financial Support/Funding for DECA
- Profile of Chapter Members by Class
- Chapter Members by Demographics
- Rating the Qualities of Chapters, Chartered Association, and National DECA

Chartered Association Advisor Findings

- Respondent Profile, Level of Opportunity to Start New Chapters
- Level of Support from State Department of Education
- Role, Chronology and Workload
- Rating Qualities of Chartered Association and National DECA
- Priorities if Allocating Resources for DECA

Summary of Chapter Advisor Survey Comments

- Other Reasons for Becoming a DECA Advisor
- Please complete the following sentences with a few words: DECA is important to me because:
- My experience as a Chapter Advisor in DECA would be more rewarding if:
- If you were to leave your role as Chapter Advisor, what would probably be the reason(s)?
- What are the greatest reoccurring challenges you face as a chapter advisor?
- What are the greatest future challenges that you anticipate facing as a chapter advisor?
- How could DECA Inc. help you overcome these challenges?

Summary of Chartered Association Advisor Comments

- What factors tend to limit the growth opportunity in your state/province
- If you were to leave your role as DECA Chartered Association Advisor, what would be the reason(s)?
- What are the greatest reoccurring challenges you face as a chartered association advisor?
- What are the greatest future challenges that you anticipate facing as a chartered association advisor?
- Please complete the following sentences with a few words. DECA is important to me because:
- My role as a Chartered Association Advisor in DECA would be more valuable if:
- How can DECA continue to add value to the educational experience?
- How can DECA be THE ONE?
- What other priorities do you see? Chartered Associations

Partner Survey Comments

- DECA is important to our company/organization because:
- Our experience in DECA would be more valuable if:
- What are three reoccurring challenges your company/organization faces?
- What are three new challenges your company/organization anticipates facing in the future?
- How can DECA Inc. help your company/organization overcome these challenges?

Methodology

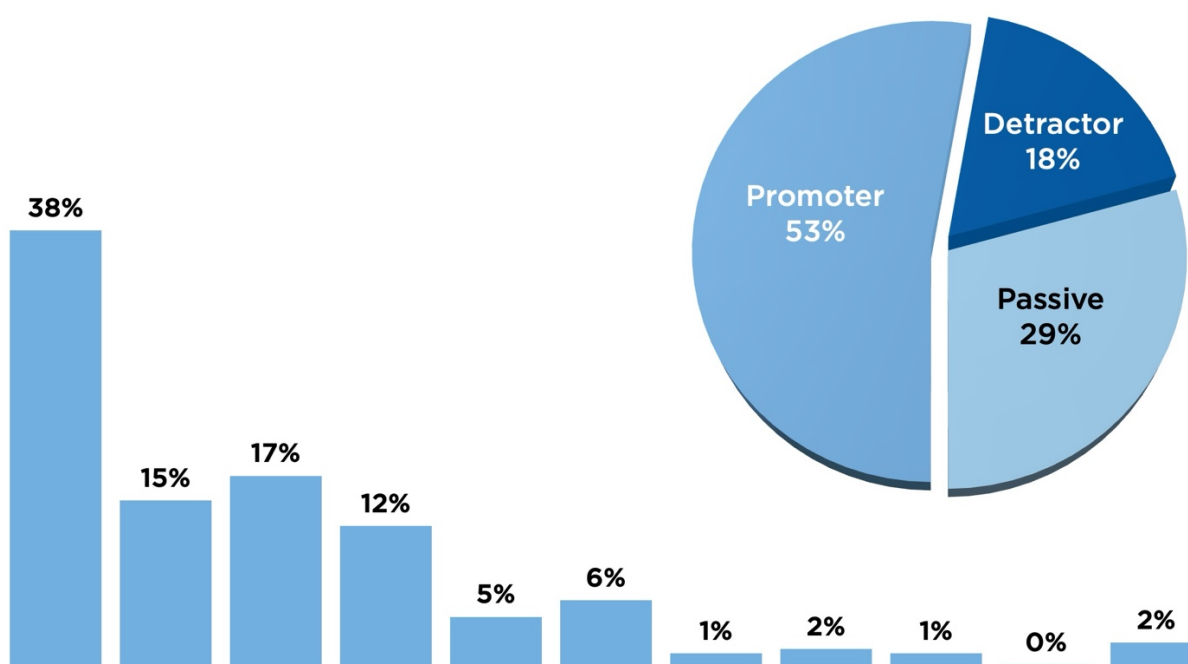
VistaCova surveyed 6,264 Chapter Advisors, 135 Chartered Association Advisors, and 83 NAB Partners.

- Fieldwork was conducted during the period of March 13 through April 7, consisting of an emailed invitation with a personalized survey link, followed by two reminders sent among non-respondents and a special note to anyone with an incomplete survey.
- A total of 2,572 Chapter Advisors (45%), 78 Association Advisors (61%), and 26 Partners (34%) participated, with relatively high response rates after adjusting for undeliverable emails and those who chose to opt out.
- Among Chapter Advisors, Primary contacts (52%) were much more responsive than Secondary contacts (30%). Their participation represented 58.5% of all DECA Chapters.

Chapter Advisor Survey Findings

Likely to Recommend Being a DECA Chapter Advisor

The Net Promoter Score is commonly used by corporations and associations to measure loyalty and strength of relationship with members, customers, or a constituency by converting responses to what is often a “one question survey” to audience categories and a ratio defined by how individuals respond.

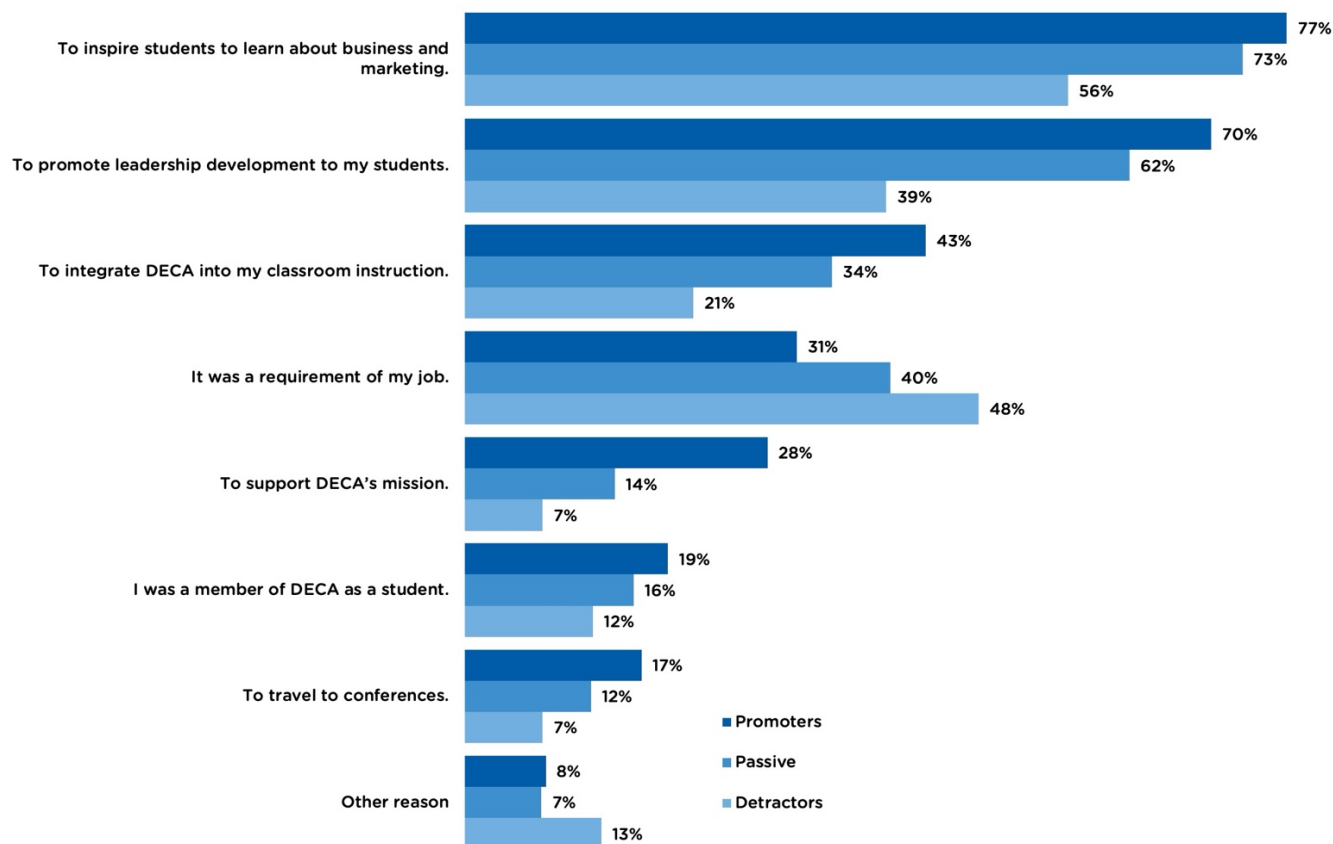


- Chapter Advisors indicated how likely would you be to recommend being a DECA Chapter Advisor to another business, marketing, hospitality, or finance teacher. Respondents were categorized as Promoters (9-10), Passive (7-8), or Detractors (6 or lower rating) on an 11-point scale.
- NPS is calculated by subtracting the proportion of Detractors from Promoters and multiplied by 100, yielding an NPS of 35. Among Chapter Advisors, 18% are Detractors, 53% Promoters, and 29% are Passive. This is at the high end of the average we see in associations, as NPS typically ranges between 25 and 35.
- NPS increases sharply with years in DECA, with new advisors (17) rating it lowest, those with 3-5 years (22), rising to 54 among those with 20+ years in DECA. NPS is lower in suburban chapters (30) and those without school funding (29).

Most Important Reasons for Becoming a DECA Chapter Advisor

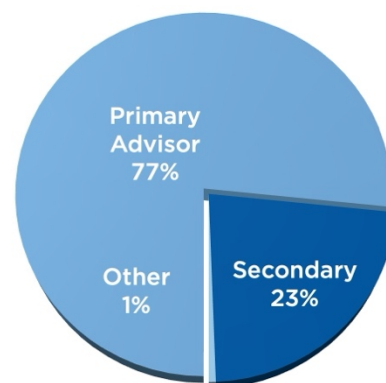
The most common reasons that Chapter Advisors became an advisor are to inspire students to learn about business and marketing (70%) and to promote leadership development to my students (62%).

- It is far less common to become a DECA Chapter Advisor because it was a requirement of my their (37%) or to integrate DECA into their classroom instruction (36%)
- The least likely reasons include supporting DECA's mission (20%), being a member of DECA as a student (16%), or to travel to conferences (13%).



Other reasons were mentioned by 8%.

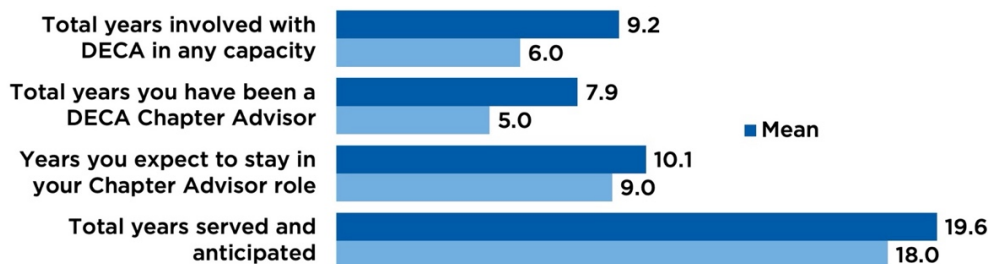
- These most commonly included being asked by students starting a chapter, feeling compelled to help the students, or because of DECA's strengths (commonly being tied to co-op or being an integral part of CTE). Some were advisors in other chapters (since we were not that clear that we wanted to learn why they first became a CA).
- Other interesting responses include supporting or permanently/temporarily replacing the primary advisor, supplementing salary, acting at the prompt of administration, to be around great kids, simply learning more and finding it appealing, or doing it because no one else wants to do it.
- The "real world" aspect of DECA, helping them grow personally and professionally through competition, confers a great branding differentiation. A few mention state requirements for vocational education.



History with DECA

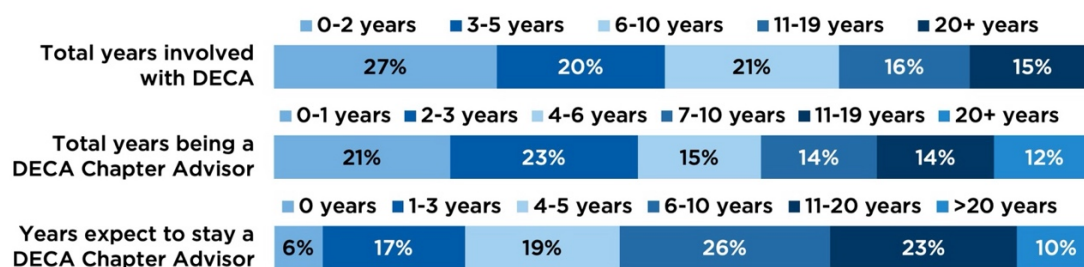
The average respondent reports a mean of 9.2 years in DECA (in any capacity), including 7.9 years as a Chapter Advisor. The median/midpoint (aka the “typical” response is 6 and 5 years, respectively.

- When asked to project their future involvement, Chapter Advisors report a mean of 10.1 years and a median of 9 years in the CA role, meaning they are about halfway through their DECA career.
- Combining their specific responses for past and anticipated future involvement shows that the average Chapter Advisor expects to spend a mean of 19.6 and a median of 18 years in DECA. (These mean figures do not add precisely because some people answer one or the other question and were not counted for the total figure.)



Of course, the averages only tell part of the story. We also divided responses into segments based on their number of years to get a better sense of how the population of Chapters Advisors is distributed. Because of the constant rotation of personnel, there are substantial numbers of people who are relatively new to DECA, with 0-2 years involved (27%) or 0-1 years as a Chapter Advisor (21%).

- At the other extreme of the distribution, few have 20 or more years with DECA (15%) or as a Chapter Advisor (12%). In between, cohorts shrink in size reflecting normal attrition—20% with 3-5 years, 21% with 6-10 years, and 16% with 11-19 years, time periods of 3, 5, and 9 years, respectively.
- The same pattern holds for the Chapter Advisor role, as 23% report 2-3 years, but only 14%-15% each report 4-6, 7-10, or 11-19 years.



Agreement: DECA Helped me Continue to Stay in Classroom Teacher Role

When asked to indicate their agreement with the statement that DECA has helped them continue to stay in their role as a classroom teacher, Chapter Advisors were roughly split between about one-fourth each strongly agreeing, somewhat agreeing, or feeling neutral. Another 6%-8% each disagreed somewhat or strongly, or had no opinion. This translated into an average 3.66 score on a 5-point scale.



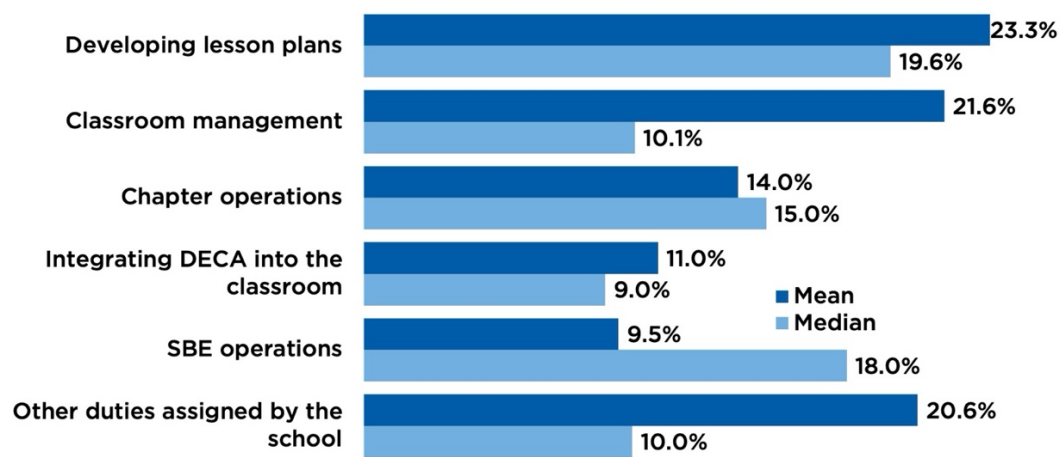
Using the average score to identify characteristics associated with higher or lower impact of DECA on their classroom teacher role, we find the following:

- Agreement is highest among the most experienced Chapter Advisors, as those with 20 or more years (4.23) or 11-19 years (3.97) report considerably higher agreement than those with 0-1 years (3.25), 2-3 years (3.51), 4-6 years (3.61) or 7-10 years (3.68). This probably reflects a combination of DECA having progressively greater impact on the Chapter Advisor over time and some Chapter Advisors stepping down over time and thus not being included in the survey universe.
- The same increase in agreement occurs among those who are relatively new to DECA, 3.33 among those with 0-2 years, increasing steadily to 4.19 among those with 20 or more years in DECA.
- Agreement is highest among those who plan to remain the longest too, with a steady progression from only 3.24 who plan to quit now (i.e., stay 0 more years) to 4.09 among those who plan to remain a Chapter Advisor for 20 more years.
- Put another way, the newest Chapter Advisors and those who expect to stop doing this immediately both indicate 11% lower agreement than the average respondent, while those who fall in the cohort with the most years as an Advisor and plan to remain one the longest in the future report an agreement with this statement 15% and 12% higher than the average Chapter Advisor.
- One characteristic with a clear impact for which we can only describe and not explain is far higher agreement on the impact of DECA on their teaching among those who run DECA co-curricular (3.95) rather than after school (3.36).
- Agreement is also much higher among those who became an advisor to support DECA's mission (4.17), travel to conferences (4.14), was a member of DECA as a student (4.10), and to integrate DECA into their classroom instruction (4.06). Agreement is lowest among those who became an advisor as a job requirement (3.52), and is lower among those who did it inspire students to learn about business and marketing (3.78) or promote leadership development to their students (3.84).
- There are other qualities that show minimal variances in the impact of DECA's influence on their career as a classroom teacher. These include:
 - Career-long educators (3.71) have slightly higher agreement than those who started their career in business before becoming an educator (3.64).
 - By mix of students, Advisors who have mostly middle to lower class (3.77), mostly lower-class (3.74) or mostly middle-class students (3.73) have higher agreement than Advisors who have a mix of upper and middle-class students (3.58) or mostly upper-class students (3.45).
 - Rural Advisors (3.79) have slightly higher agreement than urban (3.68) or suburban (3.61).
 - Those who have the school providing any financial support/funding for DECA dues/travel (3.72) have slightly higher agreement than those whose schools do not provide funding (3.60).

Percentage of Time Spent per Week by Function

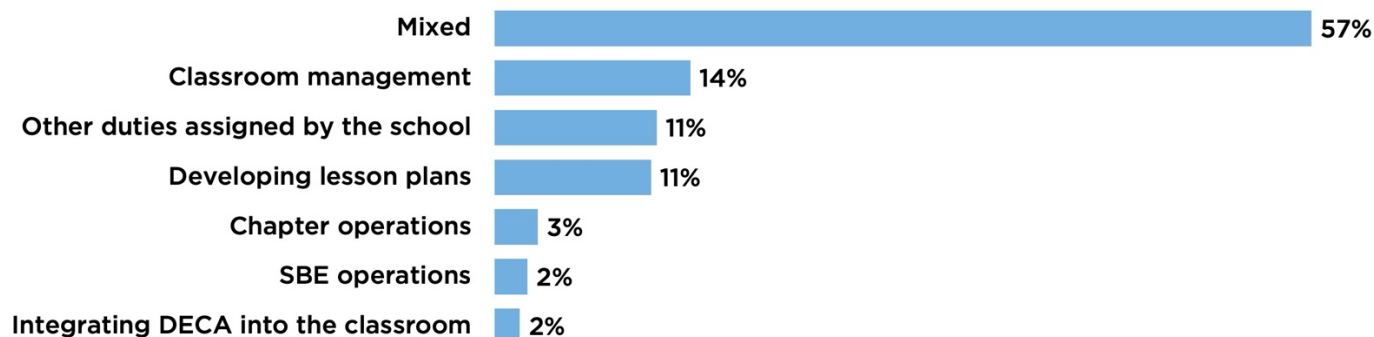
The average mix of responsibilities reported by Chapter Advisors consists primarily of developing lesson plans (23.3% of total time), classroom management (21.6%), and other duties assigned by the school (20.6%).

- The remaining one-third of their time includes chapter operations such as meetings, fundraising, and organizing travel (14.0%), integrating DECA into the classroom (11.0%), and SBE operations (9.5%).
- Median/midpoints are commonly regarded as the “typical” response and these vary considerably from the means with much more time spent on SBE operations (18.0%), and less time spent particularly on classroom management (10.1%) and other duties assigned (10.0%) and slightly less time developing lesson plans (19.6%) and integrating DECA into the classroom (9.0%). Please note that these medians add to only 82% given that they need not add to 100%, unlike means.



Given these average figures and the nature of teaching, a minority (43%) of Chapter Advisors report that any single activity comprises a majority of their time per week.

- The highest proportion indicate that classroom management (14%), developing lesson plans (11%), and other duties assigned by the school (11%) take most of their time, while only 2%-3% each say that chapter operations, SBE operations, or integrated DECA into the classroom comprise a majority of their work week.



Professional Background

Overall, two-thirds of Chapter Advisors began their career in business and became an educator later in their career.

- Given that a career shift means having less time on average to become involved in DECA, it makes sense that those who were in business first then entered education later have fewer mean years in DECA in any capacity (8.4 years) or as a Chapter Advisor (6.0 years) compared to career-long educators (10.9 and 7.0 years, respectively).
- Those who were in business first also expect to stay in their Chapter Advisor role for fewer years, a mean of 7.3 years compared to 9.2 years among career-long educators.
- Comparing their most important reasons for becoming a DECA Chapter Advisor shows that few reasons have more than +/- 1 to 3 percentage points difference except that those who started in business are more likely to report that they did it as a job requirement (39% or +6 percentage points higher than career-long educators), and they are less likely to report being a member of DECA as a student (13%, -10 points) and to travel to conferences (12% or -5 points fewer than career long educators).

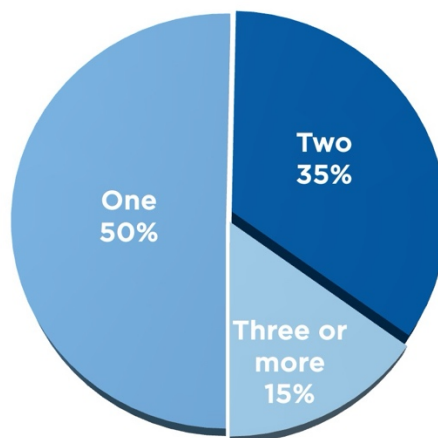


Number of Advisors in DECA Chapter



Survey participants indicated a mean of 1.7 total advisors, and a median/midpoint of 1.0.

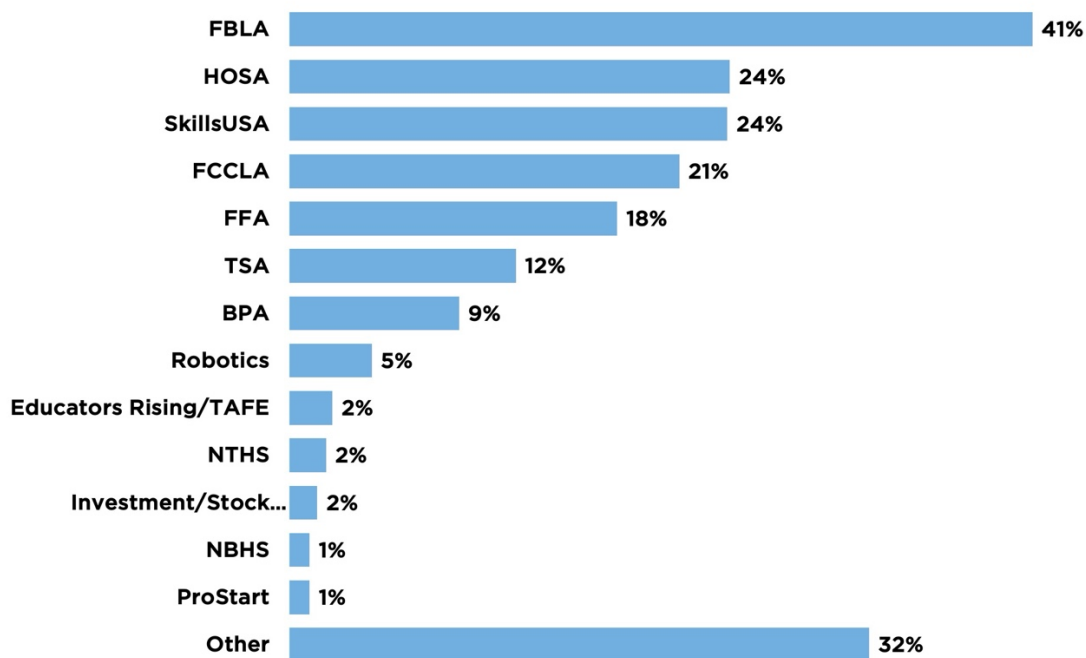
- The distribution of responses shows that half of respondents are the only advisor, while 35% work with one peer, and 15% work with two or more.
- Having more than one advisor is (by definition) correlated with respondents who were secondary rather than primary Chapter Advisors, but otherwise there are no strong relationships with number of advisor and most other responses.
- Solo acts are a little more likely to be new to DECA and new Chapter Advisors, and are a little more likely to report DECA as a job requirement as one of the reasons why they became a Chapter Advisor.



Other Business Related CTSOs in School

Almost two-thirds of Chapter Advisors reported at least one business-related career & technical student organizations in your school.

- Among those who do report them, Future Business Leaders of America (41%) is by far the most common, while the former Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA), SkillsUSA, and Family, Career and Community Leaders of America are each present in more than 20% of their schools.
- Future Farmers of America (18%), Technology Student Association (12%), and Business Professionals of America (9%) round out the organizations that approach at least 10% penetration in schools that also have DECA.
- Because these findings represent recoding from an open-ended question, we also identified between 1% to 5% of schools each that had Robotics Clubs, Educators Rising or TAFE (as the Texas affiliate was particularly common), National Technical and Business Honor Societies, Investment or Stock Market Clubs, and ProStar.
- Interestingly, 32% of total responses were for other organizations that each accounted for less than 1% of the schools that had at least one CTSO.



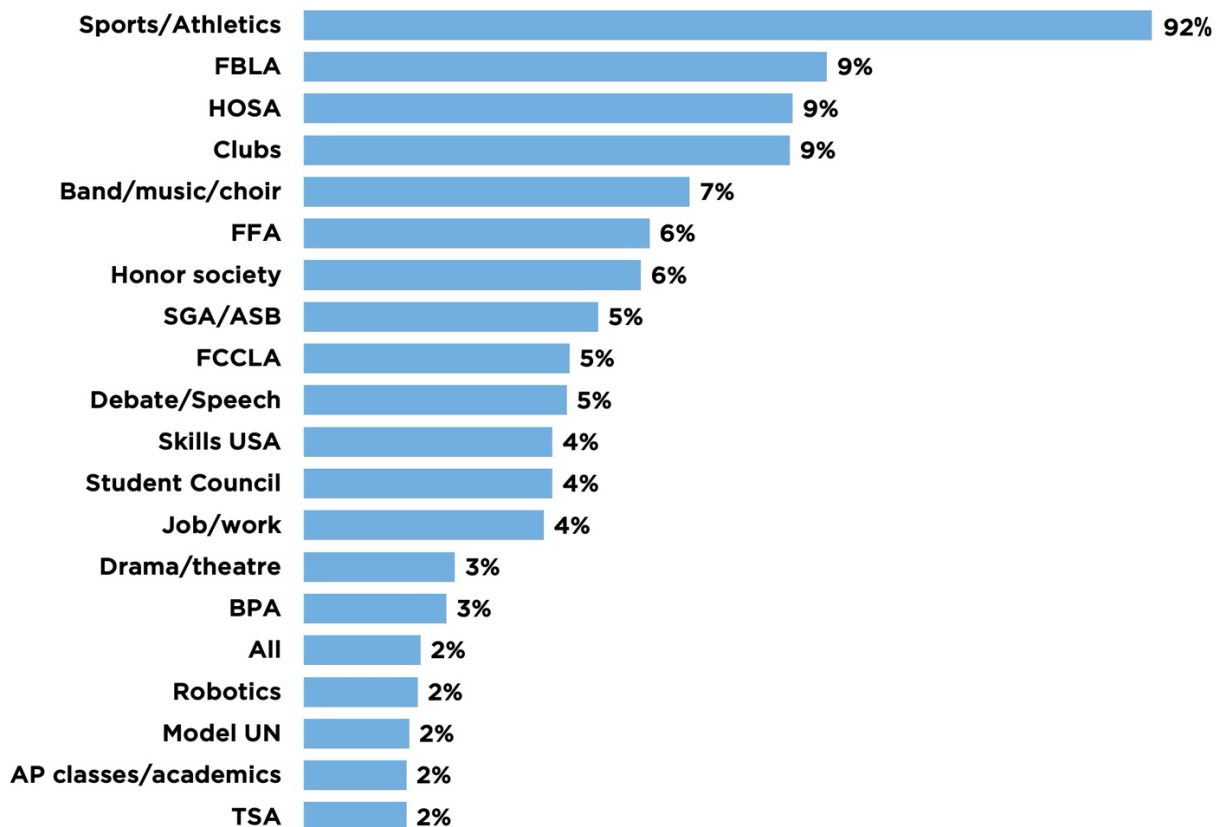
Converting these responses to a simple numeric value shows that Chapter Advisors work in schools that have an average of 2.0 other business related CTSOs.

- This average varies only slightly; it is 2.4 among those who have 20+ years in DECA and as a Chapter Advisor, and 2.2 among those who are in predominantly rural areas.
- There are also variations in the proportion who report specific CTSOs. For example, HOSA is more common in suburban areas, SkillsUSA is more common in urban and rural, and FFA is predominantly in rural settings, with 44% of rural respondents reporting them at their schools.

Other Activities That Compete with DECA for Student Participation

In another open-ended question, Chapter Advisors indicated what other activities compete with DECA for student participation.

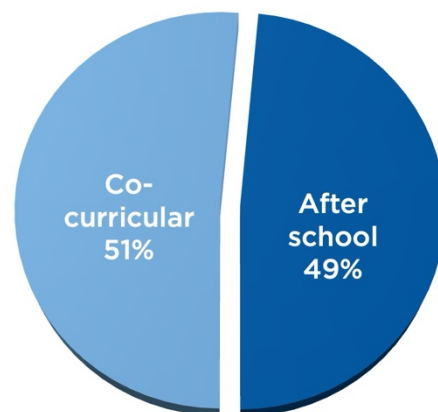
- Naturally, almost all (92%) who answered the question mentioned sports/athletics but we suspect the other 8% thought the question was more narrowly defined than it was meant to be.
- A few activities such as clubs (9%), band, music, or choir (7%), honor society (6%), student government or debate/speech (5% each), side jobs/work (4%), and drama/theatre (3%) were mentioned.
- Others mentioned various CTSO activities with FBLA, HOSA, and FFA mentioned most often, by 6% to 9% each. Other CTSOs were mentioned by fewer Chapter Advisors.



How DECA is Implemented

Chapter Advisors are roughly split between 51% who report that DECA is run co-curricular and 49% who report it is run after school. (Several respondents noted late during the fieldwork that this should have been a multiple-choice rather than a single option question.)

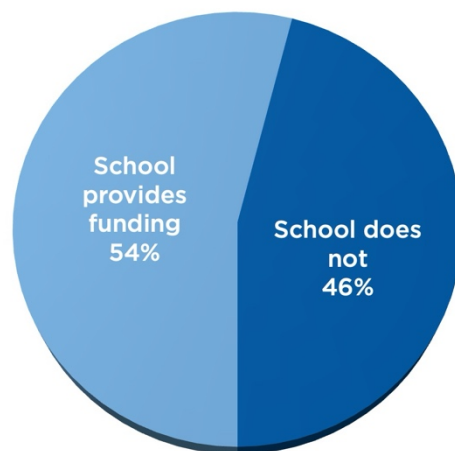
- Subject to that caveat, co-curricular activities are far more common among rural programs (63%), those that serve a student population that is predominantly middle-to lower or mostly lower class (58%), those that have three or more CTSOs (61%) competing for attention, and particularly among Chapter Advisors who have 20+ years in DECA (73%) or as an Advisor (75%).
- Although it might feel like a tenuous link between this and reasons for becoming an Advisor, those who joined to integrate DECA into their classroom instruction (67%), to travel to conferences (63%), because it was a job requirement or they belonged to DECA as a student (60% each) were most likely to run DECA as co-curricular programs.
- Those who became Advisors at least in part to promote leadership development to students (47%) and inspire students to learn about business and marketing (49%) had the highest proportion who run DECA after school.
- Perhaps most interesting, Detractors (58%) are far more likely to do DECA after school while Promoters (57%) are more likely to run DECA as a co-curricular program.



School Provides Financial Support/Funding for DECA

A slight majority of Chapter Advisors report that their school provides some financial support/funding for DECA dues and travel.

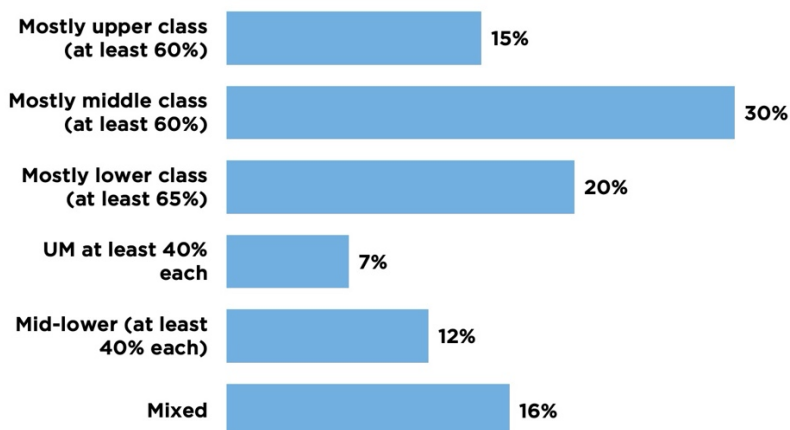
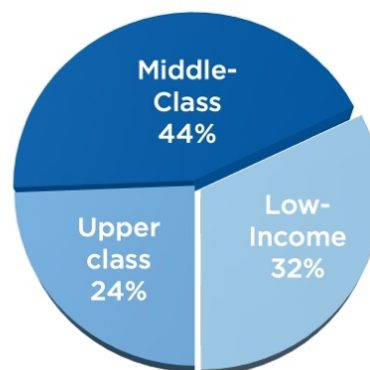
- More secondary Advisors (60%) indicate that their school funds them, implying that larger chapters with more staff support have access to funding.
- Promoters (57%), Advisors with 7-10 years as an Advisor (59%), who expect to stay more than 20 additional years (63%), have three or more competitive CTSOs (60%), hold co-curricular activities (57%), are rural (58%) or work predominantly with middle-to lower class or a mix of classes (58%) are all more likely to report their school provides funding.
- Detractors (52%), and those who serve urban (50%) and mostly upper class (56%) or upper- and middle-class students (52%) are most likely to indicate that they do not receive funding.



Profile of Chapter Members by Class

When asked to estimate the proportion of their chapter's members by social class, Chapter Advisors estimated that an average of 44% are middle class, 32% are low-income, and 24% are upper class.

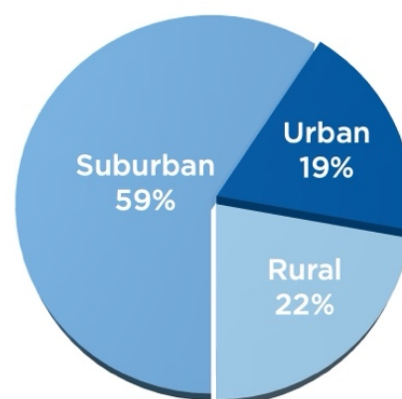
- Combining their responses into a more granular segmentation shows that 30% serve a chapter that is mostly middle-class (with at least 60% in this category), while 20% have a chapter that is mostly middle class, and 15% have a chapter that is mostly upper class.
- The remainder are split between middle and lower class (12%) or split between upper and middle class (7%) with at least 40% of their students in each category.



Chapter Members by Demographics

The geographic location of chapters is most commonly suburban, reported by 59%, with similar segments reporting that they are in rural (22%) or urban districts (19%).

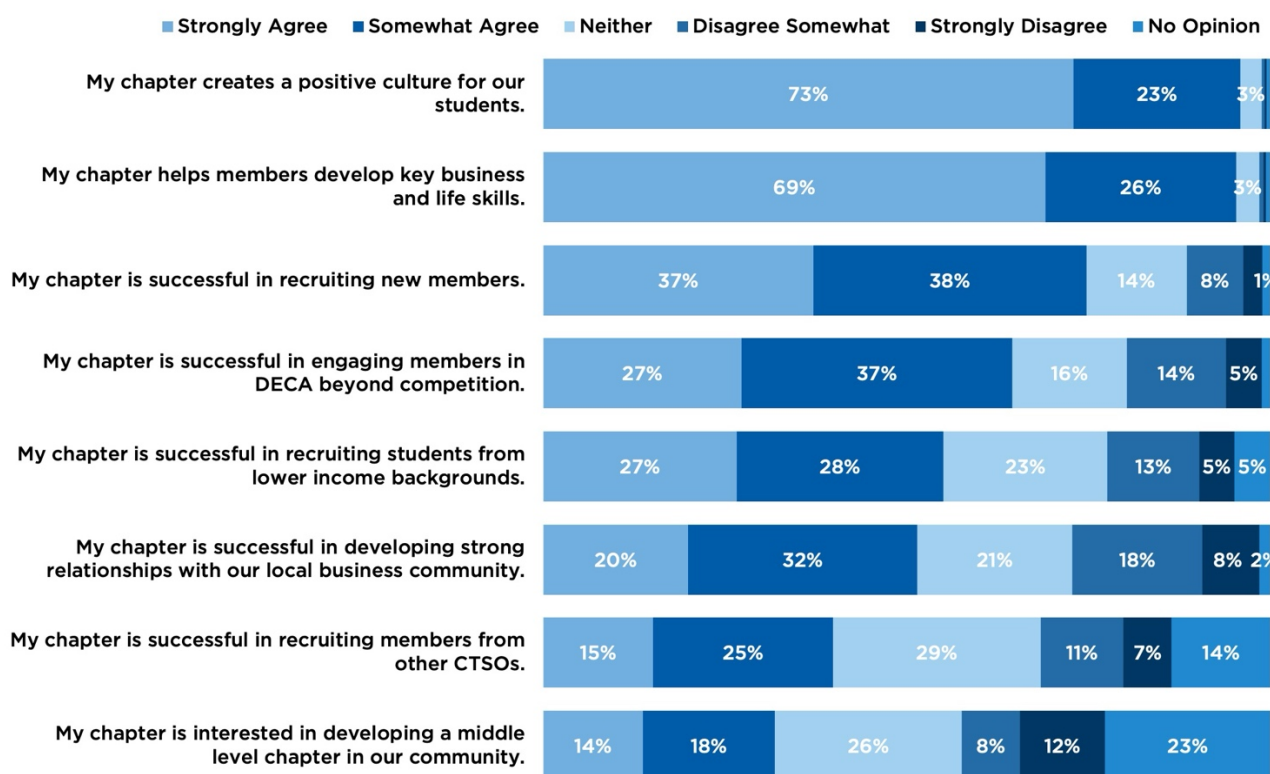
- Naturally, the class mix of chapters varies with location, as 80% of those who have a mix of upper and middle class and 75% of those who have most upper class are in suburban districts.
- Those who have a mix of middle and lower class have the highest proportion (34%) in rural districts.
- Those who report a chapter comprised mostly of lower class have their highest proportion in urban districts.



Rating the Qualities of Chapters

When asked to rate their chapter for its qualities, Chapter Advisors overwhelmingly rate it highest for creating a positive culture for their students (4.69) and helping members develop key business and life skills (4.64). These qualities have near-perfect scores driven by 73% and 69% strongly agreeing that their chapter embodies these characteristics, with almost all remaining respondents somewhat agreeing.

- Other qualities were rated at or below 4.0, the numeric equivalent of “somewhat agree.” These qualities include being successful in recruiting new members (4.00), engaging members in DECA beyond competition. (3.69), and recruiting students from lower income backgrounds (3.63).
- The lowest-rated qualities include being successful developing strong relationships with their local business community (3.38) and recruiting members from other CTSOs (3.35); and they are relatively disinterested in developing a middle level chapter in their community (3.18).



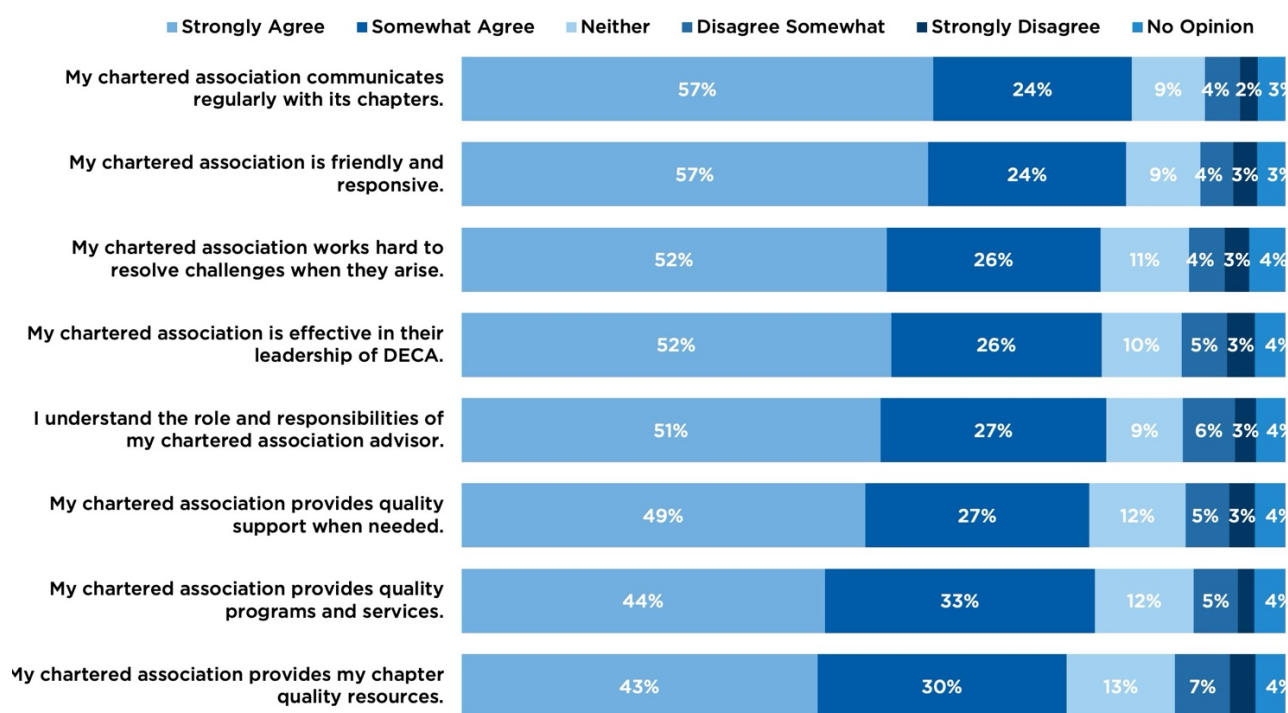
Aggregate scores for chapter self-ratings (averaging all scores for an index of chapter quality) show:

- By Net Promoter category, Detractors are not only down on DECA, they also rate their own chapter (3.39) much lower than Passive (3.68) or Promoters do (4.03).
- Those with 20+ years in DECA (3.95) rate their chapter far higher than those with 0-2 years (3.68). Years as an Advisor show the same pattern.
- Those with three or more CTSOs in their school (3.99) rate their chapter higher than those who have none or one (3.73). Those with co-curricular programs (3.90) rate their chapter higher than those who run them after school (3.74).
- Those with mostly lower-class students (3.89) rate their chapter higher than those with mostly upper-class or a mix of upper- and middle -lass students (3.68). Urban chapters (3.89) also rate their chapter higher than suburban (3.79).
- Those who became a Chapter Advisor to support the mission (4.04) rate their chapter highest.

Rating Qualities of Chartered Association

Chapter Advisors rate their chartered association more consistently, with a narrow spread in average scores between 4.08 and 4.35.

- The highest rated quality is communicating regularly with its chapters (4.35) and being friendly and responsive (4.32).
- Slightly lower qualities are working hard to resolve challenges when they arise (4.24), being effective in their leadership of DECA and understanding the role and responsibilities of their chartered association advisor (4.22 each), providing quality support when needed (4.18) and quality programs and services. (4.16),
- The lowest rated quality is providing their chapter with quality resources (4.08), but the average score is only 7% lower than the highest, reflecting a decrease in those who strongly agree of -14 percentage points and a much smaller shift in the number who neither agree or disagree, or disagree with this statement.



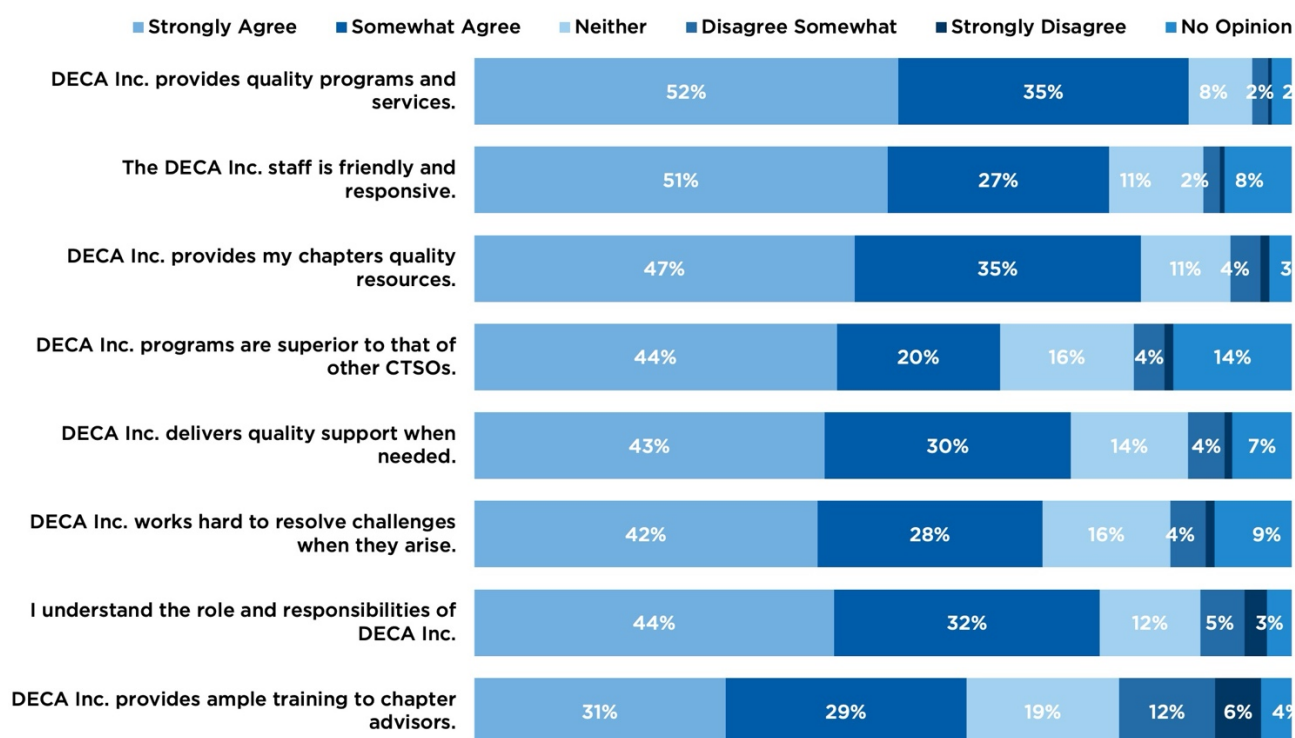
Detractors give their Chartered Association a lower aggregate score (3.65) than Passive (4.08) or Promoters (4.47) do. Those who became an Advisor to support the mission (4.39) also rate is higher.

- Those with 20+ years in DECA (4.31) rate their CA higher than those with 0-2 years (4.10).
- Those with three or more CTSOs in their school (4.32) rate their CA higher than those who have none or one (4.14). Those with co-curricular programs (4.27) rate their CA slightly higher, too.

Rating Qualities of DECA Inc.

Ratings of DECA Inc. show a similar pattern to that of the Chartered Association but with one quality that lags much lower.

- Overall DECA is rated highest for providing quality programs and services (4.40) and for friendly and responsive staff (4.36).
- DECA is also rated highly for providing chapters with quality resources. (4.26), for having programs that are superior to that of other CTSOs (4.20), delivering quality support when needed. (4.18), working hard to resolve challenges when they arise. (4.16). Advisors also agree that they understand the role and responsibilities of DECA (4.13). These qualities each have a consistent 42%-47% who strongly agree, but there is a substantial variance in the percent who agree somewhat.
- The only weak point for DECA lies in providing ample training to chapter advisors (3.71), where roughly equal numbers agree strongly or somewhat, and almost 20% each disagree, or neither agree or disagree.



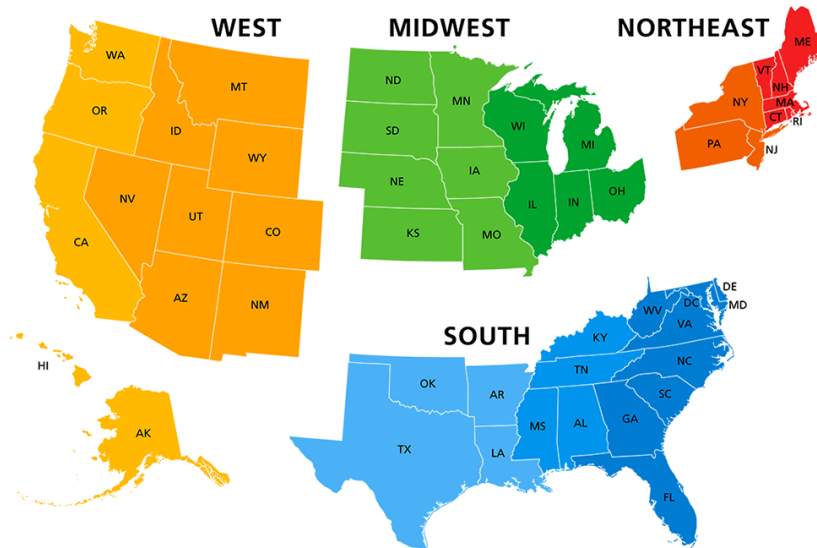
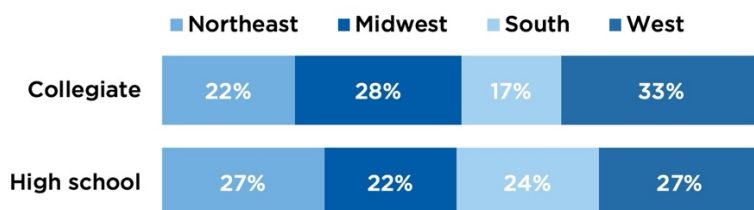
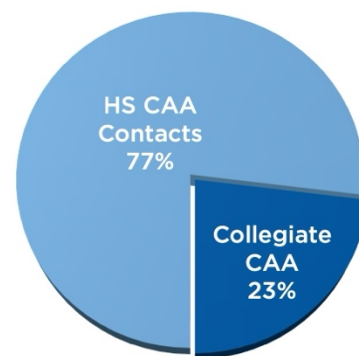
- Detractors give DECA a much lower aggregate score (3.10) than Passive (3.56) or Promoters (3.98) do. The difference between Promoters and Detractors is more pronounced here than for the Chartered Association and their own chapter, almost a 30% spread compared to 19% for the latter.
- Those who became an Advisor to support the DECA mission (3.90) give DECA an aggregate rating much higher than those who became an Advisor because it was a job requirement (3.65).
- Those who became an Advisor 20+ years ago (3.88) give DECA a higher rating than those who have been one for 0-1 years (3.59). There variances are relatively small, at 7%-8% between the segments.
- Those who do co-curricular (+5%), have school funding (+3%), and work in rural or urban districts (+2%) rate DECA slightly higher than those with after school programs, don't have school funding, or work in suburban districts.

Chartered Association Advisor Findings

Respondent Profile

Among the 78 Chartered Association Advisors (CAA) who participated in the survey, 77% were high school CAAs and 23% were collegiate.

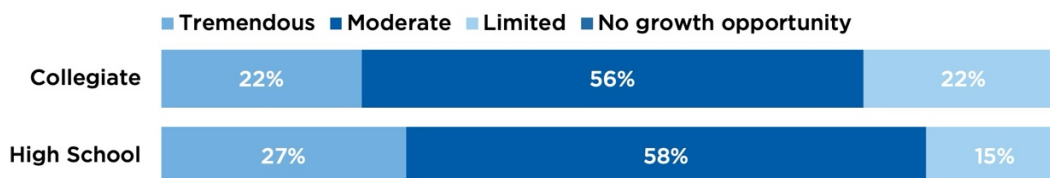
- A slightly higher proportion are in the West and Northeast, with slightly fewer in the Midwest and South.
- The 18 collegiate programs are more likely to be in the West, while the 60 high school programs are more likely to be in the Northeast or West.



Level of Opportunity to Start New Chapters

The consensus is that there is a moderate level of opportunity to start new chapters in their state/province.

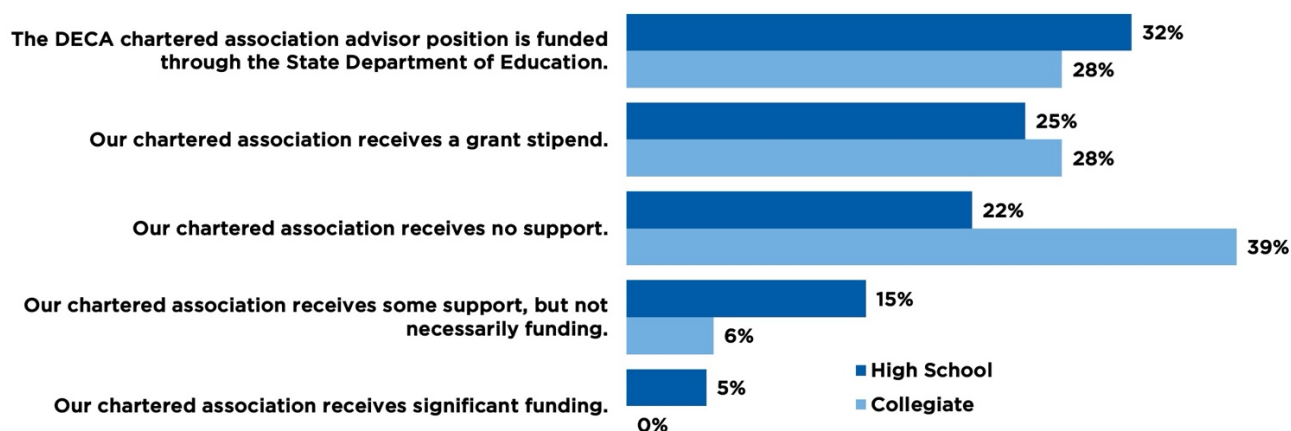
- While 27% of High School CAAs feel there is tremendous opportunity for new chapters, 22% of Collegiate CAAs feel this way. A slight majority of each feel there is moderate opportunity while 22% of Collegiate and 15% of High School CAAs feel there is limited opportunity.



Level of Support from State Department of Education

High school CAAs report that their position is funded through their state's Department of Education (32%), their chartered association receives a grant stipend (25%), some support but not necessarily funding (15%), and occasionally significant funding (5%), while 22% indicate receiving no support.

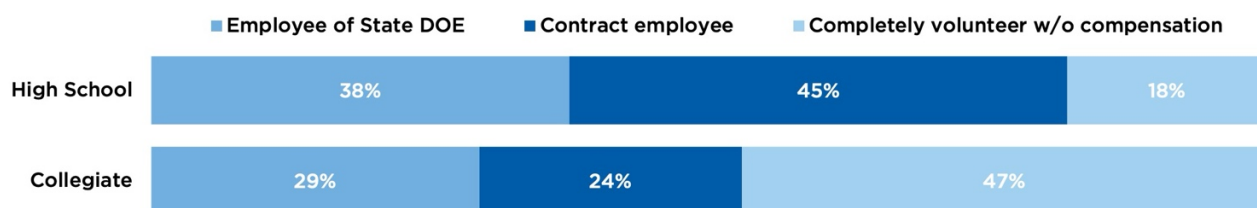
Collegiate CAAs are more likely to report no support (39%), while 28% each have the CAA position funded by the state DOE or receive a grant stipend, and only 6% report some support but not necessarily funding.



Role

High school CAAs are most often a contract employee (45%) or an employee of the state Department of Education (38%), while 18% are uncompensated volunteers.

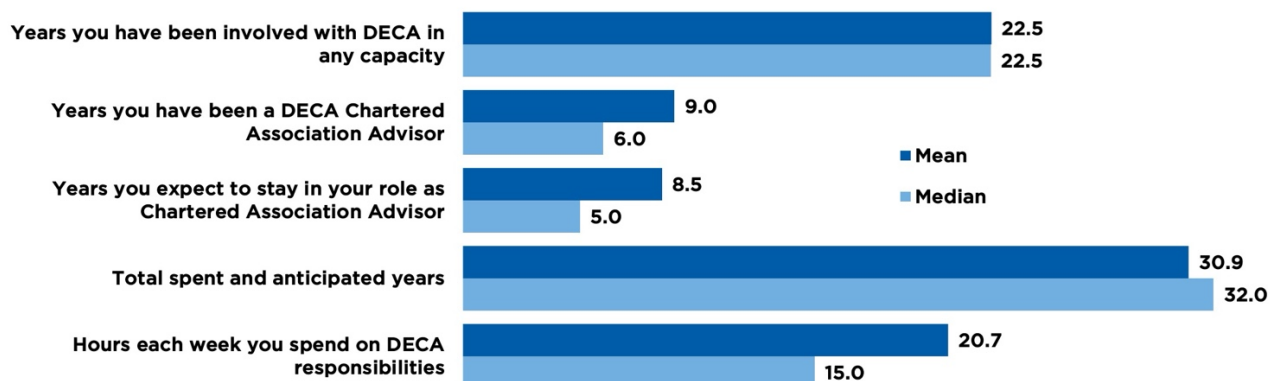
Collegiate CAAs are most often uncompensated volunteers (47%) with some employees of state DOEs (29%) or contract employees (24%).



Chronology and Workload

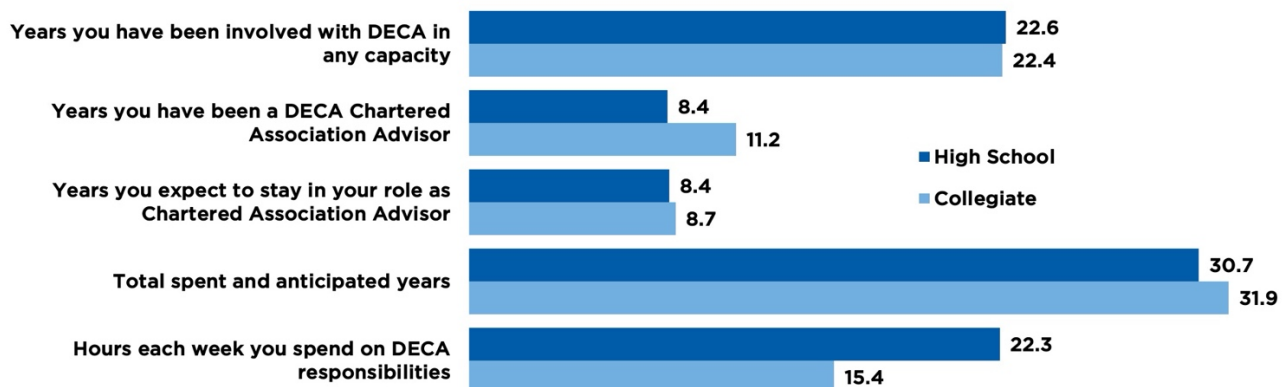
CAAs report an average of 22.5 years involved in DECA in any capacity.

- They have considerably fewer years as a DECA Chartered Association Advisor, a mean of 9.0 and median/midpoint of 6.0 years.
- They have similar expectations regarding how long they expect to remain in the CAA role, with a mean of 8.5 and median of 5.0 years.
- Combining their responses, this means that survey participants expect to have a cumulative DECA career that will last a median of 32.0 years.



Segmented by type of CAA, there is no real difference in terms of being involved in DECA or in terms of how much longer they expect to stay in their role.

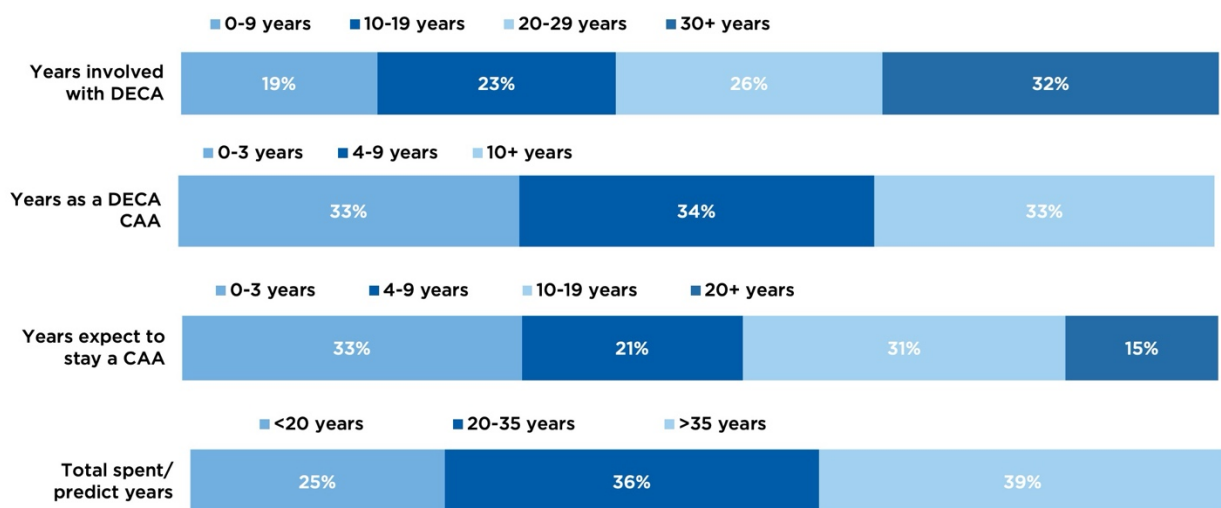
- Collegiate CAAs have been in this role about three years longer, at 11.2 total years, compared to 8.4 total years among high school CAAs.
- They have considerably fewer years as a DECA Chartered Association Advisor, a mean of 9.0 and median/midpoint of 6.0 years.
- The collegiate CAAs report a slightly longer anticipated career with DECA, about 1.2 years longer.



The estimated weekly time spent on DECA responsibilities is a mean of 20.7 hours and a median of 15 hours overall. High school CAAs report a higher mean of 22.3 hours per week compared to collegiate CAAs who spend a mean of 15.4 hours.

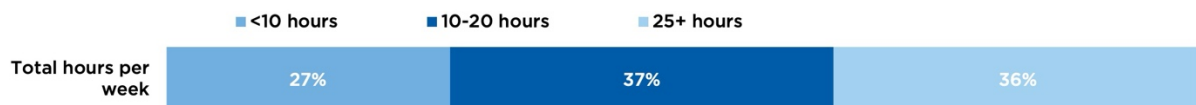
Often, central tendencies tell only part of the story, and segmentation tells the other part.

- The proportion of CAAs who have fewer than 10 years with DECA in any capacity are about 20% while slightly more have 10-19 or 20-29 years with DECA. The largest cluster, about one-third, have 30 or more years with DECA.
- While one-third are relatively new as a CAA, with three or fewer years in the role, another one-third each have 4-9 years or ten or more years.
- One-third expect to stop being a CAA within three years and another one-fifth expect to leave in 4-9 years, while a solid core of almost half plan to remain in the role for 10 or more years.
- These findings suggest that no “brain drain” is imminent, although losing an expected 11% or so of their CAAs per year should be compared to historical retention to determine if churn is increasing, decreasing, or relatively stable.



The typical workweek spent on DECA responsibilities is fewer than 10 hours for 27% of CAAs.

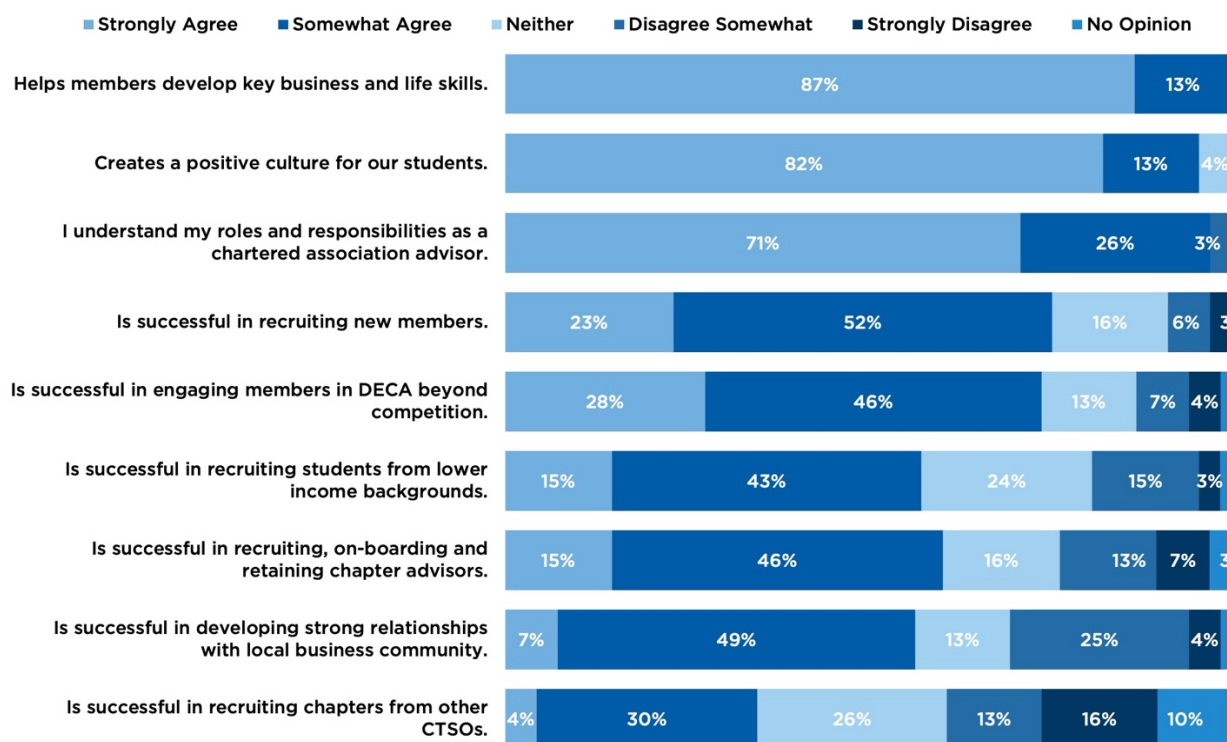
- The remainder are almost evenly split between spending 10-20 hours (37%) or 25 or more hours (36%). (No one reported 21-24 hours.)



Rating Qualities of Chartered Association

When asked to rate their Chartered Association using the same 5-point scale that Chapter Advisors used to evaluate their chapters, CAAs rated them very highly for helping members develop key business and life skills (4.87) and creating a positive culture for their students (4.78).

- They also indicate a high level of agreement that they understand their roles and responsibilities as a chartered association advisor (4.65). Each of these three statements had at least 70% strongly agreeing and most of the remainder agreeing somewhat.
- There is a very sharp drop-off in how CAAs rate their association's other qualities. Being successful in recruiting new members (3.87), engaging members in DECA beyond competition (3.87), recruiting students from lower income backgrounds (3.52), recruiting/on-boarding/retaining chapter advisors (3.48), and developing strong relationships with their local business community (3.31) are all rated sharply lower.
- For these qualities, fewer than 30% of CAAs strongly agree with any of them, while between 43%-52% somewhat agree. Substantial proportions between 13% and 24% neither agree or disagree. And as many as 25% and 7% disagree somewhat or strongly disagree.
- The lowest rating by far is being successful in recruiting chapters from other CTSOs (2.94). This reflects very few strongly agreeing, and similar proportions of about 30% somewhat agreeing, neither agreeing or disagreeing, or disagreeing with the statement.



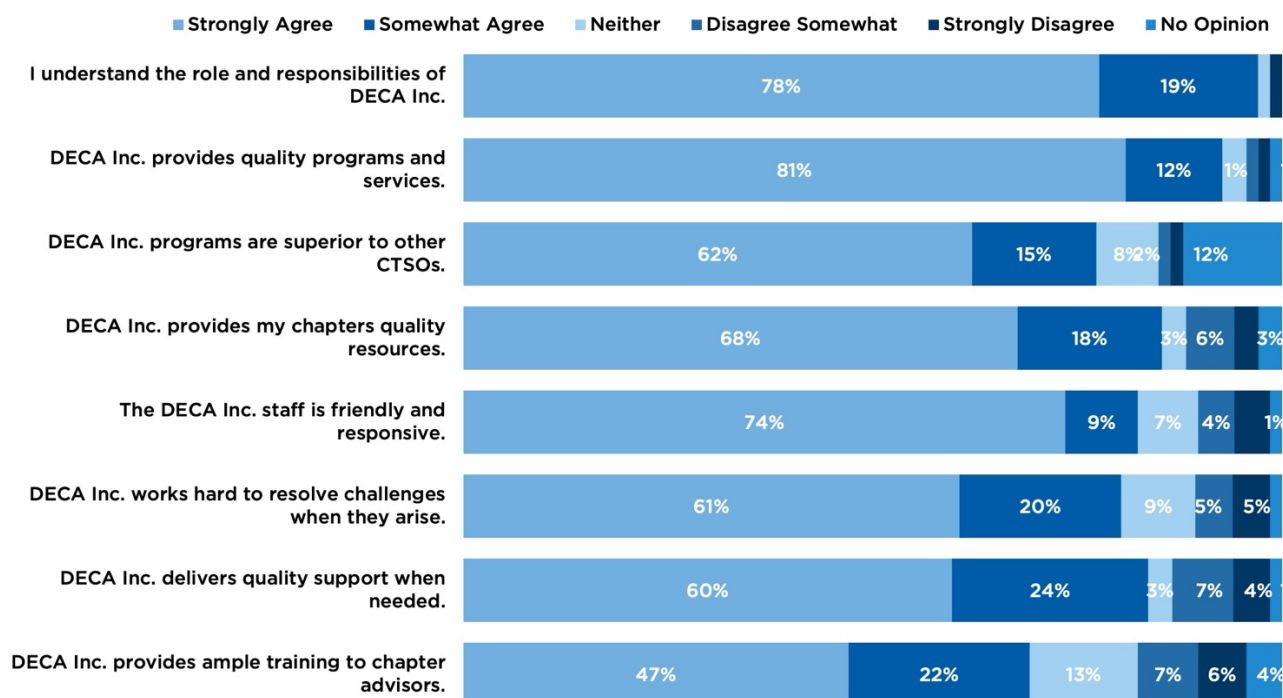
Using the aggregate average score, the same technique as in the Chapter Advisor survey but with different segments, shows higher aggregate scores reported by state DOE employees (4.05) and contract employees (3.99) compared to volunteers (3.61).

- CAAs in the West (4.08) rate their association higher, particularly compared to those in the Midwest (3.70).
- CAAs who see tremendous or moderate growth (3.95) rate their association higher than those who see limited growth (3.77).
- CAAs who receive grant stipends or state DOE funding (3.98) rate their association higher than those who get support but not necessarily funding (3.63).
- CAAs who have served in this role ten or more years (4.03) rate their association higher than those who have been a CAA 0-3 years (3.85), while there is an odd peak in the rating among those who have been with DECA 20-29 years (4.19), much higher than those who have less or more experience with DECA.
- CAAs who spend 10-20 hours on association duties (3.70) rate their association considerably lower than those who spend less (4.12) or more time (4.02).

Rating Qualities of National DECA

In rating National DECA, CAAs rate their agreement highest for understanding its role and responsibilities and for DECA providing quality programs and services (4.72 each).

- Other highly rated features include DECA Inc. programs being superior to other CTSOs (4.53), providing their chapters with quality resources (4.45), and friendly and responsive staff (4.45).
- Even the qualities that are rated relatively lower are still higher than 4.0, including DECA Inc. works hard to resolve challenges when they arise (4.29), delivers quality support when needed. (4.29), and provides ample training to chapter advisors. (4.02).



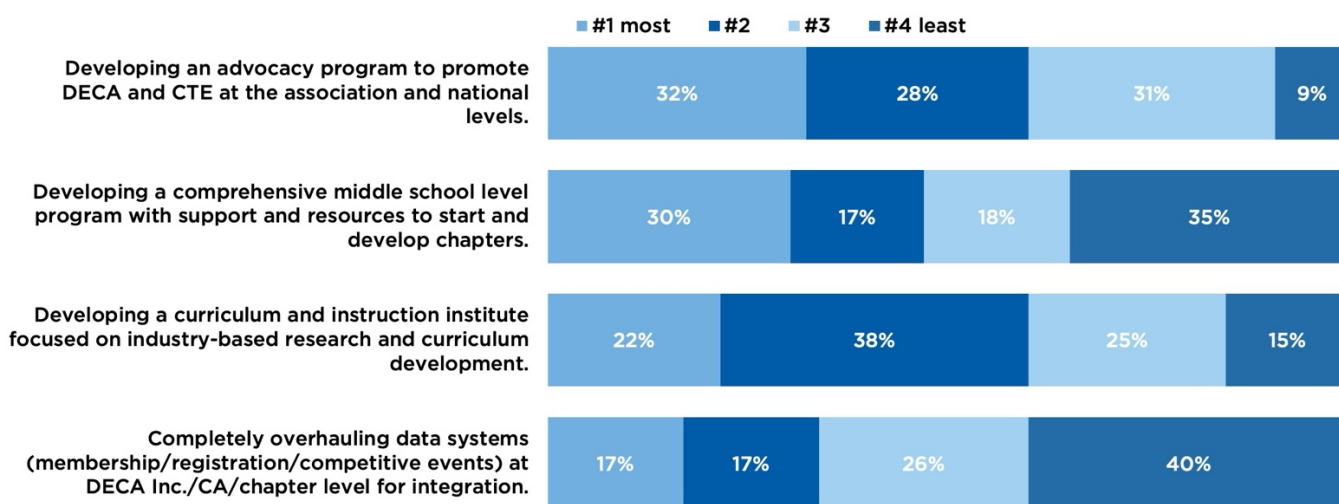
As with their self-rating of the Chartered Association, volunteers (3.90) rate DECA considerably lower than state DOE employees (4.65) and contract employees (4.60), although all these aggregate ratings are considerably higher than the scores for their own association.

- Interestingly, CAAs who see tremendous growth opportunity (4.14) give DECA a considerably lower aggregate rating than those who believe they have moderate (4.52) or limited (4.59) growth opportunity in their state.
- CAAs in the South (4.76) rate DECA considerably higher than those in the West (4.49), Midwest (4.25) or Northeast (4.23).
- CAAs of associations that receive state DOE funding (4.83) or support but not necessarily funding (4.58) gives DECA an aggregate rating much higher than those who receive a grant stipend (4.24) and particularly those who receive no support (3.89).
- CAAs who have spent 10-19 years with DECA in any capacity (4.33) or who have served as a CAA for 10 or more years (4.23) rate DECA somewhat lower than the average respondent overall (4.43).
- Although the response rate was very high with this audience, there is some suggestion of response bias as those who answered the invitation (4.57) or who answered the final reminder (4.43) gave DECA a higher aggregate rating than those who answered the first reminder (4.23). This suggests a pattern where the strongest supporters answered early, but the uptick later during fieldwork suggests that the bias is somewhat limited.

Priorities if Allocating Resources for DECA

CAAs are split between what priorities they would assign to DECA if they were allocating resources.

- A similar proportion regard developing an advocacy program to promote DECA and CTE at the association and national levels (32%) and developing a comprehensive middle school level program with support and resources to start and develop chapters (30%) the top priority.
- There is however, a substantial difference among those who regard the latter as a priority, as 35% rate it as the least important, while considerably more rate the former as the second or third most important priority.
- Developing a curriculum and instruction institute focused on industry-based research and curriculum development has 22% regarding it as top priority; with 38% regarding it as second most important the same majority rating it among their top two as those supporting an advocacy program.
- Completely overhauling data systems for complete integration has about one-sixth each ranking it as the top or second priority.



Summary of Chapter Advisor Survey Comments

Other Reasons for Becoming a DECA Advisor

The key themes and motivations include:

- Student support and development:
 - Inspire and develop students as leaders and competitors
 - Provide real-world business experiences and networking opportunities
 - Help students grow in confidence, public speaking, and problem-solving skills
- Personal experience and passion:
 - Former DECA members wanting to give back
 - Belief in the impact of DECA on students' futures
 - Love for the organization and its mission
- School and program requirements:
 - Part of the job description for business/marketing teachers
 - Needed for CTE (Career and Technical Education) programming
 - Required for vocational education in some states
- Continuation of existing programs:
 - Taking over for retiring or departing advisors
 - Ensuring the program doesn't end at their school
- Student initiative:
 - Students approaching teachers to start or continue DECA chapters
 - Responding to student interest in the program
- Professional growth:
 - Learning more about business education
 - Staying connected with students outside the classroom
- Unique opportunities:
 - Travel experiences for students
 - Competitions and conferences
- Administrative requests:
 - Being asked by principals or superintendents to run the program
- Lack of alternatives:
 - No one else willing to take on the role
 - Stepping in to fill a gap
- Extracurricular diversity:
 - Providing non-sports, non-arts-based activities
 - Offering business-focused club options

Many advisors noted that while they may have initially become involved due to job requirements or requests, they continued because of the positive impact they saw on students and their own enjoyment of the program.

Please complete the following sentences with a few words:

DECA is important to me because:

- Student growth and development: Many respondents emphasized how DECA helps students develop leadership skills, confidence, professionalism, and other important abilities that will benefit them in their future careers and lives.
- Real-world experience: DECA provides students with opportunities to apply classroom learning to real business scenarios through competitions, projects, and events.
- Opportunities beyond the classroom: Respondents value the travel, networking, and experiences DECA offers students that they may not otherwise have access to.

- Personal connection with students: Many advisors enjoy building relationships with students outside the classroom through DECA activities.
- Career preparation: DECA is seen as an important tool for preparing students for future careers in business and other fields.
- Personal experience: Many advisors participated in DECA as students themselves and want to provide the same positive experience to their students.
- Program growth: DECA helps attract students to business and marketing classes and programs.
- Competitive element: Competitions motivate students and provide a way to showcase their skills.
- Community and networking: Both students and advisors benefit from the connections made through DECA.
- Curriculum enhancement: DECA provides resources and activities that supplement classroom learning.

Chapter advisors see DECA as a valuable organization providing many benefits to students, enhances their teaching, and allows them to make a meaningful impact on students' lives and future careers.

Please complete the following sentences with a few words:

My experience as a Chapter Advisor in DECA would be more rewarding if:

While many Chapter Advisors find the role very rewarding already, there are many ways it could be enhanced to better support advisors and students.

- More time and resources:
 - Many advisors wish they had more dedicated time during the school day to focus on DECA activities
 - More funding and financial support from schools/districts to reduce fundraising burden
 - More resources and curriculum materials to integrate DECA into classroom teaching
- Better compensation:
 - Many advisors feel they should receive higher stipends or additional pay for the significant time commitment
 - Some suggested compensation similar to that of athletic coaches
- More support:
 - From school administration in terms of recognition and understanding of DECA's value
 - Better training and mentoring, especially for new advisors
 - More collaboration and networking opportunities with other advisors
- Reduced administrative burden:
 - Streamlined processes for paperwork, registration, travel planning, etc.
 - Less complex competition structure and rules
- Greater student engagement:
 - More student interest and participation in DECA
 - Higher levels of student commitment and motivation
- Competition improvements:
 - More equitable competition between schools of different sizes/resources
 - Better judging and feedback for students
 - More opportunities for students to advance to higher levels
- Lower costs:
 - Reduced expenses for conferences and competitions to increase accessibility
 - More financial support for students to participate
- Better integration with curriculum:
 - Ability to incorporate DECA more directly into regular business/marketing classes
 - Dedicated DECA classes in some cases
- More recognition:
 - For advisors' efforts from schools, DECA organization, and community

- For students' achievements
- Personal growth:
 - Opportunities for advisors to take on leadership roles
 - Professional development to improve advisor skills and knowledge

If you were to leave your role as Chapter Advisor, what would probably be the reason(s)?

Potential reasons mentioned most frequently include:

- Time commitment/workload - Many advisors cited the significant time and effort required outside of regular teaching duties.
- Lack of compensation - Advisors often feel the stipend or pay does not match the workload.
- Retirement - Many long-serving advisors mentioned retirement as a reason they would leave.
- Changing jobs/careers - Moving to a different school, district, or leaving education entirely.
- Family commitments - Balancing DECA responsibilities with family life is challenging for many.
- Burnout - The demands of teaching plus DECA lead to exhaustion for some.
- Lack of support - From school administration, district, or state DECA leadership.
- Funding issues - Difficulty raising money for conferences and activities.
- Administrative burdens - Excessive paperwork and logistics.
- Student participation/interest declining - Lack of student engagement or declining membership.
- Moving into administration - Taking on roles like principal that preclude being an advisor.
- Conference/travel challenges - Issues with organizing trips and supervising students at events.
- Costs for students - Concerns about DECA becoming too expensive for students to participate.
- Disorganization - Frustrations with how DECA is run at state/national levels.
- New teacher taking over - Passing the role to a younger or more enthusiastic colleague.

While many advisors expressed strong commitment to DECA, the significant workload on top of teaching duties emerged as the primary challenge that could lead to advisors stepping down from the role.

What are the greatest reoccurring challenges you face as a chapter advisor?

- Funding and finances: This was by far the most frequently mentioned challenge. Advisors struggle with funding for travel, conferences, competitions, and general chapter activities. Many noted the high costs associated with DECA and difficulties fundraising.
- Time constraints: Advisors frequently cited lack of time as a major challenge - both for themselves to manage all DECA responsibilities on top of teaching duties, and for students to participate fully given other commitments.
- Student recruitment and engagement: Many advisors find it difficult to recruit students, maintain consistent participation, and keep students engaged throughout the year, especially after competitions.
- Competition preparation: Preparing students adequately for DECA competitions, especially the exam portions, was noted as challenging by many advisors.
- Administrative tasks and paperwork: The amount of administrative work, paperwork, and deadlines associated with running a DECA chapter was frequently cited as overwhelming.
- Balancing DECA with other school activities: Advisors noted challenges competing with sports, other clubs, and academic demands for students' time and attention.
- Travel logistics: Organizing travel for conferences and competitions, including transportation, lodging, and associated costs, was mentioned as difficult by many.
- Lack of school/administrative support: Some advisors feel they lack adequate support from their school administration or district for the DECA program.
- Understanding DECA structure/requirements: Especially for new advisors, understanding all aspects of DECA and how to effectively run a chapter was noted as challenging.
- Student motivation and commitment: Getting students to fully commit to DECA, follow through on responsibilities, and put in the necessary work was a common challenge.

What are the greatest future challenges that you anticipate facing as a chapter advisor?

- Funding and costs - Many advisors cited concerns about rising costs for conferences, travel, membership dues, etc. and challenges with fundraising and securing adequate funding.
- Student recruitment and retention - Attracting new members, maintaining engagement, and competing with other activities for students' time and interest was a common challenge.
- Time management - Advisors struggle to balance DECA responsibilities with teaching duties and personal lives. There's often not enough time to adequately prepare students.
- Administrative/school support - Lack of support or understanding from school administration regarding the value of DECA was mentioned frequently.
- Competition preparation - Helping students prepare for and succeed in competitive events is an ongoing challenge.
- Chapter growth management - As chapters grow, it becomes more difficult to manage logistics, travel, etc. with limited advisor resources.
- Student motivation and commitment - Getting students to fully engage, prepare, and follow through on DECA activities can be difficult.
- Travel logistics and costs - Organizing and funding travel to conferences and competitions, especially for larger chapters.
- Advisor burnout—Significant time and effort required leads to advisor fatigue/turnover concerns.
- Equity and access - Ensuring DECA is accessible to all students regardless of financial means.

Other common themes included: keeping up with changes in business/marketing, integrating DECA into curriculum, finding judges/volunteers, and concerns about the future of the program as advisors retire.

How could DECA Inc. help you overcome these challenges?

- Many advisors requested more financial support and ways to reduce costs, especially for conferences and travel. Suggestions included more scholarships, grants, sponsorships, and funding options for low-income students and schools.
- Numerous requests for more resources, training, and support for advisors, especially new advisors. This included things like mentorship programs, more detailed guides, and streamlined processes.
- Many wanted more classroom resources, curriculum materials, and ways to integrate DECA into regular classes.
- Advisors asked for help with recruitment, retention, and engagement of students. This included things like more promotional materials and activities to keep students involved.
- There were requests to simplify and streamline various DECA processes, forms, and communications.
- Some suggested changes to competition structure, judging, and feedback to make things fairer and more educational.
- Several advisors wanted more support in advocating for DECA's importance to school administrators and getting appropriate compensation.
- There were requests for more fundraising ideas and support.
- Some suggested changes to conference locations, structures, and timing to reduce conflicts and improve the experience.
- Some advisors felt DECA Inc. could provide more oversight/support to state DECA organizations.

The overall themes centered around financial support, advisor resources/training, classroom integration, student engagement, streamlining processes, and improving competitions and conferences. Many of the challenges seemed to stem from limited time, funding, and support at the local level.

Summary of Chartered Association Advisor Comments

What factors tend to limit the growth opportunity in your state/province?

- Advisor-related challenges:
 - Finding qualified advisors who meet school requirements
 - Advisor certification and retention issues
 - Reluctance of teachers to take on additional responsibilities
- Funding constraints:
 - Limited local-level funding for membership dues and travel
 - Lack of state-level financial support in some areas
- Competition with other organizations:
 - Presence of other Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)
 - Strong presence of FBLA (Future Business Leaders of America) in some areas
- Curriculum and program requirements:
 - Need for approved business/marketing programs in schools
 - Declining enrollment in marketing classes
 - CTE classes sometimes viewed as electives rather than core subjects
- Administrative and systemic challenges:
 - Lack of support from school administrations or departments of education
 - Complex approval processes, especially for collegiate chapters
 - Geographic and demographic disparities in some states
- Awareness and perception issues:
 - Misunderstanding of DECA's role beyond competitions
 - Stigma or misconceptions about business and marketing education
- Capacity and resource limitations:
 - Time constraints for association directors and advisors
 - Limited staff to manage growth and operations
- Educational trends and policies:
 - Changing standards and career pathway focus
 - Push towards other fields like technology sciences

These factors vary by region and educational level (high school vs. collegiate), with some being more prevalent in certain areas than others.

If you were to leave your role as DECA Chartered Association Advisor, what would be the reason(s)?

- Retirement/Age:
 - Many mentioned that they would leave due to retirement, old age, or feeling it's time to let younger people take over after many years of involvement.
- Workload and Compensation Issues:
 - Lack of compensation relative to the workload
 - Difficulty balancing with full-time careers
 - Increased responsibilities without increased funding or support
 - Amount of volunteer time required
- Organizational Changes:
 - Changes in management strategy at the Association level
 - State department changing directions
 - Reassignment within State Department of Education
 - Promotion to other roles (e.g. CTE Director)
- Lack of Support:
 - From state education departments
 - From DECA Inc., especially for the Collegiate Division

- From local school districts
- Lack of appreciation for efforts
- Personal Reasons:
 - Family needs
 - Moving to another state
 - Health issues
 - Need for better work-life balance
- Frustrations with the Role:
 - Dealing with complaints and expectations from coaches/advisors
 - Concerns about student wellbeing and program pressure
 - Lack of growth opportunities for the organization
 - Feeling that change could benefit the organization
- External Factors:
 - Better job opportunities
 - Financial considerations
 - Changes in state agency policies or funding

Some respondents also noted they would only leave involuntarily (if asked to leave) or would continue to be involved in some capacity even after retiring from their primary role.

What are the greatest reoccurring challenges you face as a chartered association advisor?

- Advisor-related issues:
 - Advisor burnout and turnover
 - Lack of training for new advisors
 - Advisors not following procedures, meeting deadlines, or communicating effectively
 - Shortage of advisors
 - Challenges with difficult or unsupportive advisors
- Funding and financial challenges:
 - Lack of financial support from administrations, state departments, or local districts
 - Increasing costs for conferences, travel, and participation
 - Funding challenges for lower socioeconomic areas
 - Cash flow issues
- Communication and support:
 - Difficulty maintaining consistent communication with advisors and stakeholders
 - Lack of support from school administrations, districts, or state departments of education
 - Challenges in providing adequate support and training to advisors
- Competition and growth:
 - Competition with other CTSOs (Career and Technical Student Organizations)
 - Challenges in recruiting new chapters and growing membership
 - Maintaining engagement of existing chapters
- Logistical challenges:
 - Finding suitable and affordable venues for conferences
 - Managing hotel contracts and rising costs
 - Recruiting judges for competitions
 - Organizing state competitions and events
- Administrative and policy issues:
 - Changes in school board, superintendent, or state department policies
 - Lack of awareness or support from new administrators
 - Obstacles presented by departments of education
 - Risk management concerns
- Time and resource constraints:
 - Limited time for DECA responsibilities due to other duties

- Lack of staff capacity to manage all association elements
- Difficulty providing one-on-one support to new advisors
- Equity and access:
 - Ensuring equitable participation opportunities for all students
 - Addressing funding challenges that limit participation

These challenges highlight the complex nature of managing a chartered association, balancing the needs of advisors, students, and stakeholders while navigating financial, logistical, and administrative hurdles.

What are the greatest future challenges that you anticipate facing as a collegiate association advisor?

- Advisor-related issues:
 - Lack of buy-in, training, and resources
 - Complaints and failure to read provided information
 - Limited say in leadership for collegiate-only advisors
- Organizational challenges:
 - Perceived inferior service for collegiate chapters compared to high school
 - Difficulty in building and retaining chapters
 - Lack of support from state, region, and national organization
- Funding problems:
 - Insufficient funding for chapters, travel, and events
 - Increasing costs for students and chapters
- Educational and recruitment concerns:
 - Incorporating DECA resources into classrooms
 - Member recruitment and retention
 - Ensuring quality student leadership
 - Lack of awareness about collegiate DECA among high schools
- Administrative and policy issues:
 - District policies on travel, approval, and rooming
 - Government policies
 - Lack of support from schools and CTE directors
 - Difficulty in growing marketing programs
- Time and resource constraints:
 - Lack of time for advisors
 - Competing responsibilities and organizations on campus
 - Volume of emails and administrative tasks
- Continuity concerns:
 - What happens to chapters when advisors leave
 - Need for more than just competition to sustain the division

**What are the greatest future challenges that you anticipate facing as an association advisor?
Chartered Associations**

- Funding and Financial Issues:
 - Decreasing funding from state departments and other sources
 - Rising costs for conferences and events
 - Keeping DECA experiences affordable for students
 - Balancing organizational budgets with increasing expenses
- Advisor-related Challenges:
 - Aging population of advisors and upcoming retirements
 - Recruiting and retaining quality advisors
 - Supporting new advisors and managing turnover
 - Unpaid time demands on local advisors
- Membership and Growth:
 - Managing increasing membership and chapter growth
 - Outgrowing current venue capacities for state conferences
 - Recruiting new chapters and students
 - Competing with other activities and CTSOs for student participation
- Educational and Program Challenges:
 - Continuing to grow Marketing Education programs
 - Survival of marketing/business programs
 - Lack of middle school level programming
 - Adapting to changing marketplace demands
- Administrative and Logistical Issues:
 - Travel restrictions and safety concerns, especially for international events
 - School board and Department of Education support and regulations
 - Communication and timeliness issues
 - Risk management and supervision of state officers
- Event-specific Challenges:
 - Finding suitable locations for state conferences
 - Recruiting judges and volunteers for events
 - Managing conference sizes due to extreme growth
- External Factors:
 - Impact on students' mental health
 - Inflation and rising costs
 - Changing education environment
 - Competition from other extracurricular activities

Collegiate Chapters

- Advisor and School Support:
 - Lack of advisor support from schools
 - Complaints from advisors
 - Difficulty in developing future advisors
 - Turnover of instructors/advisors
- Membership and Recruitment:
 - Member recruitment challenges
 - Chapter retention issues
 - Declining student numbers
 - Competition with other Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSOs)
- Funding and Resources:
 - Lack of funds
 - Generating income
 - Funding student experiences
 - Reaching maximum capacity for event facilities
- Program Development and Management:
 - Creating new, valuable programming
 - Implementing AI in projects ethically
 - Adapting to technology advancements
 - Managing increased workload and time constraints
- Educational and Administrative Challenges:
 - Changing mindsets about the organization's role
 - Obtaining academic credit for marketing courses
 - Dealing with state control of grants
 - Navigating district policies and local politics
- Student Engagement:
 - Understanding student motivations
 - Addressing perceived lack of student interest in learning
 - Developing quality student leadership
- Organizational Growth and Transition:
 - Expanding to new colleges/universities
 - Transitioning leadership roles
 - Concerns about the future existence of the Collegiate Division

Please complete the following sentences with a few words:
DECA is important to me because:

Chartered Associations

- Personal impact: Many respondents mention that DECA shaped their own lives and careers, often starting from their high school years.
- Student benefits: There's a strong emphasis on how DECA positively impacts students' lives, providing them with valuable skills, experiences, and opportunities for personal and professional growth.
- Real-world preparation: DECA is seen to bridge classroom learning with real-life situations, preparing students for future careers and the workforce.
- Skill development: The organization is credited with developing important skills in students, particularly 21st-century skills, and workplace competencies.
- Networking: DECA provides networking opportunities for both students and advisors.
- Career exploration: It allows students to evaluate potential career fields and discover their abilities.
- Long-term impact: Many believe that DECA's influence extends well beyond high school, affecting students' futures significantly.
- Personal fulfillment: Advisors and supporters' express satisfaction in being part of an organization that makes a positive difference in students' lives.
- Educational value: DECA is seen as an essential complement to Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs.
- Community impact: Some mention the positive effect DECA has not just on individuals, but also on communities.

Collegiate chapters

- DECA builds confidence and workplace readiness skills in students.
- It's described as the strongest CTSO (Career and Technical Student Organization) aligned with what the author teaches.
- The program transforms students' interpersonal skills and professional development.
- It provides a fun and engaging environment for learning, even when students don't realize they're developing important skills.
- DECA offers opportunities to solve real-world problems and connect with industry leaders.
- It creates a safe space for students to be themselves while setting them up for success.
- The organization can change a person's career trajectory and has created professional careers for some.
- It offers opportunities for students to develop their future and compete in professional roles.
- The document mentions support from DECA Inc., the Western Region, and partnerships with MBA Research.

My role as a Chartered Association Advisor in DECA would be more valuable if:

- Time and workload:
 - Many advisors wish they had more time to dedicate to DECA, with some suggesting it should be their full-time job.
 - Some mentioned having less responsibilities in other roles to focus more on DECA.
- Support and recognition:
 - There's a desire for more support from various entities, including DECA Inc., the Department of Education, school districts, and local administrations.
 - Many advisors feel undervalued and wish for more recognition from their employers and the advisors they serve.
- Financial support:
 - Several responses mention the need for better funding and compensation for their work.
- Clarity and autonomy:
 - Some advisors want clearer roles and expectations, particularly in relation to state boards and national organizations.
 - There's a desire for more autonomy and less bureaucracy in their positions.
- Networking and collaboration:
 - Advisors express interest in more opportunities to network with other association advisors and share ideas.
- Resources and materials:
 - Some mention the need for more marketing materials and resources to support their work.
- Advisor and student engagement:
 - There's a desire for better understanding and appreciation from local advisors and students about the work involved in organizing events and conferences.
- Growth and impact:
 - Some responses focus on the desire to grow DECA's reach and impact more students and schools.

How can DECA continue to add value to the educational experience? Chartered Associations

- Resource Management:
 - Streamline the large amount of information and resources to prevent advisor overwhelm, especially for new advisors.
 - Continue developing classroom integration resources and new advisor materials.
 - Provide more support for after-school DECA programs.
- Advisor Support and Development:
 - Offer quality training and development opportunities for advisors.
 - Continue providing resources, lesson plans, and real-world applications.
 - Facilitate connections between association advisors for knowledge sharing.
- Curriculum and Program Expansion:
 - Explore adding middle school level resources and programs.
 - Keep pace with business world trends to better prepare students.
 - Consider creating an individual award system similar to scout programs.
- Event and Conference Improvements:
 - Drive different experiences at conferences, such as workshops or partner opportunities.
 - Consider reducing ICDC attendance to improve quality of programming.
 - Provide more unique experiences beyond competitive events.
- Inclusivity and Support:
 - Further work on creating inclusive environments.
 - Support all chapters and chartered associations equally.
 - Remember to balance curriculum intensity with student well-being.
- Marketing and Partnerships:
 - Help associations market DECA to businesses, school administrators, and parents.
 - Foster robust industry partnerships at the state level.
 - Provide support at the school board level.
- Communication and Resources:
 - Maintain good communication with advisors and chapters.
 - Continue providing DECA+ resources and materials.
 - Offer more guidance on implementing DECA in the classroom and prepared events.

Overall sentiment is positive, with many state chapter advisors expressing appreciation for DECA's current efforts and encouraging it to continue its current trajectory with some areas of expansion and/or improvement.

Collegiate Chapters

- Career advancement: Connect students to career opportunities and integrate more with industry through partnerships, speaker banks, and job shadowing experiences.
- Curriculum integration: Work towards better integration with school curricula, potentially by fostering relationships with state governments and business-minded faculty.
- Program development: Continue as co-curricular, update DECA+ program, maintain and improve resources like case studies and exams.
- Engagement: Organize more fun activities for students, engage advisors and administrators, and improve connection between national, association, and chapter levels.
- Industry relevance: Consider offering industry-recognized certifications, update competitive events to align with current business practices.
- National Advisory Board (NAB): Increase interaction with and involvement of NAB.
- Expand offerings: Develop programs that add value beyond competitive events, possibly including international experiences.

- Support: Provide more on-location and in-person support, especially for new college/university chapters.
- Marketing: Create campaigns focused on why colleges and universities should want DECA, not just why students should join.

Chapter advisors emphasize the need for DECA to stay relevant, practical, and beneficial to students' future careers while maintaining its core strengths in competitive events and educational experiences.

How can DECA be THE ONE? Chartered Associations

Many chartered associations respondents believe that DECA is already "THE ONE" and should continue its current trajectory.

- Suggestions for improvement include:
 - Focusing on quality programming rather than just growing in size
 - Building stronger corporate connections
 - Implementing more professional skills events (e.g., job interviews, public speaking)
 - Continuing to innovate resources for chapters and advisors
 - Expanding to include middle school students
 - Leveraging personal finance education
 - Improving affordability and funding for students
 - Enhancing marketing and public awareness
 - Maintaining DECA's unique brand proposition
- Some concerns were raised about:
 - The sustainability of large events like ICDC (International Career Development Conference)
 - Advisor burnout
 - The need for more timely resources
 - The high cost of participation for some students
- There were comments about DECA's strengths, including:
 - Bridging students with leadership, competition, curriculum, and career development
 - Providing exceptional support compared to other Career and Technical Student Organizations
 - Having a clear vision and unique brand
- A few respondents didn't understand the concept of DECA being "THE ONE" or felt it shouldn't be pressured to be so.
- One suggestion mentioned the possibility of acquiring Future Business Leaders of America.

Collegiate Chapters

- Focus on education and career readiness, not just experience.
- Emphasize DECA's strengths in business and marketing education.
- Consider offering industry certifications with competitive events.
- Avoid spreading resources too thin by trying to cover all industries.
- Highlight how DECA skills apply to various career paths beyond traditional business roles.
- Improve marketing efforts to showcase DECA's value to those unfamiliar with the organization.
- Conduct research on college students' needs and preferences for organizations.
- Emphasize soft skills training, which is valuable across all industries.
- Consider expanding to include middle school levels and students with diverse academic abilities.
- Keep costs low while maintaining high-value programming.
- Be open to different opinions and treat members, advisors, and volunteers with respect.
- Engage business-minded faculty to increase industry relevance and support.

While many believe DECA is already the leading CTSO, there are areas for improvement, particularly in marketing, inclusivity, and adapting to needs of collegiate students and modern workforce requirements.

What other priorities do you see? Chartered Associations

- Advisor retention and training:
 - Bring back the "Train the Trainer" program
 - Focus on advisor onboarding and retention
 - Provide training for networking with business partners
- Membership and growth:
 - Emphasis on collegiate membership and growth
 - Ensure accessibility for students from all economic backgrounds
 - Consider expanding to the middle school level
- Organizational improvements:
 - Overhaul the data system for better accuracy and insights
 - Improve the hotel booking system (DLG)
 - Negotiate better prices for accommodations at events
- Partnerships and support:
 - Develop industry partnerships
 - Seek corporate support for financial assistance
 - Gather data on post-graduation success and equity-focused outcomes
- Student well-being:
 - Focus on student mental health and wellness initiatives
 - Conduct student wellness surveys
- Recognition and incentives:
 - Create incentives for active advisors (e.g., free conference registration)
 - Consider individual awards for classroom achievements
- Miscellaneous:
 - Continue promoting DECA's reputation
 - Stay current with trends and needs
 - Address the needs of new advisors

Collegiate Chapters

- Improve staff training and communication
- Develop a marketing campaign to bridge high school and collegiate levels
- Strengthen the advisory team and involve them more as partners
- Provide better support for starting and developing collegiate DECA chapters
- Focus on credentials
- Make a decision about expanding Collegiate DECA or developing an exit plan
- Maintain DECA's core offerings while considering some updates
- Create a marketing campaign targeting schools, colleges, and universities to increase buy-in
- Moderately expand and update competitive events
- Continue developing DECA+

Collegiate chapters suggest a mix of internal improvements, marketing efforts, and program developments to strengthen the collegiate aspect of DECA. There seems to be some concern about the future direction of the collegiate division, with an emphasis on making strategic decisions about its expansion or potential exit. Some commenters noted that certain questions or priorities may not apply to all chapters.

Partner Survey

DECA is important to our company/organization because:

Based on the provided responses, it's clear that DECA (Distributive Education Clubs of America) is important to various organizations for several key reasons. Here's a concise summary of the main points:

- Talent pipeline and recruitment:
 - Connects organizations with promising business students
 - Helps identify and recruit excellent students for colleges and future employment
 - Provides access to students exploring post-high school opportunities
- Educational alignment and support:
 - Aligns with organizational values and educational missions
 - Supports aspiring students through mentorship and real-world learning experiences
 - Helps develop curriculum and stay current with next-generation business education
- Networking and partnerships:
 - Connects employers with educators and students
 - Provides opportunities for community impact and local engagement
 - Allows for partnerships in surveys and research (e.g., Piper Sandler Teen Survey)
- Professional development:
 - Prepares students for future careers in business, marketing, and entrepreneurship
 - Introduces students to various career paths and opportunities
 - Promotes specific professions (e.g., accounting) to high school students
- Mutual benefits:
 - Offers volunteering and fundraising opportunities for organizations
 - Provides a unique platform for organizations to share their stories with potential applicants
 - Aligns with common goals of strengthening Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs

Our experience in DECA would be more valuable if:

- Better understanding of partner needs and goals
- More opportunities to interact with students, advisors, and schools
- Improved communication strategies
- Enhanced involvement at state and local levels
- More presentation and promotional opportunities
- Better tracking of impact and results
- Improved integration of partner products/services
- More opportunities for college students
- Direct communication with students (e.g., email access)

Some partners expressed satisfaction with their current experience, while others suggested specific improvements. Overall, the feedback indicates a desire for more engagement, better alignment with DECA's structure, and clearer pathways to achieve mutual goals.

What are three reoccurring challenges your company/organization faces?

This document lists various recurring challenges faced by partners in educational and business contexts.

- Staffing:
 - recruiting, retention on property team members across departments
 - finding good talent, labor shortages, pipeline of talent
 - Stakeholder turnover
- Student engagement, student member attraction, and students losing faith in higher ed
- Promotion:
 - Efficient channels to communicate to large groups of key stakeholders, finding value-added ways to present to a group of teachers, getting in front of students
- Rising costs
 - To manufacture our machines, pricing pressure
- Branding: protecting our brand and the integrity of our brand
- Resource constraints:
 - Budgetary issues
 - Need for additional dedicated resources
 - Limited company resources at events
 - Funding challenges
- Marketing and awareness:
 - Creating awareness about specific industries
 - Reaching the right audience (teachers and administrators)
 - Advocating for Business and Marketing Education
 - Addressing misconceptions about certain industries
- Recruitment and retention:
 - Member growth and retention
 - Finding suitable students for curriculum videos
 - Offering attractive options to young people
- Technological challenges:
 - Adapting to shifting marketing channels based on technology
 - Reaching students digitally
 - Accommodating Chromebook limitations
- Professional development:
 - Building teacher leadership
 - Fostering meaningful training for industry professionals
 - Partner depth of knowledge
- Operational challenges:
 - Buyer turnover affecting consistency
 - Expanding into new markets
 - Rapid growth and expansion
 - Hotel availability for events

- Educational trends:
 - Positioning business programs within a STEM-focused world
 - Enrollment issues
 - Generational diversity in education and work ethic
- Product-related issues:
 - Product development and relevance
 - Data analytics
 - Ongoing development of tools and resources

What are three new challenges your company/organization anticipates facing in the future?

- Staffing—main concerns include recruiting difficulties due to population decreases, labor shortages, and a decline in accounting majors and CPAs. Challenges in finding quality talent with appropriate skills and expectations.
- Market-related issues, segments, growth, marketing budgets, and expansion into new markets.
- AI concerns about its impact and automation, considerations on how to incorporate AI into programs and processes.
- Adapting to customer needs
- Business development and branding
- Educational concerns (e.g., advocating for business education, building teacher leadership)
- Technological advancements and keeping up with trends
- Industry-specific issues (e.g., competition for talent in restaurants, limited convention properties)
- Enrollment and funding concerns
- Professional development and training

How can DECA Inc. help your company/organization overcome these challenges?

- Enhancing collaboration and awareness between advisors, operators, and the organization.
- Strengthening partnerships in curriculum development and industry leadership.
- Continuing engagement with national sales partners and industry events.
- Increasing participation in educational functions, such as judging and scholarship programs.
- Improving connections with educators and departments of education.
- Maintaining support despite budget constraints due to external factors.
- Restructuring sponsorship fees to include more advertising and finding common ground on state-level fees.
- Providing more targeted engagement opportunities based on partner goals.
- Promoting retail as a viable career option for all education levels.
- Co-branding events and competitions at regional and national levels.
- Offering more opportunities to showcase career options in specific fields like accounting.
- Enhancing soft skills training, work ethic, and decision-making abilities for students.
- Improving communication and responsiveness to partners.
- Increasing opportunities for partners to interact directly with students and teachers.
- Expanding access to the collegiate network for talent recruitment and content creation.