

Topic: Competitive Events—Integrating into the Curriculum

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This Advisor Corner features advice on preparing students for competition. Karen Brettingen has an enviable track record; each year, on average, 60 of her DECA members compete at the district level, with 40 going on to state competition and a steady 5 to 7 making their way to nationals.

Karen has integrated competitive event-style role-playing into her first year marketing class in a fundamental way. For mini-evaluations within her curriculum units, she invites members of the business community into the classroom to role-play with each class member.

Students are given a case study a few days in advance so they can prepare their presentations. They then present their results to the visiting businesspeople in a role-play format. The business volunteers write a formal appraisal of the student's performance on a form like DECA's evaluation sheet, but they also deliver an oral evaluation on the spot—a good way to correct presentation blemishes like handshakes, voice quality, etc.

In the future, when Karen talks to these students about DECA competition, the process is familiar, and they are several giant steps ahead of the game. Not only is she easing DECA members comfortably into the competitive events structure, Karen is also demonstrating the genuinely co-curricular possibilities of DECA's Competitive Events Program.