

**Question 10: How do you select students for competition? How do you figure out who is going to compete in certain events—without testing each student and spending a lot of time to figure it out?**

**Al Gancarz**

The Civic Consciousness Project at our school is one that students always want to work on. (It has gone to ICDC for the past 20 years, so you can understand the interest.) This project is always some type of event that will benefit MDA. For the past 10 years, I have required students who want to be a co-chairperson on the annual Civic Consciousness Project to serve as counselors at muscular dystrophy summer camps. This works rather well. Last year about 10 members of my chapter attended this weeklong camp.

All first-year students have to do a role-play event. (It's hard to get 9th and 10th graders to write a written project.) Some students with not as much capability do a state event with no test: public speaking, job interview, etc. this gives those kids some sense of success.

First-year students can get extra credit for volunteering to work on a project done by the rest of the chapter.

As a teacher gets to know the students, he or she will be able to assist them with project or event selection. I always try to place a student in an event where I think they will have the best possible experience. Winning is a bonus. It is more important that a student have a positive experience that he or she can build on.

**Mike Karpie**

Student selection can take place on several levels. So get ready—here are some of my top-secret ways:

1. Ask the student if he/she has a job. If they work at a supermarket, they should be placed into food marketing. Place students in the areas they work in.
2. Ask them what their parents do for a living. Chances are a lot of talk happens around the dinner table, and you will be surprised how much the kids already know.
3. Ask about their career plans and then place them into an area of interest. They will also work harder if they like the area.
4. Look at their talents. See what they do well.
5. For help with manuals, I ask the kids if they have family, friends, or neighbors who own a business. This helps them and us get our foot in the door with businesses.
6. We also try to team the older members with younger ones. The older kids are great mentors and love to teach. Remember, wherever you can, let the kids do the work.
7. Find out what their interests or hobbies are and start to develop from there.

These are just a few ways. There are many more.

**Bill Lind**

This gets easier with experience. I asked them, I looked at their academics, I did things in class to assess their communications skills. I looked at their employment. For written projects I did a very thorough interview. Knowing how teams worked successfully, I selected them and decided who to team them with. I did allow them to give input. I was often more interested in who they didn't want to work with and why! My older students also recommended students

and a constant flow of little brothers and sisters made the process easier.

### **Lucinda Mason**

I encourage everyone to go to (instate) regional competition. Bunches sign up at first, and some end up dropping out. That's OK. The ones who go are the ones who want to. Our deadline for regionals is the second week in December. If there are students who I think need to go that haven't signed up by Thanksgiving, I may talk to them individually to encourage them. Sometimes that works, and sometimes it doesn't. There are always a few that I really want to go, but sometimes it just doesn't work out. I let them sign up for whatever they want. We can only take three in each event, so sometimes I have to play "let's make a deal" to get it down to three. Once a student competes in an event, he or she has priority for that event the next year.

### **Dennis Sweetapple**

Every one of my students must compete on the district level. If they make it to the finals, they choose if they want to continue or not. I have found that they must want to be there or you will have problems with them.

### **Debbie Tixier**

All of our students in marketing are expected to compete at the district level each January. They enter an individual competency event and a team event. Those qualifying for state have a choice to go or not. Almost all go (130 this year) because they want to qualify for nationals. Most of our students are pretty self-motivated.

When they sign up, we let them choose an area for both individual and team and the partner they want to compete with. If too many go into one area, or we believe they could do better in another area because of where they work or what business their folks own, etc., then we try to spread them out among the categories. We try to give input where possible. After their first year, we have a better grasp on their ability levels and what their interests are and try to pair them up with someone who they like, but who has comparable ability.