



## EDUCATIONAL CONFERENCES

# DECA Travel

DECA advisors must have thought through all aspects of student travel while also being prepared for any possible surprises when traveling with students! The most important aspect is to make sure you understand your local school board policies for student travel and collect any forms or requirements required by your school district and school. Map out all financial obligations and registration deadlines early for your association and DECA conferences. Keep all your records and travel-related files organized and update any necessary forms each school year.

One of the perks of DECA membership is the opportunity to travel in a professional business style. Here are a few tips to ensure a successful trip!

## BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

### 1. Schedule a meeting with the parents, students and administrators.

- Provide a conference information sheet with hotel information. Review the Comprehensive Consent Form and Code of Conduct. Discuss consequences.
- Review the importance of representing their family, school, and chapter in a professional manner. For parents unable to attend, follow up with a phone call and a mailing.
- Distribute the trip itinerary and tentative agenda. Use this opportunity to show how students are kept busy with educational and fun activities. Talk about the ways the students prepare for the conference.
- Explain the dress code.
- Let the administration congratulate the students for accepting the opportunity to participate.

### 2. Submit a press release.

Make this a positive experience for the entire community.

### 3. Invite the principal to come into the classroom.

- They should meet the students who will be attending the conference. Let the students present the code of conduct they have signed and will practice at the conference. The principal can help reinforce the importance of professional behavior.
- They should also share ways they are preparing for the event.

### 4. Meet one last time before leaving for the conference.

Review professional expectations. Review the conference program. Answer last-minute questions. Reinforce your belief in them and their abilities.

### 5. Discuss emergency procedures and develop a plan with your administrators.

- You never know what will happen—and things can happen to anyone. Be sure you have your administrator's contact information and know school policies and procedures.
- Bring a copy of your school's activities handbook.
- Bring your students' signed Comprehensive Consent Forms.

## DURING THE CONFERENCE

### 1. Conduct a chapter meeting after registering in your hotel. The agenda should include:

- Collect your students' cell phone numbers.
- Make a master list of your students' room numbers.
- Hand out programs and conference materials.
- Go over the schedule of events. Have each student mark in their program where they are to be throughout the conference. Advise them of your location during the conference.
- Go over the physical layout of the hotels.
- Review the Code of Conduct and dress code.
- Build on their excitement and enthusiasm and reinforce your belief in them. Encourage them to meet delegates from other chapters.

### 2. Establish procedures for students to check-in with you during the conference.

- This is vital! You can help eliminate student frustrations. It's important that you ask your students how they are doing. Be positive and supportive. Keep your eyes open for potential problems.
- Let your students know where you will be, too!

### 3. Enforce curfew.

Make sure students are in their own rooms. You have a responsibility to your students and their parents to see that your students are in the correct room. Curfew applies to all students!

### 4. Sit with your students during the general sessions and other special functions.

Create a "team" spirit for your chapter. Even the "best of students" are capable of "acting up."

### 5. Be visible.

- Drop in and check on your students. "Count heads" at the key sessions and at curfew.
- Review the day's activities and what activities are scheduled for the next day.

### 6. Meet problems head-on in a positive manner.

Don't let things get out of hand. Do your part tactfully. They are all of our students!

## AFTER THE CONFERENCE

### 1. Congratulate your students for their professionalism and participation at the conference.

### 2. Send a letter to parents expressing your appreciation for their support.

### 3. Follow-up with the principal, other administrators and school board members with a student presentation.

### 4. Submit a follow-up press release with chapter pictures and student comments.