

Old Dominion University

ODU Digital Commons

---

OTS Master's Level Projects & Papers

STEM Education & Professional Studies

---

2005

## Factors Contributing to Virginia Marketing Education's Low Participation in State DECA Competitive Written Events

Eric R. Keiser  
*Old Dominion University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/ots\\_masters\\_projects](https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/ots_masters_projects)



Part of the [Education Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Keiser, Eric R., "Factors Contributing to Virginia Marketing Education's Low Participation in State DECA Competitive Written Events" (2005). *OTS Master's Level Projects & Papers*. 131.  
[https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/ots\\_masters\\_projects/131](https://digitalcommons.odu.edu/ots_masters_projects/131)

This Master's Project is brought to you for free and open access by the STEM Education & Professional Studies at ODU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in OTS Master's Level Projects & Papers by an authorized administrator of ODU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@odu.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@odu.edu).

**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO VIRGINIA MARKETING EDUCATION'S LOW  
PARTICIPATION IN STATE DECA COMPETITIVE WRITTEN EVENTS**

A Research Project Presented to the Graduate Faculty of the  
Department of Occupational and Technical Studies  
Old Dominion University

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master of Science in Occupational and Technical Studies

By  
Eric R. Keiser  
August 2005

## SIGNATURE PAGE

This research paper was prepared by Eric R. Keiser, under the direction and guidance of Dr. John M. Ritz in OTED 636, Problems in Occupational and Technical Studies. It was submitted to the Graduate Program Director as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Science in Occupational and Technical Studies degree.

Approval:

---

Dr. John M. Ritz  
Research Advisor and Graduate Program  
Director  
Occupational and Technical Studies  
Old Dominion University

---

Date

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>SIGNATURE PAGE</b> .....	ii
<b>TABLE OF TABLES</b> .....	v
<b>CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	2
RESEARCH GOALS.....	3
BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE.....	3
LIMITATIONS.....	4
ASSUMPTIONS.....	4
PROCEDURES.....	5
DEFINITION OF TERMS.....	6
OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS.....	8
<b>CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE</b> .....	9
HISTORY OF DECA.....	9
COMPETITIVE EVENTS.....	12
RESEARCH AND EFFECTIVE METHODS.....	15
SUMMARY.....	17
<b>CHAPTER III METHODS AND PROCEDURES</b> .....	19
POPULATION.....	19
INSTRUMENT DESIGN.....	19
METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION.....	20
STATISTICAL ANALYSIS.....	21
SUMMARY.....	21
<b>CHAPTER IV FINDINGS</b> .....	22
REPORT OF FINDING.....	22
SUMMARY.....	38
<b>CHAPTER V SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS</b> .....	39
SUMMARY.....	39
CONCLUSIONS.....	42
RECOMMENDATIONS.....	51
<b>REFERENCES</b> .....	53

**TABLE OF APPENDICES**..... 55

Appendix A..... 56

Electronic Survey Instrument..... 56

Appendix B..... 62

Cover Letter..... 62

Appendix C..... 64

State Advisor memorandum..... 64

Appendix D..... 66

Follow-up Letter..... 66

## TABLE OF TABLES

Table 4.1 - Survey Response Rate.....	23
Table 4.2 - Survey Response Item Completion Rate.....	23
Table 4.3 - Rate of DECA Chapter Attendance At 2005 SLC.....	24
Table 4.4 - Rate Of DECA Chapter Written Event Participation 2005 SLC..	24
Table 4.5 - Virginia DECA Chapters Who Experience Success In Written Events.....	25
Table 4.6 - Teacher Demographic: Years Teaching Marketing Education...	27
Table 4.7 - Teacher Demographic: Education And Experience.....	27
Table 4.8 - Teacher Demographic: Tenure At Present School.....	28
Table 4.9 - Chapter characteristics: High school Student Enrollment.....	28
Table 4.10 - Chapter Characteristics: Number Of DECA Chapter Members	29
Table 4.11 - Chapter Characteristics: DECA Member Gender Composition	29
Table 4.12 - Student Characteristic Or Traits.....	31
Table 4.13 - Extraneous Environmental Factors Contributing To Participation In Written Events.....	31
Table 4.14 - Time Spent Per Week On DECA Written Events.....	33
Table 4.15 - Time Students Should Spend In Preparation For Written Events .....	33
Table 4.16 - Techniques Used By Chapter Advisors.....	34
Table 4.17 - Material And Tools Used To Effectuate Teaching Competitive Events.....	36
Table 4.18 - Open Ended Response Rate: Short Answers Vs. Multiple Sentences Answers.....	38

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Each year Virginia high school students are exposed to a variety of different learning experiences. Students who have a particular interest in the fields of marketing, management, and entrepreneurship are offered the opportunity to study these disciplines in more detail by enrolling in Marketing Education courses. The Marketing Education curriculum consists of three interrelated parts, including classroom instruction, cooperative education (on-the-job-training) and DECA, an Association of Marketing Students. DECA is a student organization created for Marketing Education students, but unlike most student organizations or clubs, DECA has a co-curricular organizational designation, rather than an extra-curricular designation.

DECA's activities are specifically designed to provide applied learning scenarios for high school students in marketing, management, and entrepreneurial competencies. Although the number of activities is infinite, they all must be centered on one of the four guiding principles of DECA: vocational understanding, civic consciousness, social intelligence and leadership development (DECA, 2004).

Every year Virginia Marketing Education students assemble in order to support the four DECA principles. This support is manifested at the local school or district level through District Leadership Conference (DLC) competitive events and later followed by the State Leadership Conference or (SLC) competitive events. These competitive events consist of DECA projects and activities that

may be in the form of reports, role plays, team events, oral presentations, simulations or other creative formats. Students come together in competition, are evaluated based upon performance competencies, and the best qualify to compete against the nation's best at the national conference or International Career Development Conference (ICDC).

Virginia has historically been near the top of the national student enrollment when compared to other state DECA enrollments. As of December 15, 2004, Virginia DECA announced its 11,000<sup>th</sup> member, shattering the previous annual membership high of 10,400 (DECA, Virginia, 2004). Although this growth is positive with respect to membership numbers, the growth is not reflected in the number of students participating in DECA's written competitive events. Why was there an increase in the membership and not an increase in the written competitive events? Have the Virginia DECA chapter advisors abandoned written competitive events as being too much work and resolved themselves and their students to participation in events without a written component? What can be done to improve Virginia Marketing Education participation in state and national DECA written competitive events?

#### STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The purpose of this study was to determine factors that contribute to Virginia Marketing Education low participation rate in the state and national DECA competitive written events.



## RESEARCH GOALS

To guide this research, the following objectives were established:

- Identify Virginia DECA chapters who traditionally participate in competitive written events at the state level.
- Identify Virginia DECA chapters who experience success in written events at the state level.
- Identify what student demographic characteristics exist in DECA chapters who consistently participate in written competitive events.
- Identify techniques used by chapter advisors to garner student participation in written competitive events.

## BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE

The impetus of this study was founded in the researchers own curiosity and perhaps more importantly a question raised by the Virginia DECA State Advisor. When compared to other state DECA organizations of similar size, Virginia was lagging behind in competitive written event participation and success. The lack of participation of Virginia DECA chapters in written competitive events stood in stark contrast to the rapid growth experienced by Virginia DECA membership rolls.

Why is there high student DECA membership, yet low participation in written competitive events? If the teachers were truly incorporating DECA as part of their classroom study, which was part of the marketing education co-curricular program, should not the participation and success rates be much higher? Are

teachers not teaching with proper instructional strategies? Are resources available to aid teachers that are not being utilized?

It was important that this information be researched, not only to identify practices that would increase the participation rates of students in DECA programs and the student's satisfaction rendered by participation in such events, but also and equally important, to identify other deficiencies that may plague Virginia Marketing Education programs. Identification and correction of potential deficiencies were particularly important to elective education programs where funding and fiscal constraints were constantly being evaluated.

#### LIMITATIONS

The limitations identified for this study were as follows:

- Judging at all levels of competition may not be completely objective.
- The study was limited to DECA written competitive events.
- The study of Virginia DECA chapters was based upon selections made by the Virginia State Advisor.

#### ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions were made in this study:

- The students and teachers who participated in this study were representative of participants in Virginia DECA and National DECA.
- It was assumed that results of written events at state and national competitions are the result of fair and accurate judging by the adult volunteer judges.

## PROCEDURES

The researcher initially contacted the Virginia DECA State Advisor. Upon review of the literature and augmented by information provided by interviews conducted with the Virginia DECA State Advisor, the researcher composed an anonymous survey instrument containing multiple choice, open-ended and closed-ended items. The researcher designed the survey by first referring to the research objectives and subsequently created items to match each. Multiple choice items were crafted to collect institutional information. A Likert Scale (5 strongly agree-1 strongly disagree) followed each of the items related to the research goals. Close-ended items were utilized to encourage greater participation, as well as to facilitate tabulation and analysis. Open-ended items at the end of the survey were also included to afford the respondents the opportunity to express their opinions and attitudes about written competitive events. The open-ended items also provided insight as to the motives for the respondent's answers to the closed-ended items.

The anonymous survey instrument along with the attached cover letter was electronically distributed to all Virginia DECA chapter advisors. The electronic data collection method was used for several reasons. One, the researcher believed this was the most effective way to garner a large sample size, thus increasing research validity. Second, chapter advisors utilized electronic communication on a daily basis. The electronic distribution allowed for the expeditious distribution and redistribution (follow-up) of information. Finally, electronic data collection also afforded the researcher fiscal benefits as well. The

electronic distribution was facilitated by using the 2004-2005 school year Virginia DECA database. The Virginia DECA State Advisor facilitated the distribution of the survey with a State Advisor memorandum which included a cover letter and the electronic survey as attachments. Once completed by the respondents, the instruments were electronically mailed to the researcher. Participants were given ten days to respond to the instrument. A follow-up resubmission of the instrument and reminder letter was sent to participants who did not respond within a ten day period.

## DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms were defined to assist the reader with the study:

Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) - CTSO is the co-curricular student organization component of the career and technical education programs that provide students opportunities for continued development and implementation of classroom instruction.

Co-curricular - Co-curricular activities are those that reflect what is included in the curriculum, but they are performed outside of the classroom. Co-curricular events are in direct support of the curriculum.

Competitive event - Students prepare for and compete against each other in various marketing oriented events, with effectiveness based upon adopted industry standards and in turn judged by leaders in industry. Competitive events may include written manuals, roles plays, team decision making, or other activities that are congruent with sound educational practices and accurately portray and simulate marketing principles.

DECA - Once the acronym for Distributive Clubs of America, DECA is a co-curricular student organization for Marketing Education students.

DECA Advisor - The adult sponsor of a DECA Chapter, typically a marketing education teacher.

DECA Chapter - A local DECA unit in a high school setting.

DECA State Advisor - State level representative for National DECA.

Responsibilities include but are not limited to: state membership rolls, chapter education programs, coordination and implementation of State Leadership Conference (SLC).

District Leadership Conference (DLC) - DLC is the tournament of thirteen marketing oriented competitive events. Opportunities to compete in the district or regional level event are provided to all DECA members. This precursor to SLC, often determines who is permitted to move on and participate in the SLC event.

International Career Development Conference (ICDC) - ICDC is the national meeting where thousands of students, advisors, business persons and alumni gather for several days of DECA excitement. Most participants are at ICDC to compete in one of DECA's competency-based competitive events. The top competitors in each event are recognized for their outstanding achievement.

State Leadership Conference (SLC) - SLC is a tournament of marketing oriented competitive events. Opportunities to compete are provided to all DECA members across the state.

Written Competitive Events - Competitive marketing events composed of individuals or teams not to exceed three participants in which a carefully

prescribed document consisting of between ten to thirty pages is a component of the event. The written component depending upon the event accounts for sixty to seventy points of a one-hundred point scale. The remaining points are earned as the result of an oral presentation evaluated by judges. Written Competitive Events are competitive events at the SLC and ICDC level only.

## OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

Chapter I introduced DECA, an Association of Marketing Students, as the student organization component of Marketing Education co-curricular program. DECA's projects and activities based instructional methods of reports, role plays, team events, oral presentations, simulations or other creative formats were to be utilized as augmented learning experiences in which students were encouraged to test learned competencies via competitive events. Chapter I also established the research goals, the background and significance of the study, its limitations and assumptions, the procedures used, and the list of definitions as they pertained to this study.

Chapter II of this study provided a review of the literature pertaining to the establishment, definition, performance and participation of marketing education students in DECA written competitive events. Chapter III concentrated on the methods and procedures employed to conduct this study. Chapter IV presented the findings of this study. Chapter V summarized the findings of the research, draw conclusions based upon the findings, and conveyed recommendations based upon the conclusions.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to determine factors that contributed to Virginia Marketing Education's low participation rate in state and national DECA competitive written events. While the purpose, goals and objectives of the DECA written events were clearly defined in the literature, little has been written on the factors contributing to written event participation. Although studies were vetted to yield why advisors do not incorporate CTSO's as part of their curriculum, no studies were identified that specifically addressed participation in DECA competitive written events in the state of Virginia or any other state. Therefore, this chapter will address the literature findings in three ways. The first section discussed the history of DECA and how it evolved. The second component reviewed the many components of DECA with attention given to the competitive events. The last section addressed effective methods and frameworks used by successful written events practitioners.

#### HISTORY OF DECA

The history of DECA, the Marketing Education co-curricular student organization, can be traced to retail sales. In 1905, Lucinda Prince prepared a program for high school girls, training them for careers in retail sales in Boston, Massachusetts (Berns, 1996). She convinced local retailers that her trained salespeople could outperform those who lacked the same training. Not only was this the first vocational cooperative program, but it also highlighted the

importance and the relevance of competition in evaluating marketing skill competencies.

In 1946, the Distributive Education Clubs of America (DECA) was incorporated and organized around an ambitious goal: to improve educational and career opportunities in marketing, management and entrepreneurship for students. DECA's first national conference was held in Memphis, Tennessee, in 1947. "More than 100 students and sponsors representing 22 states participated in the three-day conference" (Berns, 1996, p. 7). As the conferences grew larger, more delegates meant an increased opportunity to demonstrate learned skills and experiences in an organized setting. This process led to the creation of the competitive events program.

DECA continually sought to improve the competitive events program. In order for the competency-based events to remain relevant, DECA would continually add and modify the events to reflect the changes in business and society.

Since its inception, DECA has remained on the forefront of educational innovation, working with business and industry to integrate academic achievement with career and technical skills. Today with 180,000 student members and faculty advisors, DECA functions as a co-curricular student organization to over 5,000 marketing education programs in secondary and postsecondary schools across the United States, its territories and Canada (DECA Virginia Website, 2005).



There are three parts that compose the integrated Marketing Education curriculum. The first part is the written or classroom based instructional component. The second part is the cooperative work training. Students in the General Marketing curricula work outside the classroom at a training station. The training station allows students to apply many of the skills learned in the classroom. The third part of the curriculum is DECA, a student organization for Marketing Education students. All marketing related activities not performed either in the classroom or at the training station fall under the umbrella of vocational student organization (Bell, 1989).

Marketing Education is a co-curricular course of study. Co-curricular activities are an extension of the curriculum. Successful programs offer students opportunities to participate in cooperative learning groups through these organizations. Co-curricular activities provide students with concrete applications and examples of how course knowledge skills are pertinent to their future. Students also develop relationships with teachers and peers. In a letter addressed to Career and Technical Education administrators, August 29, 2000, Neils Brooks, Director Office of Career, Technical, and Adult Education Services for the state of Virginia wrote the following: "The vocational student organizations in Virginia are co-curricular not extracurricular in nature...To meet the intent of state regulations and federal definition, a vocational student organization must support and be an integral part of the instructional program."

## COMPETITIVE EVENTS

DECA competitive events recognize academic and vocational excellence as the building blocks to successful careers in marketing, merchandising, management, and entrepreneurship. Competency-based competitive events are learning activities designed to evaluate participants' skills and knowledge in marketing, management, and entrepreneurship. In effect, they are demonstrations of occupational proficiency. They measure occupational knowledge, creativity, basic and advanced thinking and communication skills (DECA, 2005).

DECA members and advisors employ the competitive events program to demonstrate the relationship between marketing education curriculum and the needs of business and industry. For this reason, DECA has wide support and sponsorship from many business leaders. The support is evident at the District and State Leadership Conference (SLC) through the participation of judging by relevant industry experts. Support at the national level is marked by the participation of industry leaders in the judging, as well as with the sponsorship of nationally recognized companies and foundations that contribute monies and resources in the form of monetary rewards and scholarships for event winners.

DECA offers competitive events with a focus in marketing, management and entrepreneurship. The competitive events are unique. The events challenge student knowledge of marketing and business in practical, realistic situations. The students apply lessons learned in the classroom, on the job, and through DECA experiences.

DECA competitive events are a vital part of its dynamic, student-centered program of personal and leadership development. According to DECA, Inc., the objectives and goals of its competitive events program are as follows:

1. To contribute to the development of skills necessary for careers in marketing, merchandising, management and entrepreneurship.
2. To evaluate student achievement of skills through careful measurement devices.
3. To provide opportunities for student and team recognition.
4. To provide constructive avenues for individual or team expression, initiative and creativity.
5. To motivate students to assume responsibility for self-improvement and self-discipline.
6. To provide a vehicle for students to demonstrate (via performance indicators) their acquired skills through individual or team activities.
7. To help students acquire a realistic self-concept through individual or team activities.
8. To help students to participate in an environment of cooperation and competition.
9. To provide visibility for educational goals and objectives of marketing education.

Competitive events address many marketing areas and specialized disciplines. The disciplines range from apparel and accessories to e-commerce, to vehicle and petroleum marketing. The competitive event formats used to judge competencies are different. Some of the events are one and/or two member events that use a written comprehensive examination and role-play scenarios to assess achievement. Other events are composed of single and/or two member teams utilizing multiple choice comprehensive examinations and case study role-

play scenarios to assess achievement (DECA, 2004). The aforementioned events are not considered written events.

Written competitive events consist of two components, a written document either ten (10) pages or thirty (30) pages in length accounting for 70% of the total, and an oral presentation component making up the remaining 30% of the total score. Similar to the non-written events, a few written events are single participant events and others may have up to three (3) participants.

Another important differentiation between the non-written and written events is the number of events and venues of competition. The non-written events are contested at the local or district level. Premised upon achievement at the district level, a prerequisite for moving onto the state competition, the student becomes eligible for the State Leadership Conference (SLC). In order to compete in non-written events at the SLC level, students must achieve winner status at the district level.

Written events, however, are first contested at the SLC level; there are no district level competitions. Written events do not have the additional district competition step found in the non-written events. Written event competitors who place well at the SLC are eligible to compete at the national competition level, International Career Development Conference (ICDC). The total number of competitive events taking place at the 2005 ICDC held in Anaheim, California, was thirty-seven (37). Of those 37 events, seventeen (17) were written events (DECA, 2004).

## RESEARCH AND EFFECTIVE METHODS

The research conducted for this study yielded scant information directly related to factors that contribute to student participation in competitive written events. However, research did reveal a few studies where the teachers' participation in vocational education and successful integration of Career and Technical Student Organizations (CTSO's) was identified. Although these do not directly address the subject area of this research, inferences and correlations may be drawn.

Davis surveyed career and technical teachers to find out why they did not incorporate CTSO's into the curriculum. The reasons given by the teachers who do not integrate CTSO's in their curriculum were numerous. The study on the non-participation of vocational education teachers in vocational programs in Pennsylvania synthesized the following as reasons for not integrating CTSO's in their curriculum (Hudson, 2004):

- Respondents did not consider Vocational Student Organizations as an integral part of the curriculum
- Teachers felt they should receive extra compensation for participation.
- Teachers indicated they did not have time for student organization activities.

Additional reasons for not starting a CTSO collected from surveys included:

- Student dues are too high.
- School activity period is not provided.
- After-school activities transportation is not provided.
- Organization activities take up too much after-school and weekend time.
- Students are not interested in CTSO activities.
- Parents are not supportive of CTE organizations.

The issue of CTSO growth and participation was also the subject of a January, 2000, CTSO Executive Directors forum. The forum was composed of

five national CTSO executive directors. It addressed several issues, trends, and obstacles facing CTSO's. In the end, the executives agreed the key to CTSO success was having an enthusiastic local advisor. As with any successful organization, "It's not what you say, it's how you feel about what you say." If an organization is not composed of persons with this positive attitudes, then success cannot have a chance (Webcast, 2000).

Although little information existed addressing written competitive event participation, a plethora of information was identified pertaining to the methods and procedures for putting together successful written events. One source was the DECA Advisor. The DECA Advisor, DECA's Professional Division newsletter, informs chapter advisors about national DECA events and programs. It was published seven times a year and was also available on the web. Each of the 5,000 chapter advisors received an issue of the newsletter in a chapter management packet. A popular column was the Advisor Corner. It featured advice from advisors, and information on a variety of issues ranging from chapter management to competitive events. The research identified twelve articles in the years 2001-2004 that specifically dealt with written competitive events. The articles dealt with preparation and methodology, to properly matching student abilities to particular events.

In addition DECA also published written event manuals and reproduced national written event winning samples from previous years. The written assistance guide provided definitions and examples of written components to aid students in preparation of written events. This teaching tool helped both

experienced and novice teachers work with their students in planning and development of projects and lessen the confusions as to what was allowable for the written events (DECA Guide, 2004).

On the Virginia DECA website, the “Why should I bother with written event and chapter projects?” detailed how students and teachers could become more proficient in written competitive events. The website addressed: where to find resources, motivation of students, “chunking” material into smaller parts, establishing time frames, deciding which written event is the right fit, determining strengths and weaknesses, as well as a section titled, “Putting it All Together, a six step approach for success” (DECA Virginia Website, 2005).

## SUMMARY

As noted in the literature reviewed, ample information was identified dealing with the history, goals and objectives of DECA. However, little research was uncovered that addressed the problem of this study: Determining factors that contribute to Virginia Marketing Education low participation rate in the state and national DECA competitive written events. Studies have been conducted that parallel some of the components found in this study, but no study was found that directly spoke to the factors affecting participation rates in competitive written events. It was true that correlations may be drawn from other studies and from antidotal evidence. Even though the factors identified in the studies found in the literature review may help to guide this research study, in order to draw conclusions and state recommendations for this particular study on written event

participation, further research was needed. Chapter III addressed the methods and procedures utilized to research this data.



## CHAPTER III

### METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to determine factors that contributed to Virginia Marketing Education's low participation rate in the state and national DECA competitive written events. Chapter III includes the population, instrument design, methods of data collection, statistical analysis, and summary of the methods and procedures used to conduct this study.

### POPULATION

The population of this study consisted of all Virginia Marketing Education Teachers/DECA chapter advisors listed on the 2004-2005 Virginia DECA State rolls. This population numbered 400 teacher/advisors.

### INSTRUMENT DESIGN

An anonymous survey instrument was developed containing multiple choice, open-ended and closed-ended items. The researcher designed the survey by first referring to the research objectives and subsequently created items to match each. Multiple choice items were crafted to collect institutional information. A Likert Scale (5 strongly agree-1 strongly disagree) followed each of the closed-ended items relating to the research goals. Close-ended items were utilized to encourage greater participation, as well as to facilitate tabulation and analysis. Open-ended items at the end of the survey were included to allow respondents the opportunity to express their opinions and attitudes. The open-

ended items also provided insight as to the motives for the respondent's answers to the closed-ended items (see Appendix A).

## METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

The anonymous survey instrument along with a cover letter (Appendix B) was electronically distributed to all Virginia DECA chapter advisors. The electronic data collection method was used for several reasons. One, the researcher believed this was the most effective way to harvest a large sample size, thus increasing research reliability. Second, chapter advisors were used to using electronic communication on a daily basis. Third, electronic distribution provided for the expeditious distribution and redistribution (follow-up) of information. Finally, electronic data collection also afforded the researcher fiscal benefits as well. The electronic distribution was facilitated by using the 2004-2005 school year Virginia DECA Advisor database. The Virginia DECA State Advisor facilitated the distribution of the survey with a State Advisor memorandum (Appendix C) which included a cover letter and the electronic survey instrument as attachments. Once completed by the respondents, the instruments were electronically mailed to the researcher. Participants were given ten days to respond to the instrument. A follow-up resubmission of the instrument and follow-up letter (Appendix D) was sent to those participants who did not respond within the ten day period. In order to protect the participants, at the conclusion of the study all electronic and hard copy data were destroyed.

## STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Upon receiving the data, the mean for each survey statement was calculated and recorded. The data were interval in nature; therefore, appropriate descriptive statistics were utilized. In addition, cross-tabulations were conducted to compare the DECA chapters who participated in written competitive events and DECA chapters who do not participate in written competitive events.

## SUMMARY

Chapter III outlined the methods and procedures utilized in this descriptive research study. This chapter outlined the research population, instrument design, methods of data collection, and statistical analysis. Chapter IV will address the findings of the data.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine factors that contributed to Virginia Marketing Education low participation rate in the state and national DECA competitive written events. An anonymous survey instrument containing multiple choice, closed-ended and open-ended items, was electronically distributed to all Virginia DECA chapter advisors.

Multiple choice items were crafted to collect institutional information. A Likert Scale (5 strongly agree-1 strongly disagree) followed each of the closed-ended items relating to the research goals. Close-ended items were utilized to encourage greater participation, as well as to facilitate tabulation and analysis. Open-ended items at the end of the survey were included to allow respondents the opportunity to express their opinions and attitudes. The open-ended items also provided insight as to the motives for the respondent's answers to the closed-ended items.

A mean analysis of each closed-ended item was calculated and rounded to the nearest one-hundredths. Each survey item was correlated to the research objective it addressed.

### REPORT OF FINDING

Of the (400) advisors who were electronically mailed the survey, 68 completed and resubmitted the survey. The overall rate of response to the electronic survey was 17%. Table 4.1 illustrates the survey response rate.

Table 4.1 - Survey Response Rate

	Advisors
Surveys submitted	400
Responses	68
Non- responses	332
Response rate	17%

The number of respondents who answered all the questions was (62). A total of six advisors did not answer the two open-ended questions. Of the total number of respondents, 91% answered all of the items including the two open format items. Table 4.2 illustrates the distinction between survey respondents who fully completed the survey.

Table 4.2 - Survey Response Item Completion Rate

	Number of Advisors	Percentage of Total
Answered all questions	62	91%
Did not answer open format questions	6	9%

## OBJECTIVE ONE

The first objective of the study was to identify Virginia DECA chapters who traditionally participate in competitive written events at the state level. Survey Questions 7 and 8 addressed this objective.

Question 7 asked, "How many students from your DECA chapter attended the 2005 SLC?" Of the 68 respondents, 67 or 99% sent at least 1 or more students to the 2005 SLC. Table 4.3 illustrates the results to multiple choice survey Question 7.

Table 4.3 - Rate Of DECA Chapter Attendance At 2005 SLC

Possible survey answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of the total
0 students	1	1%
1-3 students	19	28%
4-7 students	25	37%
8-11 students	5	7%
12+ students	18	26%
Total	68	100%

Question 8 asked, “How many students from your DECA chapter participated in written competitive events at the 2005 SLC?” Table 4.4 indicates of the 68 respondents 41 or 60% had at least one or more students participate in the written competitive events at the 2005 SLC. The remaining 27 respondents of the 68 or 40% did not have a student who participated in a written competitive event at the 2005 SLC. Table 4.4 illustrates the results to multiple choice survey Question 8.

Table 4.4 - Rate Of DECA Chapter Written Event Participation At 2005 SLC

Possible survey answers	Number of Responses	Percentage of the total
0 students	0	0
1-3 students	13	32%
4-7 students	15	37%
8-11 students	3	7%
12+ students	10	24%
Total	41	100%

## OBJECTIVE TWO

The second objective of the study was to identify Virginia DECA chapters who experience success in written events. Likert Scale survey Questions 15 and 16 addressed this objective.

In addition to isolating the survey responses to address the second objective of the study, the identification of Virginia DECA chapters who

experience success in written events, Table 4.5 delineates the overall degree of agreement as well as also distinguished the differences in attitudes or agreement of chapter advisors who participated in written events (participating chapters) compared to the attitudes of those responding chapter advisors who did not participate in written events (non-participating chapters).

Question 15 identified if the chapters experienced success in written events. Participating chapters had a relatively high degree of agreement with a 3.95 mean. The non-participating chapter's mean of 2.33 reflects disagreement.

Question 16 asked if the DECA chapter had experienced success in events other than written events. The degree of agreement with survey Question 16 was high for both the participating and non-participating chapter respondents, with the non-participating mean response of 4.22 slightly in more agreement than the participating mean of 3.98. The combined overall mean of 4.07 in Question 16 was considerable higher than the overall mean of 3.31 found in Question 15.

Table 4.5 - Virginia DECA Chapters Who Experience Success In Written Events

Question	Participating Chapters	Non-Participating Chapters	Overall
15. Our DECA chapter has experienced success in written events.	3.95	2.33	3.31
16. Our DECA chapter has experienced success in DECA events other than written events.	3.98	4.22	4.07

### OBJECTIVE THREE

The third objective of this study was to identify what demographic characteristics existed in DECA chapters who consistently participate in written competitive events. Both multiple choice and Likert Scale items were employed to address the third objective. The survey items used for identifying demographic characteristics were also divided into more defined areas. The third objective findings were dissected with respect to the following areas. The more defined areas and corresponding questions included: teacher demographics or characteristics which were identified in multiple choice Questions 1-3; chapter characteristics which were identified by multiple choices Questions 4-6; student demographics characteristics and traits which were assessed with Likert Scale items 12, 21-24, 27, and 29. Additionally, Likert Scale items 13, 17, 18, and 25 were isolated as questions under the extraneous environmental factor contributing to participation in written events.

Question 1 asked, "Which of the following best describes your number of years teaching marketing education?" While the participating chapter advisors tended to show a relatively even distribution, the non-participating chapter advisors tended to be more heavily weighted at the 16+ year end of the distribution continuum. The percentage scores revealed a distribution differential with the non-participating chapter advisors showing a higher percentage distribution (48%) of advisors with longer teaching tenure. The participating chapters illustrates a more evenly dispersed distribution of advisor teaching



experience with 4-7 years Marketing Education experience being the largest percentage at 32%. Table 4.6 illustrated the totals to the Question 1

Table 4.6 - Teacher Demographic: Years Teaching Marketing Education

Possible survey answers	Participating chapters		Non-participating Chapters	
	Raw #	% of Total	Raw #	% of Total
0-3 years	7	17%	3	11
4-7 years	13	32%	5	19
8-11 years	5	12%	5	19
12-15 years	5	12%	1	4
16+ years	11	27%	13	48
Total	41	100%	27	100%

Question 2 asked, “Which of the following statements is applicable to your education and experience? Both the participating and non-participating data appeared to mirror each other. However, it must be mentioned that 10% or 3 of the non-participating chapter advisors did not answer Question 2. Table 4.7 represented the totals to Question 2.

Table 4.7 - Teacher Demographic: Education And Experience

Possible survey answers	Participating chapters		Non-participating Chapter	
	Raw #	% of Total	Raw #	% of Total
Immediately began teaching upon graduation from college	14	34%	8	30%
Worked outside of education 1-3 before teaching Marketing Education.	5	12%	4	15%
Worked outside of education 4-7 before teaching Marketing Education.	21	51%	11	41%
Was an educator in another subject area before teaching Marketing Education.	1	2%	1	4%
Total	41	100%	*24	*90%

Question 3 asked, “How long have you been teaching at your present school?” The responses to Question 3 indicated the distribution of tenure at one’s

present school for participating chapter advisors and non-participating chapter advisors appeared to be comparatively the same percentage scores with the exception of 8-11 years and 12-15 years categories. Table 4.8 detailed the finding to Question 3.

Table 4.8 - Teacher Demographic: Tenure At Present School

Possible survey answers	Participating chapters		Non-participating Chapter	
	Raw #	% of Total	Raw #	% of Total
0-3 years	11	27%	10	37%
4-7 years	14	34%	8	30%
8-11 years	2	5%	3	11%
12-15 years	7	17%	1	4%
16+ years	7	17%	5	19%
Total	41	100%	27	100%

Question 4 asked, “How many students are enrolled in your high school?”

The responses to Question 4 revealed 75% of participating chapters and 78% of non-participating chapters had high school student enrollments of 1001 or more students. The data further uncovered the fact that 22 or 53% of participating chapters had school student enrollments of 1501 students or more. Conversely, 10 or 37% of the non-participating chapters had school student enrollments of 1501 student or more. Table 4.9 detailed the findings to Question 4.

Table 4.9 - Chapter characteristics: High school Student Enrollment

Possible survey answers	Participating chapters		Non-participating Chapter	
	Raw #	% of Total	Raw #	% of Total
Under 500 students	3	7%	2	7%
501-1000 students	7	17%	4	15%
1001-1500 students	9	22%	11	41%
1501-2000 students	10	24%	4	15%
2000+ students	12	29%	6	22%
Total	41	100%	27	100%

Question 5 asked, “Which of the following categories best describes the number of paid DECA members in your chapter?” The data collected showed the membership distribution to be relatively even in non-participating chapters, the same could not be stated about the membership distribution of the participating chapters. Twenty-two or 54% of participating chapters had 90 or more members. Table 4.10 illustrated the finding to Question 5.

Table 4.10 - Chapter Characteristics: Number Of DECA Chapter Members

Possible survey answers	Participating chapters		Non-participating Chapter	
	Raw #	% of Total	Raw #	% of Total
Under 10 members	0	0%	0	0%
11-30 members	4	10%	8	30%
31-60 members	8	20%	6	22%
61-90 members	7	17%	6	22%
90+ members	22	54%	7	26%
Total	41	100%	27	100%

Question 6 asked, “Which of the following best describes the gender composition of your DECA chapter?” Similar to Question 5, it was interesting to note that in chapters that do participate in written events, 61% of the chapters had an equal amount of male and female students, while the non-participating chapters had a 37% equal gender composition. Table 4.11 detailed the finding to Question 6

Table 4.11 - Chapter Characteristics: DECA Member Gender Composition

Possible survey answers	Participating chapters		Non-participating Chapter	
	Raw #	% of Total	Raw #	% of Total
Equal males and females	25	61%	10	37%
More males members	5	12%	5	19%
More female members	11	27%	12	44%
Total	41	100%	27	100%

Table 4.12 detailed the findings to survey questions that addressed general student characteristics and participation in written competitive events. With the exception of Question 12 and 24, the overall data results category suggested that advisor responses appeared in the neither agree nor disagree range. Question 12, evoked the most skewed response among all of the questions with chapter advisors agreeing that students are able to make connections between class work and DECA activities. Question 24, indicated that advisors do not generally believe students who participate in written events are more introverted when compared to other DECA competitive events students. In Question 22, the participating chapter's advisors moderately disagreed that students lacked fundamental skill necessary to craft a written event document, while non-participating chapter advisors neither agreed nor disagreed that students lacked the fundamental skills necessary to craft a written event document. Although both participating chapter advisors and non-participating advisors neither agreed nor disagreed in Question 23 that students who participate in written events were more motivated than students who participated in other DECA events, the data did indicate non-participating advisors agreed slightly more that student motivation is a component in written event participation. In Question 27, advisors neither agreed nor disagreed that students who participated in written events have better written skills compared to other DECA students. The mean score of 3.32 to Question 29 indicated the advisors only slightly agreed that more female students participated in written competitive events.

Table 4.12 - Student Characteristic Or Traits

Question	Participating Chapters	Non-Participating Chapters	Overall
12. Students are able to make the connection between class work and DECA activities	4.20	3.81	4.04
21. Students do not want to put in the time needed to construct a well written event document.	3.24	4.07	3.57
22. Students lack fundamental skills necessary to put together a well-crafted written event.	2.73	3.11	2.88
23. Students who participate in written events are more motivated than students who participate in other DECA events.	3.44	3.52	3.47
24. Students who participate in written events are more introverted when compared to other DECA competitive event students.	2.44	2.67	2.53
27. Students who participate in written events have better written skills compared to other DECA students.	3.20	3.33	3.25
29. Generally more female students participate in written competitive events.	3.49	3.07	3.32

Table 4.13 isolates questions that address extraneous environmental factors that might effect participation in written events. The overall scores indicated agreement with the exception of Question 17. In Question 17, advisors neither agreed nor disagreed that they did not have enough time to effectively implement a written event. The overall scores indicated DECA chapters receive administrative support (4.12 mean), advisors believed written events took more preparation compared to other DECA events (4.07 mean), and competitive events did in fact reflect real world marketing practices (4.00 mean).

Table 4.13 - Extraneous Environmental Factors Contributing To Participation In Written Events

Question	Participating Chapters	Non-Participating Chapters	Overall
13. The school administration supports our DECA program.	4.27	3.89	4.12
17. DECA advisors do not have enough time to effectively implement a written events program.	3.00	3.59	3.24

18. Written events consume more time and take more preparation compared to other DECA events.	4.22	4.22	4.07
25. Written competitive events reflect real world marketing practices.	4.24	3.63	4.00

#### OBJECTIVE FOUR

The fourth objective of this study was to identify techniques used by the chapter advisors to garner student participation in written competitive events. Similar to the objective three, the fourth objective was also composed of sub-objectives. The fourth objective was divided into two sections or areas. One section addressed techniques used to garner student participation and the second related part identified materials used by chapter advisors when teaching competitive DECA events. The identification of techniques was addressed with multiple choice items 9, and 10, as well as Likert Scale items 11, 14, 19, 20, 26, and 28. Material and tools used to aid the teaching of competitive events was addressed by Likert Scale items 30-36.

In addition to the aforementioned questions and question forms, two open ended format Questions, 37 and 38, were used to elicit more information and insight from the advisors. The summarized results of the open-ended questions fall under the objective four domain.

Question 9 asked, "While preparing for SLC, on a weekly average basis, how much time do you believe you spent on DECA written events?" The non-participating chapters did not provide information for this question. Table 4.14 codifies the data from Question 9.

Table 4.14 - Time Spent Per Week On DECA Written Events

Possible survey answers	Participating chapters		Non-participating Chapter	
	Raw #	% of Total	Raw #	% of Total
0-2 hours	12	29%	N/A	N/A
2-4 hours	17	41%	N/A	N/A
4-6 hours	6	15%	N/A	N/A
6+ hours	6	15%	N/A	N/A
Total	41	100%	N/A	N/A

Question 10 asked, “While preparing for SLC, on a weekly average basis, how much time do you believe the participating student needs to spend on DECA written events?” Table 4.15 illustrated the data for Question 10. The data in Table 4.15 indicated that 59% of non-participating chapter advisors believed students needed to spend 0-2 hours per week in preparation for written events. Data in Table 4.15 parallels the finding found in Table 4.14 with respect to participating advisors. In Table 4.14, 41% of participating chapter advisors indicated spending 2-4 hours per week on written events preparation. The same data was reflected in Table 4.15 with 46% of participating chapter advisors indicating that students needed to spend 2-4 hours per week on written events preparation

Table 4.15 - Time Students Should Spend In Preparation For Written Events

Possible survey answers	Participating chapters		Non-participating Chapter	
	Raw #	% of Total	Raw #	% of Total
0-2 hours	2	5%	16	59%
2-4 hours	19	46%	6	22%
4-6 hours	12	29%	2	8%
6+ hours	8	20%	3	11%
Total	41	100%	27	100%

Table 4.16 concentrated on the survey items specific to techniques used by chapter advisors to assist in written competitive event participation. In Question 11 the advisors were in overall agreement that DECA activities were

integrated as part of classroom instruction. In Question 14, while the overall 3.78 mean score indicated a general agreement that students competing in DECA events were encouraged to work on their project during class time, the data also revealed participating chapters with a 4.07 mean agreement, which is much higher than the 3.33 mean agreement score of the non-participating chapters. Question 19 revealed the advisors were in slight disagreement with using the State DECA specialist services in composing written event documents. The data in Question 20 supported that participating chapter advisors consult other DECA advisors when teaching written events. In Question 26, both participating and non-participating chapter advisors with (3.98 mean) and (3.63 mean) respectfully, moderately agreed written events had more controllable parameters when compared to role-play events. The data in Question 28 revealed both the participating and non-participating chapter advisors were in disagreement or did not use advisory panels in evaluating competitive events prior to competition.

Table 4.16 - Techniques Used By Chapter Advisors

Question	Participating Chapters	Non-Participating Chapters	Overall
11. DECA activities are highly integrated into my classroom instruction.	4.07	3.56	3.87
14. Students competing in DECA events are encouraged to work on their projects during class time.	4.07	3.33	3.78
19. The State DECA specialist has assisted my class in composing written events.	3.20	2.30	2.84
20. I have consulted other DECA advisors when teaching written events.	3.90	2.78	3.46
26. Written event are have more controllable parameters when compared to role-play events.	3.98	3.63	3.84
28. Our DECA chapter used advisory panels in evaluating our competitive events.	2.85	2.41	2.68



Table 4.17 identified the finding to the question; “The DECA Advisor has a variety of materials and tools at their disposal when teaching competitive DECA events. Please indicate your degree of agreement as to the use of listed materials with respect to DECA written competitive event success.”

In addition to the means for each material or tool, a ranking column was also included to ascertain which tools the advisor believed were most helpful to achieving DECA written competitive event success. The data indicated that chapter advisors who participated in written events agree that number 33, “Sample DECA written events” with a mean 4.29 and rank of 1 was an important tool to use when composing written events. Non-participating advisors ranked number 36, “Textbooks” with a mean 3.59 and a number 1 ranking. Conversely, the participating chapter advisors scored “Textbooks” with a mean of 3.05 or a 7 ranking, the lowest among the seven materials and tools listed. Participating chapter advisors agreed with a 4.05 mean that number 32, “DECA Images Products” were useful in written competitive success. The participating chapter advisors agreed the “Virginia DECA” website, number 35, was useful with a mean of 3.76 and a 3 ranking. The non-participating chapter advisors scored the entire group of listed tools and materials means within the neither agreed nor disagreed scores. The participating chapter advisor means were dispersed in the agree range with “Sample DECA” written events and “DECA Images Products” receiving 4.29 mean and 4.05 mean, respectfully. “The Virginia DECA” website, “The DECA Advisor” scored in the higher range of neither agreed nor disagreed with mean scores of 3.76 and 3.71. Chapter advisors classified “LAP’s”, “Mark-

Ed Materials” and Textbooks” in the neither agree nor disagree range. The overall mean scores indicated that advisors agreed “Sample DECA” written events (3.97 mean) were useful written event tools. With the lowest overall mean of 3.21, the chapter advisors neither agreed nor disagreed that “Mark-Ed Materials” were useful tools for written event success.

Table 4.17 - Material And Tools Used To Effectuate Teaching Competitive Events

Question	Participating Chapters		Non-Participating Chapters		Overall	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
30. Mark-Ed Materials	3.21	6	3.33	7	3.21	7
31. LAP's	3.22	5	3.37	6	3.28	5
32. DECA Images Products	4.05	2	3.48	4	3.82	2
33. Sample DECA written events	4.29	1	3.48	3	3.97	1
34. The DECA Advisor	3.71	4	3.52	2	3.63	3
35. Virginia DECA website	3.76	3	3.37	5	3.60	4
36. Textbooks	3.05	7	3.59	1	3.26	6

### OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

The electronic survey consisted of three question formats divided as follows: ten multiple choice, twenty-six Likert Scale and two open ended questions. The two open-ended questions permitted respondents to expound upon their answers and provide more insight. Sixty-two or 91% of the respondents answered the two opened-ended questions. The responses were categorized in two ways: short one or two sentence responses and multiple sentence longer responses.

Table 4.18 detailed the response rates to opened-ended format survey questions 37 and 38. The two questions were:

- Question 37: What do you believe is the primary reason for success in DECA competitive written events?
- Question 38: How do you get students excited about participating in DECA competitive written events?

The following excerpted statements reflected common responses to Question 37 by advisors whose chapters participated in written competitive events:

- The paper and presentation counts as their mid-term.
- The State Advisor came to our school last year to give us "tips" on becoming better presenters as well as choosing topics that would allow our students to be successful.
- It has to be approached as a mission. Start as a classroom grade and after they are hooked move to a competitive position... this appeals to many students.
- Our success comes from following the directions, utilizing all available DECA support, wonderful support from our CTE Coordinator and fellow CTE teachers at our school.
- Former example papers and visuals for the students to look at...we purchase national winners from DECA every year.
- Motivated students willing to start early so they can make necessary rewrites to get the best finished product possible.
- A motivated student who takes ownership of the manual and makes it a priority.

The following excerpted statements reflect common responses to Question 38 by advisors whose chapters participated in written competitive events:

- Promote where ICDC will be. "Free" ticket to SLC but they also must compete at SLC in something.
- ...the motivation is the destination for ICDC.

- Traveling to Nationals - the opportunity to “make the stage”!
- They have no choice. All advanced students must participate in (help chair) a chapter project. Marketing students must (1) complete an advertising campaign and (2) a marketing research project through class. It is their choice as to whether they 'go the next step' to make it "SLC worthy." If we have more than 2, a panel of local judges selects the ones that go to State.
- We show videos of students winning on stage at SLC, reflecting the excitement that we all experience! We also talk in class about the competitions, relating experiences and timetables.
- Having other students who have participated talk to them. Show them their options and explain how it all works.

Table 4.18 - Open Ended Response Rate: Short Answers Vs. Multiple Sentences Answers

Answer Type	Number of advisors	Percentage of Total Answered
Short answers (one or two sentence responses)	39	63%
Multiple sentence answers	23	37%
Total	62	100%

## SUMMARY

This chapter presented the data collected to determine factors that contributed to Virginia Marketing Education’s low participation rate in the state and national DECA competitive written events. A survey was electronically distributed to all Virginia marketing education teachers/DECA advisors. The overall response rate was 17%. The chapter also addressed and reported findings for each of the four research objectives. In Chapter V, a summary of the data analysis will be presented. Conclusions based upon the data will be drawn and recommendations for further studies will be put forward.

## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine factors that contributed to Virginia Marketing Education low participation rate in the state and national DECA competitive written events. Chapter V will summarize the findings of this study and offer conclusions and recommendation for further studies.

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to determine factors that contributed to Virginia Marketing Education low participation rate in the state and national DECA competitive written events. To guide this research, the following objectives were established:

- Identify Virginia DECA chapters who traditionally participate in competitive written events at the state level.
- Identify Virginia DECA chapters who experience success in written events at the state level.
- Identify what student demographic characteristics exist in DECA chapters who consistently participate in written competitive events.
- Identify techniques used by chapter advisors to garner student participation in written competitive events.

Each year Virginia high school students were exposed to a variety of different learning experiences. Students who have a particular interest in the fields of marketing, management, and entrepreneurship were offered the

opportunity to study these disciplines in more detail by enrolling in Marketing Education courses. The Marketing Education curriculum consisted of three interrelated parts, including classroom instruction, cooperative education (on-the-job-training) and DECA, an Association of Marketing Students. DECA is a student organization created for Marketing Education students, but unlike most student organizations or clubs, DECA had a co-curricular organizational designation, rather than an extra-curricular designation.

DECA's activities were specifically designed to provide applied learning scenarios for high school students in marketing, management, and entrepreneurial competencies. Although the number of activities is infinite, they all must be centered on one of the four guiding principles of DECA: vocational understanding, civic consciousness, social intelligence and leadership development (DECA, 2004).

Every year Virginia Marketing Education students assembled in order to support the four DECA principles. This support was exhibited in the competitive events consisting of DECA projects and activities that may be in the form of reports, role plays, team events, oral presentations, simulations, or other creative formats.

Virginia had historically been near the top of the national student enrollment when compared to other state DECA enrollments. As of December 15, 2004, Virginia DECA announced its 11,000<sup>th</sup> member, shattering the previous annual membership high of 10,400 (DECA, Virginia, 2004). Although this growth was positive with respect to membership numbers, the growth was not reflected

in the number of students participating in DECA's written competitive events.

Why was there an increase in the membership and not an increase in the written competitive events? Have the Virginia DECA chapter advisors abandoned written competitive events as being too much work and resolved themselves and their students to participation in events without a written component? Using these and similar questions as guides, objectives were established and research was conducted in order to uncover the factors that contribute to the low rate of participation in Virginia DECA's written competitive events.

Limitations and assumptions were drawn in reference to the research. An exhaustive literature review yielded that while the purpose, goals and objectives of the DECA written events were clearly defined in the literature; little had been written on the factors contributing to written event participation. Therefore the review of the literature addressed the literature findings in three ways. The category discussed the history and evolution of DECA. The second component reviewed the many components of DECA with attention given to the competitive events. The last section addressed effective methods and frameworks used by successful written events practitioners.

The population of this study consisted of all Virginia Marketing Education Teachers/DECA chapter advisors listed on the 2004-2005 Virginia DECA State rolls. This population numbered 400 teacher/advisors. An anonymous survey instrument was developed containing multiple choice, open-ended, and closed-ended items. The instrument was designed by first referring to the research objectives and developing survey items that correlated to each specific objective.

The anonymous survey along with cover letter was electronically distributed to all Virginia DECA chapter advisors. Once completed by the respondents, the instruments were electronically mailed to the researcher. Participants were given ten days to respond to the instrument. A follow-up resubmission of the instrument and follow-up letter was sent to those participants who did not respond within the ten day period.

Upon receiving the data, the mean for each Likert Scale item was calculated and recorded. Overall 17% of the total population responded to the survey. Of the 400 Virginia Marketing Education Teachers/DECA chapter advisors, 68 responded. The data were interval in nature; therefore, appropriate descriptive statistics were utilized. In addition, cross-tabulations were conducted to compare the DECA chapters who participated in written competitive events and DECA chapters who did not participate in written competitive events. The results were arranged by research goals to determine tendencies of the data.

## CONCLUSIONS

Below were the research objectives set out to be answered by this study, as well as the conclusions that have been drawn based upon the data collected.

- Identify Virginia DECA chapters who traditionally participate in competitive written events at the state level.

Two of the thirty-eight survey items were related to this research objective. Both questions were multiple choice formats. Question 7 asked, "How many students from your DECA chapter attended the 2005 SLC?", and Question 8 asked, "How many students from your DECA chapter participated in written



competitive events?” The data showed 17% of the total Teacher/Advisor population (400 Virginia Marketing Teachers/Advisors) who responded to the survey, 67 of the 68 or 99% sent at least one or more students to the 2005 SLC. The number of chapters who actually had one or more students participate in written events (participating chapter) at the 2005 SLC was 41 or 60% of the respondents. Although this information was illuminating, in reviewing the objective and the questions used to illicit information, some problems did appear to exist; notably, the objective stated chapters who “traditionally” participate in written events. The questions put forth to the respondents only addressed a single occasion or point in time rather than a protracted period of time which usually must take place in order for a “tradition” to become ensconced. In addition, because of the anonymity of the research methodology, a grouping of chapters was identified and not the identification of particular chapters. Although the responses were low for the population size, for purposes of this study, 41 or 60% of the respondents did participate in written events in the 2005 SLC. However, one cannot draw the conclusion that these same respondents “traditionally” participated in written events.

- Identify Virginia DECA chapters who experience success in written events.

Two of the thirty-eight survey items were related to this research objective. Both questions were Likert Scale format. As was determined by reviewing the data, participating chapters were in agreement (3.95 mean) that their chapter had experienced success in written events. Conversely, the non-participating

chapters had a 2.33 mean or relatively high level of disagreement with respect to success in written events. However, interestingly, when asked the question, "Our DECA chapter has experienced success in events other than written events," the chapters who did not participate in written events had a 4.22 mean score compared to 3.98 mean score of the participating chapters. It was interesting the non-participating chapter advisors identified with such a high level of agreement. Perhaps this information reflected a higher emphasize of the non-participating chapters on events other than written events. When combined, the overall scores did indicate, DECA chapters do experience more success in events other than written events (4.07 mean) compared to chapters that experienced success in written events (3.31 mean).

Similar to the first objective, problems with question interpretation may have plagued these survey items. The questions could have been interpreted in two ways. The respondents could have possibly interpreted the question to mean success in written events at the 2005 SLC; thus, viewing success from a recent perspective. Others may have interpreted the question in terms of a longer period of time. Neither of the questions provided a period of time by which to benchmark a chapter success in either the written events or events other than written events.

- Identify demographic characteristics that exist in DECA chapters who consistently participate in written in competitive events.

The third objective was not only addressed by the largest number of survey items (17). It also was dissected into more defined areas as well. The results do point to many interesting facts.

An analysis of teacher demographics showed that little differences between participating chapters and non-participating chapters with one exception. The one area of marked difference was in the area of “years of teaching Marketing Education.” Forty-eight percent of non-participating chapter advisors fell in the 16 or more years of teaching Marketing Education, while twenty-seven percent of the participating chapter advisors were in the same category. Is it possible that the more tenured teachers had an aversion to written events? The answer to this question did not fall under the purview of this study.

Participating chapters high school enrollment sizes are considerably different compared to non-participating chapters high school enrollments. The data revealed 22 or 53% of participating chapters have school enrollments of 1501 students or more. Conversely, 10 or 37% of non-participating chapters fell into this category.

A similar correlation yet larger disparity existed between participating and non-participating chapters was evident with respect to DECA membership size. Twenty-two or 54% of participating chapters had 90 or more members, while only 26% of non-participating chapters have 90 or more members. This data would indicate that large schools and larger DECA chapters were more likely to participate in written events. The reasons for this may be varied: from more advisors per chapter with shared responsibilities, to increased resource availability, to many more possibilities.

Although slight disparities existed between participating and non-participating chapter's, with respect to student demographic and characteristics

the data revealed both participating and non-participating chapter's advisors had similar attitudes. However, one question where advisors had moderately opposing responses was, "Students do not want to put in the time needed to construct a well written event document." While the participating chapter advisors scored the question with a 3.24 mean or neither agreed nor disagreed, the non-participating chapter advisors expressed their beliefs with a 4.07 mean or agreed with the statement. This may indicate that participating chapter advisors believed students were more easily motivated to construct a written event document, while the non-participating advisors had difficulty motivating students to construct a written event document. However, the trait of students motivation was addressed in Question 21, "Students who participate in written events are more motivated than students who participate in other DECA events", and the data told participating chapter advisors (3.44 mean) and non-participating chapter advisors (3.52 mean) were practically the same in their stances.

The remainder of the questions under the student characteristics or traits section revealed advisors were relatively neutral or neither agreed nor disagree that students lacked fundamental skills to craft a written document, written competitive events students were more introverted, or that written competitive event students had better writing skills than other students. This data indicated that advisors did not view students who participated in written events to be different than students who participated in other DECA events or any other

student for that matter. It would appear the advisors do not believe a particular type of student was a contributing factor to participation in written events.

The data on extraneous environmental factors that might contribute to participation in written events did not divulge many startling results save one. When asked, "DECA advisor do not have enough time to effectively implement a writer events program", the participating chapter advisors scored a 3.00 mean and the non-participating chapter advisors scored 3.59. The participating chapters advisors, those who have actually implemented a written events program, neither agreed nor disagreed with having sufficient time to employ a written events program, compared to non-participating chapter advisors who tended to agree they did not have enough time to execute a written events program. What made this finding interesting was those chapter advisors that had participated in written events were neutral on the time factor, while the non-participating chapter advisors, who may had never participated in written events, believed, felt, or perceive that they did not have enough time to conduct a written events program. However, to assume that the non-participating chapter advisors had never had experience would be incorrect. In fact many of the non-participating chapter advisors may have had previous experience with written events and those past experiences may possibly be reflected in the research data.

Both the participating chapter advisors (4.22 mean) and the non-participating chapter advisors (4.22 mean) agree, "Written events consume more time and take more preparation compared to other DECA events. The belief that

written events take more time compared to other DECA events may be a contributing factor to the written event low participation rates.

The remainder of the scores indicated all chapter advisors agreed that their school administration was supportive of their DECA programs, and written competitive events reflected real world marketing practices. Thus, the environmental condition wherein the DECA chapters exist appeared to be positive.

- Identify techniques used by chapter advisors to garner student participation in written competitive events.

Seventeen of the thirty-eight survey items were related to this research objective. The survey items utilized for this research objective included all three format questions used in the survey: multiple choice, closed-ended and open-ended questions. This objective was also divided into two smaller components. One section addressed techniques used to garner student participation and the second section identified materials used by chapter advisors when teaching competitive events.

Data showed that participating chapter advisors were in stronger agreement of incorporating DECA activities into classroom instruction and encouraging students competing in DECA events to work on their projects during class, when compared to non-participating chapter advisors. In addition, when asked "While preparing for SLC, on a weekly average basis, how much time do you believe the participating student needs to spend on DECA written events", fifty-nine percent the largest percentage grouping of non-participating chapters, stated 0-2 hours was needed. The participating chapter advisors, 46%, the

largest percentage grouping of participating chapter advisors, stated 2-4 hours was needed. It would appear, advisors integrating DECA activities into classroom instruction and encouraging students to work on DECA competitive events during class time had a positive effect on the participation in competitive written events.

The lowest two scores addressing the techniques component of this objective dealt with the use of outside assistance from the State DECA Specialist and the use of advisory panels to evaluate competitive events. Although these resources could also be defined as tools, the researcher determined them to be consultative resources whose value was in providing information on techniques. Although the participating chapters slightly agreed (3.20 mean) in consulting with the State DECA Specialist in composing written events, the overall scores indicated neither agree nor disagree to slightly disagree when consulting outside sources. It would appear the lack of outside consultation and advisory panel evaluations of competitive events was not a contributing factor to participation in written events, although a few of the open-ended responses mentioned both resources as being part of their competitive event success toolbox.

The data collected pertaining to material and tools used to effectuate teaching competitive events, the second component of the techniques objective showed the greatest disparity among all the survey responses. It was interesting to note the participating chapter advisors ranked materials more specific to competitive events higher, while the non-participating advisors ranked "textbooks" a more generalized tool highest. This data clearly showed chapters

who participated in written events utilized materials and tools specifically designed to assist with competitive events.

The data also may have uncovered another component not addressed by this study. Perhaps data on resources used to effectuate teaching competitive events was reflective of something else, a marketing teachers/advisors educational philosophy. The qualitative open-ended survey items permitted the respondents to expound upon the quantitative closed-ended survey items. The open-ended responses to the primary reason for success in DECA competitive events, suggested incorporating the written event as graded class room component, following directions to the "T", using old papers, and approaching written events in mission-like manner by establishing prescribed schedules and deadlines. Participating chapter advisors philosophy extols the idea of curriculum integration. The same can be said about the non-participating advisors with one caveat... the degree to which the DECA events were integrated into the class room. It appeared non-participating advisors had a tendency to focus less on the specific nature of the competitive events and more on the overarching marketing principles perhaps to the exclusion of DECA events. It appeared to be a matter of educational and curriculum emphasis. Some advisors employ instructional strategies by incorporating DECA activities and related competitive events into their programs to teach the marketing curriculum, while other advisors placed less emphasis on integrating DECA activities and related competitive events into their programs. The latter belief was expressed by some of the non-participating respondents. Two respondents asserted that some Virginia Marketing Education



programs teach DECA and competitive events exclusively and do not teach the marketing curriculum.

The answers to open-ended Question 38, “How do you get students excited about participating in DECA competitive written events”, provided considerable insight. The overwhelming response to the question was having past participating students talk to the students about their experiences. This was an obvious advantage to chapters who had students that participated in the written events, but what about chapters that did not have past successes to draw upon? Participating chapter advisors recommended making written projects a part of a class grade and selecting the best to go onto competition, “talking up” the idea of competition and traveling to ICDC, working collaboratively with other teachers in the school i.e., English departments and establishing working timelines.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study were premised upon 17% of the total population. At first look this may appear as low response to an inconsequential survey. However, upon further analysis, it was discovered the rate of response to the survey used in this study is not much lower than typical response rate of other surveys of the same population. Thus, the recommendations forwarded by this research can only be based upon the findings of the vocal and interested few.

It was obvious more research needed to be conducted in order to ascertain the factors that contribute to the low participation rate in competitive written events. One would suspect the rate of response to the survey instrument

used in this study might be an indication. This study raises more questions than it answered. It would appear at least a few chapters have the answers or the formula that lead to high participation and success in written events. It was believed a few of the successful chapters would be receptive to sharing their valuable information with others with the goal of more participation and the related benefits garnered by students who participated in real world educational opportunities.

It was important that more research be done to uncover the successful chapters and the characteristics that make them so. The researcher believed it was better and would prove to be more productive to study the successful chapters and discover what they were doing well, than to identify the study of not-so-successful chapters to determine why they were not doing so well. Although many characteristics make up a successful competitive written events program, once the successful chapters characteristic were discovered, they could be honed, messaged, and replicated to fit other chapters.

## REFERENCES

- Author. (2004). *The DECA Guide 2004-2005*. Reston, VA: Distributive Education Clubs of America, Inc.
- Bell, S. L. (1989). *A study of Vocational Student Organization Activities in State Education Agencies and the Relationship of Employability Skills* (Doctoral dissertation, Temple University, 1989).
- Berns, R. G. (1996). *Deca A Continuing Tradition of Excellence*. Reston, VA: Distributive Education Clubs of America, Inc.
- Brown, B.L. *CTE Student Organizations*. (2002). Retrieved February 10, 2005 from [www.ericacve.org/pubs.asp](http://www.ericacve.org/pubs.asp)..
- Brown, B.L. *Youth Organizations Myths and Realities*. (2002). Retrieved February 21, 2005 from [www.ericacve.org/pubs.asp](http://www.ericacve.org/pubs.asp).
- Camp, W., Jackson, R., Buser, B., Baldwin, E. (2000). *Vocational Student Organizations and Student Achievement*. National Center for Research in Vocational Education: Berkley, CA.
- Career and Technical Education Student Organizations*. Class notes OTED 501, Instructor Michael Koslowski, Spring 2004.
- Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Education. Letter to Career and Technical Education Administrators. (August 29, 2000). Retrieved February 12, 2004 from <http://www.Penk12.va.us/VDOE/instruction/CTE/memos/vso.html>
- CTSO's: Their Role and Impact in Student Development and Achievement*. (January 16, 2002). Web cast Transcription. Professional Reporters Inc.
- DECA, An Association of Marketing Students. (2004). Homepage. Retrieved February 10, 2005 from <http://www.deca.org/>
- Department of Education. (2004). Homepage. Retrieved October 10, 2004 from <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices>
- Department of Education. *Charting a New Course for Career and Technical Education*. (2003). <http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/lisit/ovae/pi/hsnit/papers/cte.doc>
- Gordon, H.R.D. (1999). *The History and Growth of Vocational Education in America*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Hudson, C. C., *Factors Related to Instructors Willingness to Serve as Vocational Industrial Clubs of America*. Retrieved February 15, 2005 from [http://www.hiceducation.org/Edu\\_Proceedings/Clemente%20Charles%20Hudson.pdf](http://www.hiceducation.org/Edu_Proceedings/Clemente%20Charles%20Hudson.pdf)

Huff, P.J. (2003). *A study on successful techniques of Deca chapters in competitive event at the district, state and national levels*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of Wisconsin-Stout.

Hyslop-Margison, E. J. *An Assessment of the Historical Arguments in Vocational Education Reform*. (2003) Retrieved February 17, 2005 from <http://www.scholar.lib.vt.edu/ejournals/JCTE/v17n1/hyslop.html>

Kelly, A.V. (1995). *Education and Democracy*. London: Paul Chapman.

Lind, B. (Advisor. February, 2004). *Tips for teaching through DECA written Events*. Reston, VA: Distributive Education Clubs of America, Inc.

*Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS): Final Report Available*. Retrieved February 10, 2005 from <http://www.academicinnovations.com/report.html>

Zirkle, C., & Connors, J. (2003). *The Contribution of Career and Technical Student Organizations to the Development and Assessment of Workplace Skills and Knowledge: A Literature Review*. Ohio State University.

## TABLE OF APPENDICES

Appendix A – Electronic Survey Instrument

Appendix B –Cover Letter

Appendix C – State Advisor memorandum

Appendix D – Follow-up Letter

## Appendix A

### Electronic Survey Instrument

## Participation in Virginia DECA's Written Competitive Events

Questions 1-10 are multiple-choice format. Please check the best response to each question.

**1. Which of the following categories best describes your number of years teaching marketing education?**

- 0-3  4-7  8-11  12-15  16+

**2. Which of the following statements is applicable to your education and experience?**

- Immediately began teaching Marketing Education upon graduating from college.  
 Worked outside of education for 1-3 years before teaching Marketing Education.  
 Worked outside of education for 4-7 years before teaching Marketing Education.  
 I was an educator in another subject area before teaching Marketing Education.

**3. How long have you been teaching at your present school?**

- 0-3  4-7  8-11  12-15  16+

**4. How many students are enrolled in your high school?**

- under 500  501-1000  1001-1500  1501-2000  2000+

**5. Which of the following categories best describes the number of paid DECA members in your chapter?**

- under 10  11-30  31-60  61-90  90+

**6. Which of the following best describes the gender composition of your DECA chapter?**

- Equal percentage males and females  Greater percentage of male students.  
 Greater percentage of female students.

**7. How many students from your DECA chapter attended the 2005 SLC?**

- 0  1-3  4-7  8-11  12+ (If you answered "0" to question 7 go to question 11.)

**8. How many students from your DECA chapter participated in written competitive events at the 2005 SLC?**

0  1-3  4-7  8-11  12+

**9. While preparing for SLC, on a weekly average basis, how much time do you believe you spent on DECA written events?**

0-2 hours  2-4 hours  4-6 hours  6+ hours

**10. While preparing for SLC, on a weekly average basis, how much time do you believe the participating student needs to spend on DECA written events?**

0-2 hours  2-4 hours  4-6 hours  6+ hours

Questions 11-29 are statements used to ascertain your degree of agreement or disagreement. Please check the response that best represents your feeling or opinions for each question.

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
11. DECA activities are highly integrated into my classroom instruction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Students are able to make the connection between class work and DECA activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. The school administration supports our DECA program.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Students competing in DECA events are encouraged to work on their projects during class time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Our DECA chapter has experienced success in written events.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Our DECA chapter has experienced success in DECA competitive events other than written events.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. DECA advisors do not have enough time to effectively	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



implement a written events program.

18. Written events consume more time and take more preparation compared to other DECA events.

19. The State DECA specialist has assisted my class in composing written events.

20. I have consulted other DECA advisors when teaching written events.

21. Students do not want to put in the time needed to construct a well written event document.

22. Students lack fundamental skills necessary to put together a well-crafted written event.

23. Students who participate in written events are more motivated than students who participate in other DECA events.

24. Students who participate in written events are more introverted when compared to other DECA competitive event students.

25. Written competitive events reflect real world marketing practices.

26. Written events have more controllable parameters when compared to role-play events.

27. Students who participate in written events have better written skills compared to other DECA students.

28. Our DECA chapter uses advisory panels in evaluating our competitive events.

29. Generally more female students participate in written competitive events.

The DECA Advisor has a variety of materials and tools at their disposal when teaching competitive DECA events. Please indicate your degree of agreement as to the use of listed materials with respect to DECA written competitive event success.

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neither Agree or Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
30. Mark-Ed Materials	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31. LAPs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32. DECA Images Products	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33. Sample DECA written events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34. The DECA Advisor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35. Virginia DECA website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
36. Textbooks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

37. What do you believe is the primary reason for success in DECA competitive written events?

38. How do you get students excited about participating in DECA competitive written events?



Submit

Appendix B

Cover Letter

Dear Virginia DECA Advisor,

I am in the process of conducting research on the factors contributing to student participation in DECA written competitive events. As an active DECA chapter advisor, your participation in this research is requested, in order to determine steps that can be taken to encourage greater student participation.

Please take a few minutes to review and complete the attached electronic survey. The information gathered by this survey will assist in identifying practices used by chapters who frequently participate in written events. The findings of this research will be made available in the future with the expectation that the findings will enhance future competitive written events participation.

To protect each respondent's confidentiality, all electronic data will be stored in a password protected electronic account accessible only to the researcher. Upon completion of data collection all hard copy and electronic information will be destroyed. You can be assured all of your information and written opinions will be held in the strictest of confidence.

This research is a partial requirement for the fulfillment for the masters program at Old Dominion University and the Department of Occupational and Technical Studies. Your careful consideration to this research is greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Rick Keiser

Attachment

Appendix C

State Advisor memorandum

Dear Advisors,

For some of you, this is your last week! I'm green with envy. The rest of you have to contend with senioritis for a few more weeks. Just remember to keep saying to yourself, "There IS no senioritis, there IS no senioritis..."

I have two things for you. First, we have a couple of options for exciting travel/educational opportunities through DECA. One option is an ADVISORS ONLY fashion/international marketing trip to Italy. The second is a hospitality/travel-tourism cruise to the Caribbean. (The Italy trip will be offered as a college course through ODU for recertification/licensure.) If you are interested in exploring either of these options, please visit the Web at <http://www.lions2.odu.edu/org/deca/conferences/travelwithdeca.html> Remember, making these trips happen will not require a firm commitment on your part, but if there is little or no interest involved, planning will go no further.

Finally, I don't usually do this, but I'm asking for your help to provide information for an ODU student because I think his research will benefit Virginia DECA. He is doing a research paper that is attempting to discover why some chapters utilize written events in their curriculum while others do not. In return for responding to his survey, he has promised to share his results with us. Regardless of which side of the spectrum you fall on, please take a few minutes to complete the survey located at <http://www.lions2.odu.edu/org/deca/researchletter.html> I've taken the survey myself, and it took me approximately 3 minutes to complete. I hope you'll be willing to help our student, as well as Virginia DECA! Thanks for your understanding.

If I don't talk with you before, have a great summer, and I look forward to seeing all of you at the VAME conference this summer!!! (It ought to be another good one.)

=====  
Virgin a DECA... Taking Care of Business!

Mickey Kosloski  
Virginia DECA Specialist  
ODU, Education Bldg, Room 252-6  
Norfolk VA 23529  
757.683.3507  
757.683.6472 (fax)  
<http://www.viriniadeca.com>

Appendix D

Follow-up Letter



Dear Virginia DECA Advisor,

Recently, you received an electronic research survey on the factors contributing to student participation in DECA written events. As an active DECA chapter advisor, your participation was requested in order to determine steps that can be taken to encourage greater student participation.

I would to thank those of you who submitted the electronic survey and encourage those of you who have not filled out the survey to please do so. Your input and opinions are greatly appreciated.

As stated in the initial letter, in order to protect each respondent's confidentiality, all electronic data will be stored in a password protected electronic account accessible only to the researcher. Upon completion of data collection all hard copy and electronic information will be destroyed. You can be assured all of your information and written opinions will be held in the strictest of confidence.

Again, I would like to thank those who have already responded to the survey, your answers and input has been very informative.

For those of you have not responded, I understand some of you have already completed the school year or will soon be wrapping up the school year. I understand you have many other fun things on your mind. However, if you would please take a few minutes of your time to complete the attached survey it would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Rick Keiser