



SoCal DAT

Candidate Guide 2026-2027

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ABOUT SOCAL DAT

The Southern California DECA District Action Team (SoCal DAT) supports the Southern California district of California DECA. The SoCal DAT works under the supervision of the SoCal DAT Advisor.

GOAL

DECA activities assist in the development of academically prepared, community oriented, professionally responsible, experienced leaders. The SoCal DAT will help strengthen local chapters through their DECA involvement.

ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES (DECA STUDENTS)

The SoCal DAT works under the advisement of the SoCal DAT Advisor, to fulfill the following roles and responsibilities:

- **New Chapter Support (For new chapter advisors and officers)**
Provide support to new chapters through school visits, virtual meetings, and online correspondence in partnership with the State Management Team.
- **New Chapter Recruitment**
Assist in Identifying prospective new chapters to join Southern California DECA and conduct outreach and recruitment efforts in partnership with the State Management Team.
- **Competitive Event Training**
Deliver competitive event trainings (ranging from beginning to advance trainings) to help support the growth of competitive event skills and knowledge for SoCal chapters through virtual sessions and chapter visits.
- **Community Outreach & Advocacy**
Attend community events and conduct advocacy activities with community leaders to promote DECA and represent DECA as ambassadors.

ADVISOR

For questions regarding the Southern California DECA District Action Team, contact the SoCal DAT Advisor, Michael Buxton (mbuxton@powayusd.com).

SOCAL DAT ADVISOR RESPONSIBILITIES

The SoCal DAT Advisor works in partnership with the State Management Team to oversee the SoCal DAT. The SoCal DAT Advisor will report to the California DECA State Director. Roles and responsibilities for the SoCal DAT Advisor include:

New Chapter Support (for new chapter advisors and officers)

Advise and support SoCal DAT in their chapter support activities.

New Chapter Recruitment

Assist the SoCal DAT in identifying prospective new chapters to join California DECA and conduct outreach and recruitment efforts in partnership with the State Management Team. Advise and support the SoCal DAT in their recruitment activities.

Competitive Event Training

Assist the SoCal DAT in delivering competitive event trainings (ranging from beginning to advanced trainings) to help support the growth of competitive event skills and knowledge for SoCal DECA chapters. Ensure the SoCal DAT is prepared and trained to deliver virtual competitive event trainings or in-person trainings during chapter visits.

Community Outreach & Advocacy

Ensure the SoCal DAT is prepared to represent DECA in a professional manner. Coordinate outreach and advocacy activities for SoCal DAT in conjunction with the State Management Team. Advise and support SoCal DAT in their outreach activities.

SoCal District Conference Support

Coordinate SoCal DAT participation and support of the SoCal DECA District conference and activities, including judge recruitment. Work in partnership with the State Management Team to determine conference roles and activities for the SoCal DAT.

SoCal DAT Leadership Program

Lead and coordinate the SoCal DAT selection process. Connect with SoCal chapters to recruit student leaders to apply and participate in the SoCal DAT. Provide training, planning, and advisement within the SoCal DAT Leadership Program.

SoCal DAT Communication

Maintain communication with the State Management Team to ensure Southern California chapter advisors are informed of SoCal DAT-related news, opportunities, and reminders.

SoCal DAT Structure

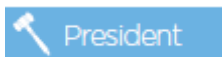
The SoCal District Action Team is the core group of DECA members providing leadership to the Southern California District. To ensure success, the DECA Mission-Based Officer Positions provide the defined roles and responsibilities needed to support the overall mission and goals of DECA.

DECA MISSION STATEMENT

DECA prepares emerging leaders and entrepreneurs for careers in marketing, finance, hospitality, and management in high schools and colleges around the globe.

OFFICER POSITIONS

There are four (4) mission-based officer positions on the SoCal District Action Team. As emerging leaders, DECA encourages leadership teams to practice real-world leadership by adopting a structure that mirrors business and industry. DECA officer positions are aligned with the DECA mission to ensure that each aspect of the mission is represented with great leadership.



Practice the “**Entrepreneurial**” and “**Management**” elements of DECA’s Mission Statement. Serves as the liaison between the District Action Team and the California DECA State Officer Team. Establishes vision, management, and organization for the team and ensures each district officer has the training, support, accountability, and resources to deliver a powerful DECA experience for every Southern California DECA member.



Practices the “**Emerging Leaders**” element of the DECA Mission. Responsible for providing support and leadership to all district-wide non-competitive event career and leadership activities.



Practices the “**Careers**” element of the DECA mission. Responsible for providing support and leadership to district-wide participation, preparation, and performance in Competitive Events.



Practices the “**Marketing**” element of the DECA mission. Responsible for providing support and leadership to district-wide membership, branding, and promotional campaigns.

POSITION APPOINTMENTS

The position of Southern California District Action Team President (Vice President of Southern California) is elected at the Southern California DECA District Career Development Conference. (See the California DECA State Officer Candidate Guide for details). All other mission-based SoCal DAT officer positions are appointed positions and interviews and selections for those positions take place at the Southern California DECA District Career Development Conference.

SOCAL DAT SELECTION PROCESS

SoCal DECA members who meet the eligibility requirements and submit a completed application by the deadline will be considered for a position on the SoCal DAT.

- **REMINDER:** The SoCal DAT interviews, selections, and announcement of officers will ALL take place at the SoCal DECA District CDC in January.
- The selection process is led by the SoCal DAT Advisor.
- Each SoCal DECA chapter is limited to two (2) applicants per school for SoCal DAT. Each school may only have one (1) candidate per unique office.
- The SoCal DAT Advisor in conjunction with members of the Board of Directors and State Management Team will review all applications and the selected DAT will be announced at the conclusion of the Southern California District Career Development Conference.
- Accepting a DAT position disqualifies the officer from running for any state level positions at the State Career Development Conference in the same year.
- The term of office for the SoCal DAT starts at the close of the District Career Development Conference where they are elected/appointed and ends at the close of the next year's District Career Development Conference.
- Students who run for Southern California District Vice President but are not elected may still be considered for a position on the SoCal DAT, provided they provide notice of their interest in being considered for the DAT.

TIMELINE

November 3, 2025:	Application Opens
November 28, 2025:	Application Deadline
January 9-11, 2026:	Interview of Finalists (<i>Applicants must be registered attendees at the SoCal DECA CDC as interviews will take place at the conference</i>)
January 11, 2026:	SoCal DAT Team 2 Announced (<i>during the Grand Awards Session</i>)
TBA:	First SoCal DAT Meeting and Filming for Intro Video
Once Per Month/Quarter:	SoCal DAT Meetings (Frequency at the discretion of SoCal DAT Advisor)
Conferences:	SoCal DAT in-person meetings will be held at the SoCal CDC.

SOCAL DAT APPLICATION

The Southern California DECA District Action Team (SoCal DAT) supports the Southern California District of California DECA. The SoCal DAT works under the supervision of the SoCal DAT Advisor.

Eligibility for Applicants

- All SoCal DAT applicants must:
- Meet the CTE requirements as outlined by the California Department of Education:
 - The high school the candidate attends must offer a CTE program or pathway (consisting of a minimum of two courses) that is aligned with the ideals and standards of DECA - for students interested in marketing, finance, hospitality, management, and entrepreneurship.
 - The applicant's DECA chapter must have a Credentialed CTE Instructor (or an instructor with a Single Subject Credential in Business or Home Economics) who serves as an advisor for the chapter and teaches in the CTE program or pathway used for DECA affiliation. This credential requirement applies to all schools including private schools.
 - All students participating in California DECA must be enrolled in a pathway (or have taken all of the courses available in the pathway) in one of the following Career and Technical Education (CTE) areas: Marketing, Business Management and Administration, Hospitality and Tourism and Finance.
- Be affiliated as a member of their local DECA chapter and be in good standing with DECA chapter, California DECA, and DECA, Inc.
- Be a member of a state-approved DECA chapter and be an active participant in the chapter
- Have held or currently hold a DECA chapter office (recommended, not required)
- Maintain a GPA of 2.5 (4.0 scale) or better throughout term of service
- Be recommended by their local chapter advisor (signified by advisor's signature on the Advisor's Checklist)
- Complete the online application process for consideration

Recognition

SoCal DAT members who serve in good standing for the school year will be recognized for their service. To achieve SoCal DAT recognition, a member must complete at least ten (10) hours of service, verified by the chapter advisor.

- See attached form for tracking hours of service
- All activities must be pre-approved by the SoCal DAT Advisor and must comply with DECA Code of Conduct.

Application Forms

Complete the following attached forms:

- Application Form (Online)
- Advisor Checklist (Uploaded at the time of application)
- Applicant Q&A (Submitted at the time of application)
 - Why do you want to serve as a member of SoCal DAT?
 - What skills or traits do you possess to help fulfill this role?
 - Please provide a list your DECA leadership experience and accomplishments. (For example: offices held, awards won, notable chapter accomplishments, etc.)
 - Please provide a summary of your goals for the SoCal DECA District. What do you want to see the SoCal DAT accomplish? How will you achieve these goals?

Application Submission



Applications must be submitted online at californiadeca.org/socaldat by 5:00 p.m. PDT of the date listed on the Timeline on the previous page.

ADVISOR CHECKLIST FOR MEETING WITH DAT APPLICANT & PARENTS/GUARDIANS

The Chapter Advisor should schedule a meeting with the DAT applicant and their parent/guardian and carefully review this checklist and the entire DAT Information Guide. Once the advisor has held this meeting and reviewed the checklist it should be completed, signed and dated, and submitted along with all required forms in this guide.

✓	ITEMS TO DISCUSS AND REVIEW WITH YOUR DAT APPLICANT
	Have a frank conversation with the applicant to ensure they understand the commitments required. Be sure that they understand that at times they may need to miss sporting events or other personal activities in order to fulfill their responsibilities. Applicants must recognize that DECA conferences and events come before other social functions, including athletics and dances.
	Ensure that applicants understand that being a DAT member a privilege and will require their very best effort. If selected, they will be required to devote a <u>minimum</u> of 10 hours of service, plus attend DAT virtual meetings during their term.
	Talk to the applicant about their involvement in other activities like sports, clubs, work, etc. Be sure they have fully calculated the time commitment and are prepared to make DECA a priority if they are selected.
	Set up a plan for the officer to keep the advisor regularly updated about their projects, upcoming responsibilities, and duties.
	Ensure that all forms from this guide have been completed.
	Ensure that the candidate understands that, if selected, they cannot travel to participate in any DAT activities without properly completing (with all required signatures) permission forms which they will get from the SoCal DAT Advisor.
	Be sure that the candidate understands that while being a member of DAT is an invaluable experience and will be a great accomplishment to highlight on their resume and college applications, serving on DAT should be about their passion for DECA and desire to contribute to the growth and progress of the SoCal DECA District. This is a real commitment that requires time, effort, initiative, and commitment throughout their term of service.

Chapter Advisor Signature

Date

SOCAL DAT SERVICE HOURS TRACKING FORM

SOCAL DAT MEMBER NAME: _____

SOCAL DAT MEMBER CHAPTER: _____

ACTIVITY DATE	ACTIVITY TITLE & DESCRIPTION	TOTAL SERVICE HOURS COMPLETED
TOTAL HOURS		

SERVICE HOURS VERIFIED BY ADVISOR:

ADVISOR PRINTED NAME

ADVISOR SIGNATURE

DATE