

PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon GAD HISTORY

The Academic Decathlon program was inaugurated in 1968 by Dr. Robert Peterson, superintendent of Orange County Schools in California. It was expanded in 1979 to a statewide competition, and the first national academic program was held in 1982 with 19 states participating. Twenty-six (26) states and five (5) foreign countries participated in the 1983 competition as the program expanded on a national basis.

Georgia Academic Decathlon held its first competition in 1987. Mr. Howard Stroud, assistant superintendent of Clarke County Schools, served as the first state director of the Georgia Academic Decathlon. Clarke County Schools, aided by a state grant, directed and hosted the Georgia Academic Decathlon for seven years.

Beginning in 1993, the Professional Association of Georgia Educators became the sponsoring agent with Gwinnett County Public Schools serving as the host school district for the state competition.

The goal of the PAGE Georgia Academic Decathlon is to move steadily toward having every high school in Georgia participating in Academic Decathlon.

State Championship Teams:

1993		H.V. Jenkins High School	Chatham County
1994		Cedar Shoals High School	Clarke County
1995		Cedar Shoals High School	Clarke County
1996		Cedar Shoals High School	Clarke County
1997		Cedar Shoals High School	Clarke County
1998		Cedar Shoals High School	Clarke County
1999		Cedar Shoals High School	Clarke County
2000		Cedar Shoals High School	Clarke County
2001	Division I	Cedar Shoals High School	Clarke County
	Division II	Central High School	Bibb County
2002	Division I	Central High School	Bibb County
	Division II	Savannah Arts Academy	Chatham County
2003	Division I	*Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	Savannah Arts Academy	Chatham County
2004	Division I	*Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	Columbus High School	Muscogee County
2005	Division I	*Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	Columbus High School	Muscogee County
2006	Division I	*Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High School	Catoosa County
2007	Division I	*Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	Columbus High School	Muscogee County

2008	Division I	*Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High School	Catoosa County
2009	Division I	Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	*Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High	Catoosa County
2010	Division I	Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	*Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High	Catoosa County
2011	Division I	Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	*Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High	Catoosa County
2012	Division I	Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	*Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High	Catoosa County
2013	Division I	*Berkmar High School & *Parkview High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High School	Catoosa County
2014	Division I	Berkmar High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	*Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High	Catoosa County
2015	Division I	*Parkview High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High School	Catoosa County
2016	Division I	Parkview High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	*Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High	Catoosa County
2017	Division I	Parkview High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	*Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High	Catoosa County
2018	Division I	+Parkview High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	*Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High	Catoosa County
2019	Division I	+Villa Rica High School	Carroll County
	Division II	*Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High	Catoosa County
2020	Division I	*Parkview High School	Gwinnett County
	Division II	+Lakeview Ft. Oglethorpe High	Catoosa County

* Howard Stroud Winner – State Championship Team

+ Division IV Representative to Nationals

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HOW THE DECATHLON WORKS

Academic Decathlon is unique because it is not limited to high-achieving students. Preparation and competition include high school students from ninth through twelfth (9-12) grades. The purposes of the Academic Decathlon are to: 1) develop a greater respect for knowledge; 2) promote wholesome competition in academic areas of study and interest; 3) stimulate intellectual growth and achievement; and 4) encourage public interest and awareness of outstanding programs in our schools.

A unique aspect of Academic Decathlon is the design to include students from all academic backgrounds. Each 9-member team consists of 3 Honor students (GPA from 3.8-4.0), 3 Scholastic students (GPA from 3.2-3.799) and 3 Varsity students (GPA from 0.0-3.199). The Varsity students – perhaps never academically motivated before – perform very well. Some students who once performed average work excel in the competition and experience continued academic success after the event.

Students must be academically well rounded to earn good scores in the Decathlon. Lives are changed and enthused students take new directions. It's exciting, it's rewarding, it works!

Competition events include 7 tests of academic strength, 3 demonstrations of communication ability and the Super Quiz™ – a showcase of the decathlon curriculum areas in a collaborative team event before an audience. Seven (7) comprehensive tests are given in the areas of: economics, social science, mathematics, literature, science, music and art. The 3 communication events include: speech (*prepared and impromptu*), interview and a written essay.

The competition concludes with the Super Quiz™. All decathletes gather in an arena setting where groups of students from each team participate in a relay round. Thirteen questions are asked of each group of students. The order of participation in the Super Quiz™ has the Varsity students compete first, followed by the Scholastic students, and concluding with the Honor students. As each round is completed and the team scores are tabulated, students get excited and cheer for an all-out academic effort.

Teams may choose to wear similar T-shirts, or blazers or uniforms during competition; however, team apparel should not be distracting to other decathletes. A team coach or co-coaches lead each team. Coaches often depend on experts in fields outside their area of expertise to work with the team. So the concept of team and coach broadens to include all who work to support the team to their goal.

What is the goal of Georgia Academic Decathlon? It is for all participants, decathletes and coaches to be active learners and do so in an enjoyable setting. Academic Decathlon provides just the right format.

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To the Academic Decathlon Coach

THE CHALLENGE AND REWARD OF COACHING

Coaching an Academic Decathlon team can be a very challenging but rewarding experience. However, to be a successful coach requires an extraordinary amount of energy. It is difficult for a teacher to handle this task alone. A group of teachers working together to support a coach is a wonderful approach. This enables the students to have the expertise of the “coaching team” in each of the events of the Academic Decathlon. There are a number of tasks that can be carried out which help to build a strong program and a strong Academic Decathlon team.

PUBLICITY AND RECRUITMENT

One of the most important steps in building an Academic Decathlon team and program is to stress the importance of school-wide publicity. This publicity should place strong emphasis on reaching the Varsity students. One effective method of recruiting Varsity students, as well as all other students, is to have former team members **visit all English classes**. Georgia high school students are required to take English in each of the four years of high school. Communication in each of these classes assures communicating to all potential students. Use previous Varsity students as “ambassadors” because they usually know other Varsity students. The administrator should approve such an approach. This communicates the importance of the Academic Decathlon in your school.

At the beginning of the year when the coach is building a team, he/she may want to write a bulletin to be a part of the **announcements made by the school principal**. In this announcement, talk about the rewards of competition and the opportunity to strengthen the individual’s academic horizons.

Advertise the program. In a highly visible area, have a section of a **bulletin board** devoted to Decathlon announcements.

Plan a “kick-off” meeting. At this meeting have present and former decathletes tell what the program is like. Show a video that explains Georgia Academic Decathlon (there are a few to choose from on www.pageinc.org/gad and on www.usad.org). The coach and former team members can be present to answer questions that potential team members may have. Invite your principal to be a part of the “kick-off” meeting. This means a lot to the students to know their principal supports this event in an active way.

It is not too difficult to get Honor students involved, but don’t assume that students will join. Some students are shy and some students like to be invited to participate. Go out of your way to invite potential decathletes. **Be on the lookout for potential decathletes.** Invite your colleagues to be active recruiters. Ask counselors to recommend students. Frequently they know students who are in the Varsity category who may be good candidates.