

Orange County Academic Decathlon

2020-2021 Program Information

WHAT IS THE OCAD PROGRAM?

Founded in 1968 by former County Superintendent of Schools Robert Peterson, Ed.D., Orange County Academic Decathlon (OCAD) serves as the model for all the prestigious Academic Decathlon events that now exist at the state and national levels.

OCAD is a highly spirited, rigorous academic competition that is uniquely designed to provide high school students of all achievement levels the opportunity to compete as team members in a series of ten (10) academic tests and demonstrations. All public and private high schools are eligible to compete.

Mandatory Competition Dates:

- **Essay Competition:** 1/13/21
- **Speech & Interview Competition:** 1/23/21 or 1/30/21
- **Written Tests & Super Quiz:** 2/6/21

All events will be virtual for 2020-2021

2020-2021 Theme:

The Cold War

WHY PARTICIPATE IN THE OCAD PROGRAM?

The mission of the Orange County Academic Decathlon is to inspire academic excellence and build 21st century skills that prepare students for college and careers.

The program engages students of all achievement levels in a variety of challenging academic events. Under the guidance of an adult coach, OCAD challenges student members to demonstrate a mastery of higher-order thinking skills, written aptitude, and communication skills in the following subjects: **art, economics, literature, math, music, science, social science, interview, speech, and essay.**

OCAD contributes to a Multi-Tiered System of Support and Local Control and Accountability Plan priorities by building academic and social-emotional skills, engaging students, families and community members, and fostering school connectedness.

Students who participate report improvement in the areas of communication, collaboration, critical thinking, and character, and they report feeling a stronger sense of belonging at school.

Student Outcomes

Survey results from students who participated in the 2019-2020 Academic Decathlon:

- **84%** reported that the program improved **skills in critical thinking**
- **92%** reported that the program improved **skills in communication**
- **82%** reported that the program improved **skills in team-work**
- **85%** reported the development of **stronger character traits**
- **93%** reported that the program helped them to **build relationships with their peers**
- **70%** reported that the program helped them **feel more connected to their school**

The competition culminates with an exciting Super Quiz relay, a team event where parents, faculty, and classmates cheer for their teams from the sidelines, championing academics much like the environment of a sporting event.



The Academic Decathlon is sponsored by the Orange County Academic Decathlon (OCAD) Association, a 501c3 non-profit organization, and is administered by the Orange County Department of Education.



HOW DO SCHOOLS PARTICIPATE?

Supervision

Each participating school must have a faculty representative to serve as a coach. As OCAD is a multidisciplinary program, having an assistant coach may be beneficial.

Registration and Participation Fees

A school must have an Intent to Participate form on file with the Orange County Department of Education Academic Events office by **October 16, 2020**. All registration materials, online registration, and payment (PO or check) must be received on **December 4, 2020**. Participation fees for the 2020-2021 school year are **\$495** for each school team and **\$75** for each additional alternate team member (special pricing for 2021 due to COVID-19).

Note: Students from all grade levels are eligible to participate on an OCAD team. There is also a separate Junior Varsity OCAD competition for ninth and tenth graders held in May.

HOW ARE TEAMS FORMED?

Academic Decathlon teams consist of nine (9) student members, known as Decathletes. Each team consists of three (3) decathletes in each of the following Grade Point Average (GPA) categories:

Honors	(GPA 3.80 – 4.0)
Scholastic	(GPA 3.2 – 3.79)
Varsity	(GPA 0.0 – 3.19)

The OCAD guidelines for student eligibility and Grade Point Average (GPA) computation are defined by the United States Academic Decathlon. For competition purposes, all courses that are included in GPA computation will be academic in nature (e.g., math, science, English, social science, art history, music appreciation, etc.). Courses that are not included in the computation are performance-based, skill-building or hands-on (e.g., band/chorus, theater arts, art, health, home economics, etc.)

HOW ARE TEAMS RECOGNIZED?

Team Awards

A school competes in one of three competition divisions. Team awards are presented to the top five Super Quiz teams and top five overall teams in each division. The team awarded first place in the Orange County Academic Decathlon will represent the county at the California Academic Decathlon in March 2021. Additional top-scoring teams may be invited to the state competition as "wild card" teams, depending on state-wide overall team scores. Historically, Orange County sends 2-4 "wild card" teams to the state competition.



Individual Awards

For each competition division, medals are presented to the top five decathletes in each GPA category for each subject area. The highest overall individual scoring decathletes also receive medals. Educational scholarships up to \$1,000 are awarded to top overall individual winners.

WHO MAY I CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION?

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