



# SALES PROJECT

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**Alexandria Area High School**

**4300 Pioneer Rd SE, Alexandria, MN 56308**

**April 28, 2024**

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## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Chapter Overview

Alexandria is located in central Minnesota, with a population of 14,382 people. The DECA Chapter was established at Alexandria Area High School (AAHS) in 2013, starting with twelve members. Since its founding, the Alexandria Chapter has grown significantly, with the 2024 year having 153 students participating. Last year the Chapter qualified at an all-time high of 39 students for the International Career Development Conference (ICDC). This was the second-largest chapter from the state of Minnesota at ICDC.

### Problems and Goals

#### Problems

- 1 Increase of low-income families in the Alexandria area.
- 2 Lack of awareness about the DECA Chapter within the community.
- 3 Poor utility of funds within the DECA Chapter.

#### Goals

Increase  
Community  
Involvement  
in DECA



Assist Students with  
Expense Correlated  
Barriers





Provide DECA Students  
With Real-World  
Business Experience

### Project Overview

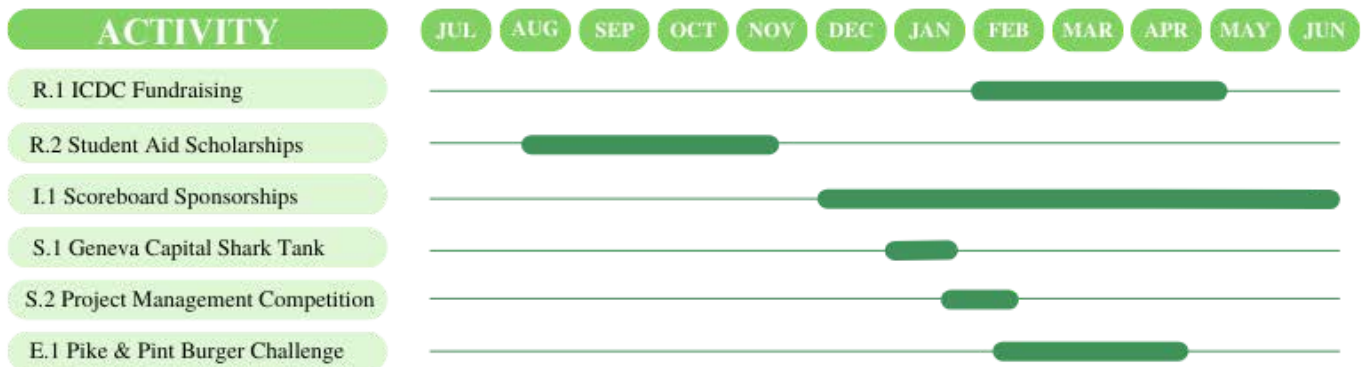
The objective of the 2023-2024 Sales Project is to increase community involvement, assist students with financial barriers, and provide students with real-world business experience. To achieve this mission, the *On the RISE* initiative was established, with its fundamentals being to Redirect scholarship assets, Initiate recurring revenue, Supply scholarships, and Expand real-world experiences to support the AAHS DECA Chapter.



### Proposed Activities

Activity(s)	Description
 Redirect Scholarship Assets	Scholarships to students in need were distributed, and ICDC fundraising was facilitated.
 Initiate Recurring Revenue	A sponsored scoreboard was implemented in the AAHS gymnasium.
 Supply Scholarship Events	Shark Tank and Project Management Competitions were facilitated.
 Expand Real-World Experiences	The Burger Challenge was implemented into the AAHS Marketing 101 class.

## Project Timeline



2023-2024 JANUARY-DECEMBER FISCAL YEAR

## Human Resource Management



## TOTAL Amount Raised

**Alexandria DECA Sales Team** 



## Closing The Project

The success of the Sales Project is due to the community of Alexandria, whose continual support is needed to facilitate change. The *On the RISE* Campaign has provided DECA members with professional skills, scholarship opportunities, and community partnerships that they can use in future endeavors.



## II. INITIATING

### A. Statement of the Problem



The Alexandria DECA Chapter's student success is unparalleled in Minnesota. However, financial hardship is a barrier that prohibits many students from participating in DECA, as there are many expenses to consider, such as clothing costs, hotel rooms, and an activity fee of \$200. As residents of Alexandria have witnessed over the years, the poverty rate has increased exponentially for high school students, with **over 35% of the student body qualifying for free and reduced expenses**. In addition, the business community's collaboration with DECA could be improved for a mutually

beneficial experience. Without this partnership, there is a lack of funding for the Alexandria DECA Chapter. Finally, the chapter has a non-profit endowment fund that students have slowly grown. The Endowment fund, currently valued at \$800,000, is seen as a massive opportunity for optimizing the chapter as long as its purpose is executed ethically.

#### 1 Increase of Low-Income Families in the Alexandria Area

In Alexandria, the rate of citizens below the poverty line has increased significantly in the last few years, with the poverty rate in 2022 being 12.4%, compared to 2017's rate of 9.2%. This significant increase of poverty for Alexandria's population of 14,382 is a cause for concern when considering **35% of AAHS students receive free and reduced costs**. This statistic should not deter a student from participating in DECA; however, that is the harsh reality of the AAHS Chapter. From this, the conclusion was drawn that students who face financial burdens do not have an equal opportunity to experience the difference DECA produces. Within the Alexandria DECA Chapter, the activity fee required to participate is \$200. This amount may seem inconsequential to some, but with the added price of clothing, hotel rooms, and individual competition fees, this can quickly become a stressor that already struggling students can not afford.

Student Reduced-Expense Rate over the Years in Alexandria

School Year	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Free and Reduced Expenses	24%	29%	35%

#### 2 Lack of Awareness About the DECA Chapter Within the Community

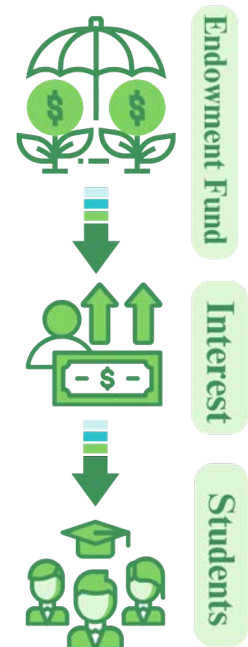
The Alexandria DECA Chapter is the largest student organization at AAHS and the third-largest chapter in Minnesota. However, when surveying the Alexandria general public, **62% said they were unsure how DECA operates**. This statistic shows that the current methodology utilized to reach DECA's desired demographics could be more effective in the Alexandria community. This lack of awareness is detrimental to the chapter and the community because citizens are unaware of the benefits DECA could bring them. This community is the backbone that DECA relies on for sponsorships, mentoring, and financial advice to keep the chapter thriving. The chapter will prosper if a more significant percentage of the community is reached.

Amount of people who could proficiently explain what DECA is



### 3 Poor Utility of Funds Within the DECA Chapter

Close work with the DECA Foundation revealed that the funds acquired through the Alexandria Chapter Endowment Fund need to be appropriately utilized. This determination is upheld since **only four students were given financial assistance in 2022**. This lack of financial aid to students hinders the chapter from growing and its members from flourishing. The endowment fund is currently at \$800,000, which donors and alums generously provided. Since the endowment fund is a non-profit classified as a 501(c)(3) organization, the interest created during the year must be distributed to the students. Right now, these **surplus endowment funds are not going to the recipients that would benefit most**, especially considering the heightened poverty rates in Alexandria Area High School. The funds allocated for the DECA Chapter from their 501(c)(3) are currently being distributed by board members and advisors, most of whom aren't familiar with the average student's experience. The Alexandria DECA Chapter has implemented opportunities such as scholarships for seniors, rewards for top competitors, and grand competition prizes. These are all set up to benefit the already upper-class students at the top of DECA, for most of whom, money is not a barrier to their participation.



#### B. Project Scope

##### Purpose

The Sales Project is designed to raise funds for the local DECA Chapter. This year's goal is to put the chapter **On the RISE** by creating recurring funding sources and providing a solid support system within the community. The funds raised by the sales project will allow students of all socioeconomic backgrounds to participate in DECA. This participation opens up many opportunities for students to learn public speaking, event planning, and networking skills. The authentic expertise that DECA provides for students can help them further down the road in any career that they choose.

The Alexandria DECA Foundation was formed in the fall of 2019 as a 501(c)(3) organization. The DECA Foundation consists of five members who have helped raise over \$800,000 in sponsored capital. The board's financial goal is to spend the interest earned without tapping into the principal amount. Our goal with the Sales Project is to add \$70,000 to the endowment fund within the 2023-2024 school year. This amount will allow the endowment fund to reach the goal of \$870,000.



### Rationale

Funding the AAHS DECA Chapter is critical to the success and opportunities of the students.. **At Alexandria Area High School, DECA has the third-highest student cost of all activities.** Allowing all students to benefit from DECA is a top priority. The table below shows that the overall cost increases significantly as more students participate. Without funding, the chapter cannot substantially impact many students' lives.

Chapter Financial Analysis						
Past Years	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Total Revenue from Activity Fee	\$9,463.50	\$18,140.00	\$20,480.00	\$17,745.00	\$13,670.00	\$18,750.00
<u>Expenses</u>						
Advisors Salary & Benefits	\$6,573.74	\$5,396.64	\$5,678.87	\$8,332.43	\$6,069.95	\$7,460.96
Travel	\$6,149.38	\$5,546.15	\$2,089.12	\$0.00	\$5,079.88	\$6,760.52
State Conference Fees	\$27,461.73	\$46,918.01	\$49,876.03	\$7,800.00	\$34,171.14	\$43,303.86
Total Expenses	\$40,184.85	\$57,860.80	\$57,644.02	\$16,132.43	\$45,320.97	\$57,525.34
Net Profit / (Loss)	(\$30,721.35)	(\$39,720.80)	(\$37,164.02)	\$1,612.57	(\$31,650.97)	(38,775.34)
# of Participants	115	124	134	104	97	125
# of ICDC Participants	11	20	27	34	39	42
Net Profit/(Loss) per Student	(\$267.14)	(\$320.33)	(\$269.30)	\$15.51	(\$326.30)	(\$310.20)

### Expected Benefits

#### Increased participation

The overall number of students in DECA will increase by boosting the funding and morale around DECA. Additionally, local businesses will get involved in the DECA chapter.

#### Increased Funds

The chapter will be adequately financed by implementing fundraising initiatives and growing the endowment fund.

### III. PLANNING AND ORGANIZING

#### A. Project Goals

##### GOAL 1



Increase Community Involvement in DECA

##### GOAL 2



Assist Students with Expense Correlated Barriers

##### GOAL 3



Provide DECA Students With Real-World Business Experience

##### GOAL 1

Increase Community Involvement in DECA

The Alexandria, Minnesota, community has vast resources to offer regarding the DECA program. The business community has prioritized strengthening its involvement within Alexandria Area High School. This effort has manifested in donations to specific sports teams, passionate speakers sharing their stories with business classes, and mentorship with students. The most overlooked area of sponsorship, however, is the local DECA Chapter. With the chapter's members becoming the future employees of these same companies, it is in their best interest to sponsor the Alexandria Chapter. This sponsorship will be shown to be beneficial when companies get their name and careers in the high school. This will, in turn, provide the Alexandria DECA Chapter with recurring revenue.

##### GOAL 2

Assist Students with Expense Correlated Barriers

The goal for every Alexandria DECA student is to be able to participate in the International Career Development Competition (ICDC). The costs of ICDC can be formidable for most families regardless of their economic class. If students know they cannot afford to travel for the International Competition, they can be dissuaded from giving their total effort. needs to have the funding to support all hard-working student expenses.. The opportunity for students to attend ICDC without financial barriers needs to be provided through raising funds for the Alexandria Chapter and donations provided by local businesses.

##### GOAL 3

Provide DECA Students With Real-World Business Experience

Student membership in DECA has steadily increased throughout the last ten years in Alexandria. Currently, enrollment for the 2023-24 year is 153 students. With such a large number of participants, the quality of the experience that the students receive could suffer as a result. To combat this issue, the Sales Team's goal is to **provide DECA students with real-world business experiences that will assist them in their future careers.** This will give the students invaluable skills in the world of business, which will transfer to many of their future careers.





# THE SALES TEAM



**Carver Larson**

**Communications Officer**

## Key Roles

- Communicating with Businesses
- Generate Ideas
- Research Campaign Strategies

**Carver Larson's** most significant contributions to the Sales Team are his communication skills, networking, and ability to establish relationships. As the **Communications Officer**, these qualities can be displayed through his work connecting with businesses in the community to generate funding and strengthening relationships with community members. Carver's primary responsibility is collaborating with business executives to create new ideas.

**Lane Kompelien's** strengths are her determination, her entrepreneurial views, her willpower to problem-solve, and her assertiveness in projects. Considering these various traits, we have elected Lane as our **Project Coordinator**. In this project, she will guide the Team, brainstorm, and pursue new ways to reach out to the community. Lane's role includes coordinating meetings, surveilling group progress, and sending emails.



**Lane Kompelien**

**Project Coordinator**

## Key Roles

- Coordinate Meetings
- Survey Group Progress
- Send Emails



**Rachael Mohr**

**Chief Marketing Officer**

## Key Roles

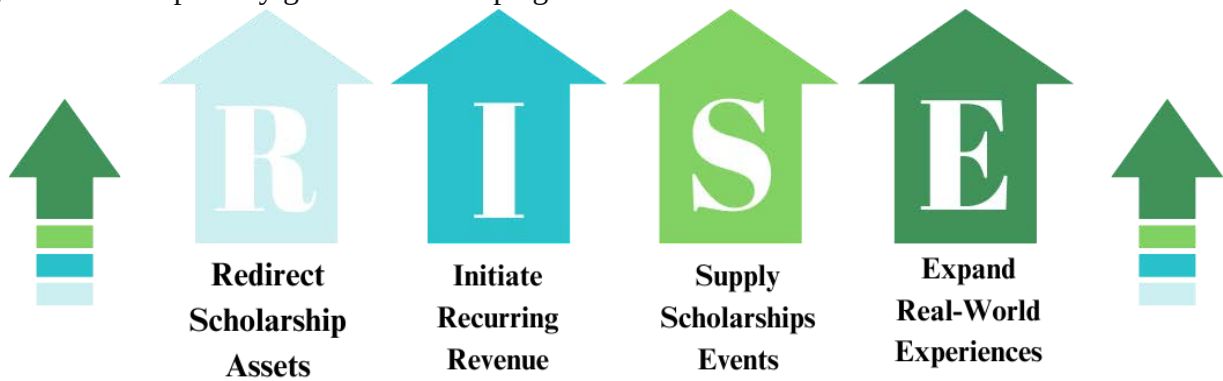
- Connect with Community Members
- Create Presentations
- Renovate Website

**Rachael Mohr's** greatest strengths are her creativity, collaboration, and organization. Considering these strengths, we have appointed Rachael Mohr as our **Chief Marketing Officer**, where her attributes will be most effectively showcased. As the Chief Marketing Officer, Rachael Mohr will represent the community's Sales Team, renovate the Alexandria DECA Chapter's website, and create informative scholarship presentations for DECA.

C. Schedule

i. Milestone

After considering the problems the Alexandria DECA Chapter faces, the Sales Team created the **On the RISE** Campaign. This campaign consists of four primary objectives. The acronym **RISE** stands for **Redirect**, **Initiate**, **Supply**, and **Expand**. These initiatives helped the Team complete their activities while keeping focus on the primary goals of the campaign.



**Redirect Scholarship Assets:** The Alexandria DECA Chapter's 501(c)(3) endowment fund was generously created by two DECA Foundation members, Mark Watkins and Mike Tripp. This fund has grown to over \$800,000 over the years. By utilizing the funds provided by the 501(c)(3) and the subsidiary fundraising that occurred throughout the year, the Sales Team provided students in need with funding to participate in DECA without financial barriers. In the foundation meetings, the Team also created a plan for ICDC fundraising. The Team then facilitated this fundraising by connecting students with businesses that sponsor this initiative.



**Initiate Recurring Revenue:** Sponsored scoreboard advertisements were successfully implemented in the Alexandria Area High School gymnasium through partnerships with six local businesses. The Team connected with these businesses and sold advertisements that were placed on the scoreboard. The collaboration with these businesses builds repertoire and trust, resulting in these businesses choosing to re-invest in advertisements every five years.

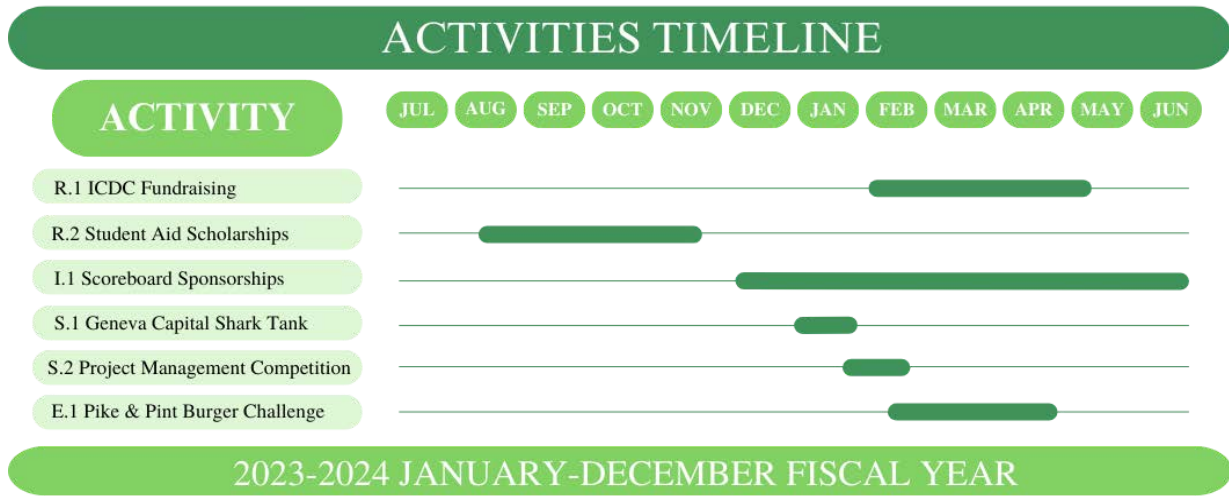


**Supply Scholarships Events:** The Sales Team supplied senior and junior students in need with scholarships to negate the considerable cost of college education. The Team planned and ran the local Shark Tank and Project Management competitions, which are events facilitated for students to demonstrate their skills to the community. In return, they are rewarded for their hard work with academic scholarships. The Team distributed \$31,000 in scholarships to the winners of these competitions. The group coordinated with the community judges, announced projects, and presented on the scholarship's function and usage. This experience allowed the Team to share information about DECA and provide resources to deserving students.



**Expand Real-World Experiences:** The Sales Team ran the 2023-24 Burger Challenge for the AAHS business classes in partnership with the local restaurant Pike & Pint. The Burger Challenge allows students to familiarize themselves with the business world by creating custom burgers for the chance to be implemented on the Pike & Pint's menu. This real-world endeavor generates revenue for the business. While facilitating the activity, the Team secured a restaurant to work with, gave informational presentations to students, mentored students on their projects, and monitored the progress of burger selection.

## ii. Timeline to Reach Each Milestone



### D. Quality Management Plan

To measure the success of the proposed milestones, The Sales Team developed Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) with specific metrics for each activity. These quantifiable metrics will be utilized to determine the project's success and ability to set the DECA chapter *On The RISE*.



The activities that contributed to the **Redirect Scholarship Assets** section focused on allocating raised by the Sales Team. The table below provides insight into how performance and success were measured for each activity in the **R** portion.

Activity	Description	KPI	Poor	Good	Excellent
<b>ICDC Fundraising</b>	Funds were generated through outreach to local businesses who generously donated	Percent of students whose trip is fully covered	<50%	50-99%	%100
<b>Student Aid Scholarships</b>	Students in need received scholarships for DECA's activity fee, clothing costs, and food costs.	Percent of in-need students reached	<60%	60-99%	%100



The activity that contributed to the **Initiate Recurring Revenue** section focused on creating a long-lasting opportunity to generate revenue for the Sales Team. The table below provides insight into how performance and success were measured for each activity in the **I** portion.

Activity	Description	KPI	Poor	Good	Excellent
<b>Scoreboard Sponsorships</b>	The Team asked 6 businesses to sponsor the new scoreboard and, in turn, the DECA Foundation got \$5,000 for every \$10,000 sale.	\$ Raised	<\$10,000	\$10,000-\$29,999	\$30,000





The activities that contributed to the **Supply Scholarship Events** section focused on the amount of dollars that the Sales Team was able to provide for competition winners. The table below provides insight into how performance and success were measured for each activity in the **S** portion.

Activity	Description	KPI	Poor	Good	Excellent
<b>Shark Tank Competition</b>	The Sales team facilitated a competition for our Senior students in DECA to win Scholarships.	\$ Given to participators	<\$5,000	\$5,000-\$19,999	\$20,000
<b>Project Management Competition</b>	The Sales team facilitated a competition for our Junior students in DECA to win Scholarships.	\$ Given to participators	<\$2,000	\$2,000-\$8,999	\$9,000

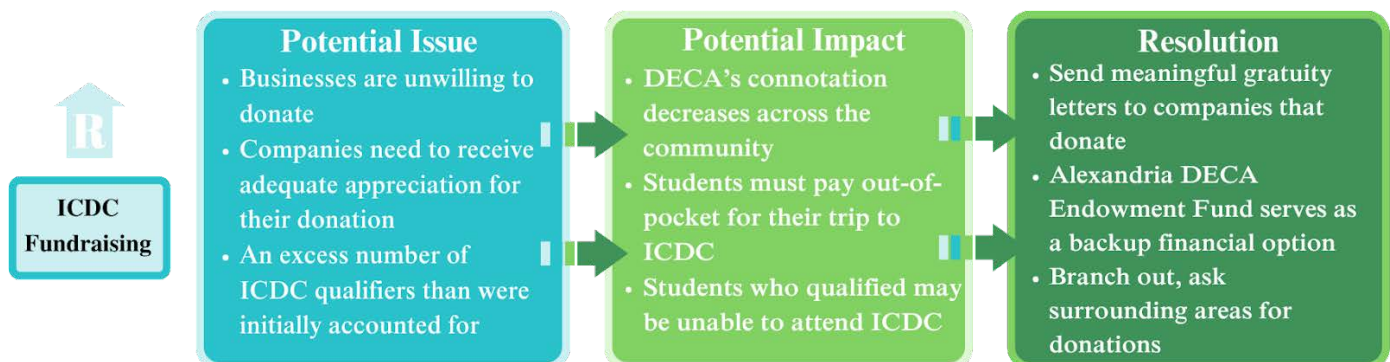


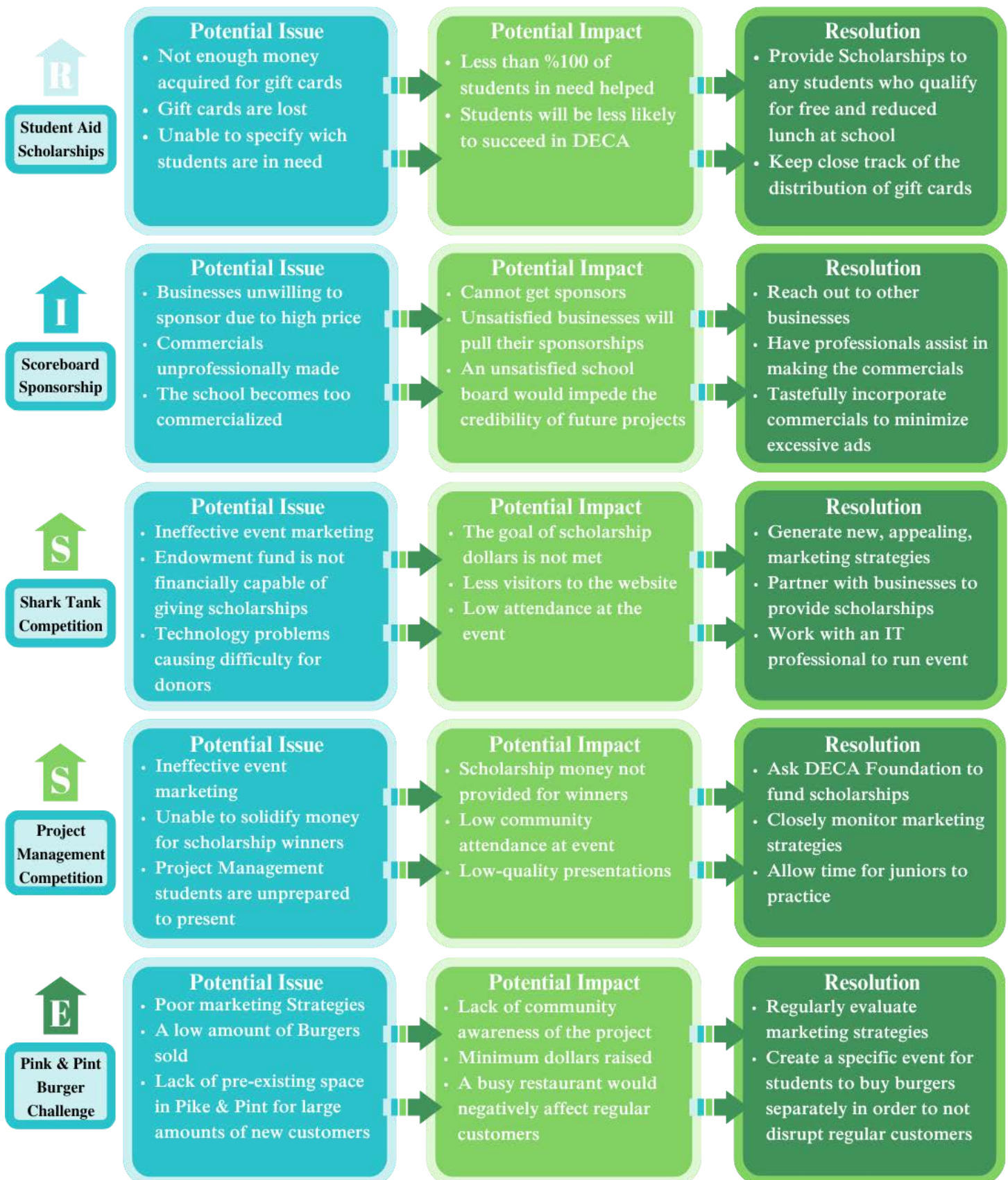
The activities that contributed to the **Expand Real-World Experiences** section focused on involving students in a real-world marketing campaign while raising money for the chapter. The table below provides insight into how performance and success were measured for each activity in the **E** portion.

Activity	Description	KPI	Poor	Good	Excellent
<b>Pink &amp; Pint Burger Challenge</b>	Students created a burger and marketing campaign. The winning burger was sold at Pike & Pint. Every burger sold gave \$1 to DECA.	\$ Raised for DECA from burger sales	<\$400	\$400-\$999	\$1,000

### E. Risk Management Plan

The Sales Team designed and created a risk management plan to help identify potential problems prior to their occurrence. Each activity includes potential issues, the impact of those issues, and our team's projected resolution.







## F. Proposed Project Budget

The Budget is divided by Foundation Revenue, Scholarships/Expenses, and Total amount raised. The Team had the opportunity to partner with three local businesses that agreed to sponsor \$34,310 in academic scholarships for the Shark Tank and Project Management Competitions. **Additionally, the foundation gained \$60,000 from the scoreboard sponsorships to invest in the endowment fund.** The table below illustrates how each campaign activity was financially impacted.

	ICDC Fundraising	Student Aid Scholarships	Scoreboard Sponsorship	Shark Tank Competition	Project Management Competition	Pink & Pint Burger Challenge
TOTAL Expenses/ Foundation Revenue	—	—	\$30,000	\$2,560	\$740	\$954
	\$39,000 \$15,000	\$4,250	—	\$21,000	\$10,000	—
	\$54,000	\$4,250	\$30,000	\$23,260	\$10,640	\$954
				-\$300 Monetary	-\$100 Monetary	

## IV. EXECUTION

The Sales Team utilized the Project Management Cycle to navigate the project. The goal of the Sales Project, to create opportunities for students and families of all socioeconomic levels, was kept in mind throughout the entirety of the project. By using this cycle the project was able to stay organized, efficient, and clear on the expectations of creating quality activities and fundraising events to ensure its continual success. During the execution, the objective to put the DECA Chapter **On The RISE** was the driving force behind the team. After the initiation and planning phase, key metrics were measured to ensure that the project was on track.



## Goals Demonstrated Through Events



### Increase Community Involvement in DECA

- Working directly with Pike & Pint
- Partnering with the Dashery to provide gift cards for students



### Assist Students with Expense Correlated Barriers

- Student Aid Scholarships
- Competition Scholarship money provided



### Provide DECA Students With Real-World Business Experience

- Burger Challenge marketing
- Reaching out to local businesses for ICDC donations



# R

## Redirect Scholarships Assets

### R.1

#### Student Aid Scholarships

The Alexandria DECA Chapter has vast resources at its disposal, the culmination of years of generosity from donors and fundraising whose efforts have been stowed in the DECA Endowment Fund, a 501(c)(3). This non-profit fund, currently at \$800,000, earns 5% annual interest. This 5% is at the disposal of the Alexandria Chapter, which then has to fund its entire year with this interest. For the 2023-24 fiscal year, the funds allocated to the Chapter is \$30,000. With this money, the team determined the general areas where this money is needed. The team started with the students with monetary concerns, whose DECA participation relied on financial scholarships. The team presented to all business classes at AAHS to inform them of the availability of scholarships for anyone participating in DECA.



Through confidential surveys, the team determined that **17 students in need applied for these scholarships**. The team then worked in correspondence with The Dashery, a business clothing store in Alexandria, Minnesota. The goal of this partnership was to make clothing scholarships possible with the given funds. The Sales Team met with The Dashery owner, Mandy Brower, on October 21st 2023. Brower pledged to donate \$50 towards each \$100 gift card given to scholarship recipients. The other \$50 was supplied by the DECA Foundation. **This contribution allowed all students to look professional, participate in DECA, and have an equal opportunity to succeed regardless of their financial position.** The number of clothing scholarships given totaled seventeen, meaning \$1,700 was distributed to students in need. Scholarships for food needs at competitions were given as gift cards to Target. \$50 was given to each student, totaling \$850. After all the scholarships were distributed, \$2,550 was given to students in need.



### R.2

#### ICDC Fundraising

The International Career Development Conference (ICDC) is a rewarding experience for a student's hard work throughout the year. However, it comes with a substantial cost to each participant. Having to pay out of pocket for hotel rooms, plane tickets, airport transportation, and other expenses is a weight that deserving students shouldn't have to worry about when considering their DECA experience. After working with the DECA advisors, the cost per student for the 2023 ICDC trip was found to be \$1,005. With 39 qualifying students, the cost of funding every student's trip would be \$39,195. Due to this, the Sales Team created an ICDC fundraising goal of \$40,000. With this goal having been

#### ICDC Costs Per Student

Flight Costs	\$380.00
Registration Costs	\$437.50
Costs of Transportation	\$187.50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$1,005.00</b>

established, the sales team worked with the DECA Foundation to construct a plan for ICDC fundraising meetings, which was facilitated in February of 2023. To give students real-world business experiences, the team determined that they must fundraise their trip by presenting to businesses within the community. To help the students with this, the Team created a presentation that students can customize when visiting businesses in the community. Next, a list was created of businesses in the community that could donate to students. The Team worked with those businesses to connect with the students who would visit them, enduring connections were established. These meetings took place in March of 2023. This effort resulted in **100% of the 39 ICDC qualifiers' trips being fundraised**. The qualifiers went to 84 businesses, pitching their project and selling themselves to receive funding. The final number for the amount raised was \$54,000, which is \$14,000 over the goal. This action meant **zero students faced financial burdens for their ICDC trip**. The ICDC experience allowed students to learn business skills that will be invaluable in their future careers.



Since the 2023 ICDC trip's fundraising exceeded what was necessary, the Sales Team had \$18,000 to distribute in the form of academic scholarships to students. This was given to seniors in a process designed by the Team. Each senior who applied for a scholarship had to submit a video sharing their ideas for improving the Chapter as a whole. These videos were then reviewed by the DECA Foundation members. In total, 19 seniors submitted videos, and 100% of them received scholarships ranging from \$1,500-500. This allowed excess funds to be allocated in a way that benefited DECA members and provided ideas for increasing chapter success in future years.



## I Initiate Recurring Revenue

### I.1 Scoreboard Sponsorships

With the overarching goal of the **On the RISE Campaign** being to generate revenue for the DECA Chapter, our Team needed one key idea that would secure the chapter financially. The Sales Team met with the DECA Foundation, where the idea of selling six advertisements on the gymnasium's new scoreboard was first pitched. The Team then met with the Cardinal Athletic Foundation (CAF) and decided that for DECA to gain revenue from these advertisements, the DECA Foundation must split the board's cost with the Athletic Foundation. With the support of both Foundations, the Team's next step was to get the approval of the Superintendent Rick Sansted and the School Board. The Team curated a presentation, met with the



Superintendent, and finally met with the school board over the course of two weeks in December. This collaboration puts focus on compromising and considering everyone's best interests. The final cost of the scoreboard was determined to be \$250,000, with the DECA Foundation investing \$125,000 in this endeavor. The next step was to reach out to businesses with whom the Sales Team had previous relationships and inquire about their interest in purchasing an advertisement for a five-year commitment. Emails were sent to six prospective businesses, and after their positive responses, we met with their executives in person. Donating businesses included Alomere Health, Bell Bank, Alexandria Industries, Bremer Bank, Geneva Capital, and Zorbaz. Each meeting resulted in the **business purchasing an advertisement for \$10,000**. This was when the Team began work with a graphic designer from Geneva Capital, who agreed to assist with creating these advertisements. After two meetings with graphic designer Anna Petro, where the Team got a crash course on graphic design, we met with each business to craft their desired advertisement. This gave the Team experience in a field that would have otherwise never been explored. This design phase took place in late January.

Anna Petro, Graphic Designer From Geneva Capital



During this time, the financial stability of the company that was chosen to manufacture this scoreboard, Daktronics, was called into question. With such a large amount of money being invested, the Sales Team wanted to ensure that the company would be around for years in case servicing was needed on the scoreboard. This led us to the Director of Operations at Geneva Capital, Nate Kary. The Team's meetings with Nate in late January provided insight into how to analyze quarterly reports, stock market trends, and other detailed financials. After this deep search into Daktronics was done, it was determined that they were not at risk for bankruptcy, and the project could proceed. The designs made were sent and approved by the individual companies in February. As each company approved the design, they were sent to Daktronics to install on the scoreboard. This static advertising was paired with videos created by the businesses that play on the scoreboard at each sporting event. Each advertisement was 30 seconds long. This endeavor **raised \$60,000 in total in the first year, with \$30,000 being put towards the DECA Foundation** per the monetary split. These businesses will also be re-investing every five years for an additional \$10,000.

Nate Kary, Director of Operations at Geneva Capital



## **S** Supply Scholarship Events

### **S.1** Geneva Capital Shark Tank

A significant goal of the Sales Team for the 2023-24 year was to supply academic scholarships to students. The primary audience to reach was disadvantaged students, for whom the Sales Team provided funding for activity fees, clothing, and food. In addition, the Sales Team wanted to focus on incentivizing all DECA students to reach their full potential. To do this, the Team theorized that competitive events with scholarship prizes would generate the most engagement. The team then determined that the grade that would





benefit from academic scholarships would be seniors. This manifested in the Shark Tank Competition. To obtain the funding for scholarships at this event, the Team met with local business Geneva Capital on January 3rd, 2024. Geneva Capital generously donated \$21,000 to Shark Tank, and five of their executives agreed to donate their time to judge the competition.



The Sales Team found these competitions to be possible sources of donations since members of the community were invited to come and watch. This gives parents and interested adults the chance to understand what the students are doing in DECA and to see their hard work displayed in a polished presentation. To reach a large margin of the community, the Team took to social media to promote Shark Tank. The Team asked the DECA Foundation for a \$100 donation, which was used to garner higher engagement on Instagram. Four \$25 gift cards to local restaurants were given away to a random commenter on each of the four boosted posts made in the week leading up to Shark Tank. This created excitement for the event, as people would be hearing about it more. A Facebook event was created to livestream the Shark Tank competition, social media posts were also added to that platform as well. Flyers with the Chapter's Venmo were distributed at the door, and virtual flyers were distributed online. The Sales Team **updated the Foundation website allowing anyone to contribute to DECA easily and efficiently**. The Sales Team personally MC'd the event, announcing projects and helping backstage. The competition was also used as a forum to share a presentation on the DECA Foundation, which was given before the teams competed. This allowed the Team to inform the community about what the Foundation does for our community, which generated donations to the Chapter. Overall, **the participating seniors gained invaluable experience in the business world, and the Sales Team fundraised \$2,560 for the DECA Foundation**.



## **S.2** Project Management Competition

With Geneva Capital's Shark Tank Competition being such a resounding success for the Chapter and students alike, the Sales Team proposed a smaller, yet similar, competition for juniors. This was termed the "Fish Bowl" competition, to go along with Shark Tank. To obtain funding for scholarships, we went to Bremer Bank and Brenton Orion. After presenting to these businesses, they each donated \$5,000 to the Fish Bowl competition, **for a total of \$10,000 in scholarships to distribute to the winners of this competition**. The advertisements for Project Management were similar to that of Shark Tank, where four \$25 gift cards were distributed on Facebook and Instagram to random supporters. This received a significant amount of interaction, which boosted the attendance of the Fish Bowl competition. At this competition, the Sales Team presented the



benefits of the DECA Foundation, and how to donate. This raised \$740 for the Chapter, and it gave community members the chance to understand what students are doing in DECA.

## **E Expand Real-World Experiences**

### **E.1 Pike & Pint Burger Challenge**

The Sales Team, in an effort to provide students with real-world business experience as well as earn money for DECA, formulated The Burger Challenge. This challenge would be in partnership with local restaurant Pike & Pint. The owner of Pike & Pint, Kent Kopp, helped the Sales Team by donating his staff and talent to the project. The Alexandria Area High School's Marketing 101 (M1) class helped compose innovative burger ideas for the challenge. The M1 class was split into six groups and tasked to design the best possible burger. The Sales Team brought in Kent Kopp to present to these classes what he wanted the finished product to be: a creative, popular burger that could remain on the menu for years.

Kent Kopp Owner of Pike & Pint



#### **Burger Challenge Process**



The Team then began mentoring these groups on their projects, guiding them through the design process. After each group had procured their design, they created pitches that they gave to the rest of the class, selling their burger. The class picked the top two burgers, the *Rib Tickler* and *Whiskey Stampede*, which were put on the menu at Pike & Pint. Next, they had to advertise their products. This was achieved through various avenues according to each group. The goal was to raise awareness not only in the school but in the community that these items would soon be available at Pike & Pint. Some examples of these advertisements included Instagram posts and in-school posters. These burgers stayed on Pike & Pint's menu for six weeks. **For each burger sold, \$1 was contributed to the DECA foundation.** At the end of this time, the number of orders of both burgers was tallied to **954 orders**, with a 458:496 split between the two burgers. The final winning burger was then permanently placed on Pike & Pint's menu, to be enjoyed by the community.



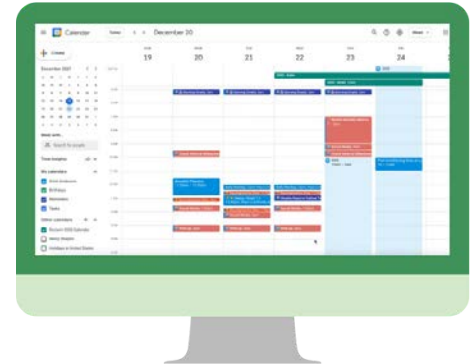
## V. MONITORING AND CONTROLLING

### A. Monitoring

To ensure the success of the Sales Project, close monitoring was needed to confirm that the goals laid out were being met. This allowed the Sales Team to provide extra support in any areas that it was deemed necessary. **Monitoring was done using schedules, budgets, and key metrics.** These components were regularly utilized and checked to ensure that the Sales Project was successful.

#### Schedule

To have effective communication, the Sales Team utilized Google platforms. A **Shared Google Calendar** was created for the Team, ensuring all timelines were met. Meetings were scheduled through this forum, which allowed the Sales Team to effectively communicate with each other and with community members.



Utilizing a schedule helped keep all Team members on the same page and provided a consistent overview of important calendar dates. It was especially helpful for more time-sensitive events such as the Burger Challenge, which had a short time window that required strict attention to detail. The agenda helped **organize milestones** to stay on top of contacting the restaurant, engaging the community, creating the burgers, and getting them prepared for sale at the restaurant. Additionally, the project maintained efficiency through regular check-ins with the DECA members and advisors. These meetings allowed for asking questions, receiving feedback, and ensuring the adequacy of the project. DECA advisors and members were able to monitor the project and keep the Team on track, which ensured the success of the Sales Project.

#### Budget

A budget was created to analyze the revenue gained for each activity. This helped the Sales Project Team know if the project was on track to meet its goals and raise additional funds. This was beneficial for the projects because with little cost and high profit margins the success of each activity was improved.

Money Raised					
ICDC Fundraising	Student Aid Scholarships	Scoreboard Sponsorships	Geneva Capital Shark Tank	Project Management Competition	Burger Challenge
\$54,000	\$4,250	\$60,000	\$23,260	\$10,640	\$954

#### Project Quality

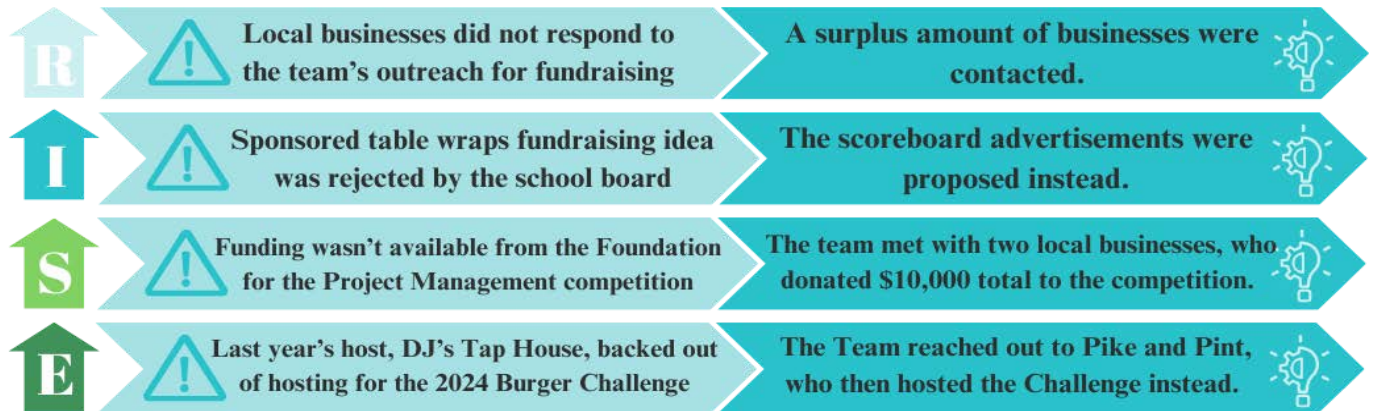
For the Sales Project to maintain high standards, the team met frequently to maintain an effective communication stream. The Sales Project Team made it a goal to meet together once a week to work on the project, create goals, or communicate with community members. These meetings were in addition to the DECA Project Management bi-weekly meetings. Communication was essential to the success of the project. Team members communicated through a group message, Basecamp, and a running to-do list. DECA advisors and additional peers were consulted when there were questions or concerns. The use of this system helped the project and presentation to be viewed by many people to help create a successful result.





## B. Controlling

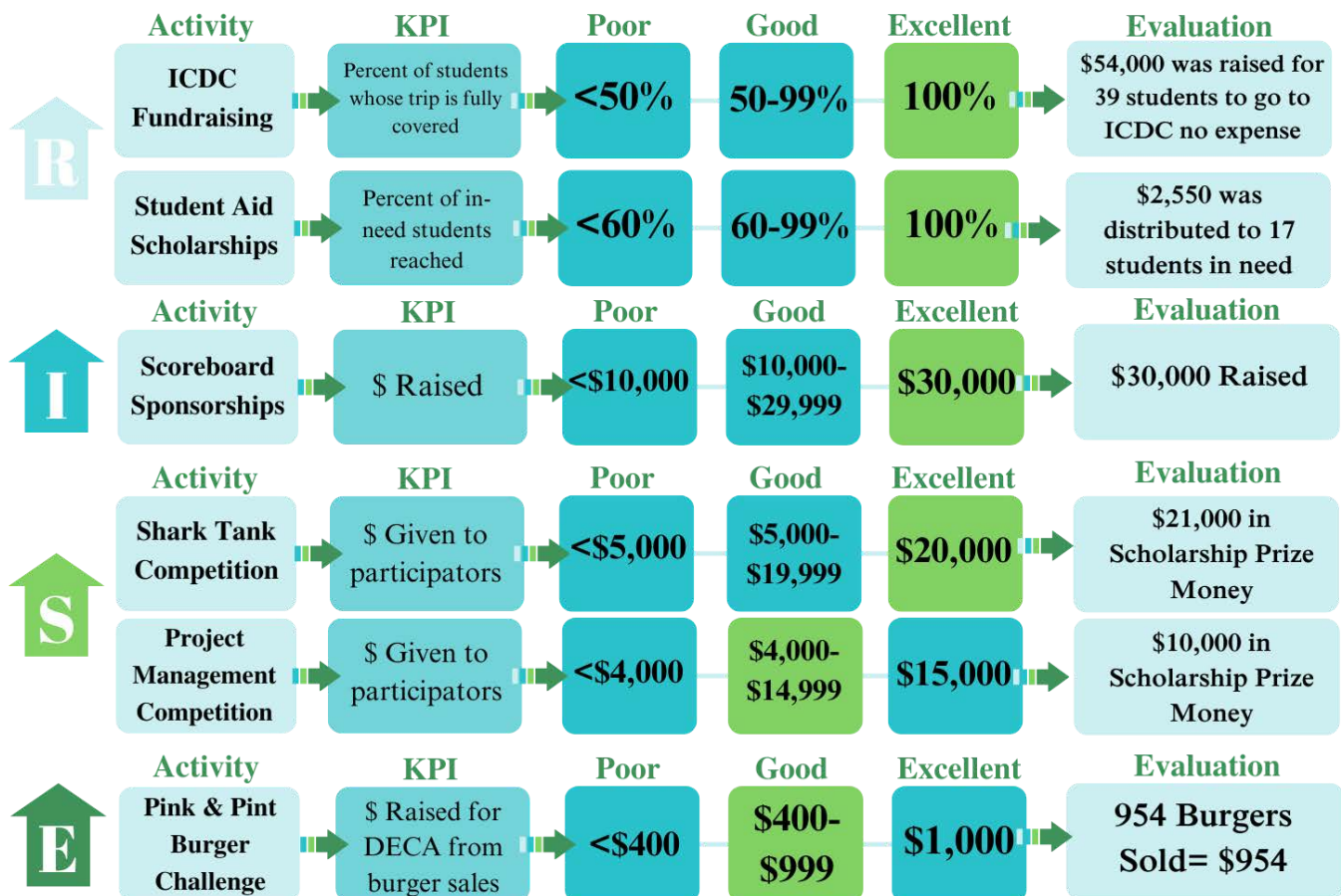
Throughout the Sales Project, the Team encountered a multitude of problems that had to be solved. These problems were dealt with quickly and efficiently to maintain the schedule and timeline goals. Shown below are problems that arose in each activity, and the steps taken to resolve them.



## VI. CLOSING THE PROJECT

### A. Evaluation of Key Metrics

After completing the **RISE** initiative activities, the Team evaluated the key metrics created in the quality management plan to gauge the success of the project and identify any strengths and weaknesses.



## B. Lessons Learned



### Necessity of Community Involvement

Throughout this project, the Sales Team required the assistance of community members. Having such a strong base for the community, and having people that care about the high school and students' business education has been invaluable to the Sales Project. Without generous donors to help with funding or speakers to come talk to students, the Chapter would not be where it is today.



### Skill of Communication

The Sales Team had to communicate with businesses, school board members, and students alike to complete the **On the RISE Campaign**. Using each member's strengths to effectively correspond with those who assisted in making this project possible was a vital component of the Project Management cycle.



### Significance of Persevering

In October of 2023, the initial idea for the **Initiate** segment of the Sales Project was proposed. This idea featured informational table wraps, which would be sponsored by a local business. This idea was pitched to the school board, who rejected it. This then prompted the sponsored scoreboard, which was approved. This experience taught the Sales Team how to problem solve and persevere in the face of adversity.

## C. Recommendations for Future Projects

### Research School Board Approval Process

In October, when the Team first had to go to the School Board for approval, the process was unclear, as students did not petition the school board often. This led to confusion and stagnant progress. To avoid this in the future, we recommend that the Sales Teams look at the district website for details on the exact process, as well as confer with Superintendent Rick Sansted as early as possible. This is due to the fact that, as we discovered, the School Board only meets once a month, which led to conflict with progress.

### Facilitate a "Day of Giving" Fundraiser

For many associations within the Alexandria community, the national "Day of Giving" the Tuesday after Thanksgiving is the ideal opportunity for fundraising. Many choose to use social media to promote their venmo or donation avenues on this day, and it has been successful. For future projects, we propose a similar approach for the DECA Chapter. Utilizing Facebook and Instagram to promote this fundraiser will generate the highest interaction, as evidenced in the **On the RISE** campaign.

### Implement Sponsored Table Wraps

In the first phase of the Initiate campaign, table wraps sponsored by local businesses, to be implemented in the AAHS commons were proposed. Quotes from the graphics company Winning Edge were obtained, and businesses were contacted to gauge the responsiveness of the community. A pilot table, sponsored by Geneva Capital, was approved by Superintendent Rick Sansted and implemented into the Commons. However, the School Board rejected the proposal for the 2023-24 school year. The Team recommends that future Sales Projects, utilizing the proper school board approval process, petition the school board to reconsider the table wraps, as they would be a significant fundraiser for the chapter.

## VII. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Consultants	Personal Interviews	Internet Sites	Journals
Eric Hartmann: DECA Advisor Megan Jacob: Business Teacher Mark Watkins: Geneva Capital CEO	Chad Duwenhogger: Principal Rick Sansted: Superintendent Mike Tripp, Nate Kary, and Anna Petro: Geneva Capital Kent Kopp: Owner of Pike & Pint	1- Alexandria Demographics 2- DataUSA 3- LivingAlexArea 4- Economic Development Commission	1- "Manufacturing inequality" 2- United States Census Bureau