

AHS Academic Decathlon Advances to State Competition

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Staff Writer

At the 2016 Los Angeles County Academic Decathlon Competition on Feb. 6, AHS's Acadec battled it out in a ten-event scholastic competition against 52 other teams.

Each Acadec team consists of nine members. Teams are divided into the Honors, Scholastic and Varsity divisions. There are three students in each division. Honors students have a GPA of 3.75 and above, Scholastic students have a GPA between 3.0 and 3.74 and Varsity students have GPAs that are below 2.99.

The county competition is comprised of seven objective events that test teams in fields of study such as art, mathematics and social science. In addition, the competition has a subjective portion, in which team members must deliver speeches, write essays and undergo interviews from judges. Teams also must prepare for a Super Quiz, an event in which all members take turns to solve multiple different challenges and questions based off of the competition curriculum.

In Academic Decathlons, each event, with the exception of the Super Quiz, is scored based on a 1,000 point system. The Super Quiz is worth 10,000 possible points, but these points will only count toward the team score and not an indi-

vidual's score. At the end of the competition, the maximum possible score for a single competitor is 10,000 points. The

At the LA County Competition, AHS Acadec earned a team score of 46,389.7. This score placed the team 8th over-

terview and mathematics categories.

The team will compete in the state competition from March 17-20.

"I'm really proud of our team," Scholastic member Lucy Zhong said. "It is our seniors' last year so we want to make this memorable for them." This marks the third consecutive year that the team has qualified for the State Competition.

In anticipation for the state competition, the team looks to prepare themselves for a successful showing. "We will continue reviewing our study materials and tutoring each other," Honors member Chi Yu said. "I will specifically focus on science, economics, and mathematics, hoping to acquire medals in those areas."

After the end of the 2015-16 school year, AHS Acadec may encounter a few roster issues.

"We will need to recruit for next year since we are losing three seniors. [We especially need] varsity students," Malonek said. "I am also always trying to increase our representation so the [team demographics] look more like that of the [school's]."

The roster changes may also have an effect on the team's performance. "[The seniors] are definitely some of our strongest [members]," Scholastic member Jenny Hsu said. "With the seniors gone, the team may struggle a bit at first, but we will always work hard to achieve our goals."



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Academic Decathlon members attended the county competition on Feb. 6, at El Rancho High School in Pico Rivera. The county competition theme this year is "India."

team score is calculated by first combining the top two scores from the Honors, Scholastic, and Varsity divisions. These results are then added up and combined with the team's Super Quiz score to form a grand total. The maximum possible team score is 70,000 points.

all in the county, an improvement from their 9th place standing last year. According to Acadec coach Jennie Malonek, the team performed within expectations, as their goal was to come in 7th place. Six individuals in the team also won medals in the essay, speech, in-

U.S. Task Force: Teen Depression Screenings

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On Feb. 18, the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force released new recommendations on diagnosing depression by suggesting that all adolescents older than 12 should be routinely screened for depression.

"The article starts the discussion where there is definite need for identification of indicators for depression in our youth. It stops short of specific implementation, funding, training and evaluation," Peer Counseling adviser Shelley Gee-Ryan said.

According to the LA Times, having depression can cause adolescents to experience poor academic performance, failed relationships, problems with substance abuse and, almost 20 percent of the time, attempted suicides.

"You don't know how bad a person's problem can be, [especially] if they're considering hurting themselves. On the

other hand, some other people may not want to share their problems with others," sophomore Jocelyn Barajas said.

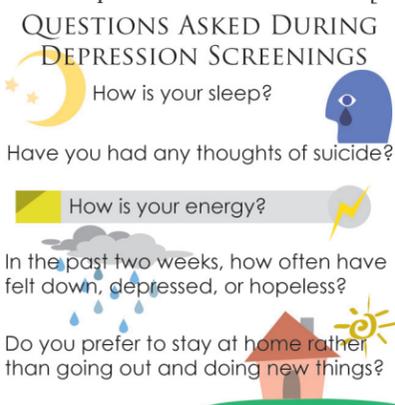
One in 10 teens shows some signs of depression, such as eating too less or too much, losing interest in hobbies, and thinking about death or suicide, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

"I think that [screening for depression] is a good idea, but not everyone has a set schedule for when to eat [and] sleep, so [those factors] wouldn't be an accurate representation for what the [norm] is," senior Xavier Baltazar said.

Some students feel screening teens regularly is an invasion of their personal privacy.

"I think this is bad because there's nothing worse than poking into a teenager's life. Instead [communities] should make teens feel more welcomed rather than targeting students through depression screenings," said junior Tammy Huynh.

MOOR graphic by LESLIE HWANG



American University Study: 92 Percent College Students Prefer Textbooks Over E-Books

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In our society today, preferring gadgets over traditional ways would be no surprise. A study done by American University linguistics professor Naomi S. Baron asked 300 college students in the U.S., Slovakia, Japan and Germany how they preferred to read. Baron found that 92 percent of the students preferred physical copies of books rather than e-books.

"I prefer physical books because I like being able to actually hold the book and have the physical copy," freshman Gloria Palomino said.

Physical copies may provide a sense of completion, by allowing readers to see how much they have finished. With physical copies, readers are also able to highlight and annotate books which can then be used for studying in the future. Aside from the benefits of having a physical book, there is also the factor of size, weight and price, elements that may sway the decision between a physical book and an e-book.

"Physical books are better; there's a whole different experience when you ac-

tually get to hold a book right in front of you. [By] incorporating the books we use in class with technology that often acts as a distraction, the result may not be for the better. The only problem is physical books remain to be expensive and so students [may] opt to get an electronic version instead," senior Nikki Calizo said.

According to Publishers Weekly, students who read e-books responded that they understood the narrative details less than students that read the printed versions of books. The e-books are less effective than print books: they provide less interaction, can be difficult to read for long hours and may also serve as a distraction for readers.

E-books and physical books both have their own personal characteristics that they bring to the table. More e-books in schools may be possible in the future as technology grows over time.

"I think it will be possible [for schools to switch over to e-books], [but] the one issue we have is [that] there is a law that I have to comply with called [Williams v. California], which means every student has what they need, especially when it comes to textbooks for each class that they are taking for their use," bookroom clerk Mary Hubner said.

Studies Reveal Lack of Internet Connection May Damage Academic Performance, Job Opportunities

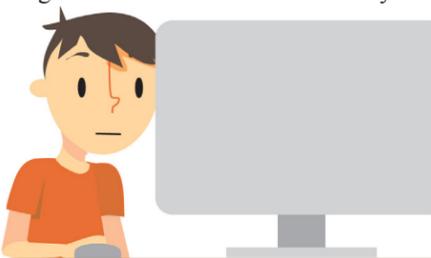
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Several researchers are claiming that lacking access to Internet can cause students to have poor performance at school. Vikki Katz, a researcher Rutgers University, conducted a phone-survey in 2015 and collected data from 1,191 low and moderate-income families. Katz claims that many of these families are not meeting their needs in accessing Internet due to financial problems.

Most of these families could only afford

access through one computer or by using a smartphone. Students might not be able

to do research for homework and projects. Furthermore, common under-connected Internet issues that these families encounter include poor service, slow connection, many people sharing the same computer, and financial difficulties to afford full access Internet.



"Lack of technology truly hurts a student when they are working on a group project and they need to communicate, or they are unable to solve a problem and have no one and nothing to ask," senior Joseph Ney-Jun said.

According to USA Today, inability to access fully-connected Internet may cause chil-

dren in these families to perform poorly at school due to lack of assistance such as help through search engines.

"It can really affect a student's grade if he or she only has one computer at home and has to share it with siblings," said freshman Serena Duenas.

Regardless, students should try to access the information they need from other sources, such as the library or school, according to Career Center Ed Tech Adviser Janice Liu

MOOR graphic by LESLIE HWANG