**2026 Georgia DECA Middle School**

**Theme Speech Competition**

**The 2026 Georgia DECA Theme Speech Topic is:**

**As emerging leaders, you know that success is more than just meeting expectations—it’s about exceeding them. This year, we dare you to Go The Extra—the extra mile, the extra step, the extra level on the path to achieving your college and career goals.**

**Whether it’s competing in a new competitive event, working towards THRIVE LEVEL in chapter campaigns, going for GOLD certification with your SBE or developing new leadership skills. How do you plan to push yourself and Go the Extra this year?**

**Purpose:** To develop the participant’s ability in organizing and presenting information in an effective manner to a small group.

**Guidelines:**

1. One participant per chapter is permitted to enter at the regional level. The regional event winners will be eligible to compete at state. Other finalists will not be eligible to compete at state, should a winner be unable to attend state.

2. The overall topic will be published annually by Georgia DECA on the Georgia DECA Website. The regional and state event topics will be the same.

3. The participant will prepare the speech and bring it to the conference. The length of the presentation will be a maximum of 3 minutes. A 1 minute warning will be given. Students will be asked to stop speaking at 3 minutes.

4. Any size index card may be used for presenting the theme speech, however memorization of the speech is encouraged. No props or visual aids of any kind are allowed. Only index cards may be utilized. If any other format is used, 10 points will be deducted.

**2026 Theme Speech Rating Sheet**

**Participant’s Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Participant’s School: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

***Directions:***

*Score each participant according to the maximum points possible. Subtract penalty points at the end.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Items Evaluated** | **Maximum Points Possible** | **Score** | **Comments** |
| Opening | 20 |  |  |
| Voice | 10 |  |  |
| Platform Deportment/Diction | 20 |  |  |
| Organization | 30 |  |  |
| Closing | 20 |  |  |
| Subtotal | 100 |  |  |
| **Penalties** |  |  |  |
| Speech was over 3 minutes | -5 |  |  |
| Format other than note cards used in presentation | -10 |  |  |
| Total Penalties | -10 |  |  |
| **TOTAL SCORE** | 100 |  |  |

Judges Initials: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Feedback: