

acadec to state or not to state

Before class started, juniors **Johnny Waugh** and **Erin Long** ran through the halls, screaming in disappointment. Academic Decathlon sponsor **John Davis** sulked at his desk trying to figure out how he could help during what he described as “one of his toughest days.”

A representative from the United States Academic Decathlon Organization notified Mr. Davis that the Academic Decathlon team would not be attending the state competition despite their previous invitation. The team’s name appeared on the organization’s website as state qualifiers, but officials found an unknown accounting error a day after the team had been told they would compete at state.

“It was an honest mistake,” Mr. Davis said. “But it was cruel to have so much time to tell everyone that you’re going and then suddenly you’re not.”

During the regional meet at Arlington Martin High School, the Acadec team took second place. However, the Academic Decathlon organization forgot to factor in one of the Texas regions. This region took the place of Legacy. When the team was told the news in class, they ran to co-sponsor **Jeri Bordelon’s** room and proceeded to share their disappointment and tears.

“We had something and they ripped it away from us.”
ERIN LONG, 11

“The representative was so insincere,” junior Erin Long said. “The blow would have been so much softer if he had apologized. We had something and they ripped it away from us.”

The Acadec team was not the only victim of this mistake. Plano High School was also publicized as a qualifier on the organization’s

website but told they were not invited anymore. Mrs. Bordelon spent her day refuting the teams’ denials and convinced the representative to allow the team to participate in the San Antonio competition.

“I think they realized it was the only right thing to do,” Mrs. Bordelon said.

As the news of their invitation to the San Antonio meet spread to the rest of the team, it was met with screams and cheers of happiness at senior **Kyle Rodney’s** lunch table. Rodney spent his four years at Legacy coming close to six state recognitions in band and Acadec but never qualified.

“This was the last chance I had to make state,” Rodney said. “There was a sense of individual accomplishment when it was finally confirmed.”

Now they have another chance, and the team plans to study even harder than they did for the regional meet.

“We already proved it to ourselves,” junior **Breton Hawkins** said. “We have to prove to them that we belong there, and we’re going to kick butt.”

By Brooke Jackson



DESTINIE WALKER PHOTO

BRAGGING RIGHTS

At the regional meet, **Carter Poe**, 12, expresses his confidence to Mr. **John Davis**. “I was really impressed with my ability to speak well while making up random facts on the spot,” Poe said. Poe was the highest scorer for speech in his classification.



DESTINIE WALKER PHOTO

PRIOR PREPARATION

Before her speeches, **Shamiran Prater**, 12, prepares her cards for reference. “I was really focused on this speech because it was my best category last year and I wanted to do well,” Prater said.



AISHA DEBURR PHOTO

THROWING IDEAS

In order to prepare for his upcoming debate, **Ben Speigner**, 10, brainstormers with Mr. **Howard Ritz**. Speigner’s friend convinced him to join debate and he appreciated Mr. Ritz as a teacher. “He makes you want to learn and be effective in an argument,” Speigner said.

CASUAL COLLABORATING

While studying intensely, **Jessica Bao**, 12, and **Rimsha Shahid**, 11, practice for their upcoming debate. They did speaking drills and case critiques to improve their performance. “Rimsha and I were prepared speaking, research, and critical thinking-wise,” Bao said.



AISHA DEBURR PHOTO

PLEASANT SURPRISE

While attending the debate Christmas party, **Devyn Hinds**, 10, opens her present from a classmate. Both divisions of the debate team attended to celebrate. “We bonded, like a family,” Hinds said. “It brought us together. We weren’t just LD and CX debate — we were Legacy Debate.”



AISHA DEBURR PHOTO



AISHA DEBURR PHOTO

DEBATE DUO

Abby Belea, 9, and **Alexander Vo**, 9, discuss different methods of transportation for a family of four. Debate partners changed almost every week. “I love debating,” Belea said. “I actually debate outside of class.” Belea received fourth place in CX Varsity Debate at Trimble Tech.

debate an average day in debate defies traditional classroom

Students filed in the classroom one by one, setting their backpacks and binders down on the floor to get comfortable for the next hour of LD debate club. They sat down casually on the desk tops, some with their feet on the chair, others swinging their legs off the side of the desks.

Once a decent sized crowd had entered, Mr. **Howard Ritz** began to cover the current debate topic: Whether or not human rights protection should supersede state sovereignty. He stood up behind his desk to speak to the class about one of the possible sides to this argument and waved his arms around as he did so, using his hands to speak in exaggerated motions.

After a few minutes of talking, the conversation shifted. “I’m multitasking,” Mr. Ritz offered the students as an excuse for drifting off topic. “You know how random I think.”

Now back on topic, the class discussed the names of students who would be attending the next debate tournament, so they could be moved from the large whiteboard in the back of the classroom to his paper.

“Is **Deja Morehead** on the board?” he asked. Her competition entry was confirmed by sophomore **Keith Brothers**.

The topic once again deviated, this time back to the original debate topic. He spoke for awhile, his lecture broken occasionally by a question or comment from a student.

“Any ideas, thoughts provoked, or anything?” he asked the class. “Because this is really a brainstorming session to help you write your cases.”

Sophomore **Danny Olvera** walked into the classroom, stopped under the leaf-framed arch just inside the door, and said, “I am so confused right now.”

“CX is in the other room,” Mr. Ritz told him, pausing his allocution just long enough to direct him in the right direction towards another room, just down the hall.

By Michelle McDaniel

“I’m multitasking. You know how random I think.”
MR. HOWARD RITZ

avid teachers work to help students see potential, prepare for college acceptance

Achievement Via Individual Determination, AVID, has one major goal set in place for their students — college. For some, it has been something they have been striving for since seventh grade. Now, the seniors of AVID are coming to the end of their high school career and preparing for their college years.

Ms. **Jennifer Roberts** has been teaching AVID since the Class of 2015 were freshman after a position opened up in 2011.

“It’s been neat to see them grow from freshman, not sure about high school and then being able to see them all the way through until they come in with their letters saying they got into college,” Ms. Roberts said. “My favorite part about teaching AVID is helping students realize their potential.”

Senior **Alexandria Reetz** began the AVID program during freshman year, after transferring from a Catholic school.

“I started AVID because I was not exactly sure where I was going, but I did know that I wanted to go to college,”

Reetz said. “It seemed like the best place to be.”

Reetz received admission to A&M-Corpus Christi with a full ride along with admission to Sam Houston State University. She planned on visiting her college choices and looking up more scholarships before she made her final decision and looked forward to the freedom she would have when she went to college.

“The last three years have been preparation for this year,” Reetz said. “I feel absolutely fabulous.”

From the bi-weekly tutorial sessions to the binder checks, AVID helped students adequately prepare for the next stage in their life.

“We’re like a big family,” Reetz said. “It’s awesome.”

By Monica Salazar



EMARY SKOCZLAS PHOTO

GREEN GUIDANCE

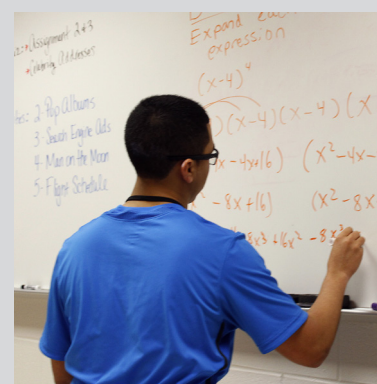
Sablon Spears, 9, discusses highlighting and learning styles with Coach **Jimmie Green**. “He’s fun,” Spears said. “He helps us with a lot of things like learning and work ethic.”

COLLEGE HUNT

In Ms. **Lisbeth Bennett’s** class, **Kala Brown**, 10, reviews loans and scholarships for college. “I really feel like AVID can be great networking for college letters and acceptances,” Brown said.



ALLEE AUSTIN PHOTO



ANNA ROBERTS PHOTO

EXPRESSION EXPANSION

In his AVID class, **Delfino Vasquez**, 11, works on a math problem from his Algebra homework. When AVID students needed assistance on math problems, they seek the help of their classmates and volunteer tutors during designated days of the week. “If I really can’t understand something and the teachers can’t explain it, I ask my tutor and my peers to help,” Vasquez said.