Diversity Overnight Overview

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**College & Alumni Report Card (CARC) Goals:** [**(back to top)**](#_top)

End of year:

* 100% of seniors will apply to at least eight “best-fit” schools

Interim Goals:

* 100% of 3.0 GPA/1000+ SAT will apply to at least three diversity overnights
* 100% of 3.0 GPA/1000+ SAT will be accepted to at least one diversity overnight
* 100% of 3.0 GPA/1000+ SAT will attend at least one diversity overnight

**Vision:** [**(back to top)**](#_top)

The primary goal of diversity overnights is to connect seniors to schools that might not otherwise be on their college list but that, in many instances, are schools that provide incredible support (academic, social/emotional, and financial) to first-generation, low-income students. Given the quality of these overnight trips, scholars are often excited by and/or deeply invested in attending a particular college that they may not have considered before the experience of the diversity overnight. It can also help to clarify for a student when and why they may not like a school and in so doing, provide better guidance for the student, family, and college counselor when finalizing their college list.

Our historical data suggests a strong correlation between students who attend diversity overnights and their likelihood of acceptance to that college. A student’s participation can and does influence admissions decisions, especially if the student’s profile does not meet all admissions criteria for a particular school. Colleges track the number of “interactions” a student has with their institutions and thus, the investment of time needed for diversity overnights is worth it because if the potential impact on admissions, financial aid, and matriculation.

A secondary goal for diversity overnights is to expand the brand of the school and the network. Because colleges can receive over 500+ applications for 30-50 spots in a diversity overnight, they often have many more qualified students than spots. However, colleges track schools and the strengths of their applicants, even if they cannot accept them for the diversity overnight. Again, when done effectively, this kind of branding can result in greater attention paid to college applications for both current and future students from the high school.

**Criteria for Success:** [**(back to top)**](#_top)

A rubric for this lever does not currently exist.

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| **OAPICS** | **Key Players:**[**(back to top)**](#_top) |
| **O** | College Counselor | * College Counselor
* Seniors
* CRS IV teacher (if not college counselor)
* Dean of College
 |
| **A** | Dean of College |
| **P** | College Counselor |
| **I** | Alumni Counselor, Dean of College, Network Director of College, Network Director of Alumni Programs & Partnerships |
| **C** | Principal, Regional Superintendent |
| **S** | This is not a consistent practice but it is a best practice. |

**High Level Timeframe:**

* June-August: Create Diversity Overnight Project Plan, matching to projected college lists + share during college list conversations with students
* August-November: Prep and support scholars through application process
* August-November: Track completion of applications, acceptances and matriculation to overnights
* December: Complete final report on Diversity Overnight applications and results

**Recommended Policies:**

**Q: Are scholars who do not meet the 3.0gpa/1000+ SAT cut-off allowed to apply to Diversity Overnights?**

Yes. The college counselor should and can make strategic decisions regarding applicants who don’t meet this criterion. For example, if there is a diversity overnight at an SAT optional school, a student with SAT scores below 1000+ but with a high GPA could be a great candidate for that diversity overnight. In addition, if a student has a compelling case (tremendous growth from 9th grade to 12th grade, family circumstances that are unique, etc.), a counselor could make a strong case via an advocacy call and/or letter of recommendation for the student. In many ways, these are exactly the scholars who can benefit from having face-to-face time with college admissions personnel, especially if they present well in person and if they have been well prepped for the experience. The 3.0/1000+ guidance is a *minimum* bar for who must attend a diversity overnight.

**Q: How many days are seniors permitted to miss school in order to attend Diversity Overnights?**

Scholars should be permitted five excused absences over the course of their senior year in order to attend college visits. This five day number includes diversity overnights, open houses, accepted applicant visits, required entrance exam and/or orientation days, and any other visits to be approved by the college counselor.

**Q: Are seniors required to submit proof of attendance? If so, how do they submit proof?**

A College Visit Verification form must be filled out and approved by a college counselor and/or Dean of College at least one week prior to student’s scheduled departure. Special allowances will be considered on a case-by-case basis if a scholar is unable to submit the form a week prior. Both the College Counselor and the Dean of College/Principal must approve any college visits beyond the maximum five excused absences. The College Visit Verification form must also be signed by someone in the admissions office at the college. When scheduling college visits, students should work with their teachers in advance to try to minimize the disruption to their academic instruction.

In addition, scholars must have all missing assignments reported on their College Visit Verification form. Any missed work during college visits is the responsibility of the student and failure to comply with any of the stated rules and expectations and/or any missing or incomplete work will jeopardize the scholar’s ability to attend future college visits.

**Q: If funding is not provided, what, if any, financial supports will the school provide?**

Most colleges will provide the necessary funding to ensure that a scholar can travel to and attend the diversity overnight. However, if funding prevents a scholar from attending, the college counselor has the discrepancy to provide necessary transportation costs, etc. on a case-by-case basis.

**Key Messages:** [**(back to top)**](#_top)

* Diversity overnights can and do influence admissions decisions. Colleges track the number of “interactions” a student has with their institution and these numbers impact acceptances.
* Diversity overnights are a great way for students to learn about a school that a student had never visited – or even possibly heard of – before that might actually be a great fit for this scholar. Diversity overnights are a great way to get scholars informed and excited about a school, even if they are not immediately excited about that school.

**Key Pitfalls:** [**(back to top)**](#_top)

* Scholars don’t want to go through an application process for a school they are not interested in. Investment building for the critical importance of Diversity Overnights and their link to admission at competitive schools with large endowments and strong graduation rates for first generation students of color needs to happen with scholars and families.
* College counselors don’t push students to complete applications and/or attend because of other competing priorities (student doesn’t know the school and therefore is less motivated, the counselor is supporting other college-related work like personal statements, the student has a heavy coursework load and is worried about spending time on diversity overnights applications, etc.). When this happens, a student may miss a key opportunity to get to know a great college option, to promote themselves to that college, and further brand the high school with a great option for future scholars.
* Families aren’t looped into the importance of attending diversity overnights (increases likelihood of acceptance, etc.) and therefore may not support application process and attendance.
* Seniors are nervous/scared/hesitant to attend diversity overnights because of lack of knowledge or understanding of school and/or purpose of the weekend.

**Norms:** [**(back to top)**](#_top)

* Creating a tracker in Google docs allows for easy access to information and reporting at the end of the season.
* Determining a weekly reporting deadline ensures accurate results for the end of the process.

**Key Timeline:** [**(back to top)**](#_top)

| **Month** | **Process/Strand**  | **Action** | **Related Materials**  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| August  | Planning & Preparation | Create advocacy plan by identifying action steps & owners for each scholar within each strand of advocacy, where applicable | * One-pager on “Engagement, Admissions, and Financial Advocacy Strategies”
 |
| August | Planning & Preparation | Execute strategies for engagement, admissions, and financial advocacy | * See ["Advocacy Overview"](http://betterlesson.com/unit/81467/advocacy)
 |
| June | Planning & Preparation | Create Diversity Overnight Project Plan, matching students and applications based on projected college lists  | * [Application Plan & Tracker - SAMPLE](http://betterlesson.com/my/document/1676252/application-tracker_template_2013-xlsx)
 |
| June-August | Communication to student | Share diversity overnight purpose, application requirements, and timing during college list conversations with students and parents  | * College Visit Verification Form
 |
| July | Planning & Preparation | Research updated deadlines and application requirements |  |
| July | Planning & Preparation | Create/revise tracker with new deadlines from colleges | * [Diversity Overnight Tracker, AF Brooklyn- SAMPLE](http://betterlesson.com/my/document/1676256/af-brooklyn-d-o-tracker_2012-2013_sample-xlsx)
 |
| July-August | Planning & Preparation | Group applications into batch deadlines to ensure easy tracking and support of scholars  |  |
| July-August | Planning & Preparation | Determine if projected number of diversity overnight applications requires an additional structure in the school year to support completion (i.e. an elective course, Friday afternoons, application lock-ins, etc.)  |  |
| August-October | Supporting Applications | Prep and support scholar through application process | * College Visit Verification Form
* [Sample Diversity Overnight Applications](http://betterlesson.com/lesson/384682/application-requirements-and-examples)
* Sample Student Applications
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| August | Supporting Applications | Notify teachers who need to write letters of recommendation | * Email from college counselor to teacher re: LoR for Diversity Overnight applications
 |
| August-October | Application Submission & Tracking | Submit applications by college-dictated deadlines |  |
| August | Application Submission & Tracking | Track quality of completion of applications, acceptances and matriculation to overnights  |  |
| August | Application Submission & Tracking | If senior likes a college after their visit, send “counselor follow-up email” after senior returns. | * Sample email from college counselor to college rep after diversity overnight visits
* Post-visit thank you email/card – SAMPLE
* Post-visit advocacy email – SAMPLE
 |
| August | Application follow-up | If senior likes a college after their visit, send “student follow-up email and/or AF thank you card” to support application.  | * Sample email from student to college rep after diversity overnight visits
 |
| August-October | Application follow-up | Prep and support scholar through application process | * Sample battle plan for lock-in for diversity overnights
 |
| August-October | Application follow-up | Notify teachers who need to write  |  |
| August-October | Application follow-up | Submit applications by college-dictated deadlines |  |
| September | Application follow-up | Track quality of completion of applications, acceptances and matriculation to overnights  |  |
| September | Application follow-up | If senior likes a college after their visit, send “counselor follow-up email” after senior returns. |  |
| September | Application follow-up | If senior likes a college after their visit, send “student follow-up email and/or AF thank you card” to support application. |  |
| October | Application follow-up | Track quality of completion of applications, acceptances and matriculation to overnights  |  |
| October | Application follow-up | If senior likes a college after their visit, send “counselor follow-up email” after senior returns. |  |
| October | Application follow-up | If senior likes a college after their visit, send “student follow-up email and/or AF thank you card” to support application.  |  |
| November | Application follow-up | Track quality of completion of applications, acceptances and matriculation to overnights  |  |
| November | Application follow-up | If senior likes a college after their visit, send “counselor follow-up email” after senior returns. |  |
| November |  | If senior likes a college after their visit, send “student follow-up email and/or AF thank you card” to support application.  |  |
| December | Data Roll-up | Complete final report on Diversity Overnight applications and results | * Sample end-of-season Diversity Overnight Report
 |
| April | Data Roll-up | Review correlations between diversity overnight application results and college application and matriculation results to inform following year’s process.  | * Sample report comparing Diversity Overnight results to college application and matriculation results
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**Better Lesson Site Map** [(back to top)](#_top)

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| **“Lesson”** | **Sample materials in this “lesson”**  |
| Overview | * High-level explanation of process
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| Application Trackers | * Sample application tracker
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| Student & Family Communication  | * Emails to families about purpose or goal of diversity overnight
 |
| Application Requirements & Examples | * Sample applications from college
 |
| Sample Student Application  | * Sample essay from student
 |
| Communication to College from Counselors | * Sample emails to college reps to advocate for diversity overnight admission
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**Resources**: [(back to top)](#_top)

Check [here](http://getmetocollege.org/hs/tag/fly-in-programs) for updated list of annual Diversity Overnight weekends