Summer Programs Overview

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1. Overview

As part of the Achievement First high school model, every Achievement First high school scholar completes three summers of pre-approved, enriching summer programs or internships as a graduation requirement. Achievement First has invested in building a robust platform of summer experiences for our scholars, because we know that these opportunities are key to our scholars’ social-emotional development, college admissions prospects, and long-term academic, professional and personal success.

“Summer learning loss” is a well-researched trend. This phenomenon, also known as “summer slide,” is when students lose ground in academic skills during the summer months due to a lack of involvement in productive, challenging activities. Studies show that many students lose as much as 2 years of mathematics skills during the summer, and that among low-income student populations the loss is similar in reading comprehension. This contributes to a widening achievement gap, as students with fewer summer opportunities enter the next grade level only further disadvantaged and have to play catch up from day one.

Consistent with the rigorous college preparatory high school program we invest scholars in during the academic year, Achievement First works to prevent summer learning loss and to instead expand our students’ horizons in a way that is appropriately differentiated for every student. Scholars select into or are placed into different summer programs and internships determined by their academic performance and demonstrated maturity. These options are tiered by eligibility and include pre-college programs, summer internships, enrichment programs, and on-site summer academy. Scholars placed into tuition-based programs or programs with associated travel expenses receive need-based financial support. Students are not paid for their internships.

All summer activities are vetted by the Achievement First College Team, which has worked to build a portfolio of partner organizations and companies where our scholars pursue their summer opportunities. Based on program tiering and scholar eligibility, specific programs and internships are prescribed to individual scholars by the high school site-based summer programs coordinator. The coordinator runs a well-structured cycle of applications and interviews for students for the Pre-College and Internships tiers and matches all students accordingly. Scholars are monitored closely throughout the summer so that we can ensure that they follow through on their summer commitments. This tracking includes a well-codified routine of weekly check-ins with students and clear triggers for when to intervene on behalf of scholars who are struggling at their placements.

We want all scholars to have an extremely positive and productive summer experience. Moreover, scholars must complete their pre-approved summer commitment in order to move up to the next grade. Therefore, strong proactive communication with parents, partner organizations, and scholars is paramount. We have therefore established clear guidelines for how to communicate with parents, partner organizations and scholars throughout the academic year and throughout the summer, in order to ensure that every scholar has a successful experience. Students who fall short complete a make-up opportunity at the end of the summer

Excitingly, our historical data on summer programs at AF is very strong. To date, X% of students have successfully completed their slated programs. We are seeing a powerfully positive correlation between summer programs and college matriculation patterns. Take AF Brooklyn High School, for example, where in the 2014-2015 school year scholars were admitted to and are matriculating at Brown University, Stanford University, and Cornell University. All three of these scholars had previously completed pre-college programs at the same colleges where they are matriculating. This is just one example of how summer programs can positively shape our scholars’ paths.



2. Goals

The overarching goals of Summer Programs work each year is two-fold:

* 100% of students with be matched with programs in their eligibility tiers
* 100% of students will complete a pre-approved summer program

We have set reasonable and measurable goals to define the success and guide ongoing work toward realizing these goals, which are detailed and further metricized in the AF College & Alumni Report Card and the AF High School Report Card:

* 80% of families will attend the necessary meetings for their scholar's summer opportunity
* 100% of 9-11 grade students will complete a 'best fit' summer program (program they were assigned to by their Tier)
* 100% of 9-11 grades will complete all necessary financial aid paperwork & submit required fees for summer programs
* 100% of current students who do not complete or miss their pre-assigned summer programs will attend the make-up summer program boot camp
* 100% of data will be accurately reported on-time 100% of the time
* 100% of deadlines are met on time for all partnerships
* 100% of exemplary summer program materials are documented and uploaded to Many Minds
* 100% of goals from the High School Report card will be met
* 100% of students will complete Summer Program exit requirements
* 85% of summer program applications are completed in College Readiness Seminar (personal statement, resume, applications forms, LOR request)
* Secured spots increase will match enrollment increase annually

These are shared network-wide goals that the site-based team at each AF High School will work toward. Individual AF High Schools may elect to set additional school-specific goals.

3. Key Messages & Mindsets

We espouse a key set of messages and mindsets around summer programs and we invest our school-based teams, advisors, scholar families, and scholars in these messages and mindsets:

* Summer can be a period of tremendous growth for scholars. Lining each student up with an appropriate and challenging summer opportunity makes an enormous difference, as it can either give them time to make up academic credits or broaden their college or professional aspirations and readiness.
* Engaging a breadth of well-vetted partners for pre-college programs, internships, enrichment programs, and Summer Academy is key to ensuring that we are offering summer programs that match our scholars’ interests and areas for development. It is essential to provide diverse opportunities that will be appealing and enriching to all scholars.
* Each scholar must be completely prepared for their summer opportunity. Particularly for off-site opportunities, including internships and pre-college programs, scholars serve as ambassadors for Achievement First. Ensuring that all expectations are clearly understood by scholars and their families is an essential part of the school site-based summer program coordinator’s roles and responsibilities.
* While a grade level promotion requirement, Summer Programs is also a privilege for our scholars. We invest them in taking these opportunities seriously, working hard to earn them, and showing gratitude toward those who make these opportunities possible.
* Strong planning and execution are paramount in Summer Programs work. Having a clear, detailed plan for marketing and communication of opportunities, a partnership management system, a well-structured application cycle, a training and orientation plan, and a summer tracking routine are key to ensuring that all students are successful in their Summer Programs.

Summer programs team members work to share these messages and mindsets with key stakeholders, including school leaders and faculty so that we can work effectively to strengthen our collective support of our students during the summer months.

3. Tiers

Summer programs are tiered and scholars’ eligibility depends on their individual academic standing and demonstrated maturity.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Program Type | Example Programs | Academic Eligibility Requirement | Character Eligibility Requirement |
| Pre-College | * Summer@Brown
* Kenyon Young Writers Workshop
* Rochester
* Barnard
 | 85%+ (3.0+) GPA(example - varies by school) | Good merit standing, grade level team endorsement |
| Internships | * US District Court
* Delta Airlines
* NY Television Festival
* PowerPlay
* New Haven Reads
 | 75%+ (2.0+) GPA(example - varies by school) | Good merit standing, grade level team endorsement |
| Enrichment | * Stoked
* Camp Fowler
* Vibe Theater
* School run enrichment program (Amistad)
 | 75%+ (2.0+) GPA(example - varies by school) | Good merit standing, grade level team endorsement |
| Summer Academy | * Credit bearing academic course at AF school
 | Failed 1 or more academic classes on year-end report card | N/A |

The rationale for tiering eligibility is two-fold:

* Summer Programs reinforces our everything-is-earned high school culture, underscoring for students that we must work hard academically and show that we have mastered key character habits in order to show readiness for the independence and responsibility of Internships and Pre-College Programs.
* Students who fall short of passing a core academic course during the academic year at our high schools must complete Summer Academy in order to earn the course credit and move up to the next grade level. It is therefore impractical to match students with opportunities without first considering their academic profile and standing.

4. Core Strategies (Shared Practices)

There are 6 core strategies that contribute to the shared practices of Summer Programs at each AF High School. These strategies aim to bring together the needs of AF staff, scholars and families, and outside partners to provide a positive summer experience for all parties. Our six core strategies are:

1. Summer Program Coordinator Professional Development
2. Planning Summer Programs
3. Managing Summer Programs
4. Guidelines for Partner Organizations
5. Student and Family Preparation
6. Applications

Each of these strategies is detailed in the summary documents in the individual strategy folders under the Summer Programs lever.

5. Roles & Responsibilities

Summer Programs work is shared between the Network Support Team and the school site-based Summer Programs Coordinator. For nascent AF High Schools, the coordinator may be a College Readiness teacher or other teammate.

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| Owner | School site-based Summer Programs Coordinator | Drives all school-based work: manages tiering, marketing to students and families, application process, local placement partnership-building and communications, orientations, direct support of all scholars throughout the summer, data management, and reporting of progress and outcomes. |
| Approves | Dean of College | Supports Summer Programs Coordinator by providing frequent advice, support with trouble-shooting, direction, and accountability. |
| Participant(s) | AF High School-based staff, Network Director of College, Network Director of Alumni Programs & Partnerships, high school leader (principal) scholars, families, alumni, college campus-based staff | Network Director of Alumni Programs & Partnerships supports with placement partnership development (i.e. “spots”) across all AF regions; school leader (principal) supports by proactively investing school-based teachers and staff in vision and purpose of AF Summer Programs; teachers and staff reinforce key messages with scholars and families and work to invest them in their eligibility and participation. |
| Informed | Principal, Dean of College, Network Director of Alumni Programs & Partnerships, Network, Network Director of College | Keep apprised of Summer Programs work through routine updates from Summer Programs Coordinator (CARC monthly reports) |
| Consulted | Network Director of College, Dean of College, Network Director of Alumni Programs & Partnerships | Can advise when a Summer Programs Coordinator finds himself/herself in a sticky situation and/or needs to make a difficult decision; can advise on best practices from across the network |

6. Calendar of Key Dates

The Summer Programs application, matching, and matriculation process is a microcosm of the college admissions and matriculation process. The Summer Programs Coordinator is going to drive work that consists of juggling hundreds of scholars’ forms, processes, applications, and deadlines on which admission and access to funding depend. The Summer Programs world is highly deadline driven. Key deadlines and windows include:

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| August | * Complete previous summer’s partner engagement with thank you notes and reflection meetings
* Ensure smooth execution of Summer Programs boot camp for delinquent scholars
* Share outcomes data with Team College/Principal
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| September | * Scholars complete reflections from previous year program
* Confirm with past summer internship partners for next summer
* Hype Summer Programs with scholars (bulletin boards, College Readiness Seminar, etc.)
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| October | * Hold Pre-College Program Parent Information Night with parents of eligible or almost-eligible scholars
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| November | * Develop Summer Programs Tracking database to include relevant partner sites and summer opportunities
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| December | * Announce pre-college scholars and host info sessions for scholars and families
* Hype Internships eligibility with scholars
* Reach out to sites and request application and recruitment timelines
* Reach out to pre-college program partners
 |
| January | * Schedule Summer Internships fair for March
* Hype Pre-College and Internships eligibility with scholars
* Match students with pre-college programs and begin application processes
* Organize pre-college LOR process
* Reach out to pre-college program partners
 |
| February | * Continue working on pre-college applications
* Facilitate pre-college workshops
* Development of AF High School Internships and Enrichment Opportunities catalog
* Continue reaching out to internship partners
 |
| March | * Continue working on pre-college applications
* Facilitate pre-college workshops
* Continue reaching out to internship partners
 |
| April | * Continue securing internship spots and partners
* Communicate summer academy/enrichment status to families so they can plan (won’t know which one yet, but still communicate that one or the other will happen)
* Survey internship students in anticipation of matching
* Plan enrichment programming
 |
| May | * Match interns with internships
* Communicate internship matches to students, families, partners
* Finalize enrichment plans
 |
| June  | * Finalize all Internship site contracts
* Finalize all pre-college program logistics
* Facilitate orientation sessions for pre-college and Internship scholars and families
* Communicate Enrichment program involvement for Summer Academy scholars to parents/scholars
 |
| July | * Visit pre-college and Internship sites, monitor summer enrichment programs
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7. Road Map for the Year

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|  | AUGUST | SEPTEMBER | OCTOBER |
| PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT | * Send scholar and school thank you notes to all Summer Program partners
* Request program pictures from scholars and programs
* Confirm summer participation roaster
 | * Call programs to confirm summer participation for upcoming summer
 | * Communicate with summer programs that have early application deadlines to request application/recruitment timelines for the upcoming year
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| POLICIES AND PROCESSING |  | * Revisit summer programs categorization and eligibility requirements and receive approval from Leadership Team
 |  |
| DATA MANAGEMENT | * Facilitate reflection meetings with all summer pre-college and internship participants
* Update AF HIGH SCHOOL Master Enrichment Participation spreadsheet
 | * Create 9th grade master spreadsheet tab in Summer Programs Tracking Google Doc
 |  |
| STUDENT/PARENT OUTREACH | * Schedule Summer Opps presentation/prepare materials and agenda
* Complete summer program bulletin boards with pictures, information and blog suggestions
 | * Facilitate Summer Opps presentation for 9th grade CR sections—recruit Summer 2010 scholars as panelists
* Develop Summer Enrichment at AF HIGH SCHOOL overview materials (AF HIGH SCHOOL Pre-College 101) for parents and scholars with approved programming categories and eligibility information
* Schedule Pre-College Parent Information Session for 1st trimester PR Night
* Send invitation mailing to families of scholars who academically qualify (or almost qualify) for summer pre-college programming (based on cumulative GPA)
 | * Publicly distribute invitations to scholars for the Pre-College Parent Information Night to scholars who qualify/almost qualify
* Facilitate Pre-College Parent Information Night and distribute AF HIGH SCHOOL Pre-College 101 one-pagers to parents
* Schedule Summer Enrichment at AECH as major agenda item for the November/December PLC meeting
* Recruit Summer Pre-College Program participants to prepare presentation materials for PLC meeting.
* Begin online outreach to parents/scholars; link them to blogs of successful summer scholars.
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| COLLEGE READINESS/ADVISORY | * Develop CR Unit Outlines
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|  | NOVEMBER | DECEMBER | JANUARY |
| PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT | * Reach out to New Haven/Yale TFA recruiter and begin talks to have 1st and 2nd deadline CMs volunteer at Sunday pre-college workshops
* Develop Summer Programs Tracking Google Doc and create Summer Pre-College Programs tab with list of program sites
* Reach out to sites to check-in and request application and recruitment timelines, financial aid goals and deadlines (program inventory)
 | * Confirm all application and recruitment timelines with pre-college partnership sites
* E-mail TFA Pre-College Summer coach requirements to TFA recruiter to distribute to newly accepted CMs from 1st and 2nd deadlines.
 | * Communicate enrollment goals with pre-college programs and determine probability
* Catalogue applications released to scholars
* Develop pre-college workshop schedule and cohort strategy
 |
| POLICIES AND PROCESSING | * Develop AF HIGH SCHOOL Enrichment Financial Aid distribution policy and gain approval from the Leadership Team
 | * Develop summer pre-college target scholar tab in Google Doc
* Determine internal AF HIGH SCHOOL deadlines for individual pre-college programs
* Develop enrollment goals for pre-college programs
* Develop summer pre-college and internships budgeting proposal for school leadership
 | * Communicate with advisors/CR teachers to finalize pre-college target scholars in Google Doc
 |
| DATA MANAGEMENT |  | * Update Summer Programs Tracking Google Doc with updated Trimester 1 cumulative averages.
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| STUDENT/PARENT OUTREACH | * Facilitate Summer Enrichment at AF HIGH SCHOOL PLC meeting and distribute supporting materials
* Include Summer Enrichment at AF HIGH SCHOOL in any school mass mailings/e-mails to parents
 | * Begin draft of SECHS summer pre-college catalogue for scholars
* Update AF HIGH SCHOOL Summer Program website
 | * Finalize AF HIGH SCHOOL summer pre-college catalogue
* Upload all pre-college program applications to AF HIGH SCHOOL summer programs Edline page
* Create “Program Priority” lists for eligible scholars
* E-mail summer pre-college information to all scholars and parents—distribute catalogues and program priority lists
* Schedule Summer Internships Fair for March
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| COLLEGE READINESS/ADVISORY |  |  | * CR classes will complete Resume unit
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|  | FEBRUARY | MARCH | APRIL |
| PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT | * All pre-college program applications should be released and catalogued by scholar
* Create General Summer Opps tab in Master Summer Opps Google Doc
* Reach out to sites to check-in and request application and recruitment timelines, financial aid goals and deadlines
* E-mail all target summer opportunity programs with Summer Internship Fair invitation and RSVP request
 | * Most financial-aid priority deadlines are approaching for expires
* Maintain communication with programs and request admission/financial aid updates
* Reach out to AF HIGH SCHOOL Summer Internship sites
* Continue outreach to pre-college summer program sites
 | * Maintain communication with programs and request admissions updates
* All pre-college program admission and financial aid decisions should be released
 |
| POLICIES AND PROCESSING | * Process summer pre-college applications on a rolling basis and advocate for scholars
* Update pre-college tab in Master Google Doc with application information
* Develop fundraising strategy and support system for pre-college scholars
 | * All pre-college program applications should be submitted
* Develop AF HIGH SCHOOL financial aid distribution projections for all target pre-college scholars
* Develop internal deadlines for summer internships
 | * Process summer internship applications on a rolling basis; update Summer Opps Master Google Doc with submitted application information
* Cross-check application processing docs with CR classes and highlight “enrichment inactive/deficient” scholars
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| DATA MANAGEMENT |  | * Update all 10th and 11th grade master spreadsheets with PSAT data
 | * Update all grade –level master spreadsheets with Trimester 2 cumulative averages
 |
| STUDENT/PARENT OUTREACH | * Facilitate pre-college workshops (Sunday Sundaes, ongoing)
* Begin development of AF HIGH SCHOOL Internships and Enrichment Opportunities catalogue
* Prepare marketing materials for AF HIGH SCHOOL Summer Internship Fair (March)
* Launch pre-college fundraising initiative
 | * Release AF HIGH SCHOOL Internship and Enrichment Opportunities catalogue
* Facilitate AF HIGH SCHOOL Summer Internship Fair
* Upload all applications as released to AF HIGH SCHOOL website
 | * Continue release of AF HIGH SCHOOL Summer Internship opportunities (ongoing)
* Continue pre-college fundraising initiative (ongoing)
* Schedule mandatory AF HIGH SCHOOL Internship Orientation session for June date
* Schedule mandatory AF HIGH SCHOOL Pre-College Orientation session for June date
* Develop Summer Programs celebration for June date
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| COLLEGE READINESS/ADVISORY |  |  |  |

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|  | MAY | JUNE | JULY |
| PARTNERSHIP MANAGEMENT | * Intensive pre-college program coordination period
* Intensive summer internships coordination period
 | * Finalize all AF HIGH SCHOOL Internship site timelines and contracts
* Finalize all pre-college program transition logistics—travel, books, etc.
* Check-in with general summer opportunities program sites with admissions decisions
 | * Schedule pre-college site visits
* Schedule internship program site visits
* Check-in with Summer enrichment programs about scholar participation
 |
| POLICIES AND PROCESSING | * Intensive Summer Enrichment Program application processing period
 | * Perform intensive outreach on “enrichment inactive/deficient” scholars that are not required to attend Summer Academy—contact parents and schedule one-on-ones with scholars (ongoing)
* Create pre-college and internships scholar/parent contracts
* Facilitate Pre-College Orientation Session
* Facilitate Internships Orientation Session
* Communicate Enrichment Program involvement for Summer Academy scholars to parents/scholars
 | * Begin evaluating blogs using rubrics to begin determining potential blog “winners”
 |
| DATA MANAGEMENT |  |  | * Update AF HIGH SCHOOL Master Summer Programs Summer 2011 Google Doc
 |
| STUDENT/PARENT OUTREACH | * Perform intensive outreach on “enrichment inactive” scholars that are not required to attend Summer Academy—contact parents and schedule one-on-ones with scholars
* Plan Pre-College orientation session
* Plan Summer Internships Orientation session
 | * Close Pre-College fundraising initiative
* Close Summer Internship push and school-wide celebration initiative
* Launch Summer Internship push and school-wide celebration initiative
 | * Communicate with scholars via their blogs and copy CC parents on feedback.
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| COLLEGE READINESS/ADVISORY |  |  |  |