



2017 CareerLaunch Internship Program Get Started Guide

Program Overview

Denver Public Schools, its community partners, and employers across the city are turning the Denver into a classroom. Through the CareerLaunch Internship Program, high school students will complete 100-150 hour internships in the workplace. They will learn the practical applications of their STEM coursework, explore potential career paths, and make meaningful contributions to their host organizations.

CareerLaunch offers businesses a robust support system for employers and students alike. Denver Public Schools (DPS) will assist employers with internship planning and intern selection. Additionally, DPS will provide case management services and logistical support to employers throughout the program. Students will be well prepared to thrive in their internships because of the industry coursework they have received through their DPS CareerConnect pathway, as well as the job readiness training and ongoing coaching that is included in the CareerLaunch program.

Program Dates, Hours and Awards:

Summer 2017	
Dates	June 12- July 21, 2017
Total # of Hours	120
Hours per Week	20
*Financial Award (includes cost of award and transportation)	\$1100

*Scholarships are available on a limited basis.

Program Outcomes

Following the initial CareerLaunch program, business partners reported their interns were able to contribute productive work within the first two weeks of the internship. Partners also said most of our interns were very to adequately prepared to perform well within a professional environment. 98% of our partners felt offering internships to high school students was a viable way to groom future employees and said they hoped their company would continue to participate in CareerLaunch in the future.

Workplace Learning Background

In the spring of 2014, Denver Public Schools' CareerConnect program (formerly known as Career and Technical Education) received a \$7 million grant from the Department of Labor and Department of Education to expand STEM education across the district. The grant has enabled nine high schools to create new STEM coursework that prepares students for careers in five industries: finance, engineering, advanced manufacturing, technology, and biomedicine. Courses are offered throughout a student's four years of high school and become progressively



more rigorous. Typically, STEM coursework begins with a survey course and ends with a course focusing on a specific discipline within the industry (ex. civil engineering).

Learning based in the classroom, however, is just one component of a well-rounded education. Thus, CareerConnect couples STEM coursework with workplace learning experiences that allow students to experience industry in action. These workplace learning experiences include:

- **CareerX** Industry Exploration Events (interactive business tours)
- **CareerCoach** Mentoring Program
- **CareerLaunch** Internship Program

Intern Preparation and Selection Process

The internship selection process is fairly rigorous and involves three steps:

DPS Application: In order to qualify for the internship program students are required to complete and/or submit the following:

- Program overview meeting
- Online application including industry-specific skills self-assessment
- Teacher Recommendation
- Resume
- Attendance Record

Skills Training for Young Professionals: Students who successfully complete the DPS Application receive 12 hours of soft skills training, which covers workplace expectations, soft skill development and professionalism.

Employer Selection: Students who have successfully completed the DPS Application and Job Readiness Training are eligible for internship placement. School-based staff will recommend students for placement with specific businesses based on the skills and experience required and location of the company/organization.

Businesses will then interview pre-selected candidates and make their selection. Businesses can request student resumes prior to interviews if they wish. Otherwise, students will provide a copy of their resume at the time of the interview. Interviews are held at the student's home school and are coordinated by school-based staff.

Internship Components

Company Champion

- A company champion is an employee who helps to set the stage for the internship. He or she gets buy-in from management, generates excitement about the program, and assists staff with the development of the internship structure.
- The Champion is the primary contact during the internship development phase and may or may not continue to have day-to-day involvement with the program once students are placed in their positions.

Internship Focus

- Internships should provide an opportunity for the student to participate in meaningful, productive work. Students eligible for CareerLaunch have taken courses related to

STEM industries for at least a year; they will have skills and knowledge to contribute starting on the first day!

- Student interns should participate in day-to-day business operations including business and staff meetings, client consultations, etc. to get a well-rounded exposure to many aspects of the business.
- Students should also be assigned at least one project. An ideal project results in deliverables that benefit the organization even after the internship is over. Sample projects are available through the CareerConnect office to assist internship supervisors in creating a meaningful project for his/her intern. Employers and students reported the project allowed the intern to work independently and created an opportunity from the intern to learn new skills and more about the industry.

Internship Support

- Students are supported by DPS Internship Coordinators. Coordinators are school-based staff members who are available to provide additional coaching or counsel to both the student and the business.

Supervision

- An internship supervisor will be responsible for assigning work tasks and evaluating intern performance. In addition, a mentor will provide support and guidance to the intern as needed. Ideally, the supervisor is not also the student's mentor.
- If you already host college interns, consider pairing the high school student with a college intern. This can give the college student valuable mentoring and supervisory experience.
- Anyone who has frequent contact with a student will require criminal background screening provided by the DPS Security Department unless a Partnership Agreement is in place that waives this requirement.
- Supervisors are required to attend a one hour training webinar prior to the start of the internship.

Transportation

- DPS arranges transportation through RTD or students provide their own transportation.
- CareerLaunch provides bus passes for students using RTD.
- Supervisors who would like to transport students as part of the internship must obtain clearance through the DPS CareerConnect office by submitting the following: copy of driver's license, copy of current motor vehicle record, copy of vehicle insurance declaration page and signed MOU. CareerConnect will obtain parental permission to transport student.

Financial Awards

- Students are eligible for financial awards from DPS that are contingent on performance benchmarks and project completion.
- For the Summer 2017 Internship Program, employers are asked to contribute \$1250 per intern. These funds will be used to cover the cost of transportation and intern financial awards. Scholarships may be available and are provided on a first come first served basis.

Worker's Compensation Insurance

- Students in the CareerLaunch Internship Program are considered unpaid interns and are covered by DPS' worker's compensation insurance policy.

Schedule

- Summer Internships will be six weeks with tentative dates of June 12- July 21, 2017.
- Students are expected to work 20 hours per week. Specific work hours are negotiable between the intern and supervisor.

Internship Planning

You may want to consider the items listed below as you begin to plan for a summer internship. This information will be gathered through the Internship Development Form (available online using this link: [\(IDF\)](#) which includes the following:

Pre-Screening: If your company requires background checks, certain documentation (such as social security number or Colorado Identification Card), drug testing, etc. for interns, please let us know so we can plan accordingly.

Space: Is there a place for the intern to sit, access a computer (if needed) and leave his/her personal belongings?

Safety and Company Protocols: What level of training will an intern require to conduct his/her job? Will the student need Personal Protective Equipment or special clothing/shoes (ex. steel-toed shoes) to participate in the internship?

Job Description: What are the intern's specific job duties? What are the position's academic, personal, and physical requirements? DPS has developed sample job descriptions to assist businesses in developing their internship job descriptions.

Internship Supervisor and Mentor: Students will be supervised and evaluated by the internship supervisor. In addition, it is recommended the company identify a mentor or "buddy" who can provide additional support and guidance on a more informal basis.

Project: Consider what type of project would provide the intern with the opportunity to contribute to the company while gaining valuable skills and experience. This may include machine or tool maintenance, data clean-up, social media postings, quality assurance, or the development of inventory systems.

Training Goals: We ask supervisors to identify at least 2 training goals for their intern. Training goals may be focused on technical skill attainment, performance or completion of a specific task or soft skill development. Sample training goals are available through the CareerConnect office.

Paperwork

Work Study Agreements: Each student will be required to have a Work Study Agreement signed by his/her worksite supervisor. The agreement outlines the roles and responsibilities of the student, the parent, the school district and the business partner. In some cases, DPS may request an additional, more formalized agreement between the district and the company/organization.



Performance Evaluations: During the Summer Internship Program, students will be evaluated monthly. A table with the evaluation schedule is provided below.

Evaluation	Due Date
Mid-Term Evaluation	Wednesday, June 28, 2017
Final Evaluation	Wednesday, July 19, 2017

Evaluations are completed electronically using Google docs or an Excel spreadsheet. Evaluations measure the intern's level of workforce readiness and also evaluates the degree to which the internship training goals were met and project completed.

Timesheets

Supervisors are asked to assist interns to track their hours each week. The timesheet is printed and signed by the supervisor and student at the end of the internship.

Additional Information

For additional information, please contact the CareerLaunch Coordinator, Olivia Barraza Kee, at 720-423-6463 or olivia_barrazakee@dpsk12.org or visit our website at www.dpscarerconnect.org.

This project was funded by a grant awarded under the Youth CareerConnect Program in the amount of \$7 million, as implemented by the U.S. Department of Labor's Employment & Training Administration.