

High School Tech Internship – Education Pilot Site 2021 Report

Overview

The High School Tech Internship pilot is a joint initiative of the Ohio departments of Development and Education and the Governor’s Office of Workforce Transformation. The goal of the pilot was to place 100 high school student interested in technology-related roles that focus on software, data, cloud and IT infrastructure and cybersecurity in businesses across the state during the summer of 2021. The pilot program offered a competitive opportunity for employers to hire high school interns and receive reimbursement for their wages.

To promote collaboration between schools and employers in developing students for future careers, interested Business Advisory Council and Career-Technical Education Planning District leads were asked to serve as “Education Pilot Site” leads to facilitate the relationships between employers and students. During the pilot phase, two sites were selected per JobsOhio region.

Wage Reimbursement

To qualify for wage reimbursement, employers submitted documentation proving the individual was employed for a minimum of 150 hours and was paid at least \$12 per hour. Employers received higher wage reimbursements for younger students to help more students experience technology careers at earlier ages. Employers were eligible to receive wage reimbursement for a maximum of four individuals per calendar year.

Age at Start Date of Employment	Wage Reimbursement
17 or younger	\$1,250
18 or 19	\$1,000

Employers received an extra \$100 in reimbursement if they can demonstrated the intern earned an industry-recognized credential recognized on the Innovative Workforce Incentive Program list by the time of the reimbursement request.

Pilot Sites

Region	Pilot Site
Central	Educational Service Center of Central Ohio
Central	Tolles Career & Technical Center
Northeast	Auburn Vocational School District
Northeast	Columbiana County School’s Business Advisory Council
Northwest	Vanguard Sentinel Career-Technical Planning District
Northwest	Washington Local Schools
Southeast	Building Bridges to Careers Network
Southeast	Lawrence County Educational Service Center Business Advisory Council with Collins Career Technical Center
Southwest	Cincinnati Public Schools
Southwest	Grant Career Center IT Business & Industry Advisory Council
West	Greene County Career Center
West	Miami Valley Career Technology Center

Pilot sites met biweekly during a six-month period to complete the following:

- Recruit interested employers;
- Work with employers to post internship opportunities in Development Services Agency portal;
- Work with schools to identify students to apply for internships;
- Work with schools and employers to hire students;
- Develop Work-Based Learning Success Agreements for students who were hired;
- Work with employers to complete grant agreements;
- Monitor progress and evaluation of student interns;
- Work with employers to access and receive reimbursement for student wages;
- Communicate with state agencies about successes and challenges.

Outcomes

Overall, the pilot was very informative with many pockets of success and opportunities for improvement. Education Pilot Sites were asked to reflect on their experiences and communicate with state agencies about their successes and challenges. A summary of their findings follows.

Successes

- More than 70 high school students were successfully placed in technology-related roles across Ohio.
- In addition to the students placed through the High School Tech Internship pilot – Education Pilot Sites placed more than 250 students in other internships.
- Many pilot sites reported developing new relationships with local employers through the program. Sixteen new partnerships were reported.
- Students were hired full time into IT jobs as a result of the partnerships formed during the internship.
- Students who interned with educational institutions were critical to ensuring the technology, including chrome books and computer labs, were ready for students for the school year.

Promising Practices

Employer Engagement

- Many potential employer partners were interested in the opportunity following Lt. Governor Jon Husted's press release; however, most of the employers were committed advisory members.
- The financial incentive for employers helped businesses mitigate the financial risks of providing these opportunities to students.

State support

- The biweekly touch base meetings between the state program support team and pilot sites were helpful.
- The communication between the pilot sites and state program support team, both written and virtual meetings, were excellent.

Recommendations for the Future

- Most sites reported timeline challenges and recommended beginning the employer recruitment process in January.
- Sites with intermediary organizations were more successful at placing larger numbers of students.
- Wage reimbursement amounts were in some cases a barrier - \$12 an hour was too high for a few companies.
- Employment at educational organizations was beneficial, but these should not be the majority employers.

Student Testimonials

- “Working at Garber has moved my process of learning from book learning to real world situations. Having a work environment that is comfortable has helped me transition from the school experience to the workforce much faster. I am appreciative of Garber and MVCTC for giving me this opportunity.” – David Pryor (CN 2022)
- “I am extremely happy and grateful that I had the opportunity to be in the advanced placement program at MVCTC. Through the program I was able to get an opportunity to work at Garber Connect. When the school finished, I was given the opportunity to work with Garber Connect as a full time employee. – Om Bhavsar (CN 2021)
- “I really enjoyed it. It was very hands on to get experience in a help desk job, it was nice to be able to work through the summer and get experience that way after graduation we are not going out into the workforce completely blind” Alex Acree – Grant Career Center
- “I’ve been working hard and I’ve been enjoying it, I am very appreciative of this opportunity” Will Swart – Grant Career Center

Media coverage

- <https://www.fox19.com/2021/05/03/lt-gov-jon-husted-makes-stops-cincinnati-kick-off-in-demand-jobs-week/>
- <https://www.wkbn.com/news/local-news/ohio-program-helping-local-high-school-students-land-it-internships/>
- <https://www.irontribune.com/2021/04/20/cctc-chosen-for-state-tech-intern-pilot-program/>
- <https://twitter.com/ltgovhusted/status/1386314325078511618?s=27>