

How to talk to schools about events

Mentee–mentor pairs meet at least once a month to build personal connections while completing curriculum tasks (and enjoying dinner!) at evening events facilitated by iMentor at the partner school (a couple of times each year these events are held on a college campus). Events are led and facilitated by the iMentor Program Manager (PM).

Requirements for events:

- Events should start after the end of the workday to maximize mentor attendance. If the workday ends at 5pm, the earliest start time for events should ideally be 5:30 or 6pm to allow travel time for mentors.
- A space within the school large enough to accommodate the number of students participating in iMentor and their mentors.
- At least one school staff member should be present for each of these monthly events throughout the year (both for high school–based and external events). During the first event, the PC may not know every mentee’s name at that point and will need a teacher present to help mentors find their mentees.
- Events should last for at least 2 hours in order to cover the event curriculum and give pairs substantial in–person time together. [See this example Event Overview](http://partners.mentor.org/help/event-template---111) (<http://partners.mentor.org/help/event-template---111>) for an example of an event agenda.

Recommendations for events:

- In order to increase attendance at events, many schools provide a space for the PC to supervise iMentor students between the end of school and the start of the event. The PC can provide activities and snacks to encourage students to stay at school during this time. Students can also use this time to do homework.
- When possible, events should be scheduled on days when students will be staying after–school for other activities (e.g. sports, rehearsals, clubs) to maximize attendance.
- Avoid scheduling events on early dismissal days so students don’t have too long of a gap between the end of the school–day and the event.
- In order to ensure that PCs have enough time to follow–up with both students and mentors, we suggest not scheduling events after holidays (e.g. no events the Tuesday following Memorial Day), on Thursdays before a major holiday weekend (Memorial Day or Labor Day), or on Friday evenings.
- Schedule events on the same day as the class sessions — this allows PCs to manage event logistics more easily, and remind students of the event.
- See more strategies for maximizing event attendance [here](http://partners.mentor.org/help/helping-pairs-to-meet-in-person) (<http://partners.mentor.org/help/helping-pairs-to-meet-in-person>) .

Some questions to guide your discussion on events with schools:

- Are there any space constraints or other considerations that we should be aware of (i.e. other schools or programs in the building, advance notice for submitting permit for an

evening event, number of cafeterias in your school building and capacity of each)?

- What weeks will work well for events this school year? Please note that while it's ideal to host the event after the Unit is complete, you can certainly schedule the event a week before or after the students will have completed all the Unit activities. The events are designed to be general enough to create flexibility in scheduling them, and for many Units there are alternative event options.
 - What time does the school day end for students?
 - Discuss a suitable time for events, keeping in mind the considerations above, including ensuring that the time is conducive for mentors on a monthly basis
 - What does after-school generally look like? Until what time do activities typically happen in the building?
 - Are there certain after-school activities or events we should try to plan around or along with? (e.g. looking at sports team calendar to avoid overlap or trying to schedule event on same night as a parent meeting). What is the best way to stay updated about the schedule of events at the school?
 - How do students normally travel home after after-school activities? Are there activity buses that can be used to transport students to and from events?
 - What are your requirements around safety and supervision? (e.g. student to staff ratio for after-school activities or security guard on premises)
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