

Chapter 4 – Program Overview

The NSTI should focus on critical and systematic educational endeavors that will explore all aspects of the transportation industry and its role in our society. It should present a curriculum that introduces participants to the diverse modes of transportation, as well as career opportunities that exist in the transportation industry.

A successful NSTI requires a cooperative effort among Federal, State and local transportation agencies, community-based organizations (CBOs), educational institutions and the private sector. Therefore, each NSTI is encouraged to establish an Intermodal Advisory Committee (IAC) and select members from a broad spectrum of the transportation community. The IAC is encouraged to assist with reviewing the SOW and curriculum, planning and securing resources (i.e. speakers, field trips, transportation partners, and sponsors), and providing technical assistance. Although the IAC may not make policy, it may serve in an advisory capacity and as a resource to the host site. The FHWA, State DOTs, Divisions, CBOs, and private industry may assist in conducting the NSTI by serving as members of the IAC. The Project Director is encouraged to convene a meeting of the IAC no later than six weeks prior to the start date of the NSTI. Minutes of all meetings should be filed and made available to the State DOT, the Division, and HIN upon request. The NSTI is typically implemented over a two to four-week period and must have a minimum of 15 participants. The curriculum must be STEM focused and may be developed in coordination with the State DOT and Division.

The Host Site shall determine if the NSTI will be either a residential or a non-residential program with middle or high school participants. The Project Director should report any changes in the number of participants immediately to its State DOT (e.g., if 15 participants were selected and only 10 attend the program or anytime the number of participants is less than 15), along with an explanation regarding the attrition. The State DOT will notify the Division. The State DOT and Division will contact HIN prior to determining if the host site should discontinue its program.

Program Objectives:

1. Improve STEM (Science Technology Engineering and Math) Skills
2. Provide awareness about transportation related careers to middle school and high school students
3. Encourage students to consider transportation related fields of study in their higher education pursuits.
4. Host Sites must commit significant program time to classroom instruction

Grade Levels & Program Types

The NSTI must be classified as either a middle school (grades 6-8) or high school (grades 9-12) program and as residential or non-residential.

High school programs should focus on activities that are designed to improve STEM skills, assist in preparing participants for post-secondary education and encourage them to pursue transportation-related careers. Middle school programs should focus more on career exploration.

In Residential programs, participants reside on the college or university campus. The host site provides room and board. Residential programs are required to include academic, enhancement, sports, and recreation activities throughout the duration of the camp, including weekends.

In a non-residential program, participants commute to campus daily. Non-residential programs include an academic program and enhancement activities.