



Evidence-based tools and guidance  
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## GUIDANCE FOR SAMPLE: **PITTSBURGH PRE-SUMMER MAILER**

This document provides guidance on how to use the Pittsburgh Pre-Summer Mailer sample available in the Summer Learning Toolkit. You can also access the sample in the Student Recruitment and Attendance section of the Toolkit.

### What is the *PITTSBURGH PRE-SUMMER MAILER* sample and how can you use it?

Pittsburgh Public Schools sends a pre-summer communication to provide families with key information about Summer B.O.O.S.T. (formerly Summer Dreamers Academy) as an engagement strategy and to ensure students have a smooth start to the summer program. The mailer includes details on the program schedule, attendance expectations, transportation, dress code, meals and other services.

### Why is pre-summer communications with families important?

In their study of the National Summer Learning Project, RAND found that an average of 20% of students registered for the program did not show up. Communicating with families between enrollment and the first day of the program serves as a helpful reminder to families and helps lower the no-show rate. Pre-summer communications are also an opportunity to share important details about the program and set expectations for program participation which prepares families, and the program overall, for a smooth and strong start.

### Who can benefit from this resource?

- District leaders
- Program site leaders

## Tips for developing pre-summer mailers

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- Plan multiple touchpoints for communication with families between enrollment and the first day of the program.
- Use a variety of methods to reach families, such as mailers, phone calls, texts, handwritten notes, confirmation letters and postcards, email blasts, fliers and social media.
- Include important program information and build excitement about the program. Showcase field trips, high-quality enrichment and attendance incentives as a “hook” for students and families.
- Ask families that attended the program during the previous summer what information they found most useful, and what else they wish they had known before the program began.
- Refer to the Summer Learning Recruitment Guide for sample messages, tools and other resources.

