



Exploring STEM/BMAH Outside the Classroom: High School Job Shadows vs. Field Trip Experiences



When it comes to introducing high school students to the world of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) and BioMedical Allied Health (BMAH), both job shadow experiences and field experiences offer invaluable insights. These two approaches provide distinct avenues for students to engage with real-world applications of STEM/BMAH concepts. Below is a comparison of high school STEM/BMAH job shadow experiences and field trip experiences:

High School STEM/BMAH Job Shadow Experiences:

In a job shadow experience, students have the opportunity to spend some time with a professional working in a STEM-related field, ideally at their workplace. This personalized encounter offers several benefits:

1. **Hands-On Insight:** Students observe professionals as they go about their daily tasks, gaining firsthand insight into the challenges and responsibilities of a STEM career.
2. **Mentorship:** Students interact with professionals who can answer their questions, offer advice, and provide guidance about potential career paths and educational choices.
3. **Real-World Applications:** Job shadow experiences show students how the theories they learn in the classroom translate into real-world applications, giving context to their education.
4. **Networking:** Students establish connections with industry experts, potentially leading to future internships, projects, or job opportunities.
5. **In-Depth Learning:** Students delve deeply into a specific STEM or BMAH field, discovering nuances and intricacies that might not be apparent during a field trip.

High School STEM/BMAH Field (Trip) Experiences:

STEM field (trip) experiences involve visiting companies, research institutions, museums, or other venues relevant to STEM disciplines. These outings offer unique advantages:

1. **Broad Exposure:** Field experiences expose students to a variety of STEM-related environments and workplaces, showcasing the diversity of career options within the STEM spectrum.
2. **Interactive Learning:** Students engage in hands-on activities, experiments, and demonstrations that bring abstract STEM concepts to life.
3. **Team Building:** Field experiences may involve group activities, promoting teamwork, collaboration, and communication among students.
4. **Contextual Learning:** Students see how STEM concepts are applied in real-world settings, enhancing their understanding and motivation to study these subjects.
5. **Inspiration:** Field experiences inspire students by exposing them to cutting-edge technologies, breakthrough research, and innovative projects.

Summary:

In summary, AACPS high school STEM job shadow experiences and field trip experiences offer complementary advantages for students. Job shadows provide personalized, in-depth exposure to a specific STEM career, fostering mentorship and networking opportunities with STEM professionals. On the other hand, field trips offer a broader overview of STEM/BAMH related disciplines, incorporating interactive learning, team building, and inspiration through hands-on experiences.

Both approaches play a vital role in shaping students' perceptions of STEM, igniting their curiosity, and encouraging them to pursue rewarding careers in these dynamic and impactful fields.