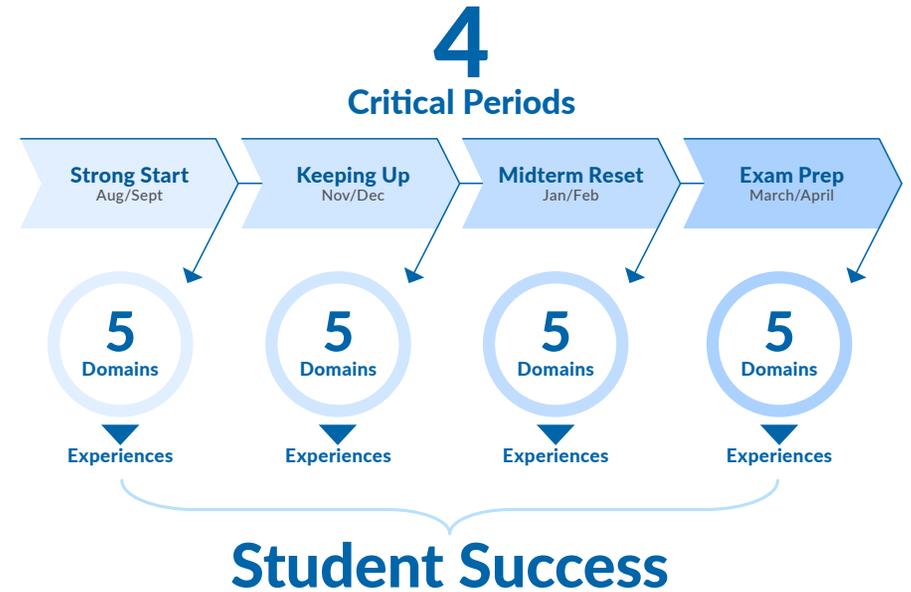


Advanced Placement® On-Track Framework

The Advanced Placement® (AP®) On-Track Framework details experiences that help students stay on track to persist and be successful in AP over the course of an academic year. The AP On-Track Framework was designed specifically with the needs of historically underserved students including those who identify as Black, Latino, and those experiencing poverty in mind.

Experiences in the AP On-Track Framework are organized into five domains that organize skills necessary for student success, and four critical periods that span an AP academic year. The critical periods identify four-week time periods when the described experiences are especially beneficial in helping students be successful in their AP classes and on the AP exam.



Critical Periods:

Strong Start Aug/Sept

It is essential to onboard and orient students to AP classes in a way that they feel connected, informed, and empowered to tackle the challenge—academically, socially, and emotionally. Building a strong foundation, allowing students to have quick gains to build confidence, and nurturing a sense of belonging on which students can fall back when things get difficult is essential to ensuring students are able to persist in the AP class and be successful.

Keeping Up Nov/Dec

At this point in the year, students are familiar with the AP structure. As the AP coursework ramps up, students need to feel a strong network of support from adults and peers coupled with a strong classroom culture of teamwork, collaboration, and persistence. Nurturing a growth mindset and providing tools for students to develop agency is essential. As the AP coursework ramps up and the holiday breaks draw closer, students will benefit from these extra supports to persevere as things get more challenging.

Midterm Reset Jan/Feb

As students return from winter break, it is important to focus on a “re-” mindset. Expectations may need to be reset, concepts re-taught, and students reconnected with their community, peers, and purpose in AP. Providing intentional structures around skill building, coaching for success, and helping students maintain a growth mindset and build independence and agency are essential to getting students re-engaged after the break.

Exam Prep March/April

Students report high levels of anxiety during this time and are likely to be at different levels of mastery regarding content and test preparedness. Providing differentiated support, teaching anxiety management, and explicitly preparing students for the AP exam will help them stay engaged and feel confident in their choice to take both the class and the AP exam.

Strong Start
Aug/Sept

Keeping Up
Nov/Dec

Midterm Reset
Jan/Feb

Exam Prep
March/April

DOMAINS

Sample Student Experiences

Mindsets

Mindsets refer to a series of self-perceptions or beliefs people hold about themselves that determine behavior, outlook, and mental attitude. Students' mindsets are essential to their ability and willingness to persevere and believe in themselves.

- Teach students about growth mindset
- Engage students in conversations around rigorous learning

- Stress that mistakes and revisions are how people learn, not signs that they do not belong
- Provide opportunities for students to compare work from the beginning of the school year to see progression

- Reinvest students in purpose and importance of their hard work
- Re-invigorate students so they can see they are halfway through the course

- Help students connect the AP exam to real life
- Manage and minimize test anxiety

Student Voice and Agency

Student agency is rooted in the belief that students have the ability and will to positively influence their own lives and the world around them. It can be defined as the capacity to set a goal, reflect, and act responsibly to effect change.

- Explicitly teach and model for students how to ask for and access help
- Assign students to set goals for AP class participation and learning

- Release control to students and support them in being independent
- Set up AP classroom checkups- quick student progress reports on how students are doing

- Step back into a more informal/supportive role, letting students take center stage
- Assign students to lead learning recaps from the first half of the year

- Help students set performance goals and expectations for AP exam
- Work with students to set goals around AP exam preparation

Classroom Community and Culture

Classroom culture is largely about the way that teachers and students communicate and the way that students communicate with each other, as well the common values developed around engaging in challenging academic work.

- Build in structures to learn about the culture, language, and values of students
- Communicate with all families at least once to establish relationships

- Solicit input from students on “what’s not going well”
- Formally assign student work groups

- Celebrate accomplishments from first half of course
- Reach out to every family again, re-grounding families in AP course

- Leverage community partnerships to provide additional support to students
- Create a “team approach” to test day (team spirit/all working together)

AP Skill Building

Advanced classes require high levels of critical thinking and analytical skills to prepare for the AP Exam, and the future courses students will take throughout college.

- Provide opportunities for checking for understanding
- Help students practice planning skills

- Explicitly teach project planning and planning for due dates
- Begin practicing AP exam format regularly, with assessments mirroring the exam format

- Utilize midterm assessment as AP exam practice
- Build in regular time for pulse checks and material recaps

- Help students build stamina and plan for the 3 hour AP exam
- Ensure all barriers to sitting for the AP exam are removed

Feedback and Grading

Feedback is information given to students about their performance that guides future behavior. Feedback can help set a path for students, directing their attention to areas for growth and improvement, and connecting them with future learning opportunities. At the same time, there is an evaluative component to feedback, regardless of whether it is given with a grade. Effective feedback tells students what they do and don't understand, where their performance is going well or needs work, and where they should direct their future efforts. Feedback is essential to students' learning and growth.

- Ensure quick gains to build up confidence
- Help students make connections between activities and goals

- Set up AP study hall where students have access to AP teacher(s) regularly
- Reframe “numerical grades” as potential qualifying scores on the AP exam

- Utilize data to conference with students and invest them in their own learning/growth
- Move from direct to indirect feedback- allow students to identify and correct their own errors

- Work with students to identify strengths/weaknesses from year of AP learning
- Help students identify how they have grown during their AP learning and celebrate that growth