

Big Sky High School

Senior Project

2020/2021



“Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence.”

-Abigail Adams

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Why We do Senior Projects

Big Sky wants its students to leave here prepared to determine what they want from their lives; whether that is a career, skill, or experience, and feel confident that they have the ability to achieve their goals. Students need to be able to foster connections and create professional relationships outside the classroom. In order to do this, students need practice and guidance in creating plans, managing roadblocks, setbacks and deadlines. Senior Projects is an opportunity for students to experience managing responsibilities and priorities predominantly on their own. We want our students to feel that when they are confronted with stress and uncertainty after high school, Big Sky has given them the tools to move forward.

Big Sky Mission Statement:

To inspire and educate students to be curious, critical thinkers who strengthen our communities.

The Learning Targets of Senior Project are:

- ❑ I can choose a project that excites me and shows a learning stretch, which is the process of gathering new information or skills above and beyond what I already know.
- ❑ I can approach an adult I may or may not know and maintain professional communication in person, on the phone, and through email while completing my Senior Project. Specifically with my advisor and my mentor (s).
- ❑ I can create a realistic time table, and think ahead in order to complete all components of my senior project.
- ❑ I can complete a lengthy project that is outside of my regular coursework, has multiple stages and requirements, and either furthers my own post-secondary goals or gives back to my community.
- ❑ I can complete post-secondary worthy pieces of writing, through revision and editing to hone good communication skills.
- ❑ I can learn to organize, plan and complete necessary steps (forms, paperwork, etc.) to meet my goals and keep all necessary documentation in a professional portfolio.
- ❑ I can ask for help from my advisor, mentor, teachers, or Senior Project Coordinators in a timely manner when I have a problem or hit a roadblock and not just quit.
- ❑ I can present my project in a confident, clear and engaging presentation to an audience.

A Note about Covid – 19

The Covid 19 Global Pandemic has had, and continues to have a massive impact on our day to day lives. There is significant uncertainty around when, and how we will move past the pandemic and regain more freedom in our lives. Until that time, Big Sky feels strongly that the core principles of the senior project are still vital to our students ability to handle this rapidly changing world. However, we certainly acknowledge that completing the Senior Project as initially designed is not feasible at this time. Therefore we have focused on the most important aspects of our learning targets and created a more streamlined Senior Project Process. Please continue through the handbook to learn more.

At this time, you will find little information about the presentation component in the spring; because quite frankly we are unsure where we will be at in the spring. We will communicate with our students as we get closer to May if they will need to be preparing for a formal presentation or another alternative. However, the new design of the Senior Project ensures that no matter what presentation format we decide, if students have met the deadlines throughout the year they will be prepared.

There is much more information about the changes in the pages ahead, but this is a brief overview of the possible paths a student could take for their Senior Project:

Pathway 1 – IB\APS\BI

- ❑ 20 hours minimum - these hours can be achieved through their classwork and outside of class.
- ❑ A minimum 8 hours (out of the total time) performed outside of classes.
- ❑ 2 interviews with professionals connected to their project through their IB, APS or BI courses. Interviews must last between 10-15 minutes minimum and be recorded in some fashion.

Pathway 2 – Job Shadow/Internship Interviews

- ❑ 3 interviews with professionals. Students must conduct the interviews with professionals either in three different fields, or in the same field but at different locations. They cannot interview family members or friends of the family. Interviews must be 10-15 minutes minimum and be recorded in some fashion.
- ❑ If a student is comfortable and has the opportunity to work with, volunteer or job shadow one of their interviewees, they may do so in exchange for one interview. Their time should be a minimum of 4 hours, and they may not be paid for their work. Students must provide documentation of their time.

Pathway 3 – Skill and/or Product

- ❑ 20 hours minimum
- ❑ 2 interviews with professionals that connect in some way to the product you are trying to produce, or the skill you are attempting to acquire. Interviews must be 10-15 minutes minimum and recorded in some fashion.

Volunteerism: All students, regardless of their chosen pathway will be asked to participate in an act(s) of volunteerism.

Components of the Senior Project

Papers

- In many classes students will produce post-secondary worthy pieces of writing that involve editing, feedback and revision.
- Students will choose what they believe is their best piece from English class to include in their portfolio.
- Students are also required to include another piece of written work that they feel showcases their skills. This this can be from another class, or another piece from English.
- **DUE: May 1st**

Activity Field Experience

- The process of creating, organizing and completing your project – either Pathway 1,2, or 3
- The completion of your volunteerism.
- Completed on your own time
- **DUE: By May 1st**



**PLAN
COMPLETE
EVALUATE
REFLECT**

Digital Portfolio

- A digital record of all your work
- KEEP EVERYTHING (receipts, pictures of progress or events, forms, timelines, communication, etc.)
- A requirement for your presentation.
- **DUE: May 1st**

Presentation

- Culmination of your writing, Activity, student work, and Portfolio.
- **The format and date of presentations are TBD in the spring.**

The Learner Profile and VIPs

Big Sky is an IB World School and committed to providing a well rounded education for our students. The **IB Learner Profile** is a part of this process. The four components of the Senior Project meet the learner profile in several ways:

The Portfolio Paper asks that students are **inquirers** by determining topics that are of interest to them, and use written **communication** to grow as **thinkers** critically and creatively.

The Activity Field Experience (the Three Pathways) asks that students be **open-minded** to new possibilities and avenues, **balance** their work loads and schedules and interact with the community through professional, **principled communication**. Learning to work with others, and be active members in the community also expands students' understanding of what it means to be a **caring** member of a community through the volunteerism component, and encourages them to be **risk-takers** by trying something new, going outside of their comfort zone and engaging with people they do not know.

The Digital Portfolio asks that students be **reflective** of a long and involved process so they can evaluate their strengths moving forward. It asks students to be organized and provide physical evidence of their best attributes as a student; something they can use after graduation in their future endeavors.

The Presentation asks that students - who through this process have become **risk-takers** and **knowledgeable** about their chosen topic – present to the public and their peers. This final piece also ties in **communication, reflection**, and a chance to share the students' **inquiry** process with others.

VIPs

Google Classroom: The Senior Project Google Classroom is an essential aspect of the Senior Project. The code to join is: [nbtzpoc](#) . Make **SURE** you are entered into the Google Classroom as this is where you will get all updates about deadlines, can ask questions, and submit your benchmarks (which will be assignments in the classroom) to compile your digital portfolio on Google Sites. **Once you have completed and passed your portfolio you will be assigned a credit and will walk in graduation.**



- You should also regularly check your email for communications from your principal Mrs. Courtney, and Coordinators Mrs. Helmer and Mrs. Green.
- **You can also follow @bigskyseniorprojects on [Instagram](#) for updates and information throughout the year.**

Senior Project Advisor – In terms of keeping yourself and your paperwork on track the advisor fulfills a crucial role. **The advisor must be a BSHS staff member.** They will:

- *Read your Proposal and **approve** your project.
- *Assist you in your project, provide encouragement and answer questions.
- * You will submit your interview questions to them for review before each interview.
- *Grade your Digital Portfolio on Google Sites.

Interviewees –Your interviewees cannot be Big Sky staff members, relatives or friends of the family but individuals outside the school who have expertise in the field of your project topic. When choosing interviewees, try to find individuals you can easily get in contact with, and who will be able to verify your work at the end of the project. **The Interviewees may not be family members, or friends of the family. The goal of these interviews is learning to seek out and create professional partnerships in your community. Interviewees need to have at least three years of experience in their field in a professional capacity.**

Senior Project Coordinating Team – The Senior Project coordinators work with the seniors, the advisors, the BSHS staff members, the parents, the community, and the administration to guide each senior toward a successful Senior Project. The coordinators are also responsible for organizing and scheduling the presentations. They will collect all forms and maintain the Google Classroom. They are: Meleina Helmer and Abby Green. They are friendly and know everything – so ask them if you need help 😊

English Teacher – Senior English teachers guide you through the writing process. Strong communication is a crucial aspect of post high school success, and the various papers you will write aim to provide varied ways to practice multiple communication styles. The skills you learn in English can also be translated into other classes. **You will pick what you feel is the best of those papers to put into your portfolio. You can also include another piece of your best written work. This piece can be from another class, or you can use another paper from your English class. Both papers need to receive a C or higher.**

NOTE:

No matter who you are, or what you do once you graduate from Big Sky – you will need to be able to communicate what you need to other people.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Is the Senior Project required for graduation from Big Sky?

A: Yes ☺

Q: Can I start my project during the summer of my Junior year?

A: Yes – however there are minimum hour requirements during your Senior year that you must meet. You must fill out a form and get your project approved by the Senior Project Committee before you can continue. You must also complete the Paper, Digital Portfolio, and Presentation during your Senior year.

Q: How will the Senior Project be evaluated?

A: You must have a passing Digital Portfolio in order to be scheduled for Presentation Day. You must pass your Presentation and Digital Portfolio (and all prior components) to graduate. Once you have passed all requirements you will receive credit on your transcript.

Q: What if I am a student with special circumstances?

A: Special circumstances and modifications will be handled as follows:

- a. *Students with an IEP or 504:* If you are a student who has an IEP/504, you are required to complete the Senior Project. Accommodations needed to complete the Senior Project will be addressed through your IEP/504 process.
- b. *Transfer students:* If you are a transfer student to Big Sky before or during your senior year, you are required to complete a Senior Project. You will work with a Senior Project coordinator to plan and implement a Senior Project which can be successfully completed in the given time frame.
- c. *Extenuating circumstances:* If unusual circumstances should arise, they will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis by the Senior Project Review Committee.
- d. *Early graduates:* If you are planning to graduate early, you are required to complete a Senior Project. You should also meet with the Senior Project Coordinator early in your senior year so that you can set up a plan to complete all components by early graduation in January.

Q: Who pays for costs associated with my Senior Project?

A: You do. This is one of the things you must consider when you're planning your project budget. For example, instead of building a house that you designed, you could draw the blue prints and/or build a model of the house. Try not to let cost restrict your ideas for your Senior Project. Instead, use your imagination and discover a way to do your ideal Senior Project with minimal expense. Discuss your project budget with your parents, advisor and mentor.

Q: Can two or more students work together on a Senior Project?

A: At this time students need to complete their own projects and may not work together. If, you feel you have a compelling case for working with someone you need to make an appointment with Mrs. Helmer to present your case, and she will decide if you may proceed.

Q: Can I use my APS science project /IB Diploma project/ BI project as a Senior Project?

A: Yes. Further information is found on the Planning and Three Pathways section of this handbook.

Q: Can I leave school to work on my project and/or meet with my Interviewee?

A: You can, providing you follow these rules:

- ✓ You may leave campus only if your parent or guardian communicates with the attendance office.
- ✓ Use your senior study hall time wisely: schedule meetings with your advisor and mentor, work on your research, get help on your activity component, your digital portfolio, and/or your presentation during this time.
- ✓ You may leave school to work on your Senior Project during lunch or study hall period. Have a parent make arrangements with the attendance office to do so.
- ✓ **You may not miss a class to work on your Senior Project. Advisors and Interviewees are not authorized to give you a pass to miss a class!**

Q: Can I change my project?

A: Yes, you can change your project but you **MUST meet with your advisor and get approval.** You will need to fill out a **NEW Proposal Form** and keep all materials from both projects in your portfolio and explain in your presentation, the reasons for the change.

Q: What happens if my project is not completed, is derailed by forces outside my control, or does not go as planned?

A: That is okay! First thing to do is meet with your advisor and make a plan to get your project back on track, or make changes as needed. Don't give up! The goal is to get the experience and practice going through this process.

Senior Project Commandments:

1. **SAVE EVERYTHING** – every scrap of paper, napkin, picture, receipt, email etc. Anything that is even remotely connected to your project should be saved. That includes **ALL** drafts of your papers **AND** the final evaluation of your Portfolio Paper. Take pictures of all your documents and upload them to your Google drive/site.
2. Update time logs frequently so you can keep track of your work. **TAKE PICTURES OF YOUR PROCESS!!!!**

3. Keep all of your work for your digital portfolio in ONE place so you don't lose any of it. Upload to your Google site or your Google drive (create a file).

Interviews and Interviewees

In an effort to streamline the Senior Project process this year, and create something that could be conducted completely remotely should a student need or wish to do so, we have introduced the practice of interviews to replace a physical process if necessary. Students still absolutely have the ability to complete a hands-on project if they wish to do so. In fact, if there is any way that students can spend actual time getting hands on experience in a safe and comfortable environment we encourage them to do so. There is no better teacher than experience. However if a student is unable to complete a physical project, they can remotely conduct interviews with professionals in capacities they are interested in pursuing or learning more about to complete their senior project.

There are still three pathways to choose from, but regardless of which pathway students choose, here are some basic requirements of interviews and interviewees across all pathways:

- Interviews must be a minimum of 10 minutes long.
- Students must submit questions for their interviews for review by their advisors before they conduct their interviews.
- **Interviews must be documented.** Students can conduct their interviews in person, through a Google Meet or Zoom, or over the phone – whatever the student and Interviewee are most comfortable with. **Students MUST make sure their interviewee understands that the interview is being recorded strictly for inclusion in their portfolio to prove the student has met the requirements for their Senior Project.**
 - Students can record video or audio of the interview. Students can record the interview virtually through Google Meet or Zoom, record audio on their phone or check out a recorder from the library if they meet in person, or conduct an interview over the phone and record with another device.
 - Students will need to submit their recording and their questions to the Google Classroom for each interview. Students can also submit pictures of the individual they interviewed if the interviewee is comfortable with their photo being taken.
 - Interviewees should be individuals that have experience in their field that is at a professional level for at least three years.
 - Students may not interview a family member, or family friend.
 - Students can choose to interview people of the same profession at different locations (if you are interested in nursing, you could interview three nurses at two different hospitals, and all different specialties, like a NICU nurse, someone who works with cancer patients, and an ER nurse for example) **OR** if the student wants to explore more than one profession that student can choose professionals in three different settings to interview (a welder, radio DJ and public defender for example)

- Again, if you feel comfortable and have the opportunity to work with, or volunteer with your interviewee to get some hands on experience we encourage you to do so safely.

The Three Pathways!

Pathway 1 IB Diploma\APS\BI Students	Pathway 2 Interviews/possible Job Shadow	Pathway 3 Skills and/or Products
<p>Students in this pathway will complete the activity component through a project in one of these classes or programs. They will complete a minimum of 20 hours on their project, create a graded digital portfolio, and they will present on presentation day.</p> <p>Note: Students MUST spend at minimum of 8 hours (out of a total 20) outside of the APS\BI\IB classes.</p> <p>Students will conduct research on careers in their field(s) of choice and create questions to complete 2 interviews with professionals. Students should either choose two different professions, or the same profession in two different places, to get as diverse of a perspective as possible.</p>	<p>Students in this pathway will choose one or more professions they are interested in exploring further. Students will conduct research on careers in their field(s) of choice and create questions to complete 3 interviews with professionals. Students should either choose three different professions, or the same profession in two or more different places, to get as diverse of a perspective as possible.</p> <p>They will complete the graded portfolio and present on presentation day.</p>	<p>Students spend a minimum of 20 hours either producing a product or acquiring a new skill.</p> <p>Students will conduct research on careers in their field(s) of choice and create questions to complete 2 interviews with professionals. Students should either choose two different professions, or the same profession in two different places, to get as diverse of a perspective as possible.</p> <p>One or both of your interviewees could be someone that helps you in learning your skill, or creating your product (what was formerly considered a mentor)</p>
<p>This pathway is for students who are IB Diploma Candidates, APS students or Health Science Academy Students in a BI class.</p>	<p>If students have the opportunity to work with, or physically job shadow one of their interviewees they may do so, for a minimum period of 4 hours, in exchange for 1 interview. Students may not be paid for their time.</p>	<p>This pathway includes skills (learning an instrument, dance, etc.) products (skis, canoes, etc.) or events (fundraisers, concerts, etc.) This pathway can also include getting certifications (EMT, phlebotomy, CDL license, etc)</p>
<p>In addition, students in this pathway must complete either 2 volunteer opportunities for a minimum of 2 hours or a single volunteer opportunity that lasts for a minimum of 3 hours.</p>	<p>In addition, students in this pathway must complete either 2 volunteer opportunities for a minimum of 2 hours or a single volunteer opportunity that lasts for a minimum of 3 hours.</p>	<p>In addition, students in this pathway must complete either 2 volunteer opportunities for a minimum of 2 hours or a single volunteer opportunity that lasts for a minimum of 3 hours.</p>

Pathway Requirements in Brief

Pathway 1 – IB\APS\BI

- ❑ 20 hours minimum - these hours can be achieved through their classwork and outside of class.
- ❑ A minimum 8 hours (out of the total time) performed outside of classes.
- ❑ 2 interviews with professionals connected to their project through their IB, APS or BI courses. Interviews must last between 10-15 minutes minimum and be recorded in some fashion.

Pathway 2 – Job Shadow/Internship Interviews

- ❑ 3 interviews with professionals. Students must conduct the interviews with professionals either in three different fields, or in the same field but in different locations. They cannot interview family members or friends of the family. Interviews must be 10-15 minutes minimum and be recorded in some fashion.
- ❑ If a student is comfortable and has the opportunity to work with, volunteer or job shadow one of their interviewees they may do so in exchange for one interview. Their time should be a minimum of 4 hours, and they may not be paid for their work. Students must provide documentation of their time.

Pathway 3 – Skill and/or Product

- ❑ 20 hours minimum
- ❑ 2 interviews with professionals that connect in some way to the product you are trying to produce, or the skill you are attempting to acquire. Interviews must be 10-15 minutes minimum and recorded in some fashion.

Volunteerism:

Being an active member of a community is central to Big Sky's mission statement. Every student will participate in volunteering in some capacity. Students will need to document their volunteerism through photographs, video, etc. for inclusion in their portfolio. Students can complete two volunteerism activities for a minimum of 2 hours, or a single activity that lasts for a minimum of three hours.

Volunteerism

The best way for any citizen to understand what is happening in their community and their world is to be active in it, and give back whenever possible. Engaging with communities allows students an opportunity to be **risk-takers** and try something new, and learn to **communicate** with new people, and **open their mind** to new ideas and experiences. Working in a community in any capacity, no matter how small or large allows students to really **reflect** on what matters to them, and how they view the people they interact with in their community every day.

Due to Covid-19 we realize that volunteering in person may not be possible, or students and their families may not be comfortable doing so. However, there are many ways to help out your community without leaving the safety of your home.

Below is a suggested list of activities students can engage in to give back to their community. This is by no means an exhaustive list, and students are encouraged to find other avenues to complete their volunteerism component. **The student's Advisor will approve their choices, so if there is something a student wants to do that is not on this list, it needs to be approved by their Advisor.**

Students can complete two activities, for a minimum total of 2 hours, or 1 activity for a minimum of 3 hours. Students cannot be paid or compensated for their time.

- Write letters of appreciation to any health care (this includes hospitals, clinics, doctors, nurses, technicians, etc.), first responders, police or fire department workers. You can also write letters to front line workers, such as grocery store employees, truck drivers, delivery drivers, and postal workers.
- Write letters and send small care packages to members in assisted living homes.
- Organize and send letters and packages to troops overseas.
- Contact a local Missoula Organization or visit www.volunteermisoula.org to find organizations that are looking for volunteers for a variety of positions. A few organizations you could work with:

<input type="checkbox"/> The Humane Society	<input type="checkbox"/> United Way	<input type="checkbox"/> Poverello Center
<input type="checkbox"/> Great Burn Conservation Alliance	<input type="checkbox"/> Missoula Parks and Recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> Missoula Food Bank
<input type="checkbox"/> Missoula Aging Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Big Brothers Big Sisters	<input type="checkbox"/> The American Red Cross
<input type="checkbox"/> YWCA	<input type="checkbox"/> CERT: Community Emergency Response Team	

- Tutor elementary or middle school students
- Clear away brush and /or snow, pick up trash along rivers or at the Veteran's cemetery, or in elderly neighbors yards.
- Work with church groups, youth groups, or other local organizations that need help.
- Work with election offices, political campaigns, data collection, canvassing, etc
- Work at Big Sky with custodial staff to keep our school looking sharp!

Due Dates and Timeline

Due to COVID-19 we are attempting to make all forms as digital as possible to minimize the amount of contact between people, as well as the number of times paper changes hands. However, there are three forms that will require a signature and cannot be done completely digitally. Therefore, students will need to fill out the paper form, and then turn the form into a digital document to submit through Google Classroom. Students can take pictures on their phone and upload the picture to their Google Account, or use any free, third party app like CamScanner to turn their picture into a PDF that can easily be uploaded to their G suite. Students can also scan documents in directly through a computer.

FORMS - DUE: OCTOBER 2ND

- ❑ Advisor Contract: Once you have contacted a teacher (either in person or via email) and asked them to be your advisor you will need to fill out the Advisor form, sign it, and have your advisor sign it. You will then need to turn it into a digital document, and submit it to Google Classroom.
- ❑ Parent/Guardian form: Paper form, that you will need to have your parents/guardians sign. Turn into a digital form and submit to Google Classroom.

Any student who does not have an advisor by this date will BE ASSIGNED AN ADVISOR

- ❑ Proposal Letter: To be written by the student and discussed with the advisor. When both student and advisor have signed the letter, students need to turn the proposal into a digital document and submit it to Google Classroom.

QUESTIONS AND ADVISOR CHECK INS: Each student will complete between 2 and 3 interviews. Before each interview the student needs to submit the questions, they plan to ask in their interview to their advisor for feedback. This will be done digitally through a Google Doc. Students should submit their questions to their advisor, who should provide feedback on the document through comments. When the student and advisor are satisfied with the document the student submits it to the Google Classroom.

- ❑ 1st interview questions: **DUE NOVEMBER 30th**
- ❑ 2nd interview questions: **DUE FEBRUARY 26th**
- ❑ 3rd interview questions (if necessary): **DUE MARCH 30th**

VOLUNTEERISM: Proof of your volunteer activities (pictures, forms, etc.) and Volunteerism Form must be uploaded to the Google Classroom by:

- ❑ **April 16th**

DIGITAL PORTFOLIOS: DUE MAY 1st

PRESENTATIONS: Date and format TBD in the Spring.

Advisor Contract

(DUE October 2nd)

I have agreed to serve as an advisor for _____ during his/her Senior Project.
(Print Student's Full Name)

STUDENT CONTACT INFORMATION:

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

I understand that as a Senior Project advisor, I have the following requirements:

- ◆ **Approve the student's project after reviewing the Proposal**
- ◆ **With the student** either in person or digitally, review interview questions.
- ◆ Grade advisee's Digital Portfolio – **submit the grade sheet to algreen@mcpsmt.org**
- ◆ Establish a method of communication and check-ins with student for help throughout the process.
- ◆ **Some other duties you are welcome and encouraged to consider:**
 - ◆ Reviewing student writing assignments
 - ◆ Helping them practice presenting in the Spring

Advisor Printed Name _____

Advisor Signature _____ Date _____

I understand that as a Senior Project Advisee, I have the following requirements:

- ◆ Meet with my advisor frequently and have all necessary documents completed by due dates.
- ◆ Turn in required documents to the BSHS Senior Projects Google Classroom
- ◆ Communicate with my advisor when I encounter issues, problems or setbacks and make appointments to meet.
- ◆ Fill out Timelines **with** my advisor

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Submit this signed form to the BSHS Senior Projects Google Classroom. (DUE October 2nd)

- I am aware that “satisfactory” completion of the Senior Project, consisting of academic writing, activity component, digital portfolio, and presentation is required to pass the Senior Project class at Big Sky High School and walk in graduation.
- I have read and understand the Senior Project Handbook.
- I have discussed the Senior Project with my son/daughter and believe that he or she understands the requirements of the project.
- I have reviewed the Proposal Letter and know what my student plans to do for their project.
- I understand that there may be costs associated with this project and that the student is responsible for these costs. Note: If cost is a concern please speak with a Senior Project Coordinator.
- I approve of the topic my son/daughter has chosen for his/her Senior Project, including his/her research paper and activity field experience.
- I approve of my son/daughter working with a variety of people, both on campus and off campus, to complete the Senior Project requirements. These people include, but are not limited to, BSHS teachers and staff and a community mentor.
- I understand that my son/daughter may need to go off campus during the school day to work on this project. If he/she is under 18, I understand that I have to make arrangements with the attendance office. Note: Off-campus work during the school day for the Senior Project is not required and should be respected in lieu of the requirements for other school work.

Parent/Guardian Name (please print)_____

Signature:_____ Date_____ Telephone_____

Public Relations Release

I give my permission for a photograph or video of my son/ daughter/ ward/ self (circle all that apply) to be used in the media, including newsletters, newspapers, magazines, future handbooks, etc. His / her / my name may also be used. I also give permission for any or all parts of his/her project to be used for either teaching or public relations purposes.

Date_____ X_____

Signature of student

Date_____ X_____

Signature of parent/ guardian

Proposal Letter Requirements

The Proposal is the first step in moving forward with your chosen topic. It is in the form of a formal letter. It must be completed, signed and turned in before you can continue with your project.

Purpose of the Proposal Letter: To introduce yourself to your advisor, and explain why you want to do this project, what pathway you have chosen, what gave you the idea, and what you hope to take away from this project. You should also include who you plan to interview and how you went about finding them, and your strategy if your first choices do not work out.

- **1 – 2 pg typed professional letter – signed by you.**

Requirements for Proposal Letter:

- It is a formal letter describing:
 - a. Who you are (even if you know your advisor well), and what about you has led you to your project. Are you pursuing something you have dabbled in before? Are you a studious music student who wants to try something totally new by learning judo? Explain to your advisor why/how you have chosen your pathway, and how you decided on your project.
 - b. What pathway you have chosen and what you hope to get out of the process: skills, experience, a finished product or certain dollar amount if you are doing a fundraiser, etc.
 - c. Who will you interview and how did you decide on them? What are their qualifications and what do you hope to learn from the interview?
 - d. Your understanding that this project is a reflection of you as a student and as a learner, and your commitment to completing all parts of the Senior Project to the best of your ability and on time.
- Your letter should be formal (no slang, no contractions, good grammar etc.), but should sound like you and be engaging and interesting to read.
- You should demonstrate enough of a plan that your advisor knows the major aspects of your project. Also, it is a letter of *intent* – so it is assumed that many things may change in the actual process.
- Be sure to include a final copy and any drafts (proof of writing progress) in your Portfolio.
- **MAKE SURE** you Advisor signs the letter at the bottom to signify they have read it and approve of your plan.

Proposal Letter Example

685 Plainview Lane
Missoula, MT 59801

← Heading: writer's address plus the date followed by double space

August 31st, 2016

Meleina Helmer
3100 South Avenue West
Missoula, MT 59804

← Advisor's full name and school address followed by double space

Dear Mrs. Helmer,

← Salutation to Advisor followed by double space

Hello. My name is Autumn Schnell and I am excited to begin my Senior Project with you as my Advisor. I am one of those students who decide nearly every other day to change my plan for my future. I just can't seem to find one thing I want to do, and the thought of having to choose right now, before I have even started my senior year, quite frankly, gives me a headache. Therefore, I feel that I need to choose a project that I know will be interesting, and will likely be of use to me in my future – whatever I decide to do.

I would like to learn how to use several software programs for the purpose of Public Relations. Although I am pretty good on my phone, can type a paper on Word, and make a Prezi, I feel there are many other areas I can increase my skills to actually deliver a product that might in turn create business or raise awareness. Specifically, I would like to learn InDesign, Photoshop, and some basic web design. This falls into Pathway 3 as I hope to demonstrate my learned skills through creating a small product on each platform. I plan to interview three individuals; Ron Thompson, Anita Sanders and Claire Beaufort. Mr. Thompson is the head of the Media Arts department at the University of Montana and I hope he will be able to answer my questions about graphic designs, and how important knowledge of these programs are in a Media Arts program. Ms. Sanders is the owner of Mountain Printing here in town, and uses these programs every day to create products for her clients. Mrs. Beaufort is a career Web Designer and works with several businesses in town. I hope to learn from Ms. Sanders and Mrs. Beaufort about the practical application of these programs, and which program is the most important to know well if I want to pursue a career in the Media Arts. After the interviews I hope to use each platform to produce a small product like a layout, or brochure or small website.

I hope to increase my comfort level talking to people I don't know, and hopefully spend some time with each interviewee in front of a computer actually looking at the programs. I hope to create some professional relationships and gain insight into what program I should focus on moving forward. In order for this project to be successful I will need to plan my time carefully, communicate effectively with all parties involved, and remain professional. I understand that this is my project, and although I will rely on others, it is up to me to complete this project to the best of my ability and with integrity. I am excited to begin this process, and I appreciate your support going forward.

Respectfully,

← Double space before closing, four spaces follow the closing for your signature

← Your signature in ink and cursive

Your full name

← Your typed full name as you wrote it above

Advisors Signature: _____

Guidelines for Planning Your Project

- As you do your activity field experience, you will be asked to “stretch” your learning: intellectually, physically and/or emotionally beyond what you already know or can do.
- Take time to really research who you want to interview to find someone who you think will be able to help you understand more about a profession or skill you are interested in.
- Really take time to think about your questions for each interview and plan them out ahead of time so you have plenty of things to talk to your interviewee about.
- Keep records of what you do. You will include them in your digital portfolio as evidence of completion of your activity component. You could use more than one of the following methods for recording what you accomplish. Remember that all documents and records will need to be in a digital format to include in your digital portfolio.
 - Keep emails, notes from interviews, pamphlets, handbooks, all recordings etc.
 - Keep a journal
 - Write detailed notes on a calendar
 - Take pictures or video of your progress
 - Keep interview and research notes
 - Keep sales receipts
- Use calendars to set up a timeline; this helps with time management.
- Monitor your progress . . . don’t fall behind. **Procrastination has a price!**
- Backup your files and disks; save all files to at least two different locations.
- A flash drive AND Google Docs AND your student drive work well for backing up files.
- Keep your Senior Project advisor in the loop. Meet with your advisor frequently and keep them updated.
- **ALWAYS Demonstrate proof of progress!**
- **There are many options for your activity field experience if you feel comfortable doing more than just the interviews. You might choose to:**
 - **Make something:** for example, a painting, a model, an outfit, a computer program, a woodworking project, or an engine
 - **Perform something:** for example, a song, a dance, a documentary, or a fashion show
 - **Write something:** for example, a short story, a book of poetry, a short novel, newspaper articles, or a memoir
 - **Teach something:** for example, to children, to senior citizens, to a Little League team, or to your peers
 - **Explore a career:** for example, complete a job shadow and do something with the knowledge you gain such as teach a class or create a pamphlet or poster to be used by an organization
 - **Learn a new skill:** for example, take a class in photography, scuba diving, or watercolor painting.

Interviewees Information

Spend time thinking about what topic area, profession or skill you want to learn more about. If you are not passionate about learning from these individuals, then you are wasting their time. Do some research to find out who you want to contact so you feel confident that you are approaching the right person.

Some things to keep in mind when looking for Interviewees:

1. They are not a family member, family friend, or Big Sky staff member– you need to stretch your wings and learn to contact people you do not know at all, or do not know well.
2. Interviewees have been professionals in their field for a minimum of three years.
3. They are taking time away from their jobs to assist you. You need to be clear with them about what you need from them. You need to be flexible with your time and make every effort to meet with them when they are available. You need to maximize your time with them, by coming to every meeting prepared and ready to work whether that meeting is in person or virtual.

Tips for Cold Calling an Interviewee:

1. Do your research, and find a couple of names and numbers of people you may want to contact to interview. Google an occupation, cruise around town and look at businesses and go in and talk to the people at the front desk, ask family members, teachers and your advisors for ideas.
2. If you have a phone number, make your first contact a phone call. If you only have an email address, then send the email; but an actual conversation is always preferable and more memorable.

Troubleshooting:

1. I followed all the steps and the contact has not returned my call or gotten back to me like they said they would.

Wait one week for them to respond. If they have not responded then call again (leave a voicemail if appropriate) and send an email as well. BE POLITE and CLEAR in your messages. Do not make demands and make your messages short, and to the point. They may be very busy – you need to keep yourself on their radar, but not annoy or overwhelm them.

It might be prudent to make contact with another person who is your second option during this time just in case. If your original contact does come through, as does your second then yay for you! You have twice the help and advice. If not, then you haven't wasted all this time and have to start over much later.

Continue to try to make contact every four to five days – if you hear nothing after three weeks speak to your advisor and consider that this person may be a dead end.

2. No matter what I try, I keep running into a dead end.

Speak to your advisor about adjusting your goals or your plan – **DO NOT JUST GIVE UP!** Also, do not wait to let your advisor know you are struggling. The more proactive you are, the less stressed you will be.

Cold Call Script: Keep in mind this script is a suggestion to give you some ideas of what to say – you do not have to repeat it word for word 😊

“Hello! My name is _____ and I am a student at Big Sky High School. I was hoping to interview you for my Senior Project. Do you have time to speak to me now or would you prefer I contact you at another time?

(If they say they have time) Great thank you! So all Seniors at Big Sky are required to fulfill a Senior project. I have chosen Pathway _____ which means I need to __ (explain the pathway and your project – BRIEFLY).

I am hoping that you would be willing to set up a time for me to interview you about your profession. I am interested in learning more about _____ and I will come prepared with questions. We can do the interview in person, over the phone, through a Google Meet or Zoom call - whatever you are most comfortable with. I will need to record the interview to include as documentation in my digital portfolio.

(If they say that sounds like a plan and they are willing to help) Fantastic! Could we schedule a time to conduct the interview? And what format would you prefer?

(If they say they DO NOT have time) No problem! Is there a better time to contact you or would you prefer an email with my contact information?

General Advice:

1. Make sure to be calm, and call them in a quiet place with no distractions.
2. Give them your best contact information (first AND last name – phone number and email) and get THEIR best contact information (first AND last name – phone number and email)
3. Be polite and flexible

Volunteerism Form

This form will be submitted after you have completed your Volunteer requirements. The advisor, manager or person in charge of your volunteer experience should fill out this form. If you completed your volunteer work at home, you may have a parent fill out this form, as well as provide documentation of what you did.

Volunteer Experience #1 Description:

Date of Service: _____ Time Spent: _____

Supervisor/manager/parent/etc: _____

Volunteer Experience #2 Description:

Date of Service: _____ Time Spent: _____

Supervisor/manager/parent/etc: _____

I assert as the student that I have fulfilled this requirement and completed these duties, and have provided proof of my activity through my time log, and evidence such as photographs, video, etc.

Student signature: _____

Senior Project Time Log

You can use this form for documenting your hours for your activity field experience or you can keep track of your time in your Digital Portfolio on Google Sites. Any time preparing for your Interviews, finding people, making questions, etc. and time interviewing should be documented, as this becomes your documentation for your experience. If you are creating a product or learning a skill this is where you keep track of all the time you spend on that product or skill. Calculate your total hours spent.

Date- write clearly the date you worked on your activity field experience

Activity- Write clearly and specifically what progress you made for your activity field experience. Include who you worked with if applicable

Time- write clearly the amount of time you spent on your activity field experience

Date

Activity/Evidence

Time

Date

Activity/Evidence

Time

Date

Activity/Evidence

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Activity/Evidence

Time

Total Hours this page: _____

Date	Activity/Evidence	Time

Date	Activity/Evidence	Time

Date	Activity/Evidence	Time

Date	Activity/Evidence	Time

Date	Activity/Evidence	Time

Date	Activity/Evidence	Time

TOTAL HOURS FOR SENIOR PROJECT: _____

Paper components - Plagiarism is not acceptable!

Plagiarism is just plain cheating. It is using someone else's words or ideas in your paper as if they were your own. If you copy someone else's work on purpose, you know that it is wrong. However, if you do not understand how to cite another person's work and accidentally plagiarize, you may still get accused of cheating. This is one good reason to learn quotation mechanics and how to effectively use MLA.

The following examples should give you some ideas about the differences between research paper writing and plagiarism. First, here is an example of original reference material from Walter Allen's *The English Novel*, New York: Dutton, 1954, followed by three student versions. Only Version C is correct!

Original material:

Wuthering Heights is the most remarkable novel in English. It is perfect, and perfect in the rarest way: it is the complete bodying forth of an intensely individual apprehension of the nature of man and life. That is to say, the content is strange enough, indeed baffling enough, while the artistic expression of it is flawless (Allen 223).

Student Version A:

The most remarkable novel in English is *Wuthering Heights*. It brings forth an individual apprehension of the nature of man and life; therefore, it is perfect in the rarest way. The artistic expression is flawless, but the content is strange, indeed baffling.

This is clearly plagiarized. The student has copied the original almost word for word, and there is no attempt to indicate what has been copied or where it was found.

Student Version B:

Wuthering Heights is a great English novel. It is perfect in the rarest way: it provides an individual apprehension of man's nature. The artistic expression is flawless, although the content is strange and baffling (Allen 223).

This is a little better, but it is still an example of plagiarism. Even though an attempt has been made to indicate the source, we cannot tell which words were copied directly. (Remember: just because you move the word order around a little or leave a word or two out, that does not make it *your* writing or *your* ideas. You still have to document.)

Student Version C:

Walter Allen insists that the "artistic expression" of *Wuthering Heights* is flawless (223). Allen admits that the content is strange and even baffling, but he argues that the novel is perfect because it accurately presents "an intensely individual apprehension of the nature of man and life" (223).

Here the student has correctly handled the use of the original. Some words are rephrased, but those taken word for word are clearly marked. Also, it is clear what source is being used.

- ❖ Plagiarism is using another person's ideas or words in your writing without giving him or her proper credit through documentation.
- ❖ All information that is paraphrased (or put in your own words) needs to be referenced.
- ❖ Every quotation must include a reference to the source. Introduce your speaker or source.
- ❖ Plagiarism will jeopardize successful completion of your paper.

DIGITAL PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to put your digital portfolio together, and check off each item as you put it in your Digital Portfolio. Remember that your Digital Portfolio will be on Google Sites.

A. Organization

Your digital Portfolio should be created as a Google Sites with the following requirements:

- _____ Have a table of contents and/or clearly labeled sections so it is easy for your advisor to navigate.
- _____ A cohesive theme, color or layout so every aspect of your digital portfolio works together.
- _____ Free of typos and all margins are the same, and has an overall professional appearance.

B. Section 1: Forms and Questions

- _____ Resume
- _____ Proposal Letter signed by your advisor
- _____ Questions written prior for each interview

C. Section 2: Papers

- _____ Clean, typed copies of final papers.
- _____ Evidence of Research (Articles, notes, Source Analysis, Bibliography, etc.) if applicable

D. Section 3: Activity Field Experience includes:

- _____ Time Logs (includes time spent on interviews, products and/or skills, and volunteerism)
- _____ Proof of Progress/ Visual / Audio Elements of Activity Field Experience
- _____ Volunteerism Form
- _____ Proof of Volunteerism
- _____ Reflection Paper

E. Section 4: Student Archives

_____ At least 4 articles from the following list to demonstrate your progress as a student **(no article can be repeated more than twice):**

Letters of Acceptance Certificates/Award Letters Best Piece of Student Work (not written)

Job Application College/ Trade school Applications Letters of Recommendation

Evidence of community service outside of school (with a church, organization, etc.)

F. Section 5: Thank You Notes/Final Evaluation

_____ **Copies of handwritten Thank You notes on cards for each Interviewee - which you should send after each Interview!**

_____ Once your Digital Portfolio is evaluated by your advisor and they turn in the grade sheet to the Senior Project Coordinators, you can be scheduled to present.

Reflection Paper Guidelines

Every student must complete a Reflection paper, but each Pathway has slightly different requirements. Please read the description for the Pathway you chose, and indicate which Pathway you chose in your paper. Your reflection paper will be on your Google site.

Pathway 1 – IB Diploma\APS\IB	Pathway 2 – Job Shadow/Internships	Pathway 3 – Skills and/or Products
Reflection Paper: 1-2 pages, successes and challenges - also a focus on takeaways: will you continue this activity/research in your future, incorporate the new skill into your future lives (why or why not). What did you learn through your interviews? Also, what skills have you taken from the entire Senior Project process that you will be able to utilize after high school.	Reflection Paper: 1-2 pages discussing successes and challenges, what you learned, how it has changed your opinion of the profession and if you still plan to pursue that career in the future (why or why not). What did you learn through your interviews? Also, what skills have you taken from the entire Senior Project process that you will be able to utilize after high school.	Reflection Paper: 1-2 pages discussing successes and challenges, with particular focus on what you took away from the process of learning this new skill, or creating this product. What did you learn through your interviews? How will you utilize this knowledge going forward? What skills have you taken from the entire Senior Project process that you will be able to utilize after high school?

Tips for a successful paper:

1. Be honest but professional. Be detailed in your descriptions of the successes and challenges. Your paper should be authentic and sound like you, but still maintain a professional tone. Also, include all aspects from the rubric.
2. Your paper should be organized and flow – it should feel like a cohesive paper from start to finish.
3. Your paper should be free of grammatical errors.

