

MCPS Capstone

**Big Sky High School
Senior Project
2017/2018**



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

Table of Contents

Senior Project Overview

➤ Welcome and VIP's	4
➤ FAQ	5
➤ Planning and the Three Pathways	7
➤ Dues Dates and Timelines	10

Forms

➤ Advisor Contract	11
➤ Parent/Guardian Consent Form	12
➤ Letter of Intent and Proposal Requirements	13
➤ Example Letter	14
➤ Proposal Form	15
➤ Mentor Contract	17
➤ Mentor Information and Instructions	19
➤ Timeline Forms (Semesters 1 and 2)	20
➤ Time Logs Template	22
➤ Activity Field Experience Evaluation	24
➤ Portfolio Evaluation Checklist	25
➤ Reflection Paper Guidelines	26
➤ Reflection Paper and Portfolio Grade Sheet	27
➤ Presentation Evaluation Rubric	29

Senior Project Information In Depth

➤ Capstone Project and MCPS requirements	31
➤ Research paper requirements	33
➤ Plagiarism policy	
➤ Activity Field Experience requirements and guidelines	34
➤ Presentation Requirements and Guidelines	35
➤ Thank you letter requirements	37

Components of the Senior Project

Paper

- Use reputable sources both primary and secondary
- Produce a post-secondary worthy piece of writing.
- English classes work on this component
- **DUE: November 3rd**

Activity Field Experience

- The process of creating, organizing and completing your project.
- Completed on your own time
- During this component you will work closely with your Mentor.
- **DUE: By May 24th**

**PLAN
EXECUTE
EVALUATE
REFLECT**

Portfolio

- A physical record of all your work
- KEEP EVERYTHING (receipts, pictures of progress or events, forms, timelines, communication, etc.)
- A requirement for your presentation.
- **DUE: Portfolio window: April 16th through the 30th**

Presentation

- Culmination of your Research, Activity, and Portfolio.
- 20 minutes, followed by Q&A to community and staff panel members
- Presentation is visual, and explains in depth the entire process of your project.
- **DUE: May 24th**

Welcome and VIPs

The very first thing you should do as a senior is not panic.

The second thing you should do is *try really hard* not to procrastinate.

And the third thing you should do is think about what you want to do for your project. It should be:

- Something you are highly interested in
- Have wanted to do for a long time
- Will benefit you, your family or your community in some way.

You will be required to complete all four Senior Project Components, working with the following people for your Senior Project:

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.

*Fill out timelines and keep you on track of your paper work. If you are missing an element, or have not met with your advisor before/during the appointed time they will report you to the administration, which will then send you an invitation to Senior Seminar 😊

Mentor - Your mentor is neither a Big Sky staff member nor a relative, but is someone outside the school who has expertise in the field of your project topic. When choosing a mentor try to find someone you can easily get in contact with, and who will be able to verify your work at the end of the project.

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. They are: Meleina Helmer, Abby Green and Melissa Riley.

English Teacher – Senior English teachers guide you through the Senior Project research component during first semester Senior English. The paper includes multiple drafts. You have the opportunity to continue to revise the paper until the Writing Assessment Team deems the paper “Satisfactory.” **In order to pass first semester of Senior English (which is a graduation requirement), you must pass the Senior Paper. It is worth 25% of your grade.**

Government Teacher – Government teachers review Senior Project presentation requirements and guide you through the preparation for your presentation. They help prepare you for the presentation by teaching proper public speaking techniques. **Your Portfolio/Reflection paper grade in Semester 2 will be entered into your government classes. You must pass these components to pass Government second semester.**

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 or my Junior year?

A: Yes – however there are minimum hour requirements during your Senior year that you must meet. You must also complete your Paper, Portfolio, and Presentation during your Senior year.

Q: How will the Senior Project be evaluated?

A: Your paper grade will be attached to Sem. 1 of Senior English
Your Portfolio/Reflection paper grade will be attached to Sem. 2 of Government
You must have a passing Portfolio in order to be scheduled for Presentation Day.
You must pass your Presentation (and all prior components) to graduate.

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: What happens if I fail English first semester?

A: The best answer to this question is: Don't fail English. However, if you do, here is what will happen:

- ❑ If you pass the class first semester but get an "Unsatisfactory" on your Paper you will get an incomplete in English and you will have two weeks after the end of 1st semester to revise your paper until it is satisfactory so the incomplete can be changed to a grade.
- ❑ If you fail the class but get a "Satisfactory" on your Paper, you will need to follow the district's procedure for making up a failed class, but you will not need to do another Senior Project paper.

- ❑ If you fail the class and get an “Unsatisfactory” on your Paper, you will need to follow the district’s procedure for making up a failed class AND you will have to do your Senior Project paper independently.

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

A: On the activity field experience, yes. However, prior to the start of the activity field experience the student team must clearly differentiate each student’s responsibilities in each student’s Letter of Intent/Proposal to the advisors. Additionally, each student must meet all the requirements of his or her individual Senior Project, write his/her own paper, prepare his/her own portfolio, and do his/her own presentation. If you plan to complete the activity component together with someone else, please plan carefully and work closely with your advisors to develop an acceptable Senior Project. **Both students must meet with a Senior Project Coordinator prior to beginning the activity component.**

Q: Will the government classes still require community service?

A: Yes. This is a district requirement and separate from the Senior Project.

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 mentor?

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 research paper, your activity component, your 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. A mentor or advisor is not authorized to give you a pass to miss a class!**

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 paper AND the final evaluation of your paper.
2. Update time logs frequently so you can keep track of your work.
3. Keep all of your work for your portfolio in ONE place so you don’t lose any of it.

Planning and the Three Pathways

The ultimate goal of Senior Projects is that you:

- ❑ Complete a post-secondary worthy piece of writing (your research paper)
- ❑ Engage in a lengthy project that demonstrates a learning stretch
- ❑ Learn to organize, plan and complete necessary steps (forms, paperwork, etc.) to meet your goals
- ❑ Learn to communicate as a professional

A Learning Stretch is the process of garnering new information and/or skills over a period of time. You will learn above and beyond what you already knew, or you will learn something new entirely.

Some things to keep in mind when planning your project:

- ❑ **Time, Resources, and Cost:** We absolutely want you to dream big, but we also don't want you to have a nervous breakdown. Speak to your family, friends, advisor, teachers, etc. to think through the realities of what you are considering to see if your plan is feasible, or needs some tweaking.
- ❑ **What you want to achieve with your project:** You will spend a great deal of time and effort working on this project – so make sure you have a clear idea of what you want to get out of this process.

Which leads us to

The Three Pathways!

These Pathways are similar in terms of their goals and aims; but achieve those goals in slightly different ways, and with slightly different requirements. During the Letter of Intent/Proposal process you will need to identify which Pathway you believe is the best fit for what you want to do for your Senior Project.

Regardless of which Pathway you choose ALL students must complete:

- * All required forms
- * The Senior Paper (**IB Diploma Students fulfill this requirement with their Extended Essay**)
- * The minimum number of required hours during the Senior year.
- * A Portfolio
- * Reflection Paper
- * Presentation

The Three Pathways – Overview

Pathway 1 IB Diploma\APS\BI Students	Pathway 2 Job Shadows/Internships	Pathway 3 Skills and/or Products
<p>Students in this pathway will complete the activity component through one of these classes or programs. They will complete a minimum of 20 hours on their project, and still create a graded 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><i>*All IB Diploma Candidates will have Scott Matthews as their Advisor.</i></p>	<p>Students in this pathway will choose a profession they are interested in exploring further. They will spend a minimum of 20 hours (divided however they choose) at a minimum of two places. They will complete the graded portfolio and present on presentation day.</p> <p>Note: students in this pathway MUST provide evidence of participating in the chosen profession in some way for a minimum of 3 hours. Students cannot be paid for their work.</p>	<p>Students spend a minimum of 30 hours either producing a product or acquiring a new skill. Students must spend between 3 to 5 hours out of the 30 either job shadowing someone connected to their skill or product, or sharing their new knowledge with students or community members.</p>
<p>Reflection Paper: 1-2 pages, successes and challenges - also a focus on their takeaways: will they continue this activity/research in their future, will they incorporate their new skill into their lives (why or why not). Also, what skills have they taken from the entire Senior Project process (project, paper, and portfolio) that they will be able to utilize after high school.</p>	<p>Reflection Paper: 1-2 pages discussing successes and challenges, what they learned, how it has changed their opinion of the profession and if they still plan to pursue that career in the future (why or why not). Also, what skills have they taken from the entire Senior Project process (project, paper, and portfolio) that they will be able to utilize after high school.</p>	<p>Reflection Paper: 1-2 pages discussing successes and challenges, with particular focus on what they took away from the process of learning this new skill, or creating this product. How will they utilize this knowledge going forward? What skills have they taken from the entire Senior Project process (project, paper, and portfolio) that they will be able to utilize after high school?</p>
<p>This pathway is for students who are IB Diploma Candidates, APS students or Health Science Academy Students in a BI class. Students in these classes may also choose to do a project in another pathway if they wish.</p>	<p>This pathway can include getting certifications (EMT, phlebotomy, CDL license, etc) working in an office, on job sites, etc. Students are responsible for meeting any and all standards set forth by the employer. Keep in mind safety and privacy restrictions when choosing a profession to job shadow.</p>	<p>This pathway includes skills (learning an instrument, dance, etc.) products (skis, canoes, etc.) or events (fundraisers, concerts, etc.)</p>

Pathway Requirements in Brief

Pathway 1 – IB\APS\BI

- ❑ 20 hours minimum
- ❑ A minimum 8 hours (out of the total time) performed outside of classes.
- ❑ Scott Matthews is the advisor of IB Diploma Candidates

Pathway 2 – Job Shadow/Internship

- ❑ 20 hours minimum – MUST be divided between two locations (the division of hours does not have to be equal)
- ❑ A minimum of 3 hours (out of the total time) must be spent doing hands-on, participatory work (filing, performing tasks or procedures, etc.)
- ❑ Students cannot be paid for their time or work.

Pathway 3 – Skill and/or Product

- ❑ 30 hours minimum
- ❑ 3-5 hours (out of the total time spent) must be either job shadowing a profession in your area of study, or presenting/teaching your knowledge/skill to others (underclassmen, other students, community members, etc.)

NOTE: each Pathway has a slightly different focus for the reflection paper. Please see Reflection Paper Guidelines for more information.

Due Dates and Timeline

DUE: September 15th

- ❑ Advisor Contract: Signed and original turned in to Mrs. Helmer – Rm 42
- ❑ Parent/Guardian form: kept in Portfolio

1st SENIOR SEMINAR: SEPTEMBER 26th – 29th (SENIOR SEMINAR: Any student who is missing any required forms, or has not met with their advisor by the due date will be asked by the administration to attend Senior Seminar to get caught up.)

DUE: October 13th

- ❑ Proposal: The signed proposal is turned in to Mrs. Helmer – Rm 42
- ❑ Mentor Contract: Turned in to Mrs. Helmer – Rm 42
- ❑ Timeline Form Semester 1: completed together by student and advisor/to be kept in the portfolio

2nd SENIOR SEMINAR – OCTOBER 23rd -27th

DUE: November 3rd

- ❑ Senior Paper: Turned into Senior English teacher
(CAS paper for
IB Diploma Candidates)

3rd SENIOR SEMINAR – NOVEMBER 27TH – DECEMBER 1ST

DUE: February 5th through the 16th

Meet with Advisor to establish:

- ❑ That a ¼ of required hours are completed
- ❑ The Timeline for Semester 2
- ❑ Portfolio check – start to gather forms, update time logs, etc.

4th SENIOR SEMINAR – FEBRUARY 26th – MARCH 2nd

DUE: APRIL 16TH – 30TH

- ❑ Portfolio
- ❑ Reflection Paper

5th SENIOR SEMINAR – MAY 7th – 11th

MAY 24TH – PRESENTATION DAY!!

Advisor Contract

(DUE September 15th)

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

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

- ♦ **Approve the student's project after reviewing the Letter of Intent/Proposal**
- ♦ Sign the student's **Proposal Form**
- ♦ **With the student**, fill out the Timeline form for Semesters 1 & 2
- ♦ If advisees do not meet with you before the appointed times, or are missing required elements, provide Meleina Helmer with their name so they can be invited to Senior Seminar.
- ♦ Grade advisee's Reflection Paper and Portfolio – **submit the grade sheet to Meleina Helmer in rm 42**
- ♦ Once the student's Portfolio and Reflection paper has been graded, fill out the Presentation Request form with the student, and **submit it to Meleina Helmer in rm. 42.**
- ♦ General help and guidance throughout the process
- ♦ **Some other duties you are welcome and encouraged to consider:**
 - ♦ Reviewing their Senior Paper
 - ♦ 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 by the required due dates, and have all necessary documents completed.
- ♦ Turn in required documents my advisor has signed to Mrs. Helmer in rm 42
- ♦ Communicate with my advisor, and make appointments to meet.
- ♦ Fill out Timelines and the Presentation Request form **with** my advisor

Student Signature _____ Date _____

Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Complete this form after you have selected an advisor. Give them a copy and put the signed copy in your portfolio. (DUE September 30th)

- I am aware that “satisfactory” completion of the Senior Project, consisting of a research component, activity component, portfolio, and presentation is required to pass senior English and Government classes at Big Sky High School.
- 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 Letter of Intent/Proposal form 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 Requirements

The Proposal is first step in moving forward with your chosen topic. It has two parts. BOTH MUST be completed, signed and turned in before you can continue with your project.

Part I: Letter of Intent: To introduce yourself to your advisor, and explain why you want to do this project, what gave you the idea, and what you hope to take away from this project. To give your advisor a more in depth idea of you, your project and why you want to do this project.

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

Part II: Proposal Form: Articulate what exactly you plan to do from start to finish of your project so that your advisor has clear idea of all aspects of your plan.

- **Form found in this packet – to be filled in completely.**

Requirements for Part I – Letter of Intent:

- 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 topic area, and how you decided on your project.
 - b. 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. 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 on time.
- Your letter should be formal (no slang, contractions, good grammar etc.), but should sound like you and be engaging and interesting to read.
- You do **NOT** have to know everything about your plan in your letter, but 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.

Letter Of Intent 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 cannot 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 (I have yet to choose a platform but I am investigating two or three that look promising) in order to advertise the schools sporting and artistic events. I will create flyers for each game/event which will necessitate working closely with several different groups of individuals, and a great deal of time management. I will also connect with the school Facebook page and twitter accounts to raise awareness not only with posters and ads, but also with social media. I plan to put my posters up around the school, and attempt to have them published in the local paper, and at several venues around town where students and families are likely to see them. I will also create a website specifically for events. My ultimate goal is to provide enough coverage that all events that take place at the school see an increase in attendance by students and community members. I also hope to solicit pictures, artwork, video, and sound bites from fellow students to include in my work. Hopefully, this endeavor will be successful and another student will be able to continue on after I leave.

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

Advisor Signature:

Part II: Proposal Form

Student's name: _____

School ID#: _____ Advisor's Name: _____

English Teacher's Name: _____ Topic area of Project: _____

Please circle the Pathway you have chosen:

Pathway 1

Pathway 2

Pathway 3

1. Describe in great detail exactly what you plan to do for your project – be specific, and include as many steps as possible.

2. Who will be your mentor? Why – what are their credentials? If you do not have a mentor yet explain where you will go, or who you will reach out to for a mentor and why.

3. Explain what you hope to achieve with this project – what is the ultimate goal/ product/ result that you are hoping for? Be as specific as possible.

4. What materials, programs, spaces, tools, etc. do you anticipate having to use to complete your project, and where do you plan to get them? What are your projected costs for your project? How will pay for your project if necessary?

5. Estimate how long your project will take you to complete. Please break down the process by steps, and estimate how long each portion will take to create a total number of hours.

6. What will your learning stretch be? What do you hope to learn or be able to do at the end of this process that you do not currently know?

Advisor Signature:_____

(signature indicates that the advisor has met with the student, read the Letter of Intent and Proposal Form, and believes that the student has a quality project and has agreed to let the project move forward)

Timeline for Semester 1 completed? **Yes** **No**

Senior Project Coordinator Signature:_____

(Both Signatures need to be obtained before the student's project is completely approved to move forward)

Mentor Contract

Directions: Fill out **both sides** of this form completely and provide your Mentor with the Mentor Information sheet so they can sign up to volunteer with MCPS.

Student's

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Advisor: _____ English Teacher: _____

1. List **all** of the mentor's contact information:

- Mentor's First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

- Mentor's Phone Number/ (cell/business/home): _____

- Mentor's COMPLETE Address (Street/City/State/Zip):

Street: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

- Mentor's Email Address:

- Explanation of the Mentor's **expertise or experience** with the topic (college/degree/certified/self-taught/job/accomplishments): _____

- The Mentor's **number of years experience** with the topic: _____ years

2. The student's **goals** (accomplishments) for this Senior Project are:

A. _____

B. _____

C. _____

D. _____

E. _____

(More goals can be added if the student and mentor deem it appropriate)

3. The student's learning stretch is _____

3. I have completed the MCPS registration and background check for volunteers.

4. I agree to be this student's mentor:

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Coordinator Signature or Stamp: _____

Students:

It is crucial you make sure your Mentor understands their responsibilities to the district.

Provide them with a copy of the MCPS Registration Instructions for Volunteers found on the next page.

Also – make sure you have a phone number and an email that you can use to contact your mentor. Likewise, give your contact information to your mentor.

MCPS Registration Instructions for Volunteers:

Student safety is a paramount concern in Missoula County Public Schools. Therefore, mentors must complete a name-based background check. *If you have already registered and completed a background check as a volunteer with MCPS you do not need to do another one.*

To initiate the volunteer process you must complete a few simple steps:

1. Please go to www.mcpsmt.org, and under the Departments tab, click on [Volunteer Resources](#)
2. You can either:
Register online: Click on the green REGISTER NOW button and the Background Check buttons on the right hand side - follow instructions.
OR
Fill out the [District Volunteer Application](#) , [Confidentiality Agreement](#), and [Background Check Form](#) under Unsupervised Volunteers and submit to the Human Resource Office in the MCPS Administration Building at 215 S 6th St. W., Missoula, MT 59801 with your \$6.00 payment.
3. We ask that the mentor absorb the background check cost if possible. Please make checks for the processing fee out to MCPS and put the name of the applicant in the memo line.

If you have any questions, please contact the MCPS administration office.

Thank you for volunteering to mentor a Big Sky High School senior!

*There is no end to education. It is not that you
read a book, pass an examination, and finish with
education. The whole of life, from the moment you
are born to the moment you die, is a process of
learning.*

TIMELINE – SEMESTER 1

The purpose of this document is to create a structure for how to proceed with your project, troubleshoot possible roadblocks, and plan as far ahead as possible. This document is kept with the advisor, or in the student's portfolio. It can be revised as necessary.

1. First Steps: What will you (the student) do first to get started in this process? What have you already put in place or started? Be as specific as possible.

2. If you are unable to get the venue/date/mentor/materials/ etc. that you need for your project – what is your back up plan or next move?

3. What do you plan to have accomplished by the end of November.

4. What do you plan to have accomplished by the end of 1st Semester.

Advisor Signature:_____

TIMELINE – SEMESTER 2

The purpose of this document is to create a structure for the second half of the year to keep you on track and ready to present in May.

1. Have you showed your time log to your advisor to verify that you have completed $\frac{1}{4}$ of your total hours?

2. What have you accomplished so far? Where are you in your process?

3. What steps do you need to take to finish your project? List them in as much detail as possible.

4. If you experience setbacks or roadblocks what is your strategy to keep moving forward?

Advisor Signature:_____

Senior Project Time Log

Student's Name: _____

Use this form for documenting your hours for your activity field experience. Made duplicate copies of the first page as needed, but make sure to total hours for each page, and have a final total.

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



Date

--

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



Activity

--

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



Time

--

Date

--

Activity

--

Time

--

Date

--

Activity

--

Time

--

Date

--

Activity

--

Time

--

Date

--

Activity

--

Time

--

Total Hours this page: _____

Date

Activity

Time

--

--

--

Date

Activity

Time

--

--

--

Date

Activity

Time

--

--

--

Date

Activity

Time

--

--

--

Date

Activity

Time

--

--

--

Date

Activity

Time

--

--

--

TOTAL HOURS FOR SENIOR PROJECT: _____

ACTIVITY FIELD EXPERIENCE EVALUATION

This form is required and must be completed by your mentor or significant person that you work with to complete your activity component hours.

Student's Name _____

Since most of the student's time spent on the activity component of this assignment has been outside of class, verification of the student's efforts is necessary. Please answer the following questions to help us evaluate his/her activity component. Please keep in mind that this student's research paper has already been evaluated. This form refers to the activity component only.

1. Can you verify that the student spent at least 20 to 30 hours on his or her activity component?

Yes _____ No _____

Comments:

2. Have you seen the activity field experience at different stages of completion and not just the final phase?

Yes _____ No _____

Comments:

3. What successes have you seen this student achieve?

4. What specific problems did this student encounter and overcome?

Additional Comments or Observations:

Evaluator's Printed Name _____

Evaluator's Signature _____

Telephone _____ Date _____

Student Name: _____

PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

Use this checklist to put your portfolio together, and check off each item as you put it in your Portfolio.
You must have a checkmark next to each item in order to pass your Portfolio Evaluation.

A. Organization includes:

- _____ 3 - Ring Binder (in good condition)
- _____ Tabbed/Labeled Sections (legibly written)
- _____ Cover Sheet for Portfolio (has your name, a title for your project and some visual element)
- _____ Table of Contents Sheet (Tip – use this checklist as a template! ☺)
- _____ Resume - updated

B. Section 1: Forms

- _____ Advisor Contract
- _____ Parent/Guardian Form
- _____ Letter of Intent (with drafts if applicable)
- _____ Proposal (any drafts, and original signed copy by Advisor and Coordinator)
- _____ Mentor Contract
- _____ Timelines – Semesters 1 and 2 – signed by Advisor with any drafts or additions

C. Section 2: Research Paper

- _____ Clean, Typed Copy of Final Paper
- _____ Final Evaluation Form with final score
- _____ Drafts of Paper with Evaluations
- _____ Evidence of Research (Articles, notes, Source Analysis, Bibliography, etc.)

D. Section 3: Activity Field Experience includes:

- _____ Time Logs
- _____ Proof of Progress/ Visual Elements of Activity Field Experience
- _____ Activity Field Experience Evaluation Form
- _____ 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):

FAFSA Application

Letters of Acceptance

Certificates/Award Letters

Job Application

College/ Trade school Applications

Letters of Recommendation

Best Piece of Student Work

F. Section 5: Thank You Notes/Final Evaluation

- _____ **Handwritten Thank You notes on cards for panel members (3) and 1 for your mentor (might think about one for your advisor too ;-)**

_____ Once your Portfolio and Reflection paper is evaluated by your advisor, turn in the grade sheet to the Senior Project Coordinators so you can be scheduled to present. When they return it, put it in your portfolio.

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.

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). Also, what skills have you taken from the entire Senior Project process (project, paper, and portfolio) 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). Also, what skills have you taken from the entire Senior Project process (project, paper, and portfolio) 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. How will you utilize this knowledge going forward? What skills have you taken from the entire Senior Project process (project, paper, and portfolio) 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.
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.

BEFORE YOUR PORTOFOLIO CAN BE ASSESSED, YOUR FIELD WORK MUST BE FINISHED.

BEFORE YOU CAN BE SCHEDULED TO PRESENT, YOUR PORTOFOLIO MUST BE PASSING.

Research Paper Requirements & Guidelines

The paper component of your Senior Project will be covered extensively in your English classes. Some general guidelines are as follows:

- The paper will be 3 to 5 pages in length, double spaced, Times New Roman font with a Works Cited page.
- All sources on the Works Cited page must be used in the paper and vice versa.
- The paper does not have to be tied directly to the student's project, although it may be if the student wishes.
- A minimum of 3 direct quotes must be used.
- Student must pass the paper in order to pass 1st Semester English IV.

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.

Activity Field Experience Requirements & Guidelines

- 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.
- You must display or demonstrate your activity field experience during your Senior Project presentation in May.
- You must complete at least 20 to 30 hours (depending on the Pathway you choose) of documented work for your activity field experience.
- Your activity field experience may consist of more than one part or event.
- The “Activity Field Experience Verification Form” can be completed by your mentor or the person you did most of your activity component hours with. It is best if this person is your mentor, but sometimes you will work with a different person and consult only with your mentor.
- Keep records of what you do. You will include them in your portfolio as evidence of completion of your activity component. You could use more than one of the following methods for recording what you accomplish.
 - Keep emails, notes from interviews, pamphlets, handbooks, 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!**
- Back up your files and disks; save all files to at least two different locations.
- A flash drive works well for backing up files.
- Keep your mentor in the loop; his or her expertise and wisdom are based on real life experience and are valuable. Meet or call your mentor on a regular basis.
- 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. 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.

Presentation Requirements and Guidelines

- You have worked hard all year, and you finally have an opportunity to shine as you present your Senior Project to your panel. This component of the Senior Project may seem nerve-racking, but remember that people at your presentation want to hear what you have to say and see you succeed.
- A Senior Project coordinator will schedule and set up your Presentation. Your panel will consist of three community members and/or teachers.
- You may want to invite your family, your mentor, and any other people who have an investment of time and energy in your Senior Project. Underclassmen will be attending to learn from your project as well.
- **First Impressions:** Interesting subject matter isn't enough to guarantee the success of presentation. The speaker's appearance, posture, voice, eye contact, and gestures all contribute to the success or failure of a presentation.
- **Appearance:** It is important to look good and dress appropriately. Think of presentations as a job interview and dress accordingly. Don't overdress; this isn't the prom. Dress comfortably so that you look and feel good without being flamboyant. Look professional! Recommended dress for males includes dress slacks and collared shirt. Suits are very appropriate. Recommended dress for females includes dress slacks with blouse. Dresses and skirts are very appropriate. If your project required a uniform or specific outfit (chef's jacket, a gi for Karate, etc.) that would be appropriate to wear during your presentation.



NO:
T-shirts
Baseball hats
Spaghetti straps
Strapless
Holes in clothing
Tight clothing
Shorts
Short skirts
Sneakers

- **Posture:** If possible, rest your notes on a desk or podium so that if you are nervous your notes don't quiver. Don't grab or lean on podium, lean or sit on the desk in order to give yourself a sense of security. Try not to pace, shift your weight from one foot to another, and jingle coins or keys. You don't want your audience to pay so much attention to unrelated movement that they lose track of what you're saying.

- **Eye Contact:** Eye contact establishes a connection with the audience. Scan the room, looking right, left, and center. Eye contact can be reciprocated from the audience.
- **Voice:** Your voice conveys emotion and meaning in addition to the topic-related content. Use your voice to get and hold your audience's attention. As you practice, think about:
 - **Pitch**-vary pitch to convey meaning. People with continually high-pitched, low-pitched or monotonous voices are hard to listen to.
 - **Volume**-your audience must be able to hear you. Vary your volume so that everyone in the room can hear you at all times.
 - **Pronunciation**-make sure you can pronounce all the words in your presentation accurately. If
 - **Enunciation**-this refers to the clarity of your speech. Don't run words together or drop the ends of words. Watch out for continuous use of words that don't add to your presentation; for instance, as you practice, count the number of times you say "like" during your speech and try to eliminate that habit.
 - **Rate**-are you speaking too fast or too slow? Give your audience "think" time as you speak.
 - **Pauses**-don't be afraid of brief pauses and try not to fill them up with "uh," "okay," or "umm."
 - **Tone**-convey your enthusiasm for your topic with your tone of voice. Your tone will get your audience fired up about your topic.
- **Practicing Your Presentation:** Having good note cards and knowing your subject are still not enough preparation for an oral presentation. The more you practice, the more comfortable you'll be when you are standing in front of your audience. Use these methods to practice for your Presentation.

Sample Outline for a Presentation

It is important to review the Presentation Evaluation Rubric to make sure you include all necessary elements in your presentation. As long as all areas are covered, the progression of topics is up to you. They should be logically placed and flow smoothly together. The following is a **suggested** outline of a presentation.

1. **Introduction/Why I chose this project (2-3 min)**
2. **Pathway you chose and how you met those requirements – in brief (1-2 min) REQUIRED**
3. **Paper and Research (3-5 min)** (*If your paper connects with your project, this would be a good place to talk about your research. If your paper is separate from your project, move discussion of your paper to after your Activity Section)
4. **Activity Section: what steps did you take, and in what order, with plenty of visuals to accompany (6-8 minutes)**
 - a. **Challenges** – during your activity section make sure to discuss what challenges you faced during this process and how you overcame them.
5. **Learning Stretch/Future Applications (2-4 min) – It is crucial** that you explain to your panel members how much you learned in this process, what you know now that you did not know before you started, and what you will ultimately take away from this project.
6. **Questions**

Thank You Letter Requirements

“Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.”

Benjamin Franklin

A Thank You Letter is a perfect opportunity to represent character and manners. It is important for you to pay respect to the people that are helping you reach your goals. People like to be thanked for the work they do.

Requirements:

- Thank You Letters should be legibly hand-written in ink, on a simple card with an envelope.
- Write a Thank you Letter to your Mentor, and have three copies of a form letter to give to Panel Members during your presentation.
- Address the letter professionally (Example: Dear Mr. Smith or Dear Panel Member,)
- Be heartfelt and meaningful with your words/thoughts
- Conclude the letter with a respectful salutation (Example: Sincerely, Respectfully)
- Provide your signature in ink pen
- Put the Thank You Letters (Mentor and Panel Member) in your Senior Project Portfolio to hand out during your presentation.

Mentor Letter

This letter should detail how the Mentor helped you, what you learned from them, and how you will apply your new knowledge in the future.

Panel Member Letter

Thank the member for volunteering their time to watch your presentation. Explain to them how you have grown and what you have learned throughout the Senior Project Process. Tell them what you plan to do with your new skills or knowledge and what your plans for the future are. Thank them again for supporting Big Sky High School students in this endeavor.

