

SENIOR PROJECTS

GENERAL GUIDELINES



State Requirement

Seniors must complete a culminating project as one of three requirements for graduation under current Chapter 4 guidelines of the Pennsylvania School Code.

Types of Projects

There are three types of projects from which to choose:

- **Service**

A student devotes a minimum of thirty hours to help others. Some examples include volunteering at a nursing home, conducting a fund raiser to benefit the community (see attached guidelines), or coaching a youth sports team.

- **Personal Development**

A student spends at least 30 hours developing a new skill or engaging in a learning experience. Possibilities include learning to play the guitar, completing automotive work, traveling to a new place, or conducting an extensive college search.

- **Research**

A student completes a formal 5-6 page research paper on his/her chosen topic, using MLA format. Topics could include a favorite band's history, the causes of the Great Depression, the history of the Tunkhannock viaduct, or the development of hunting regulations in Pennsylvania.

Necessary Components

All types of projects will require the same essential components:

- A **Project Proposal** that explains your project
- An **Action Plan** that lists the deadlines and due dates of the various parts of the project
- The **Writing Requirement**, which will be your either research paper or the journal that outlines the stages of your service or personal development and a 2-3 page reflection paper.
A **Visual Aid** in the form of a power point, poster, video tape, or live event demonstration
- An **Oral Presentation** before a small evaluating committee of your mentor and several teachers
- A **Self-Evaluation** that answers four questions about the completion of your project

Academic Eligibility

If a senior is not meeting the deadlines of the senior project, he/she will be ineligible for sports and extra-curricular activities until the work is completed.

SENIOR PROJECT TYPE 1: SERVICE

A service project will provide students with the opportunity to explore ways to enhance community life. The student will complete at least 30 hours of volunteered service in an organization, institution, or activity aimed at improving some aspect of his/her community.

If a student chooses to undertake a fund raiser as a service project, he/she must be aware of the following guidelines:

- *Fundraisers should be primarily conducted outside the daily academic schedule.*
- *Although the primary goal of fund raisers is to raise money for a cause, they should provide entertainment, supply a specific service, create a distinct product, or allow a particular purchase that will benefit an individual or group in the school or community.*
- *The student is responsible for planning, organizing, and executing an activity or program that will generate the funds.*
- *Fundraisers cannot be limited to simply soliciting donations for a cause.*
- *The number of fundraisers per year will be limited. The mentors and/or administration will use their discretion for approval of fundraisers, so seniors should plan early to assure authorization.*
- *The student must be aware that the money generated through the fund raiser must be accounted for through the school district's business office or a school account by using the proper forms. (attached)*
- *Students must complete the required fundraiser request form and deposit forms as needed.*

Project Components:

_____ 1. Project Proposal (attached)

- Read guidelines above.
- Answer 3 questions in paragraph form.
- Meet with mentor to get approval.
- Place Project Proposal in folder/binder.

_____ 2. Action Plan (attached)

- Decide how long you need to complete the required 30 hours of service.
- Consult a calendar and choose a date before May that will be the day of your oral presentation. *All* your work will be completed by this deadline.
- Meet with your mentor and complete the Action Plan sheet (included).
- Place Action Plan in your folder/binder.

3. Journal Entries (sample entry attached)

- Begin the service work, writing a journal entry of at least one well-developed paragraph each time you devote time to it.
- Each entry should include the following:
 - the date
 - the amount of time you worked
 - a description of the work/activities you completed
 - an explanation of your thoughts and feelings during and/or after the work session especially if there were problems that had to be solved
 - complete sentences with mature sentence structures and vocabulary
- Meet with your mentor several times to review your journals.
- Place the journal entries in your folder/binder.

4. Documentation of Hours (attached)

- As you complete your hours of service, fill out the form as indicated.
- Meet with your mentor when you have completed your 30 hours or finished your project.
- Place Documentation of Hours sheet in your folder/binder.

5. Reflection Paper

- When you have completed your hours of service, write a 2-3 page paper that summarizes the work you have completed as well as your reactions.
- Include an introduction that explains what type of project you choose, what the project entailed, and why you wanted to do it.
- In the body, explain 3 subtopics/aspects/stages of the service work you completed. In this section include details and specifics as well as any problems you encountered and the solutions you used.
- Conclude with your final thoughts about whether the project was worthwhile and why, what you may do differently next time and why, and what skills you developed that will benefit you in the future.
- Include a cover sheet with your name, the type and title of your project, your mentor's name, and the date.
- Submit your rough draft to your mentor for revision and editing suggestions and corrections.
- Revise the paper and submit the final draft to your mentor
- Place the Reflection Paper in your folder/binder.

6. Visual Aid

- During your presentation, you will need a visual aid in the form of a power point presentation, a poster, a video, or demonstration.
- Be sure the visual is attractive and professional.
- Show your mentor the visual before the presentation to get approval.

7. Oral Presentation

- Meet with your mentor to review the content and time of your presentation.
- Be sure to dress in a semi-professional manner, choosing clothes you might wear for a job interview.
- Use note cards if you wish, but be sure to make eye contact with your audience and expression in your voice. Practice helps!
- Begin by introducing yourself and the project.
- Follow the content of your Reflection Paper for the body of your presentation.
- Conclude by evaluating the benefits of your project.
- Ask the committee if they have any questions.

8. Self-evaluation (attached)

- Answer the 4 questions in paragraph form using mature sentence structure and vocabulary.
- Meet with your mentor to review the self-evaluation and the results of your oral presentation.

SENIOR PROJECT TYPE 2: PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

A personal development project will provide students with the opportunity to explore ways to improve their personal lives by acquiring a new skill or knowledge. The student will complete at least 30 hours of time devoted to either learning new information or developing a new ability. Examples include projects such as learning to play the guitar, choreographing a dance for a performance, becoming proficient in karate, or becoming skilled in an aspect of automotive mechanics. During the oral presentation, the student must demonstrate his/her proficiency in the area developed.

Project Components:

_____ 1. Project Proposal (attached)

- Read guidelines above.
- *Answer* 3 questions in paragraph form.
- Meet with mentor to get approval.
- Place Project Proposal in folder/binder.

_____ 2. Action Plan (attached)

- Decide how long you need to complete the required 30 hours.
- Consult a calendar and choose a date before May that will be the day of your oral presentation. All your work will be completed by this deadline.
- Meet with your mentor and complete the Action Plan sheet (included).
- Place Action Plan in your folder/binder.

_____ 3. Journal Entries (sample entry attached)

- Begin the lessons or work sessions, writing a journal entry of at least one well-developed paragraph each time you devote time to it.
- Each entry should include the following:
 - the date
 - the amount of time you worked
 - a description of the work/activities you completed
 - an explanation of your thoughts and feelings during and/or after the work session especially if there were problems that had to be solved
 - complete sentences with mature sentence structures and vocabulary
- Meet with your mentor several times to review your journals.
- Place the journal entries in your folder/binder.

_____ 4. Documentation of Hours (attached)

- As you complete your hours, fill out the form as indicated.

- Meet with your mentor when you have completed your 30 hours or finished your project.
- Place Documentation of Hours sheet in your folder/binder.

5. Reflection Paper

- When you have completed your hours, write a 2-3 page paper that summarizes the work you have completed as well as your reactions.
- Include an introduction that explains what type of project you choose, what the project entailed, and why you wanted to do it.
- In the body, explain 3 subtopics/aspects/stages of the personal development. In this section include details and specifics as well as any problems you encountered and the solutions you used.
- Conclude with your final thoughts about whether the project was worthwhile and why, what you may do differently next time and why, and what skills you developed that will benefit you in the future.
- Include a cover sheet with your name, the type and title of your project, your mentor's name, and the date.
- Submit your rough draft to your mentor for revision and editing suggestions and corrections.
- Revise the paper and submit the final draft to your mentor.
- Place the Reflection Paper in your folder/binder.

6. Visual Aid

- During your presentation, you will need a visual aid in the form of a power point presentation, a poster, a video, or demonstration. The visual aid must prove that you actually learned something new.
- Be sure the visual is attractive and professional.
- Show your mentor the visual before the presentation to get approval.

7. Oral Presentation

- Meet with your mentor to review the content of your presentation.
- Be sure to dress in a semi-professional manner, choosing clothes you might wear for a job interview.
- Use note cards if you wish, but be sure to make eye contact with your audience and expression in your voice. Practice helps!
- Begin by introducing yourself and the project.
- Follow the content of your Reflection Paper for the body of your presentation.
- Conclude by evaluating the benefits of your project.
- Ask the committee if they have any questions.

8. Self-evaluation (attached)

- Answer the 4 questions in paragraph form using mature sentence structure and vocabulary
- Meet with your mentor to review the self-evaluation and the results of your oral presentation

SENIOR PROJECT TYPE 3: RESEARCH

If a student chooses to complete a research project, he/she will choose an a topic to explore and write a formal research paper of 5-6 pages, using the MLA format. While completing this paper, the student will meet with his/her mentor, showing evidence of the conducted research in the form of sources, notes, thesis statement, outline, rough draft, works cited, and final draft. At the presentation, the student will summarize information learned and demonstrate expertise on his/her topic. Please be aware that the topic of the paper cannot be the same as the paper for English IV.

Project Components:

_____ 1. Project Proposal (attached)

- Read guidelines above.
- *Answer* 3 questions in paragraph form.
- Meet with mentor to get approval.
- Place Project Proposal in folder/binder.

_____ 2. Action Plan (attached)

- Decide how long you need to complete the required research, note-taking, and writing.
- Consult a calendar and choose a date before May that will be the day of your oral presentation. All your work will be completed by this deadline.
- Meet with your mentor and complete the Action Plan sheet (included).
- Place Action Plan in your folder/binder.

_____ 3. Writing an Introduction and Formulating a Thesis

- After you have read through your sources, write an introductory paragraph which ends with your thesis statement.
- Meet with your mentor to get approval.

_____ 4. Making an Outline

- Reviewing your sources, create an outline of the information that will allow you to develop your ideas so they support your thesis statement
- Meet with your mentor to get approval.

_____ 5. Writing a Rough Draft

- Complete a rough draft of your paper, using in-text citations as indicated in the MLA format.
- Meet with your mentor to discuss necessary changes and/or corrections.

6. Final Draft

- Revise and edit your paper.
- Submit the paper to your mentor for approval.
- Place the paper in your folder/binder

8. Visual Aid

- During your presentation, you will need a visual aid in the form of a power point presentation, a poster, a video, or demonstration. The visual aid must convey your expertise in the area of research.
- Be sure the visual is attractive and professional.
- Show your mentor the visual before the presentation to get approval.

9. Oral Presentation

- Meet with your mentor to review the content of your presentation.
- Be sure to dress in a semi-professional manner, choosing clothes you might wear for a job interview.
- Use note cards if you wish, but be sure to make eye contact with your audience and expression in your voice. Practice helps!
- Begin by introducing yourself and the project.
- Follow the content of your Reflection Paper for the body of your presentation.
- Conclude by evaluating the benefits of your project.
- *Ask* the committee if they have any questions.

10. Self-evaluation (attached)

- Answer the 4 questions in paragraph form using mature sentence structure and vocabulary
- Meet with your mentor to review the self-evaluation and the results of your oral presentation

SENIOR PROJECT PROPOSAL

Before you can get started, you have to write a proposal, which must be approved by your mentor. This proposal must be typed on a separate piece of paper and reflect the maturity and intelligence of a high school senior.

Use the following format:

LACKAWANNA TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PROJECT PROPOSAL

Name:

Date:

Title of your project:

Type of project: (research, personal development, or service)

Mentor:

Desired date of completion: (Approximately when do you want to be finished with the entire project, including your oral presentation?)

1. Briefly describe your graduation project in several sentences. (What are you planning to do?)
2. Briefly explain what you hope to learn by completing this project in several sentences. (Why are you planning to do this project?)
3. Briefly explain the steps you will complete to accomplish this project in several sentences. (How will you complete this project?)

Name _____

Project Title _____

LACKAWANNA TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PROJECT
ACTION PLAN

Deadline date	Task to be Completed	Description of Task	Completion Date & Mentor Initials
	1. Project Proposal	<i>Answer</i> 3 questions in paragraph form	
	2. Action Plan	Set up due dates, deadlines, and presentation date	
	3. Journal Entries or Research Notes and Thesis	Show mentor documentation of any work completed	
	4. Journal Entries or Paper Outline	Show mentor continued progress of work on project	
	5. Journal Entries or Rough Draft	Show mentor continued progress and writing components	
	6. Journal Entries or Final Draft	Complete writing components	
	7. Visual Aid	Create a visual to use in presentation	
	8. Presentation Outline	Discuss presentation format with mentor	
	9. Oral Presentation	Present project to faculty committee	
	10. Self Evaluation	<i>Answer</i> four questions in paragraph form	

ACTION PLAN

Sample Journal Entry

September 4, 2007

Today I attended a training session for new hospital volunteers. We met our supervisors, and everyone introduced themselves. I was the youngest member of the group, but everyone was friendly and seemed helpful. We got a list of possible jobs we could volunteer to do, but the supervisor explained that we could not just choose to do one task. We had to rotate the jobs so everything would get done. Today I worked on delivering cards and gifts to the patients on the pediatric floor with the help of a hospital employee. Next week, I will be given a different job.

I was very nervous when I arrived at the hospital, but I was pleased everyone was so nice and I soon felt comfortable. Because I did not know the layout, I got lost on my way to the meeting room, but now I know the way and that won't happen again. After the meeting with the supervisor, I realized that even though I am a volunteer, I have to be sure to be responsible and show up at the times I'm scheduled because the employees depend on the volunteers to help out. Without them, the workers get very stressed because there is so much extra work to do. Also, I experienced the satisfaction in delivering gifts to kids who were not really happy to be confined to the hospital. Some of them seem to have been there for a long time. I hope I can get to know some of them better or maybe even spend more time with them. Maybe I can bring some books and read a story to some of the younger patients.

All in all, it was a very good first day. I think I will learn a lot doing this service project.

4 hours

Remember:

Your journal must be in complete sentences. You should include the date, the hours spent, and a description of what you did during that time. Also, be sure to reflect on the activity and give your emotional reaction to the events. If there was a problem, explain how you solved it. The journal should convey the mature thoughts and feelings of a senior.

LACKAWANNA TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PROJECT

SELF EVALUATION QUESTIONS

After you have completed and presented your project, you will type the answers to the following questions in paragraph form.

Use the following format:

LACKAWANNA TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PROJECT PROPOSAL

Name:

Date:

Title of your project:

Type of project: (research, personal development, or service)

Mentor:

Presentation Date:

1. Explain the goals you accomplished in completing your senior project. Include a description of the knowledge and skills you acquired in the process.
2. If you had to do this type of project again in the future, what would you do differently? Why?
3. Please rate your senior project as a learning experience. Include reasons to support your evaluation.
4. What comments or suggestions do you have to improve the graduation project process? You may want to consider the mentors, scheduling, requirements and/or grading.

LACKAWANNA TRAIL HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PROJECTS **DEADLINES FOR REQUIRED WORK**

In order to earn a passing grade on progress reports, seniors must complete the required components by certain deadlines. If a student does not meet these deadlines, he/she will be academically ineligible for sports and extracurricular activities until the work is completed and submitted to his/her mentor. Of course, a student may complete the project earlier than these deadlines.

First Quarter

- By progress reports: Project Proposal
- By report cards: Action Plan

Second Quarter

- By progress reports: Documented progress in research, work sessions, journals, etc.
- By report cards: Continued progress in research or work sessions, and journal entries

Third Quarter

- By progress reports: Rough draft of research/reflection paper or proof of progress in work sessions, journals, visual, etc.
- By report cards: Revisions of research/reflection paper or journals, work on visual or products

Fourth Quarter

- By progress reports: Final drafts of writing components; completion of visual, products, and documentation of hours; plan oral presentation
- By report cards: Oral presentation and self-evaluation

SERVICE PROJECT FUNDRAISERS
Deposit Form

Name(s) _____

Date _____

Description of Activity _____

Number of People Attending / Contributing _____

Cost per Admission/Item _____

Subtotal _____

Concession Sales _____

Raffle Sales _____

Other _____

Other _____

Subtotal _____

Total _____

Description of Expenses (attach invoices)	Cost
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_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Net Total (Money raised after expenses are paid) _____

I/We understand that if funds are not handled in a timely and responsible manner, I will be held financially responsible.

Student(s) Signature

FUND RAISER DEPOSIT

**LACKAWANNA TRAIL SENIOR PROJECT
FUND RAISER REQUEST FORM**

Name(s) of students conducting the fund raiser

Description of Event/Activity/Sale

Date(s) of Event/Activity/Sale

Purpose of Fund Raiser

Student(s) Signature _____ Date _____
 _____ Date _____

Project Mentor Signature _____ Date _____

Principal Signature _____ Date _____

Superintendent Signature _____ Date _____

Reason for Approval/Disapproval _____

School Board Policy 229: Fund Raising

The school board acknowledges that the solicitation of funds from students must be limited since compulsory attendance laws make the student a captive donor and since such solicitation may disrupt the program of the schools. For purposes of this policy "student fund raising" shall include the solicitation and collection of money by students for any purpose and shall include the collection of money in exchanges for tickets, papers, advertising, or any other goods and services. The board prohibits the collection of money in school or on school property or at any school sponsored event by a student for personal benefit. Collection of money by approved school organizations outside the schools may be permitted only by the Superintendent. The Superintendent shall establish rules and regulations for the solicitation of funds which shall:

1. Specify the time and place in which funds can be collected.
2. Describe permitted methods of solicitation which do not place undue pressure on students or patrons.
3. Limit the kind and amount of advertising for solicitation.

Guidelines for Handling Money

1. All money must be collected and deposited with the school office in a timely manner and stored in the safe under the fund raiser is completed. Money must be counted and organized, with coins wrapped and bills facing the same way. A deposit ticket must be included with each deposit. All money should be placed in an envelope or container with the student(s) name and fund raiser on the outside.
2. A complete accounting of each fundraiser must be submitted to the office at the completion of the fundraiser. This is to include the total amount collected minus payment of bills. Invoices of expenses should be included.