

North Smithfield High School

**SENIOR PROJECT
HANDBOOK**



2018-2019

NORTH SMITHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

412 Greenville Road

North Smithfield, RI 02896

401.766.2500

nshs.northsmithfieldschools.com

TABLE OF CONTENTS

NSHS Core Values and Beliefs	3
21 st Century Graduation Expectations	4
Letter to Seniors	5
Calendar of Due Dates	6
PBGR Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty Policy	7
PBGR Disciplinary Action Policy	8
Senior Project Support Class	9
Senior Project Overview	10
Project Topic Selection	11
Student/Parent/Guardian Consent Form	12
Letter of Intent Guidelines	13
Letter of Intent Sample	14
Fieldwork Explanation	15
Letter to Prospective Community Mentor	16
Mentor Information Form	17
Senior Project Planning Worksheet	18
Letter of Recommendation Template for Mentors	19
Fieldwork Time Log	20
Fieldwork Journal Guidelines	21
Senior Project Research Paper Guidelines	22
Senior Project Research Paper “Yes” Test	23/24
Senior Project Portfolio Overview	25
Letter of Introduction to the Judges	26
Sample Letter of Introduction	27
Senior Project Presentation	28
Final Presentation Guidelines	29

NORTH SMITHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL CORE VALUES

Respect

- We believe that respect throughout the entire school community is essential in order to foster positive relationships and create an effective learning environment.

Responsibility

- We believe that responsibility is the foundation for success. As a community of learners, we are accountable to ourselves and to each other. Be present, be prepared, and participate.

Integrity

- We believe that integrity is the quality which gives meaning to education. As honest and morally principled learners, we are prepared to make valuable contributions to society.

Perseverance

- We believe in perseverance because nothing of value is accomplished without having to overcome challenges. The ability to persevere through challenges will shape our academic, professional, and personal growth.

Self-Direction

- We believe that self-directed learners take an active role in their own academic and ethical development, both in and out of the classroom. Self-directed learners take action by engaging in work that is both personally enriching and beneficial to their community.

NORTH SMITHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL BELIEFS ABOUT LEARNING

We learn best when...

- we work hard to complete meaningful tasks.
- we take risks and learn from our mistakes.
- we apply what we learn.
- we collaborate meaningfully with others.
- we reflect upon our work and act upon constructive feedback.
- given flexibility, support, and patience.

NSHS 21st CENTURY LEARNER EXPECTATIONS

Academic Expectations

1. NSHS students are effective communicators who...
 - a. Read and write widely and for a variety of purposes
 - b. Speak confidently and intelligently with adults and peers
 - c. Collaborate effectively with others
2. NSHS students are effective problem solvers who...
 - a. Identify the problem
 - b. Plan an effective process
 - c. Implement appropriate strategies
 - d. Apply sound reasoning and judgment
 - e. Identify resources for learning
 - f. See problem through to successful completion
 - g. Justify conclusions
3. NSHS students are critical thinkers who...
 - a. Research, analyze and evaluate arguments, claims, beliefs and alternative points of view
 - b. Access and evaluate sources of information for validity, accuracy and relevance
 - c. Use technology as a tool to research, organize, evaluate and communicate information
4. NSHS students demonstrate a wide range of knowledge across all content areas

Social Expectations

5. Demonstrate respect for each other's individual differences
6. Be responsible for one's own success
7. Demonstrate moral, ethical, honest behavior
8. Complete challenging work to best of ability
9. Take initiative in personal growth, development

Civic Expectations

10. Act responsibly with interests of larger community in mind
11. Practice active and informed citizenship

Dear NSHS Senior:

As a senior at North Smithfield High School, you will be required to complete a Senior Project as part of your Proficiency Based Graduation Requirements (PBGR). I am excited to embrace this culminating final project, which will allow you to showcase the skills you have acquired throughout your high school career. As part of this experience, you will select a topic that you are passionate about, further explore it through research, gain hands-on field experience, and present your newfound knowledge through both an academic research paper and presentation of your final product.

The Senior Project will provide one of the purest forms of learning you have experienced and may even give you a glimpse into your future. Choosing a topic for your Senior Project is the first and most important step in the process. Almost any topic is open to you. What have you always wanted to know more about or to learn how to do? What career or personal interest do you want to explore? What are your passions? What makes you angry? What could make the world a better place? These are only a few questions you should answer when deciding on a topic. You will be required to stretch your learning. Remember, this is an opportunity for growth, and taking a risk often elicits a great reward.

Below you will find friendly advice that we strongly urge you to consider:

- choose a topic which genuinely interests you
- do not procrastinate on any part of this process
- advocate for yourself—your teachers are here to help you

You have been given the opportunity to explore almost any topic. So please choose wisely and your Senior Project will be a rewarding experience. This handbook clearly outlines the expectations and requirements your Senior Project must meet. Continuous support and guidance from the administration, faculty, counselors and mentors are available throughout the year to help make your project excellent and dynamic. Put serious thought into your Senior Project and enjoy the challenges your choices will bring your way. The faculty and staff are proud to join you and the rest of the Class of 2019 on this journey, and we sincerely look forward to helping you along the way. We eagerly anticipate the presentations you will make in May because, as educators, there is nothing more rewarding than witnessing students utilizing the skills they have learned in the classroom to stand on their own two feet and create something meaningful to share with the world.

Sincerely,

Lindsay M. Aromin
Senior Project Coordinator

SENIOR PROJECT CALENDAR OF DUE DATES

DUE DATE	ITEM DUE
Tuesday, October 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Proposal Packet: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Letter of Intent ○ Signed Parent Consent Form ○ Signed Mentor Form ○ Signed Project Planning Worksheet ○ Proof of Mentor Database Entry
Tuesday, October 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st Journal Entry
Tuesday, October 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Paper Thesis Proposal Chart
Tuesday, November 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 Completed Research Source Charts
Tuesday, December 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2nd Journal Entry
Tuesday, January 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Research Paper for “Yes” Test Evaluation
Tuesday, January 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3rd Journal Entry
Tuesday, February 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4th Journal Entry
Tuesday, March 19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed Fieldwork Time Log—signifying completion of 15 hours of fieldwork • 5 fieldwork pictures, including one on site of student with mentor
Tuesday, March 26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank You Letter to Mentor
Tuesday, April 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5th Journal Entry
Tuesday, April 9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of Introduction to the Judges • Letter of Recommendation from Mentor
Tuesday, April 23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed Portfolios
Thursday, May 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senior Project Presentation Day

PBGR PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC DISHONESTY POLICY

Plagiarism is from the Latin word for “kidnapper.” It is a term that refers to the stealing of words or ideas from someone else without giving credit to that person. This definition includes computer programs, drawings, artwork and all other types of work, which are not one’s own. Types of plagiarism include word-for-word, mosaic (rearrangement or rewording), and indirect (paraphrasing).

Plagiarism includes, but *is not limited to*:

- Failing to cite with quotation marks the written words of another
- Failing to credit the author and source of materials used in a composition
- Failing to cite research materials in a bibliography or works cited
- Failing to cite a person who is quoted
- Failing to cite an author whose works are paraphrased or summarized
- Presenting another person’s creative work or ideas as one’s own in essays, poems, music, computer programs, or other projects
- Copying or paraphrasing ideas from literary criticisms or study aids without documentation

Academic dishonesty occurs when students obtain or assist others in obtaining credit for work which is not their own. Students are expected to conduct themselves to the highest standards of personal integrity. Students must adhere to the rules prohibiting academic dishonesty and to resist peer pressure to violate these high standards of integrity. Students are not expected to use dishonest methods to fulfill academic expectations and responsibilities. Whenever students have any questions about this procedure or any procedure, they should ask their teachers, counselors, or administrators.

Academic dishonesty includes, but *is not limited to*:

- Forging signatures
- Doctoring forms (erasures, obliterations, additions, deletions, etc.)
- Altering grades
- Falsely obtaining credit for work

**Remember, when you have a doubt or a question
about whether or not you are plagiarizing, ASK.**

You will never get in trouble for asking!

PBGR DISCIPLINARY ACTION POLICY

Any student who has been found guilty of plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty during any aspect of the Senior Project will face very serious consequences, which will adversely affect graduation status.

Penalties may include:

- Invalidation of Senior Project
- Parent Conference
- Social Suspension
- Dismissal from various school organizations, athletics or societies
- Suspension
- Loss of scholarships
- Legal proceedings
- Failure to graduate

POLICY FOR MISSED DEADLINES

Any student who **misses a deadline** during any aspect of the Senior Project will go through the following process:

- A letter indicating which component of the Senior Project is missing will be sent home. After the letter has been sent, the student will have one week from the date on the letter to turn in the missing component.
- If the component is not turned in within one week, Social Suspension will commence.
Social Suspension includes:
 - sports
 - any extracurricular activity, during or after the school day
- Social suspension will be lifted once the missing item has been completed and submitted to the Senior Project Coordinators.

PLEASE NOTE

Prior to winter and spring sports' tryouts, the athletic director will be informed of any senior who is missing a component of their senior project.

If any component is missing, that student will be **ineligible to try out for any team.**

SENIOR PROJECT SUPPORT CLASS

The Senior Project Support Class will meet every other day. This class is project-based and affords students time during the school day to work on their Senior Project and receive feedback. Students must come to every class prepared to work on some aspect of their project. The class will run largely as a workshop, with the teacher circulating, conferencing, and providing necessary support for each individual project. Some days the class will run more traditionally, with direct instruction that teaches and reinforces the skills necessary in order to complete the project successfully.

The support class is Pass/Fail and in addition to teaching academic skills, it reinforces the benefits of effective time management, meeting deadlines, and staying organized, all skills necessary to be successful post high school.

**STUDENTS MUST PASS THE SENIOR PROJECT
SUPPORT CLASS IN ORDER TO GRADUATE FROM
NORTH SMITHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL.**

The Senior Project Support Class is designed so that all students can successfully complete the project. Incremental due dates have been established as checkpoints so that students stay on track and can receive valuable feedback on the progress of their project. Students who do not meet the Senior Project Support Class deadlines consistently throughout the year risk failing the class for the year.

**PLEASE NOTE:
IT IS POSSIBLE TO PASS THE CULMINATING
SENIOR PROJECT PRESENTATION BUT FAIL THE
SUPPORT CLASS FOR THE YEAR.
STUDENTS MUST PASS BOTH THE PRESENTATION
AND THE CLASS TO MEET
THE NSHS PROFICIENCY BASED
GRADUATION REQUIREMENT.**

SENIOR PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Senior Project is a multi-step process, which students will complete during the regular school year. The components, which are explained in-depth throughout this handbook, are as follows:

- Select a topic or area of study that is interesting to you and with which you have a real desire to get involved. **Your project must represent a “learning stretch” for you;** therefore, if you have previous skills or experience in the area you are considering, you will have to explore this subject in a genuinely new and challenging manner and not just repeat what you already know or have already learned.
- Develop an essential question to guide the exploration of your topic.
- Find a mentor that can appropriately guide you through your Senior Project.
SPECIAL NOTE: NO IN-SCHOOL MENTORING. FIELDWORK MUST BE PERFORMED ABOVE AND BEYOND THE NORMAL SCHOOL DAY. YOUR MENTOR CANNOT BE A TEACHER AT NSHS OR A RELATIVE. (We want you to stretch yourself beyond your comfort zone.)
- Before you can proceed with your fieldwork, you must submit a project proposal packet, which includes a Letter of Intent, a signed parent consent form, and a signed mentor form.
- Complete a **minimum of 15-hours of fieldwork** on this topic or area of study under the guidance of a mentor from the community. You must develop the particular scope and goals of your fieldwork and discuss them with your mentor before you begin.
- Throughout this process you will be working to complete a **6-8 page research paper** on some aspect of this topic or area of study.
- After you have completed your research paper and your fieldwork, you will be required to deliver a **12-18 minute presentation**, communicating what you did for your Senior Project and what you learned. Oral presentations will be delivered in May.

Students enrolled in a NSHS CTE Program will align their Senior Project to their Capstone CTE Coursework which requires an industry-related learning experience or participation in a mentorship program.

PROJECT TOPIC SELECTION

The selection of a topic for Senior Project deserves a great deal of contemplation and discussion. Students who take great care in their decisions enjoy Senior Project; on the other hand, those who make "easy," "quick" decisions and fail to challenge themselves tend to find this a tedious and unfulfilling experience in which they fail to gain all the rewards that this project has to offer.

Some advice:

1. Choose a topic that truly interests you. Be sure the topic is about something for which you are passionate. Topic selection may also revolve around an issue that makes you very angry; people are often passionate about what makes them angry.
2. Develop an essential question around which your project is centered. Remember, this is not a career exploration project but rather a problem solving project. An essential question probes for deeper meaning and understanding of an issue, concept or principle. The discovery of an answer to this essential question will guide your project.
3. Dare to dream. Rather than making quick decisions regarding your project, make a list of the possibilities. Seek advice and input from your family and friends. **THINK BIG!!**
4. Do not get discouraged. If you are having difficulty finding a mentor, ask the Senior Project Coordinators, faculty members, and other members of the North Smithfield High School community to suggest potential mentors and resources.
5. Approach potential community mentors personally. Act as though you are preparing for a job interview; dress nicely, give them the facts about your plans, and sell yourself. A personal discussion will be far more effective than a phone call or email.
6. Above all, do not give up on your dream! If you truly want to try something, there are resources and organizations willing to dream with you. Just ask for help.

NORTH SMITHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PROJECT

STUDENT/PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Your son or daughter will be engaged in a Senior Project during this school year. This Senior Project will provide enormous benefits for your child both now and in the future. Additionally, the Senior Project will be a valuable tool in determining the student's mastery of our 21st Century Graduation Expectations in the areas of knowledge, communication, problem solving, and responsibility. Please read the Senior Project Handbook, and sign and return this form to the Senior Project Coordinator. Please address any questions or concerns to the Senior Project Coordinator at laromin@nsps.us.

As the parent or guardian of _____, who is a student enrolled at North Smithfield High School, I am aware that my son/daughter is required to successfully complete a Senior Project during the regular school year in order to graduate. I have reviewed the components of the Senior Project as presented in the handbook.

Please provide us with the following information:

Mentor's name: _____

Place of mentoring: _____

Nature of fieldwork: _____

I fully understand that the selection of the fieldwork/product component is a decision made independently of the staff and administration of North Smithfield High School. All consequences of the fieldwork/project choice, production or experience rest solely with the student and parent.

Also, I fully understand that plagiarizing the research paper or falsifying any aspect of the project will result in a failing grade and may adversely affect the student's eligibility to graduate.

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____ Date: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

LETTER OF INTENT

You cannot begin your fieldwork, nor can you begin any component of the project until your letter of intent has been approved in writing.

LETTER FORMAT:

1. Letters must be typed and single-spaced using Times New Roman, 12-point font.
2. Follow Block Style Letter (sample enclosed).
3. Letters must be addressed “Dear NSHS Faculty:” and signed.
4. Letters must be no longer than one page.
5. Each paragraph of the letter must address the following:

Paragraph One:

- What is the topic or area of study on which you will focus your Senior Project?
- Why did you choose this topic/area of study?
- What previous knowledge or experience do you have in your topic/area?
- How does this project represent a learning stretch for you as an individual? (See Senior Project Overview on page 9 for further information.)

Paragraph Two:

- Who is your mentor and what is his/her expertise? For example, address his/her years of experience, education, background, etc.
- How will you be **actively engaged** in your fieldwork hours? Fieldwork involving merely shadowing/following someone around **will not be approved**.

Paragraph Three:

- What will your research paper topic be?
- What is the essential question that you will attempt to answer through your research? (please **bold**)
- What is the link between your essential question and your fieldwork?

~IMPORTANT~

Once the NSHS Faculty Panel approves and returns your Letter of Intent, you can begin your Senior Project.

If the Panel has concerns, your letter will be returned for revision and resubmittal.

LETTER OF INTENT SAMPLE

September 26, 2014

NSHS Faculty
North Smithfield High School
412 Greenville Road
North Smithfield, RI 02896

Dear NSHS Faculty:

For my Senior Project, I will be learning American Sign Language (ASL). I will focus on basic communication skills and work towards having conversations with others only using sign language. I chose to study ASL because I am interested in broadening my communication skills, and it has always been a language that I have wanted to learn. I do not have any prior knowledge of American Sign Language, but I think it would be an incredible experience to have the ability to communicate with those who are deaf or hard of hearing. By working to understand and practice signing, I will develop a new means of communication that will expand my conversation skills. Furthermore, the stretch of learning an entirely new language will be accompanied by the exposure to the cognitive benefits of silent communication.

My mentor is Kathleen Romeo. She has been teaching ASL classes at Assabet Valley After Dark program for the past five years and is also a private sign language tutor. She was born deaf and currently has a cochlear implant, but attended public school until college where she attended the National Technical Institute for the Deaf at Rochester Institute of Technology. I will be actively engaged in over fifteen hours of fieldwork by learning American Sign Language one-on-one with my mentor. I will be keeping a workbook with lessons and engage in sign language conversations with Kathleen to practice the skills I learn.

For my research paper, I am interested in exploring the topic of sign language education for children. The essential question I will answer through my research is: **Should children be taught sign language along with their primary spoken language?** This topic directly connects to my fieldwork because as I learn to communicate through sign language, I hope to experience the social and intellectual effects that may or may not benefit young children. I will also conduct further investigation by interviewing my mentor and other sign language tutors who are certified to teach baby sign language classes. I would like to thank you in advance for considering my project proposal.

Sincerely,

Kaley O'Connor
53 Cedar Lane
North Smithfield, RI 02896

FIELDWORK EXPLANATION

What is Fieldwork?

Fieldwork is an opportunity to extend your learning beyond the classroom by working with an expert in the area of interest you have selected. For your Senior Project, you are required to complete a **minimum of fifteen hours of fieldwork with your mentor**. Fieldwork can take many forms and will most likely result in a tangible product. Your fieldwork may build upon previous knowledge or experience but must represent a “learning stretch.” If you stretch to apply your current skills and knowledge, your project should be challenging but achievable. Your fieldwork will bring you closer to answering your essential question.

Fieldwork cannot simply be a continuation of a current job or extracurricular activity. You must be actively involved, as opposed to merely observing. For example, job shadowing is not acceptable for fieldwork. Simply taking a class does not satisfy the fieldwork requirement. Fieldwork should not be so easy and/or beneath your skill-level that there is no challenge for you. In addition, you cannot be paid for your fieldwork hours.

Who can be a Mentor?

A mentor is a member of the community who has professional expertise or considerable experience and knowledge in the field of study you have selected. In addition to this requirement, your mentor must:

- be at least 25 years of age.
- not be a family member or relative.
- not be a current employer.
- not be a teacher/staff member at North Smithfield High School

What is a Mentor’s Role?

Before you begin, you will develop a plan for your fieldwork. Once you have done this, you will discuss it with your mentor and fine-tune your plan so that your project is both challenging and achievable. Your mentor will oversee your project—guiding, advising, and encouraging you throughout. It is your responsibility to stay in contact with your mentor throughout the fieldwork process. Ultimately, this is *your* project, and the mentor is there to assist you along the way.

How is Fieldwork Documented?

Your fieldwork must be documented in the following ways:

- By keeping track of hours, dates, and individual tasks by completing the Fieldwork Time Log sheet
- By having your mentor sign your time log sheet to verify your hours
- By having your mentor write a required letter of recommendation
- By including at least one photograph of you with your mentor on-site as part of your Fieldwork Journal

Dear Prospective Mentor:

The Senior Project at North Smithfield High School is designed to be a student-driven learning experience through which students build a bridge between their acquired classroom skills and the real world. The three phases of the Senior Project include a minimum of fifteen hours of fieldwork on a topic of the student's choice, a six to eight page research paper on a related topic, and a ten to fifteen minute presentation before a board of judges to synthesize and summarize the experience.

You have been asked by a North Smithfield High School senior to be his/her Senior Project Mentor because you possess expertise in an area of interest to the student. As a mentor, your role is that of both guide and teacher for the student; however, the initiative for the project should come from the student. To begin with, the student must present you with a working plan or idea for his/her fieldwork project. Once you and the student agree to collaborate you are asked to:

- Work with the student to fine tune the plan to develop a challenging but achievable fieldwork project.
- Guide, encourage, and oversee the student as he/she works to complete the fieldwork project.
- Verify the time the student spends with you on the fieldwork (minimum of fifteen hours) by signing the Fieldwork Time Log.
- Write and sign a letter of recommendation for the student based on their quality of work, interest, and involvement in the fieldwork project.

The Senior Project offers members of our community the opportunity to greatly enhance the learning experience for North Smithfield High School students. I truly appreciate your willingness to share your knowledge, expertise and time with one of our students by serving as a mentor. You may contact me at laromin@nsps.us or 401.766.2500 for more information.

Sincerely,

Lindsay M. Aromin, Senior Project Coordinator
North Smithfield High School
412 Greenville Road
North Smithfield, RI 02896

MENTOR INFORMATION FORM

STUDENT INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Email Address: _____

Phone #: _____

Nature of Fieldwork: _____

MENTOR INFORMATION:

Name: _____

Occupation: _____

Name of Business/Company: _____

Street Address: _____

City/State/Zip Code: _____

Day Phone: _____

Home Phone: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Fax Number: _____

By signing below, I am committing to serve as a mentor for at least 15 hours, and I acknowledge that the following is true:

- ✓ I am at least 25 years old.
- ✓ I am not related to the student listed above.
- ✓ I am not paying the student.
- ✓ I am not receiving compensation from the student.
- ✓ I am not serving as a mentor for another NSHS student.

Mentor's Signature

North Smithfield High School Senior Project Planning Worksheet

While some aspects of your project will certainly become more developed and fine-tuned over the course of your fieldwork, it is important that you begin your project with a clear understanding of your initial goals and hopes for the outcome of your project.

Complete as much of this document as you can. Then have a conversation about it with your mentor and add any ideas that might come up during this meeting.

Please ask your mentor to sign the bottom of the form to acknowledge that they have reviewed it with you.

What are your goals for your Senior Project?

What are some ideas for how you can be actively engaged in your fieldwork?

What will be the outcome or product of your fieldwork experience?

How can your mentor assist you with your goals? What role will they play in helping you reach your outcome?

Mentor's Signature

Student's Signature

LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION TEMPLATE FOR MENTORS

A letter of recommendation from your community mentor is a requirement for Senior Project. The following is an example you could share with your mentor if needed. This recommendation may later be used to apply for school or future employment. Please make sure that your mentor signs the letter!

- Paragraph One: Introduction
- Paragraph Two: Involvement of Student in Activity
- Paragraph Three: Overall Impression of Student
- Paragraph Four: Did the student fulfill the requirement?

March 19, 2014

NSHS Senior Project Judges
North Smithfield High School
412 Greenville Road
North Smithfield, RI 02896

Dear Judges:

One of your students, Julia Jones, asked me to mentor her for her Senior Project. Julia explained that she is considering mechanical engineering technology as a potential career. We both agreed to engage in a mentor-mentee relationship with the objective of providing her with as many opportunities to engage in engineering practice and to interact with other engineers as possible. I strove to give her a clear picture of the scope of the profession and the practical reality of engineering for the 21st Century.

During Julia's ten assignments to our product testing laboratory, she acquires a minimum of fifteen hours of experience, engaging in tasks that varied from failure mode analysis to customer communication. At first, she was given an overview tour of the lab and offices, during which time she was introduced to many of our key personnel. Julia took advantage of this opportunity to find out what different people were doing, what their background was, and she was prescient enough to ask if she could talk to them later if she had more questions about their roles. By the end of his project, Julia had worked with most of the technical staff to develop a new testing protocol for our new line of low-volume pump units.

I found Julia to be a serious student of the engineering profession. She has a natural understanding of the designed world and a great aptitude for trouble-shooting mechanical systems. She knows how to work as a member of a team and we all will miss her enthusiasm. "When will Julia be back?" has become the most frequent question that I now answer around the office. We hope to see her in the future when her education is completed.

I was very impressed by the attitude and effort Julia Jones put into her Senior Project. This experience has provided Julia with project-based experience in her future chosen field, in which she shows great promise.

Sincerely,

John Smith
John Smith, Project Engineer
Jetco Manufacturing & Engineering Company
15 Industrial Drive
Woonsocket, RI 02862

FIELDWORK TIME LOG

Senior's Name: _____ Section #: _____

Mentor's Name: _____

Mentor's Email: _____ Mentor's Phone: _____

Date	Number of Hours	Description of Fieldwork	Mentor's Signature

Total Hours: _____

As a mentor, I acknowledge that the student listed above spent a minimum of **15 hours** completing fieldwork with me.

Mentor Signature: _____

Date: _____

FIELDWORK JOURNAL

Your fieldwork journal is a personal record of your experience throughout your mentorship. As one of the components of your portfolio, your journal is an opportunity for you to share with the judges your unique experience and personality. In these journal entries, you will be reflecting on the time spent with your mentor and your growth as both a learner and an individual. In addition to the written journal component, you will also document your experience through photographs.

Your journal must consist of at least **five dated entries** reflecting the thoughts, decisions and/or observations you made while completing your fieldwork.

These 5 journal entries will be due incrementally—please refer to the Calendar of Due Dates (p. 6)

Journal Entry Guidelines:

- each entry should be **one full page in length**, typed, double-spaced
- a minimum of **5 pictures** from your experience doing your fieldwork—one of which **MUST BE WITH YOUR MENTOR ONSITE**
- since the due dates are staggered, it makes sense that you might follow the following guidelines:
 - the first entry could be about “getting started” with your fieldwork—your feelings, trepidations, what your first day was like, etc.
 - your next three entries should be reflections on the hours spent with your mentor
 - and the last entry might focus on your growth as a learner throughout the entire fieldwork experience

Be creative, as this is an opportunity to let your personality shine through—this portion could be done in the style of a scrapbook or in any other format you see fit.

SENIOR PROJECT RESEARCH PAPER

Introduction

One of the largest components of the Senior Project is the 6-8 page research paper. The paper will be an in-depth exploration of an aspect of your Senior Project topic.

YOU MUST RECEIVE A PASSING SCORE ON YOUR SENIOR PROJECT RESEARCH PAPER IN ORDER TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE YOUR SENIOR PROJECT AND GRADUATE WITH YOUR CLASSMATES IN JUNE.

There **MUST** be a **LINK** between the fieldwork and the paper.

Some examples of the fieldwork a student might complete and the research paper they might write:

Fieldwork	Possible Research Paper Topic	LINK
designing activities for patients in a nursing home	strategies for improving memory in Alzheimer's patients	After identifying a need within the patients suffering from Alzheimer's, the student became interested in learning more about strategies that could help these patients.
producing a full-scale musical theatre production	how theatre builds community	The student was interested in examining the sociological benefits of theatre and the effect his production could have on the community.
re-gripping and fitting golf clubs	the evolution of golf club technology	Even though the student's field work focused on current golf club technology, he was interested in exploring how such advancements came about.

General Paper Requirements

- length: **6-8 pages** (not including the Works Cited page)
- entire paper will be written in MLA style (a comprehensive MLA guide will be provided)
- must include a Works Cited page
- an italicized thesis statement at the end of the first paragraph
- sources: a minimum of 12 citations from at least **5 different credible sources**
- citations should take the form of both direct quotes and paraphrased information—remember: paraphrased information **MUST** be cited to avoid plagiarism
- Paper should be written in third person—avoid: *I, me, my, you, your, we, us, our*

Senior Project Research Paper “Yes” Test

	YES	NO	COMMENTS
MLA FORMATTING			
Times New Roman			
12 Point			
1 inch margins			
double spaced			
heading: name, NSHS Faculty, Senior Project, due date (should all be double spaced)			
header with last name and page number (matching font)			
title—centered, not bold or underlined, size 12 font			
If headings are utilized, are they uniformly formatted?			
	YES	NO	COMMENTS
TITLE AND INTRODUCTION			
Is the title of the paper appropriate to the topic?			
Does the introduction provide necessary background?			
Is the thesis italicized and the last sentence of the intro?			
Does the introduction give you a clear sense of what the paper is about?			
Does the title connect to the thesis statement?			
	YES	NO	COMMENTS
THE BODY OF THE PAPER			List problems by paragraph # below.
Does each paragraph in the body have a clear topic?			
Do the paragraphs accurately fit under the heading (if headings are utilized)? AND Are paragraphs ordered logically ?			
Does each paragraph have at least one in-text citation?			
Are there at least 4-6 direct quotes utilized throughout the paper?			
Did the writer provide enough context before direct quotes?			
Did the writer provide enough analysis after the direct quotes?			

Are there no more than two block quotes?			
Is paraphrased information cited properly?			
Is paraphrased information analyzed appropriately before moving on to the next idea?			
After reading the body, does the thesis still seem appropriate?			
Was any part of the body repetitive?			
	YES	NO	COMMENTS
CONCLUSION			
Is there a conclusion present?			
Is the thesis statement restated in different words?			
Does the conclusion sum up the main points made?			
Does the conclusion offer an insightful end to the paper?			
	YES	NO	COMMENTS
STYLE AND GRAMMAR			
Did the writer avoid personal pronouns? (I, me, my, etc.)			
Are the sentences structured correctly? (no fragments, no run-ons)			
Is the tone formal rather than conversational?			
Check for commonly confused words: too/to, there/their, where/were, etc.			
	YES	NO	COMMENTS
MLA CITATIONS			
Does the information inside the parenthesis throughout the paper directly correlate to the Works Cited list?			
Are the parenthesis punctuated correctly? (review sample paper for guidance)			
Are the block quotes formatted and cited correctly?			
Is the Works Cited page the last page of the paper?			
Are there at least 5 sources used throughout?			
Have all the sources listed on the Works Cited page been used in the paper?			
Are the sources listed alphabetically? (by either author's last name or the title of the work if no known author)			
Does the Works Cited page look like the one in the sample paper?			

SENIOR PROJECT PORTFOLIO

Your Senior Project Portfolio records the history of your Senior Project. From your letter of intent, to the documentation of your fieldwork and the final approved copy of your research paper, your portfolio is a window through which another person can view your accomplishments over the course of your senior year. Remember, your portfolio is a reflection of the hard work you have done and all items and documents should be assembled in a professional and polished fashion.

The following items **MUST** be present in your portfolio in order for it to be considered complete:

- ✓ personalized cover
- ✓ table of contents
- ✓ letter of introduction to the judges
- ✓ revised letter of intent with original stamp of approval
- ✓ project journal entries with at least 5 pictures (1 must be with your mentor on site)
- ✓ clean copy of passing research paper
- ✓ copy of thank-you letter to mentor
- ✓ field work time log—signed by mentor
- ✓ letter of recommendation written and signed by mentor
- ✓ copy of your polished résumé

PLEASE NOTE:

A COMPLETE AND PASSING PORTFOLIO MUST BE SUBMITTED ON THE ASSIGNED DUE DATE FOR A SENIOR TO BE ELIGIBLE TO PRESENT THEIR PROJECT ON SENIOR PROJECT PRESENTATION DAY.

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE JUDGES

The letter to the judges will be the first component of your Senior Project Portfolio. This is your chance to make a great first impression. Below you will find guidelines to help you write your letter.

Paragraph One: Reflections/thoughts on your education/personal background.

- Describe yourself.
- What personal information about yourself do you feel the reader needs to know?
- What values and experiences have shaped you?
- Describe passions and areas of special interest.
- Identify skills, attributes, hobbies, etc.

Paragraph Two: Overview of Senior Project

- Briefly describe the project: Discuss fieldwork and research paper.
- Identify/explain your essential question, how you answered that question, and your conclusions.
- Identify your learning stretch and what implications this will have for you in the future.

Paragraph Three: Reflection and Conclusion

- Reflect on the important skills you have developed as a result of the above experiences.
- State what you have learned about yourself during your educational, work, and senior project experiences.
- Reflect upon your Senior Project as an opportunity to better prepare you for life after NSHS.
- Thank the judges

SAMPLE LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

April 11, 2017

NSHS Senior Project Judges
North Smithfield High School
412 Greenville Road
North Smithfield, RI 02896

Dear Judges:

Growing up, I have always considered myself to be a very curious kid. I have drifted from interest to interest and my career ambitions ranged from wanting to be a doctor to wanting to be a lawyer, or even a business man. However, for the longest time, I have always wanted to learn about the field of criminal law. Originally, this interest derived from watching my favorite television show, “Law & Order: Special Victims Unit” to the extent that I had even memorized a criminal’s Miranda Rights. I am currently enrolled in AP U.S. Government and Politics, which has truly been a great experience for me. Through this course, I learned about topics that directly related to my Senior Project research such as the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution as well as the Adversary System. Criminal law in the American Justice System is the most fascinating topic to me, which is why I chose to learn more about it for my Senior Project.

For my project, I decided to specifically investigate the challenge of being able to defend a client who appears to be “guilty” along with the various tasks for which a criminal defense attorney is responsible. Additionally, I learned a little bit about the negotiations that occur as well as the organization of the criminal court cases. My fieldwork directly related to my overall essential research question which was how do ethics affect the defense of a criminal in a court of law? For my fieldwork, I was able to speak to criminal defense attorneys one-on-one, attend multiple courts throughout Rhode Island, and even witness a murder trial, thereby allowing me to gain insight regarding how lawyers are able to do their jobs and learn about trials that appear before the judge or jury.

Thanks to my Senior Project, I was able to mature and become more responsible, which is something I needed to learn how to do as a young adult. The Senior Project has offered me an understanding of what it is really like to be a criminal defense attorney, and moving forward with my life, I will be able to use this mentorship experience to my advantage. I appreciate your time in considering my Senior Project and would like to thank you in advance.

Sincerely,

Ronak Patel
684 Danielson Drive
North Smithfield, RI 02896

SENIOR PROJECT PRESENTATION

The final phase of the Senior Project is the oral presentation. Your presentation, supported by audio/visual aids, will serve to further explain your research paper, fieldwork, and the “link” between the two. Each senior must deliver his/her presentation before a panel of judges. Panels will be composed of adults including teachers and community members. Your presentation will be judged on its quality and validity using the standards outlined on the Senior Project Oral Presentation Rubric. It is your job to familiarize yourself with this rubric. You will be given the opportunity to practice your presentation.

YOU MUST RECEIVE A PASSING SCORE ON YOUR SENIOR PROJECT PRESENTATION IN ORDER TO SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE YOUR SENIOR PROJECT AND GRADUATE WITH YOUR CLASSMATES IN JUNE.

Your Senior Project Presentation must:

- be **12 to 18 minutes long**.
- have a recognizable introduction and conclusion.
- describe what you did for your research paper and fieldwork. Include information about how you decided on your Senior Project.
- explain how your fieldwork and research topic are linked—how did they help you gain new insight and understanding about your topic?
- describe your learning stretch. How was your project a challenge for you, and how did it “stretch” or enhance your skills and knowledge? Discuss your essential question along with your conclusions.
- Include an audio/visual aid (poster, recording, video, etc.) that will serve to help your audience better understand what you did and what you learned from your Senior Project. This aid must be integrated into your speech. If your project resulted in an actual product, this product or pictures of the product should be a part of your presentation.
- Include information about how your Senior Project did/might change your life and/or professional goals.

FINAL PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

Below you will find some guidelines to help you prepare for your Senior Project Presentation. This is **YOUR** presentation, so it should be personalized. This is your chance to showcase your creativity and your unique project.

You must address the following components in your presentation. Aside from the introduction and conclusion, you can determine the order of your presentation and the amount of time spent on each section. You will notice that sometimes suggestions overlap. It is up to you to decide what to place where. What is appropriate for your presentation may not be appropriate for someone else's.

Presentation MUST BE 12-18 minutes in length.

Creative Introduction

- Hook the audience! This is your chance to warm up the room ☺
- Examples: a demonstration, a quick interactive activity, showcase your new skill (for example: play the violin), etc. The choices are really limited only by your imagination.

Visual Aid/Media/Demonstration

- Should help the audience better understand what you did and what you learned.
- Appropriate video, pictures, or audio of you doing your project (videos should take up **no more than 2 minutes** of your overall presentation).
- Live demonstration (if applicable) of your new skill set or what you made
- How are you presenting your information? Google Slides? Prezi? Mixbook? PowerPoint?

Connection to NSHS Core Values

- Thoughtfully connect to at least 2 of the 5 NSHS core values.
- You can incorporate these anywhere in your presentation. They can be presented together. Or not together. In the introduction. In the conclusion. Wherever your heart desires.

Research Paper

- What was your thesis?
- How did you go about doing your research?
- What new insight or understanding did you gain about the topic from your research?

Fieldwork

- Describe the nature of your fieldwork
- What were you doing?
- Who was your mentor and how did you find them?
- What did you learn from the experience?—provide thoughtful examples
- Do you have anything you'd like to pass around the room or to give to the judges?
- Synthesize and evaluate the experience to form insights

Link and Learning Stretch

- Link: You need to discuss the clear link between your research paper and the fieldwork you did
- Learning Stretch: How was your project a challenge for you, and how did it “stretch” or enhance your skills and knowledge?
- Be sure to use the words **“link”** and **“learning stretch”**—the judges will be expecting to hear them!

Conclusion

- How Senior Project did/might change your life and/or professional goals
- Personal strengths and weaknesses
- Things you learned about yourself
- Core Values (if you didn't already discuss earlier)

Some elements of the North Smithfield Senior Project Handbook have been reproduced with permission from the Barrington High School Senior Project Handbook and the North Providence High School Senior Project Handbook.