

Capstone Project

Rationale: To prepare students to be ready for college and for workplace training

The Mission Statement: The mission of the Capstone Project for Red Bank High School is for seniors to demonstrate their learning, receive experience in their fields of interest, develop a sense of character, and press their sphere of experience beyond the walls of high school into the community where they view themselves as resources.

Effects of the Capstone Project:

- Emphasizes learning
- Engages students as active participants in the learning process
- Focuses on students
- Promotes higher-order thinking skills
- Connects new knowledge to what students know
- Encourages concrete applications
- Engages students in meaningful activities that benefit themselves and others
-

Five Core Components (the 5 Ps):

1. Proposal
2. Project (Contact hours with a mentor and documented research)
3. Paper (Short-written reflection)
4. Portfolio
5. Presentation

1. Proposal:

- Project Title
- Project Topic
- Goal (s)
- Timeline for accomplishing the project
- Student and Parent contract/signatures

2A. Project—Mentor:

- Provides an opportunity for seniors to volunteer at a program or business
- Meets with students to offer guidance, make suggestions, give feedback, provide coaching, demonstrate skills, share knowledge, and record progress with the project.

2B. Project—Documented Research:

- Interview with mentor
- Project journal—what activities student participated in, observed with mentor initials each entry
- Time logs with hours and mentor signature
- Find two sources about general topic and write a summary about each
- Find a source (can be mentor or interview) that tells a brief history of company/mission of organization

3. Paper (Reflection):

- Why student chose the subject
- What the student learned about the place of service
- Description of the activity, observation, service of the student
- What the student learned from activity, observation, service
- What student learned about himself/herself

4. Portfolio:

- Proposal
- Mentor sheet
- All research
- Journals
- Interview
- Reflection paper
- Photographs

5. Presentation:

- Teachers
- Mentor
- Community leaders
- Power point presentation
- One other form of visual aide

Categories students can choose to do:

1. Senior Project
2. Internship
3. Externship
4. Community Service

1A. Senior Project—curriculum based:

- Focuses on a specific discipline
- Explores academic area in a new way
- Contributes fresh information to existing body of knowledge
 - Examples: design transportation system, global political system

1B. Senior Project—self development

- Concentrates on skill development through creation and/or construction
 - Examples: create model of repairs needed to dams in Tennessee, write, produce, and organize a play as a fundraiser, etc.

**There must be a concrete product/model

2. Internships:

- must be pursued through related course
- confirm, narrow, or expand choices of career interest through broad instruction and workplace expectations
- develop an understanding of connection between school-based theory/content and work-based application
- increase awareness of the workplace, career opportunities, and community resources

Internships provide students:

- an opportunity to study a program directly related to his/her career interest
- an opportunity to participate in a workplace setting by performing duties related to the occupation being studied

Already established internships at RBHS:

- The CNA program in the Health Academy
- The Applied Methods course in the Teaching Academy

3. Externship:

- allows students to move out of the traditional classroom to partner with professionals in various fields of interest
 - job shadowing: observing professionals on the jobs in order to consider potential career choices

4. Community Service:

- experiences the real world as they enhance their learning
- develops civic values
- enriches their citizenship skills
- explores careers in the community service field
- cultivates volunteerism and community service

Direct community service:

- involves students directly with community members or those being served
 - Visits to a nursing home to read, spend time with the elderly
 - Tutoring in a recreation center
 - Volunteering at the Food Bank
 - Other projects focused on other's needs

As seniors who complete a successful Capstone Project, you can expect these results:

- Receive positive feedback
- Tie interest to real-world relevance
- Use interdisciplinary approach to learning
- Gain sense of compassion for others
- Feel true satisfaction for a job well done

*Note: for those of you entering college, you may receive preferential selection status as a CAPSTONE completer

How to choose a topic:

- Brainstorm topics that are of interest to you—keep in mind that your topic and your service hours or project (product) must match.
- Your topic should focus on a problem in the community/society at large and how you can make a contribution to help solve it.
- You will come up with a “research question” that will help you keep focus on what you will do for your service or product.
- If you are unable to do hours at approved businesses because topic does not match, student will be responsible in finding a place to do hours within the assigned time period.

How you will be graded in Directed Study/Capstone Project:

- You will be asked to turn in a number of forms, each will be a grade
- You will be asked to turn in your journals and time sheets periodically, each will be a grade

First Semester Senior Due Dates

You will need to turn in the assessment list with each assignment that you turn in.

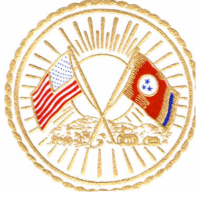
- Aug 12** Think about possible mentors and placements
- Sept 1** Summaries of two articles are due (summaries will be stapled to articles), and Project Proposal is due
- Sept 15** Timeline/strategies for project is due.
- Sept 29** Signed parental consent, project proposal, timeline, mentor form, mentor interview, and parental authorization forms by parent(s), mentor, and student is due.
- Oct 19-23** **FALL BREAK—begin hours**
- Nov 17** **Journals and time logs for 10 hours are due—inform parents and Chuy of students who did not do hours.**
- Nov 23** Letter of recommendation is due
- Nov 25-27** **Thanksgiving Break**

Dec 21-Jan 5 Christmas Break

Students should finish 15 hours before returning to school on January 6

Second Semester Due Dates

- Jan 6** Journals and time sheets for final 15 hours—call parents and send names to Chuy who have not completed hours
- Jan 26** Typed paper of reflection paper is due.
- Feb 23** Final corrected reflection turned in—Work on presentation and portfolio. **Send invitations to mentors about presentations**
- March 8-12** **Presentations all week in the evening**



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Principal

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Gary James
Assistant Principal

John Pierce
Assistant Principal

Susan Thurman
Academy Director

August 12, 2009

Dear parents and guardians of seniors:

This year seniors of the Class of 2010 will participate in the Capstone Project, formerly known as Senior Project, which is a graduation requirement for Hamilton County Department of Education. This project challenges each senior to apply the knowledge gained through 12+ years of educational experience in an area of particular interest to him or her. However, the student should not rely upon knowledge he or she already possesses but must demonstrate an aspect of new learning and growth. Not only will your student's reading, writing, and speaking skills be showcased, but also his/her application of skills and knowledge will be utilized. It is very important that you understand all elements of this project.

The Capstone Project has three main components (1) 25 hours of service (not during the school day) or 25 hours towards a product (2) a reflective essay and (3) a multimedia presentation. Your student will choose one option (see handout) to complete service hours; the reflective essay of 3-4 pages that explains what the student learned about placement, his/her skills and knowledge, and about himself and herself; the multimedia presentation which will be held in March will be presented before a panel of teachers from the student's academy or major, his/her mentor and parents and family members. To be successful, your student must complete each component of the project.

A successful Capstone Experience involves parental support as well as student initiative and self-discipline. The teacher will give direction and explanation once a week in advisory; your student will need to make appointments with his/her advisor during Academic Intervention/One Lunch if your student needs help. A teacher will be in the computer labs during One Lunch when technology is required. Academic Intervention/One Lunch is an excellent opportunity for your student to get further guidance during the Capstone Project process.

You will be asked to sign several forms for this project. Below, you will find the parental consent form that confirms your knowledge of the Capstone Project and its implications toward graduation. The senior year is an exciting time for students and parents alike. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

B. Gail Chuy

**Capstone Project Parental Consent
Red Bank High School 2009-2010**

As a parent or guardian of _____ who is a senior at Red Bank High School, I am aware that my son/daughter must complete all components of the Capstone Project in order to graduate.

I fully understand that the section of the project topic made by the student should have some relation to the student's academy or major, but is independent of the staff and administration of Red Bank High School. All consequences of the project choice, production, or experience rests solely with the student. I also realize that the product and/or field experience must be designed to help others.

Parent/guardian signature _____

Student signature _____

Date _____

National School of Excellence

Capstone Project Categories for students

Categories students can choose to do:

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2. Internship
3. Externship
4. Community Service

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How to log onto the Tennessee Electronic Library

1. Go to google.com
2. Type in Tennessee Electronic Library
3. Click on Tennessee Electronic Library and Archives (it has to be this link)
4. Click on Hamilton County
5. Scroll down to Red Bank High School
6. Click onto access your database
7. Elvis is the password
8. Click on the databases that apply to you, but not all of them will.

Assessment List Article Summaries

	possible points	points earned
1. Article relates to possible project	20	_____
2. Article must be at least a page (not an abstract)	20	_____
3. Summary gives main points of article	20	_____
4. Explain how this article helped you make final decision on topic	20	_____
5. Spelling, grammar, mechanics, and usage mistakes are minimal	20	_____
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**Capstone Project
The Proposal**

Student Name _____

Project Advisor _____

Type of Project:
Senior Project
Internship
Externship
Community Service

My project idea focuses on an area where I may sustain my interest and do at least 25 hours of documented research. It offers an aspect of new learning and growth for me. I understand that my project must have audio/visual evidence and that I will give a presentation of my work in front of a panel of invited individuals. I will locate a mentor to guide me through my creation of this project.

1. My Project Title:

2. My goal (s) for this project:

3. My strategy to accomplish the project:

4. For my oral presentation, I plan to use the following materials:

Student Signature _____ **Date** _____

Parent Signature _____ **Date** _____

Mentor's Signature _____ **Date** _____

For Advisor

Project: Approved Rejected (circle one)

Reason Rejected:

Project Advisor Signature_____

Date_____

Timeline and Strategies for completion of Capstone Project

What is my project?

Where will I complete my project?

Things to think about when completing a timeline and strategies...

How will I complete my project?

- How many hours a week will I “work” on my project?
- When will I be able to go to the place of business or work on my project?
- How many weeks will it take to complete my project?
- What do I need in order to complete my project? (transportation, materials, uniform, etc.)
- Will I need other people to help me or do I want to pair up with someone else if I am completing a Senior Project?
- What are some obstacles that I foresee that could cause delays, problems in completing my project?

Write out an actual time line with dates and activities that you project yourself doing. Keep in mind when forms, paperwork, etc. are due to your advisor. Use the back if necessary.

Date

Activity

**Capstone Project
Red Bank High School
Mentor Form**

Mentor Guidelines:

Each student should select a mentor who can advise and assist with the selection of a feasible project and will help in developing the project.

A mentor should be:

- A person who is knowledgeable/experienced in your particular field
- A person who is willing to assist you in the Capstone Project process
- A person you can have regular contact with for the duration of the project
- A person who will give you constructive feedback
- An adult, who is not a relative or teacher in the building, who will encourage you

One goal of the **Capstone Project** is to encourage the student to meet and interact with new people. The student is also encouraged to stretch and grow while working on the project. Part of the growth comes from interacting and working with another adult in the community. Therefore, a mentor can not be a member of your family. Family members are, however, encouraged to assist the student in the following ways:

- Verify project completion
- Encourage student to meet deadlines and to do his/her best
- Help student organize his/her work

Mentor Information

Student Name _____

Project Advisor _____

Date _____

Mentor's Name _____

Mentor's Company Name _____

Address _____

Phone number where he/she can be reached _____

Email address _____

Qualifications _____

Briefly describe how you discovered this mentor and how you think he/she can best help you with your **Capstone Project**.

Mentor Agreement:

I understand and accept the responsibilities of mentoring this student during his/her work on the **Capstone Project**. I will establish appropriate times when the student may do his/her hours and will sign the log to verify such time. I understand that the student must do a minimum of **25 hours** with me in order to fulfill his/her requirements, and I also agree to attend the student's presentation in the spring.

Mentor's Signature _____

Date _____

Sample questions to ask your Mentor:

Education/Preparation:

1. How much formal education is needed in your field? What sort of special training or advanced degree is required?
2. What are the important characteristics (personal traits/qualities) for someone entering this field?
3. What kinds of experience do employers want?
4. What kinds of extra-curricular activities and/or volunteer experiences would be beneficial?
5. Are there minors/electives/special knowledge and skills that would be helpful in this field?
6. What are the most important skills someone should have to find success in this occupation?
7. What types of part-time, full-time or summer jobs should I be doing right now which may prepare me for this career path?
8. What personal attributes/qualities do you think are important for career success?
9. What specific skills or personal qualities are important?

Working Conditions:

1. What is your job title?
2. Would you please describe your organization (It's goal, size, structure, etc.)
3. What type of training did you receive when you started your first job?
4. What is the typical career path in this field? What are the entry-level positions?
5. How many hours per week are you expected to work? Do you put in additional hours?
6. What other things are expected of you outside of working hours?
7. What is a typical day on the job like for you?
8. What are the most satisfying and the most frustrating parts of your work?
9. In what ways can this job be stressful?
10. How much variety does this job involve? What is the pace of work?
11. What times of year are busiest/slowest?
12. In what ways is travel a factor in this job?
13. What are pressures that you contend with?
14. What is the starting salary for an entry-level position?

Industry/Advancement:

1. How has the field changed since you first started your career?
2. Where trends/challenges for this field do you see the future?
3. What is a major challenge you face today?
4. How is the job market for your field in this area of the country? Is it difficult to find an opening? Is there an area that's best for starting such a career?
5. How long should I expect to stay in an entry-level position?
6. What are the opportunities for advancement?
7. What would be the next step in a career path for a job like this?

Networking:

1. How did you find your first job after graduation? What avenues did you explore to find job openings in your field?
2. What role does networking play, if any, to help break into this field?
3. How important is it to know someone in the industry?
4. What professional associations or organizations are useful to belong to in this field?
5. What magazines, journals, web sites are important to read in this field?

About Your Mentor:

1. What is your background?
2. Describe your career path. How have you progressed to your present position?
3. Why did you get into this field? Did someone/something significant impact choosing this career?
4. Do you belong to any professional affiliations?
5. Do you read any field-specific journals or magazines?
6. What are the things you find personally rewarding in your career?
7. What are the things you find frustrating or disappointing?
8. If you were starting out again, would you plan your career the same way? What would you do differently?
9. If your job were suddenly eliminated what other kinds of work could you do?

Advice/Other:

1. What was the most surprising part of your transition from university to work?
2. Do you have any additional information that might be helpful?
3. What advice do you have for someone planning to start a career in this field?
4. What do you see as the biggest challenges new graduates face when they enter your industry?
5. What are some other jobs in your field that are similar to your own?
6. Would you be willing to critique my résumé/cover letter? Can you offer any suggestions?
7. Do you have any suggestions on how I should prepare for a job interview?

Parent Authorization Form

NOTIFY IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

Name _____ Relationship _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

Home Phone _____ Work Phone _____

PARENTAL CONSENT

I have read and understand the information given to my child about the Capstone Project and the volunteer hours. I hereby give my permission for my child _____, to participate in this program. I will assist my child in keeping all appointments with his/her mentor. I will attend all parent events, and I agree to communicate with the Teacher Advisor regarding any concerns I may have about my child's participation in the Capstone Project. I understand that the 25 hours that my student has to complete are outside the school day, and I will have to provide transportation for my student to the place of business.

All meetings between my child and his/her mentor shall be arranged by me, my child, and the mentor, and I take full responsibility for such meetings.

Date _____

Parent Signature _____

Mentor Signature _____

Advisor Signature _____

Reflection Paper

The paper should include the following information:

1. **Introduction: Project choice** (Briefly explain why you chose the type of Capstone project and where you chose to complete it)
2. **Body Paragraph: Education** (Explain what you learned prior to doing your project that was helpful in completing it. What classes did you take that helped prepare you?)
3. **Body Paragraph: Skills used** (Explain what skills you possess and/or learned and how you acquired them in order to be able to successfully finish your project. how did you learn what you needed to? Who or what helped you learn those skills? Be thorough.)
4. **Body Paragraph: Obstacles** (What problems did you have? How did you solve them?)
5. **Body Paragraph: Personal Benefits** (Be specific)
6. **Body Paragraph: What did you learn about yourself?**
7. **Conclusion: You overall impression of your Capstone Project experience.**

Format Requirements for the Reflection Paper:

MLA format

- typed
- double-spaced
- heading: name
course
teacher
date
- minimum 3-4 pages
- Header of last name and page number on each page
- use of standard English conventions

Capstone Project Presentation

Here are some things that you need to remember **BEFORE** you give your presentation. You should **NOT READ** your paper as your presentation. Instead you should reread your paper and make notes on NOTECARDS of the major points of your paper.

- Do you have a catchy opening? (if you don't know how to begin your speech, tell your audience WHY you chose your topic—HOW you became interested in it.
- Make sure that your speech follows a logical order—hopefully you made the necessary corrections on your research paper so that you can just follow its order.
- Make sure you KNOW what you are talking about. If there was information in your paper that was confusing or that you did not fully understand, then do not include it in your speech.
- Your speech should also include information about who your mentor is and why you chose him/her and what you did for your hours/product. Tell why you chose the place, what you did, what you learned, etc. If you created a product, then you need to tell what you did and what your results were. Tell what you learned from your experience working with an expert/professional.
- Your speech should last at least 12-14 minutes.
- You need to create a conclusion to your speech; it may be similar to the conclusion in your research paper, but make sure that you tell what you learned about YOURSELF or recount the most positive aspect of the project.
- As a cue that you have finished your speech, ask if there are any questions that the teachers have.

You also **MUST** have a **VISUAL AID** for your presentation. This has to include a Power point presentation as well as one of the following:

- Tri-fold presentation board—not just a piece of poster board
- A video that you have created (not a movie clip)

*If you have other ideas, please check with your advisor for approval.

A **POWER POINT** presentation should include KEY POINTS—not your entire speech. (Each slide should outline what you will be talking about; your speech should include more information about the topics on the slide.) You should include graphics, animation, catchy and appealing to the senses.

Since you have technology, you need to make sure that the room that you are giving your presentation in has what you need (a computer and boxlight, a DVD player or VCR

and TV, CD player, etc.). You should also make sure that the technology WORKS. You need to inform your advisor of what you need in your room. Your visual aid should also include pictures of you completing your hours, and you should be ready to explain what you are doing in the pictures.

PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE your speech aloud.

***Don't forget to send an email, make a phone call, or drop by the place of business in order to remind your MENTOR of the time, date, and location of your presentation.**

Also, inform, invite your parents, , a teacher, others who you would like to be there to support you.

Here are some things that you need to remember the day of your presentation.

- 1. You need to dress up for your presentation.** This means wearing something nicer than what is dress-code at school.
 - Ladies, you can wear a dress, a skirt/blouse, or nice dress pants/blouse.
 - Gentlemen, you need to wear a button down shirt, a tie and dress pants. You can wear a sports coat or suit if you have one as well.
- 2. Before you walk out of your house, make sure that you have your note cards, your portfolio, and your visual aid.**
- 3. BE THERE ON TIME—ACTUALLY BE EARLY.**

When you get in the room:

1. Do a quick tech check to make sure everything is ready to go. If you can't get it to work after a few minutes—just move on; don't waste anymore time.
2. Introduce and thank your guests and the teachers for being present.
3. Make sure that your voice is loud enough to be heard; don't speak in a monotone voice—be enthusiastic about your topic.
4. Make sure that you are making eye contact with your audience; don't look down the entire time.
5. Be prepared to answer questions about your topic. This could last 6-8 minutes.

Don't panic, don't get too nervous—teachers, parents, and others always enjoy seeing you “all grown-up” and ready to face the real world.

You will do a great job if you are prepared.

The Capstone Program
Student Participant Survey 2009-2010

Please rate the following statements in regards to your participation in The Capstone Program.

	Agree Completely	Agree Somewhat	Disagree Somewhat	Disagree Completely
I enjoyed being a part of the Capstone Program this year.				
Capstone has allowed me to better focus on a career within my field of interest.				
I was able to witness many opportunities first-hand during my service hours.				
The department managers/staff whom I met were helpful and interested in my learning.				
I would feel comfortable contacting my mentor if I needed a reference or had additional questions.				
My mentor encouraged me to ask questions and seek answers.				
I feel better prepared for my professional future because of the Capstone Program.				
I would recommend the Capstone Program schools that do not have similar programs.				

Please share your thoughts and opinions about Capstone in the box below. What would you tell others about the program, what has the program done for you, what career choices has the program made you aware of and what career choices have you decided upon for the future?