

Experiential Learning Committee Capstone Experience Pilot ITP - Accepting Responses

Invitation To Participate™

Project Overview

The Alignment Nashville Experiential Learning Committee presents the Capstone Experience Pilot (“CAPSTONE”), an opportunity for community partners to provide and support students with a Capstone Experience defined as a project that allows students to learn about themselves by moving an idea or dream toward a topic of interest, specialization, community need or career choice. The vision of the Experiential Learning Committee is to ensure that all high school students receive a capstone experience before graduation. Accordingly, CAPSTONE seeks community partners to identify opportunities within their organizations for young people to fulfill their graduation requirement and gain valuable experience that supports MNPS goal to prepare students for college and career.

The primary outcomes supported by this Invitation to Participate™ (ITP™) are:

- 25% increase knowledge of capstone experience benefits and opportunities among teachers, parents, students and community partners
- 100% increase in number of students participating in capstone experiences by end of 2013-14 academic year
- 100% of MNPS junior students receive support with their Capstone initiatives

The committee is seeking community partners that will identify opportunities within their organizations for young people to participate and receive support with the following types of capstone experiences:

- Senior Project
- Virtual Enterprise
- Internship
- Extended observation
- Work-based Learning
- Service Learning
- Community Service

Also, community partners will be required to support students with the completion of capstone course requirements: (1) paper; (2) product; (3) portfolio and (4) presentation.

Services Needed from the Community:

The committee is seeking community partners that can support students within their organizations with capstone experiences. Examples of types of opportunities include, but are not limited to the following:

Banking/Finance H - this is a course offered through Business Academies that have a student-run credit union. Students must apply and be accepted for training by the credit union in order to enroll in this course.

Clinical Internship - this is a course offered through Health Science Academies for students who wish to work in the medical profession. Students must be approved by the instructor in order to enroll in this course.

Community Service - work with the community to develop a new approach to established programs, services or events.

Extended Observation - documented observation of a field of study. This is similar to job shadowing, but for an extended amount of time and in more depth.

Internship - the study of a program directly related to a career interest and to participate in a workplace setting by performing duties related to the occupation being studied. Internships can be paid or unpaid depending on the employer.

Senior Project - a self-development or curriculum-based project focused on a specific discipline or skill.

Senior Showcase - a culminating performance event in an art, dance, or music field.

Service Learning - an experiential method of teaching, learning and reflecting that combines classroom curriculum with meaningful service in the community to enrich learning, teach civic responsibility, and encourage lifelong civic engagement.

Student Leadership III - this is a course offered to students who have completed Student Leadership I and II. Students must be approved by the instructor in order to enroll in this course.

Virtual Enterprise - a simulated business that is set up and run by students with the guidance of a teacher and a business partner. Students must be in a business pathway and approved by the instructor in order to enroll in this course.

Work-Based Learning (apprenticeships) - the opportunity for students to learn a variety of skills by expanding the walls of classroom learning to include the community and narrowing the gap between theory and practice to provide meaning and relevance for students through rigorous academic preparation with hands-on career development experiences. These experiences take place during the school day with a teacher mentor. Students must be approved by the instructor in order to enroll in this course.

Please note that the committee welcomes creative and innovative responses.

Experiential Learning Committee Members

Amiee Wyatt, (Chair) **Metro Nashville Public Schools**

Dee Gee Lester, (Vice Chair) **Metro Nashville Park Services**

Paula Barkley, **Metro Nashville Public Schools**

Erika Burnett, **Hands On Nashville**

Chris Boeskool, **Students Taking A Right Stand**

Chae Denning, **Metro Nashville Public Schools**

Nancy DiNunzio Dickson, **Vanderbilt University**

Misty Ellis, **Nashville CARES**

Deniece Ferguson, **Oasis Center**

Maricrus Flores Figueroa, **Concerned Citizen**

Donna Gilley, **Metro Nashville Public Schools**

Jeri Hasselbring, **Adventure Science Center**

Star Herrman, **Metro Nashville Public Schools**

John Hawkins, **Adventure Science Center**

Kay Higgs, **Students Taking A Right Stand**

Oscar Miller, **Tennessee State University**

Chaney Mosley, **Metro Nashville Public Schools**

Cesar Arturo Muedas, **Concerned Parent**

Chelsea Parker, **PENCIL Foundation**

Andy Schenck, **Junior Achievement**

Andrea Steele, **Renaissance Center**

Patricia Stokes, **Urban League**

Ellen Zinkiewicz, **Nashville Career Advancement Center**

Project Explanation

General Description

CAPSTONE engages community partners to identify opportunities within their organizations for young people to participate and receive support for their capstone project.

A “Capstone Experience” is defined as a project that allows students to learn about themselves by moving an idea or dream toward a topic of interest, specialization, community need or career choice. The concept of these capstone experiences is to put learning into practice - to extend learning into applied experiences in which students actively participate and transition them from school to work or college.

Meaningful capstone experiences - banking/finance H, clinical Internships, community service, extended observations, internships, senior projects, senior showcases, service-learning projects, virtual enterprise, work-based Learning, etc. - provide a number of benefits to students including the following opportunities:

- To further develop social emotional learning skills - including self awareness and social awareness
- To strengthen academic resumes
- To assist in planning for the future (specifically helps with (1) exploring career alternatives, (2) developing relationship with experts in the field that interests them, (3) identifying, clarifying and developing career goals and (4) the transition from post high school like to college and career)

Moreover, these experiences have a sound educational foundation and philosophical basis which is outlined in the table below.

Pedagogical Domain	Description
Curriculum	Activity-oriented, career-oriented, direct experiences, innovative, integrated, practical-application, project-based, work-based, youth-developmental, service/social action
Placement	Appropriate, assigned, fields of interest, personalized, realistic
Environments	Community, non-classroom, nontraditional, off-campus, out-of-school, professional structured
Instruction	Advising, coaching, counseling, expertise-oriented, guidance, mentoring, on-the-job training, professional, supervision
Learning	Active, applied, community-based, cooperative, engaging, experiential, hands-on, independent, individualized, interdisciplinary, real-world, service
Evaluation & Assessment	Authentic, competency-based, exhibitions, performance-based, portfolios
Outcomes	<p>Experience – applied, hands-on, in-depth, practical, work-based; skills – basic, communications, computer literacy, interpersonal relations, job-readiness, leadership, organizational, problem-solving, professional, researching, report-writing, team-working, technology, workplace</p> <p>Attitudes and behaviors – autonomy, collegiality, cooperation, dependability, independence, initiative, positive, professional, self-confidence, self-motivation, work ethic, work values</p>

According to Dr. R. D. Merrit, “research has shown that experiential education programs ... have a positive impact on student participants. The two factors which are the best predictors of personal growth are opportunities to act autonomously and to develop collegial relationships with adults. Experiential learning ... affects the social, psychological and intellectual development of secondary-school students.”

Through this ITP, **CAPSTONE** seeks to identify, recruit and collaborate with community partners that have expertise and desire in working with students as they identify and complete their capstone experience.

CAPSTONE is outcome-driven, and community partners responding to this ITP must demonstrate an ability to contribute to the expected outcomes of:

- 25% increase knowledge of **Capstone Experience** benefits and opportunities among teachers, parents, students and community partners
- 100% increase in number of students participating in capstone experiences by end of 2012-13 academic year
- 100% of **MNPS** junior students receive support with their **Capstone** initiatives

Target Population

All MNPS high schools and their students (approximately 5,000 graduating students).

Needed Information from Community Service Providers

1. Description of organization
2. Description of work environment - what types of activities you would be able to expose/involve students?
3. Please check what types of capstone experiences in which your organization can support students
4. How many students are you able to support?
5. What hours are you available to work with students?
6. Is the location where you will work with students close to a bus line?
7. Is there anything else you would like for us to know about your organization?

Expected Dates of Implementation

2013-2014 school year (timing based on organization's availability)

Expected Outcomes

- 25% increase knowledge of Capstone Experience benefits and opportunities among teachers, parents, students and community partners
- 100% increase in number of students participating in capstone experiences by end of 2013-14 academic year
- 100% of MNPS junior students receive support with their Capstone initiatives.

Assessment Strategies

- Survey results
- Project Completion results
- Participation results of the number of community partners

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