

A Guide to Riverview's Senior Transition Project



**Riverview Junior-Senior High School
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Open letter to the students

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Dear Parents and Students:

Beginning with the Class of 2003, all students graduating from Riverview Junior-Senior High School must complete a graduation project that fulfills the requirements of the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the Riverview School District Board of Directors. To guide you through every step of this process, the District has developed *A Guide to Riverview's Senior Transition Project*. This manual contains guidelines and procedures to help you comprehend the nature and purpose of this requirement.

We have created this guide for students and parents to review and follow over the course of the next several years. It is very important that parent(s) understand the importance of your project and the need to keep the project requirement realistic and relevant to your own future plans. The administration and faculty recognize the importance of this experience and will assist you during each phase of the project. To direct you in this endeavor, you will find that the guide breaks each aspect down into sections. Rules, obligations, responsibilities, and timelines are clearly defined; as well as a collection of the project forms that will be used to document your progress and parent involvement.

As your principal, I encourage you to investigate a career path that is both rewarding and meaningful to your future plans. Our staff will provide you with the direction and guidance necessary to help you with this endeavor; but we clearly recognize the final product can only become an instrument of achievement and personal value through a sincere and scholarly process.

Sincerely,

Tiffany Nix
Interim Principal

TN:lt

The Riverview Junior-Senior High School
Graduation Project Requirement

Pennsylvania Department of Education Regulations

Chapter 4, Sec. 4-24. High School Graduation Requirement (A) Each school district (including charter schools) shall specify requirements for graduation into the strategic plan under 4.13 (relating to strategic planning). Requirements shall include course completion and grades, completion of culminating project and results of local assessments aligned with the academic standards.

Graduation Requirements

With the inception of the "Senior Transition Project", a .5 credit will be awarded for the successful completion of this requirement. The "Senior Transition Project" will be evaluated on a pass/fail basis; final determination of the successful completion of the project will be the responsibility of the junior-senior high school principals. The addition of the "Senior Transition Project" increased the total number of credits needed for graduation from 25 to 25.5. The increase affected graduating seniors commencing with the class of 2006. The Riverview Board of Directors requires that each candidate for graduation shall have met all requirements in regard to PSSA testing and achievement and have earned a minimum of twenty-five and one half (25.5) units of credit for graduation classes through 2011. These units must include the following:

1. English – 4 units of credit. One full unit in each of grades 9, 10, 11, and 12.
2. Social Studies – 3 units of credit. One full unit in grades 9 and 10; one additional unit in grades 11 or 12.
3. Mathematics – 3 units of credit. One full unit in grades 9 and 10; one additional unit in grades 11 or 12.
4. Science – 3 units of credit. One full unit in grades 9 and 10; one additional unit in grades 11 or 12.
5. Physical Education – one and six tenths units of credit in grade 9 – 12.
6. Health – six tenths units of credit in grades 10 – 12.
7. Arts/Humanities – 3 units of credit in grades 9 – 12.
8. Electives – five and eight-tenths units of credit in grades 9 – 12.
9. Senior Transition Project – half unit of credit cumulative grades 9 – 12.

The Riverview Junior-Senior High School
Graduation Project Requirement

10. Any one additional credit in grades 9 – 12 in Math, Science, Social Studies, or Foreign Language.

SUMMARY

| | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | English | 4.0 credits |
| 2. | Social Studies | 3.0 credits |
| 3. | Mathematics | 3.0 credits |
| 4. | Science | 3.0 credits |
| 5. | Physical Education | 1.6 credits |
| 6. | Health | .6 credits |
| 7. | Arts/Humanities | 3.0 credits |
| 8. | Electives | 5.8 credits |
| 9. | Senior Transition Project | .5 credits |
| 10. | Additional one credit | 1.0 credits |
| | Student's choice from above | |
| | | 25.5 credits |
| | | (minimum graduation requirements) |

Beginning with the graduation class of 2012, the Riverview Board of Directors requires that each candidate for graduation shall have met all requirements in regard to PSSA testing and achievement and have earned a minimum of twenty-six and one half (26.5) units of credit. These units must include the following:

1. English – 4.5 units of credit. One and one half units in grade 9, and one full unit in each of grades 10, 11, and 12.
2. Social Studies – 3 units of credit. One full unit in grades 9 and 10; one additional unit in grades 11 or 12.
3. Mathematics – 3 units of credit. One full unit in grades 9 and 10; one additional unit in grades 11 or 12.
4. Science – 3.5 units of credit. One and one half units in grade 9 and one full unit in grade 10; one additional unit in grades 11 or 12.
5. Physical Education – one and six tenths units of credit in grade 9 – 12.
6. Health – six tenths units of credit in grades 10 – 12.

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Graduation Project Requirement

7. Arts/Humanities – 3 units of credit in grades 9 – 12.
8. Electives – five and eight-tenths units of credit in grades 9 – 12.
9. Senior Transition Project – one-half unit of credit cumulative grades 9 – 12.
10. Any one additional credit in grades 9 – 12 in Math, Science, Social Studies, or Foreign Language.

SUMMARY

| | | |
|-----|-----------------------------|--------------|
| 1. | English | 4.5 credits |
| 2. | Social Studies | 3.0 credits |
| 3. | Mathematics | 3.0 credits |
| 4. | Science | 3.5 credits |
| 5. | Physical Education | 1.6 credits |
| 6. | Health | .6 credits |
| 7. | Arts/Humanities | 3.0 credits |
| 8. | Electives | 5.8 credits |
| 9. | Senior Transition Project | .5 credits |
| 10. | Additional one credit | 1.0 credits |
| | Student's choice from above | |
| | | 26.5 credits |

(minimum graduation requirements)

Rationale

The purpose of the culminating project is to assure that students are able to apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information and communicate significant knowledge and understanding.

Mission

The Riverview School District Graduation Project is intended to be a comprehensive learning activity of the highest quality both in scope and breadth. The primary purpose of the district's senior project is to assist students and their families to develop a personalized plan for their post-secondary future. The project is meant to demonstrate the district's standard of competencies expected of all students earning a high school diploma. Through this experience students will have an opportunity to exhibit a variety of applicable problem solving and research skills while investigating a specialized area of interest.

The Riverview Junior-Senior High School
Graduation Project Requirement

The Riverview School District Graduation Project which applied to all students ...

1. Provides a challenging learning experience
2. Supports diversity and learning styles
3. Encourages personal ownership of a task
4. Promotes self-esteem and self-confidence through successful project completion
5. Promotes accountability and responsibility

Project Components

1. Student/Parent Acknowledgement Form
2. Parent/Student project agreement
3. Yearly interim reports
4. Self-Reflection
5. World Processed summary
6. Time Log
7. Portfolio checklist
8. Utilization and response to a list of career inventory questions
9. Self-actualization of post-secondary goals

The Role of the Homeroom Teacher

During the student's freshman year, the student's current homeroom teacher and principal will assume the role of advisor for the expressed purpose of monitoring and guiding the student towards the satisfactory completion of a culminating project as a requirement for graduation. Responsibilities of the advisor include the following:

- Facilitates the dissemination and collection of parent/student signed acknowledgement forms.
- Return forms to the principal. The principal will assume responsibility for filing and maintaining required and related forms in each student's graduation project folder.

The Role of the Parent/Guardian

- Indicate that you have seen and reviewed the project guide and acknowledge the link between the successful completion of the culminating project as a requirement for graduation.
- Provide signed agreement of your son's/daughter's career explorations and ongoing signed acknowledgement of your son's/daughter's progress at regular intervals throughout the project process.
- Guide and support your son/daughter through the successful completion of the transition from high school to post-secondary goals as you deem appropriate.

The Riverview Junior-Senior High School
Graduation Project Requirement

- Parent(s) are encouraged to use the opportunities provided throughout the various stages of the “Senior Transition Project” to engage in meaningful dialogue with their son/daughter.

The Role of the Student

- Explore, eliminate and eventually identify possible career paths prior to graduation.
- Attain all signatures necessary for student contracts and return forms to the principal or homeroom advisor by the specified due dates(s).
- Complete all requirements of the project according to a pre-established checklist and timeline.
- Realistically complete and respond to various interest inventories and commit to concepts of career planning.
- Realize that the opportunity to plan for one’s future is a personal commitment and one that should be taken seriously.

Career Options

For the most part, students have their entire lives to search for that “special job” or means by which they can earn a living. However, the skills and the knowledge needed to qualify for a specific career or discipline has its roots in the high school years. In order to make an informed decision, students need to explore various options, refine their skills and research specific information. Today more than ever before, students graduating from high school need to plan for their future. The advice they receive along the way and the opportunities they take along the way help to define that journey. No one can predict with absolute certainty what they will be doing five or ten years from now, but life’s lessons do support the notion that preparing and planning for the future is prudent. Statistics have shown that a vast majority of successful Riverview graduates started their personal journey along one of five major pathways: the military, competitive employment, technical/vocational training, a four-year degree program at the college or university level, or have become a homemaker. Consequently, what a student does with his or her education after graduation is a personal obligation filled with consequences and rewards. The district’s mission is to help each student realize their own potential.

Scope of the Senior Transition Project

The administration and faculty of the Riverview Junior-Senior High School believe that a graduation project should challenge the student to apply the skills learned in a meaningful realistic manner. The graduation project should be a student-centered culminating experience that assists the student in mapping a course for their post secondary future. The purpose of the project is to encourage the students to think about their future. It is the goal of the Riverview School District to significantly improve student achievement and to encourage all students to become cognizant of various career paths. The project is a four-year process designed to allow each the opportunity to consciously select the path most suited to the individual’s talents and

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Graduation Project Requirement

interests. The District recognizes the importance of meaningful dialogue and the value in proven experience; consequently one of the most important components of the project is the value of parental approval and involvement in this process. The requirement of a graduation project should serve as preparation for adult life. Metaphorically, the Senior Transition Project may be viewed as a “trip-ticket” for life after high school.

As the name implies, a transition project should relate directly to the student’s post secondary plans. The transition project has several phases. At the core of the project design is the incorporation of meaningful research, exploration and assessment. The Senior Transition Project should demonstrate competencies in information-gathering skills, research, technology, utilization, written and oral communication, time management, and organizational skills. Through this process, the student can begin to realistically assess his/her options and begin to make application towards the attainment of that goal.

As a means to an end, the Senior Transition Project is intended to provide the student with a comprehensive portfolio applicable to the individual’s post-secondary plans.

The Class of 2003 became the first class required to complete a Senior Transition Project. Each succeeding class will complete the project as a graduation requirement. Although each student’s efforts will be monitored over the course of the four-year endeavor, the responsibility for completion is that of the student.

Students who have transferred from another district will have their culminating project work reviewed by an administrator. Completed projects that have satisfied another district’s requirements will be accepted for credit, provided that transcripts document the project’s status.

Explanation of Assessment

The Senior Transition Project final portfolio will be scored holistically. Holistic evaluation is a guided methodology for evaluating the project’s content and organization. The responsibility for evaluating the final portfolio is the building administrators. Evaluation of the final portfolio will be on a pass/fail basis. The summary assessment may be a single rating for the entire portfolio or a set of rating for the different features being considered. This approach helps the evaluator rate student work objectively and consistently.

Timeline

Grade 9

- Orientation meeting for ninth graders for the purpose of introducing the “Senior Transition Project” as a graduation requirement and to review and distribute the pamphlet: A Guide to Riverview’s Senior Transition Project.
- Students will take a tour of Forbes Road Technical and Career Center. This activity will be coordinated by the Guidance Counselors as a component of the Senior Transition Project. Interested students will be encouraged to complete an application for acceptance to Forbes Road’s program of studies.
- **By the end of grade 9 students will have completed:**

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Graduation Project Requirement

1. A career planning questionnaire
2. A tour of Forbes Road Technical and Career Center
3. Parent sign-off sheet
4. Submit course requests that complement post-secondary goals.

Grade 10

- Parental notification and explanation of the CCAC Interest Inventory and how the results of this career interest inventory may play in their child's future plans.
- Large group meeting with sophomores to explain the importance of the CCAC Interest Inventory and the role this survey may play in the Senior Transition Project process.
- The CCAC Interest Inventory will be administered through the Guidance Department in the fall.
- Students will either meet in small groups or individually with Guidance Counselors to review and answer questions regarding interest inventory results.
- Students will be encouraged to begin to develop a student profile that will include but will not be limited to initial career investigations, career clusters, previous and current interests.
- Students will complete a career investigative research project in conjunction with English class requirements.
- Students who fail to satisfy the requirements of the English Class career research project must resubmit their research project to a building administrator for acceptance by the end of the academic year or remain in a 10th grade homeroom next year.
- Students, with parent input, will submit course selection requests for next school year. Course requests should reflect post-secondary goals and objectives.
- **By the end of grade 10 students will have completed:**
 1. CCAC Interest Inventory
 2. Research requirements during English class
 3. Course requests that complement post-secondary goals

Grade 11

- Meet with Principal to review progress towards the successful completion of Senior Transition Project
- Orientation to college search process (coordinated by Guidance Counselor)
- Visitation procedure with representatives from colleges, universities, trade and technical schools, and/or military personnel
- Identify potential resources (career mentor and/or Shadow Study host)
- Submit plans for Shadow Study
- Conduct Shadow Study and complete all relevant forms by April 1st (include reflection paper on Shadow Study experience)
- Write reflection paper on Shadow Study experience

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Graduation Project Requirement

- Depending upon career path selected, identify, correspond and visit potential post-secondary facilities, training opportunities or employers
- Register and take appropriate screening test (such as PSAT's, SAT's, ACT's)
- Students will submit course selection requests for next school year. Course requests should reflect post-secondary goals and objectives.
- Post-secondary school orientation provided for interested parents (Guidance Department)
- **By the end of grade 11 students will have:**
 1. Conducted Shadow Study and submitted all relevant, required reports
 2. Refined career path
 3. Begin college visitations where applicable
 4. Submitted course requests that complement post-secondary goals

Grade 12

- Meet with Principal to review progress towards the satisfactory completion of Senior Transition Project.
- Finalize the Senior Transition Project portfolio. Portfolio is a collection of documents recording efforts taken by the student to achieve the goal of post-secondary educational, vocational, or military opportunities (such as copies of applications, resume, acceptance letters, etc.) [time line – end of first semester]
Any portion of the portfolio identified as unacceptable must be redone and resubmitted prior to the end of the third grading period to be eligible for graduation.
- Group meeting with parents to discuss financial aid conducted by Guidance Counselor
Make application for local scholarships (if applicable)
- **By the end of grade 12 students will have completed:**
 1. Maintained and submitted for approval an accurate Senior Transition Project portfolio documenting the student's efforts to realistically identify and execute a plan for post-secondary goals and objectives.

Riverview Junior-Senior High School
Senior Transition Project Acknowledgement Form

Having reviewed A Guide to Riverview's Senior Transition Project, I acknowledge the importance of this graduation requirement.

Student's Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date