

SENIOR EXPERIENCE PROGRAM

John F. Kennedy High School
3000 Bellmore Avenue
Bellmore, NY 11710

Brad Seidman, Program Coordinator

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In the spring of 2006, a committee of administrators, teachers, parents and students developed a senior program to offer alternative learning opportunities to graduating students towards the end of their senior year. This program, known as the "Senior Experience Program," is currently entering its seventh year.

Who participates in the program?

A cross-section of seniors participate in the "Senior Experience Program," which offers students an internship program, community service project, or service learning project.

When does the program run?

Participants have three weeks of release time during the last three weeks of the school year. This period of time is dedicated to their chosen project or internship; students are expected to spend time at their placement equal to the time that they spend at school. Attendance is monitored closely at the off-site locations and count in the school's daily attendance rate.

What do the students do during the three-week release period?

Students participate in an alternative educational experience which may be directed towards a career or provide a social service; they may also work with graduate students from local colleges on a service learning project. Students may not be paid for this experience; they cannot merely add hours to their present job. Furthermore, students cannot do their project with a member of their family.

The placement of students is approved and monitored to guarantee the quality of work. Students are required to come into Kennedy a minimum of once a week to meet with their mentors and to work on their presentations.

How are students evaluated?

All students are responsible for a series of written assignments before, during, and after the release period. In addition, they are evaluated by the site and school mentors, as well as the program coordinator, if necessary. These materials are checked by the student's mentor.

How will students be prepared for their internships?

Students also receive individual assistance from their mentors and the project coordinator. In addition, since the presentation replaces the students' final English project, assistance will also be offered in the senior English classes.

Who are the mentors?

Teachers and administrators serve as mentors. Mentors act as advisors, supporters, and sounding boards. Mentors review and evaluate journals and progress, suggest research, and provide guidance during the preparation of the culminating activity.

What are the responsibilities of the sponsors?

Sponsors are expected to provide students with an educational experience and verify their hours. Students are aware that the role they will play is based on the business's needs, and they are given the opportunity to contact the sponsor weeks ahead of time to discuss the expectations. Therefore, we ask the sponsors to be forthcoming with their expectations and the opportunities available to the student.

Who has sponsored in the past?

Over 200 different businesses sponsored students as part of this program during the first six years. These companies ranged from large firms in New York City, local schools and businesses in Nassau County and Long Island, to non-profit organizations throughout the metropolitan area. Our past sponsors include WABC-NY, Hearst Corporation, Long Island Press, Make-a-Wish Foundation, Korg USA, NY1 News, Major League Baseball, Family & Children's Association, Merrick Elementary School District, and many others.

About John F. Kennedy High School

John F. Kennedy High School is a comprehensive high school offering students the opportunity to enrich their classroom experience through participation in a wide variety of after school activities, including twenty-nine clubs and forty-four athletic programs. Community service is an integral part of the activities program, as well as a requirement for graduation.

Kennedy students are recognized annually as AP Scholars, semi-finalists in the Intel Science Talent Search; and Kennedy High School has continuously been recognized in the list of America's Best High Schools by Newsweek. In 2012, 99% of the graduating class went on to college.

Anyone wishing to learn more about the Senior Experience Program should contact the program coordinator, Brad Seidman, at bseidman@bmchsd.k12.ny.us.