

# Morris County School of Technology



## The Senior Internship Process

All students in their senior year are required to complete a 10-credit internship (aka structured learning experience). This involves the completion of a minimum of 160 internship hours (100 hours for MSE students), to be completed at an approved worksite.

Students may choose to complete up to 50% of the hourly requirement over the summer between their junior and senior year. Before a student earns summer hours, however, the student's internship proposal needs to be approved by the Board of Education. The remaining hours must be accrued during the school year. Monitoring of the internship experience is the responsibility of the structured learning coordinator, who periodically collects time sheets with reflective work logs from the interns and feedback on performance from the worksite mentors. This information may be shared with the Academy faculty, but the grade for the internship is given by the Structured Learning Coordinator.

Seniors are encouraged to undertake internships at worksites that best support their career exploration and career development goals. During junior year, students begin to network with faculty, family, friends of family, parents of classmates, and others to identify possible internship mentors/worksites for senior year. They write resumes, assess their skills and interests, and set goals for senior year and for their education beyond high school. At mid-year, they write letters of introduction/autobiographical essays for the structured learning coordinator to explain their strengths, special skills, and areas of interest.

Academy meetings take place in the fall and spring of junior year with school counselors and the structured learning coordinator to discuss internship possibilities, rules related to the internship approval process, transportation constraints, location possibilities, etc. Paperwork required for the internship approval process is distributed at the spring Academy meeting.

Ideally, internship worksites give students experience in the workplace with opportunities to learn from observing and working alongside professionals in each student's chosen field, applying and deepening the skills developed through Academy course work and developing new workplace skills.

For students who do not identify their own internship site, the structured learning coordinator will suggest possible sites used by past students that could suit the needs of current students. Every effort is made to find a suitable site that matches the student's interests and available means of transportation. Most internships in the past have been in Morris County, accessible by car, train, or bus. Some students have pursued internships in other counties or in New York City. Occasionally, students need an internship that they can get to on foot from home, County College of Morris, or Morris County School of Technology.

Students discuss internship possibilities with their parents, the faculty, and the structured learning coordinator and identify the site(s) to which they will apply. After an interview to determine if the internship site is a good match, an offer of internship by the on-site mentor is made. An assessment by the structured learning coordinator to assure that the site is a safe and appropriate workplace also takes place. Then, the student, parent, on-site mentor, structured learning coordinator, and the school district all sign off on the internship paperwork. The internship proposal is then submitted to the Board of Education for formal approval. Once the Board of Education has acted, the student can begin accruing internship hours for credit. It is possible, though not common, for students to be paid for their internship hours, in addition to receiving school credit.

Internships that begin in July or August must be approved at the June or July Board of Education meetings. Students who do not have an approved internship by the end of school year should continue to consult with the structured learning coordinator over the summer to get an internship site approved by the beginning of senior year.