

## MENTORED INDUSTRY PROJECTS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **What are Mentored Industry Projects?**
  - [Mentored industry projects](#) provide authentic learning experiences in which students connect with industry mentors to address challenges and solve problems in a community or industry. Industry mentors guide project work, offering feedback and direction throughout the project process. Students develop skills through professional interactions and understand connections between classroom content and their career aspirations.
- **Who designs the project or identifies the project challenge?**
  - Partners, companies, or mentors design the project challenge that is presented to students. Educators should not design this project challenge as the intent is to reflect workplace practices with solutions providing value to companies/mentors.
  - In some cases, [CTSO projects](#) can serve as a mentored industry project process.
- **Are students paid for the Mentored Industry Project?**
  - No, as an internship alternative, student payment is not required for the Mentored Industry Project.
  - Gift cards, prizes, or other forms of compensation instead of traditional payment options are not required in mentored industry projects.
- **How many check-ins should students have with mentors?**
  - A minimum of two to four check-ins are recommended for a Mentored Industry Project.
  - Check-ins can be virtual or in-person.
- **Where can educators recruit mentors? What is their role?**
  - Consider Advisory Board members, community partners, and local business owners to serve as mentors. Mentors should not be school staff.
  - Mentors meet with students throughout the project to ensure development is on-track, answer student questions, and offer guidance and feedback as teams generate solutions. Mentors stay with assigned student teams until project conclusion.
  - Suggested ratio is 3-4 students per mentor.
  - Suggested mentoring hours for partners are 4-5 hours throughout the project.
  - Consider mentor connections both in person and virtually. Survey mentors before beginning the project to understand their preference in mentoring and student connection.
- **How do students present final work?**
  - Celebrate the end of the project by facilitating student presentations. Include mentors, Advisory Board members, school/district staff, parents, and other community partners.
  - Invite mentor/company feedback: How will the business use this solution and implement change toward the given challenge?

- **How many hours are completed with a Mentored Industry Project?**
  - A Mentored Industry Project can last anywhere from 20-80 hours, depending on the complexity of the problem being solved and the structure chosen. For it to meet [the Career Preparation activity component of NAFTrack Certification](#), students can complete two 40-hour experiences or one 80-hour experience.
- **Are Mentored Industry Projects part of an existing class?**
  - Implementation formats take place in unique environments that work best for the student, educator, and mentors. Most common implementation settings include:
    - Implementation in an existing class
    - Part of an after (outside of) school engagement
- **How do Mentored Industry Projects relate to the Work-Based Learning Continuum?**
  - Mentored Industry Projects are a Career Preparation Activity in the WBL Continuum.
  - Mentored Industry Projects support exploration of career aspirations, skill development, and connection building for students.
- **What skill(s) will students gain through Mentored Industry Projects?**
  - Students are assessed on the [Future Ready Skills](#) (communication, collaboration, initiative and self-direction, social capital, planning for success, and problem solving).
  - Many additional skills exist inside of Mentored Industry Projects. Examples include: networking with professionals, setting up and facilitating meetings, organizing work, etc.