



Component Events

Mission: Possible

Competition Guidelines



MISSION POSSIBLE (MP) COMPETITION GUIDELINES

The Mission: Possible Competition empowers students to become active change-makers by applying the strategic problem-solving process to real-world challenges. The students' mission should focus on addressing and impacting an issue in their school, neighborhood, city, state, etc.

Rules and Requirements

Content: Failure to follow the rules and requirements listed below may result in the disqualification of the final film submission.

Eligibility and Divisions

1. The Mission: Possible Competition is open to students from K-12.
 - a. K-5th - Elementary Division
 - b. 6th-8th - Middle Division
 - c. 9th - 12th - High School Division
2. The division is determined by the highest grade level of a participating student.
3. Students may compete as individuals or in teams.
 - a. Teams may comprise any number of students.
 - b. A maximum of 10 students may perform the interview portion of the Mission: Possible Competition.
4. All participating students must be enrolled in a KAAC member school.
5. All students participating on the Mission:Possible team must sign a publication consent form.
6. Any individual or person filmed during the creation of the mission must sign the publication consent form.

Mission: Possible Publication Consent and Release Form

1. Subject Information

Full Name of Subject/Participant: _____

Parent or Guardian Name (if subject is under 18): _____

Email Address: _____ Phone: _____

2. Project Title

Project/Publication Title: _____

3. Consent and Grant of Rights

I hereby give Kentucky Association for Academic Competition the irrevocable right and permission to use, publish, and copyright my name, likeness, image, voice, written statements, or photographic/video materials (collectively called the "Materials") captured in connection with the project named above.

I understand that the Materials may be published in print, online, video, social media, or any other media format for educational or promotional purposes.

4. Release and Waiver

I release Kentucky Association for Academic Competition from any and all claims, demands, or liability arising out of or in connection with the use of the Materials, including any claims for defamation or invasion of privacy.

I acknowledge that I am [at least 18 years of age / the legal guardian of the minor named above] and have the full legal capacity to sign this release.

I understand that this consent is voluntary and that I will not receive financial compensation or payment for this use.

5. Original Work and Citation

I agree that all submitted work is entirely original, and that I did not use artificial intelligence to generate any segments of this Mission: Possible submission.

6. Signature

Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature [If under 18]: _____

Date: _____

Competition Guidelines

Mission Report

Content: The Mission Report is a comprehensive written document where individual students or teams formally present their project. It allows them to outline their Central Concern and forward-looking strategy, detail their logistical feasibility and resource management, and provide concrete evaluation data to prove the real-world impact of their work.

Step 1: Mission Identification

Content: The Mission Identification phase establishes the foundation of your project. Before you can solve a problem, you must clearly define what the issue is, who it affects, and why it matters to the area chosen (your school, neighborhood, city, or state).

1. A successful mission identification will:
 - a. **Pinpoint the Core Issue:** Choose a specific, localized problem rather than a broad, global abstract topic.
 - b. **Define the Scope and Context:** Use local observations, stakeholder insights, or data to explain why this problem exists right now.
 - c. **Identify Stakeholders:** Determine who is directly affected by the issue and who has a stake in its resolution

Example:

Core Issue: Food waste and nutritional deficiencies in our local middle school cafeteria.

Context & Stakeholders: Over 40% of fresh fruits provided with school lunches are thrown away daily without being eaten, while local food pantries report rising need. Students, cafeteria staff, and school administration are directly impacted.

Step 2: Symptoms

Content: The Symptoms section requires you to look closely at the larger issue and document multiple distinct, observable indicators that prove the problem is actively occurring.

1. Mission Report submissions must include 6 unique Symptom descriptions.
2. Successful Symptoms will:
 - a. **Include an Observable Sign:** Include a specific indicator, complaint, behavior, or physical condition that shows the problem exists.
 - b. **Provide Real-World Evidence:** Back up each symptom with a brief description, data point, or observation.
 - i. **Keep Distinctions Unique:** Ensure each symptom represents a distinct angle of the problem, rather than just repeating the same point in different words

Example:

Symptom 1 (Physical Waste): Whole, unpeeled apples and sealed cartons of milk are routinely thrown into trash cans en masse at the end of every lunch period.

Symptom 2 (Financial/Resource Inefficiency): The school food budget experiences recurring strains due to purchasing volume that outpaces actual consumption rates.

Symptom 3 (Student Behavior): Students report rushing through lunch or skipping fruit entirely because it is inconvenient to eat quickly, leading to mid-afternoon hunger and classroom distraction.

Step 3: Central Concern

Content: Now that you have identified the symptoms, you must dig deeper to find out why they are happening. Treating symptoms only provides a temporary fix; solving the Central Concern creates lasting change.

The Central Concern section works to resolve the issue identified by developing an **Action** to be taken and the **Goal** of accomplishing that **Action**. The **Central Concern** must contain a rationale for why the action is the most effective course of action to resolve the issue identified in step 1.

1. Mission Report submissions must include 1 Central Concern.
2. A successfully written Central Concern will include:
 - a. **A Rationale:** Provides context for why you have chosen the action to be taken.
 - b. **A Bridge:** These solutions will...
 - c. **An Action:** Identifies the action that will be taken to solve the major issue identified in step 1.
 - d. **A Goal:** Identifies the intended outcome of accomplishing the Action.
 - e. **Specifications:** Identifies the location and stakeholders of the mission.

Example:

At Westside Middle School, approximately 30% of food items are wasted at the end of every lunch period, and local food pantries could use these wasted items to feed local families in need. These solutions will increase the redistribution of wasted food items to local food pantries so that local families in need will have greater access to needed food items.

Rationale: At Westside Middle School, approximately 30% of food items are wasted at the end of every lunch period, and local food pantries could use these wasted items to feed local families in need.

Bridge: These solutions will

Action: Increase the redistribution of wasted food items to local food pantries

Goal: so that local families in need may have greater access to needed food items.

Specifications: Westside Middle School (location), Families in need/Food Pantries (Stakeholders)

Step 4: Brainstorm Solutions

Content: Brainstorm and generate solution ideas that address the Action and Goal from Step 3.

1. Mission Report submissions must include 6 unique Solution Ideas.
2. Each successful Solution Idea will include:
 - a. **Brief Description of Solution Idea:** Briefly explain the proposed solution idea.
 - i. What is the solution idea?
 - ii. How does it solve the Action and Goal from step 3?
 - b. **Advantage of Solution Idea:** List advantages of implementing the proposed solution idea.
 - c. **Disadvantages of Solution Idea:** List potential disadvantages or obstacles with implementing the proposed solution idea.
 - i. Use the advantages and disadvantages of each proposed solution idea to decide which to implement as the Strategic Plan.

Example:

Brief Description of Solution Idea: Establish a student-led "Share Table & Sorter" station in the Westside Middle School cafeteria, where students can place unpeeled fruit and unopened packaged items into designated bins instead of throwing them away. The surplus food from lunch will be packaged and transported to local pantries.

Advantage of Solution Idea: It requires minimal upfront cost, creates active leadership roles for students, immediately prevents edible food from entering the landfill, and directly benefits families facing food insecurity in the local community.

Disadvantages of Solution Idea: Potential obstacles include strict county health department regulations regarding perishable food storage, the need for consistent adult volunteers to transport the items, and the risk of non-compliant items accidentally being thrown into the sharing bins.

Step 5: Strategic Plan Implementation

Content: The Strategic Plan is the detailed implementation of the selected solution idea from step 4.

1. A Successful Strategic Plan will include:
 - a. **A Description of the Solution:** What was the actual initiative, program, policy, or physical creation?
 - b. **A Justification of the Chosen Solution:** Why was the solution chosen the best option to address the **Core Issue** observed in your area?
 - c. **Team Member Roles:** What was the job of each team member, and how did they fulfill their responsibilities?
 - d. **An Implementation Process:** A step-by-step description of how the Strategic Plan was carried out.
 - i. **Resource and Material Requirements:** What supplies, spaces, or permissions are needed to make the solution happen?
 - ii. **Community Involvement/Support:** Who were other civic partners that assisted with the mission, and what did they contribute?
 - e. **Addresses the Action:** Explain how the proposed solution idea addresses the Action from Step 3.
 - f. **Addresses the Goal:** Explain how the proposed solution idea addresses the Goal from Step 3.

Example:

The Westside Share & Sort Station

- **Solution Description:** Establish a "Share Table and Sorter" station positioned near the primary exit of the Westside Middle School cafeteria. This station functions as a collection point where students can easily deposit unpeeled, whole produce (such as apples, oranges, and bananas) and unopened, pre-packaged food items (such as milk cartons, string cheese, and cracker packs) instead of discarding them into the trash. The area is clearly labeled with instructional signage.
- **Justification of the Chosen Solution:**

- This solution was chosen because it directly targets the physical barriers that cause good food to be thrown away. While simple posters or announcements just tell students not to waste food, they do not change how the cafeteria actually works. By placing a clear drop-off station right along the path where students walk when leaving, this setup makes donating surplus food easier than tossing it in the trash. Focusing on familiar items like whole fruits ensures that students will easily understand how to participate and help feed families in need.

- **Step-by-Step Implementation:**

- **Pre-Lunch Setup:** Two team members and one teacher monitor arrive in the cafeteria to sanitize two folding tables using school-approved disinfectant wipes. They set up clearly labeled, color-coded plastic bins ("Produce," "Sealed Dairy/Items," and "Recycling/Waste") alongside instructional signage.
- **Collection Phase :** As students finish eating and walk toward the tray return area, student team members guide them to sort their unwanted items into the appropriate bins rather than walking past them to the trash cans. Volunteers actively monitor bins to ensure no opened or unsealed items are placed in the collection.
- **Inventory & Packing Phase:** Immediately following the final lunch shift, student team members conduct a quick inventory count of the collected items. They carefully transfer perishable items into transport coolers to maintain safe holding temperatures.
- **Community Transport & Handoff:** A designated parent volunteer or school staff member loads the sealed coolers into their vehicle and transports the collected food directly to the local neighborhood community food pantry on Tuesdays and Thursdays immediately after school.

- **Resource & Material Requirements:**

- **Materials Needed:** Two durable, easily wipeable folding tables and 4–6 heavy-duty, clear plastic storage bins with secure lids.
- **Signage & Visual Aids:** Instructional signs that clearly illustrate what items can and cannot be shared.
- **Food Safety Equipment:** Two insulated transport coolers with ice packs to maintain proper food safety temperatures during holding and transit.
- **Administrative Tools:** A clipboard with a digital or paper sign-up sheet and daily log tracker managed by the student team members.

- **Community Involvement/ Support:**

- This project succeeded because of strong teamwork between the school and the local community. The school administration and cafeteria staff helped by approving where the tables could go to make sure everything followed health and safety rules. Parent volunteers also played a vital role by taking charge of the transport process. They loaded the insulated coolers into their vehicles right after dismissal and safely delivered the rescued food items straight to the neighborhood pantry twice a week.

- **Team Member Roles & Responsibilities:**
 - **Student Volunteers:** Responsible for the physical setup, active monitoring during lunch transitions, sorting enforcement, daily item inventory, and packing items into coolers.
 - **Cafeteria Staff & Administration:** Review and approve the station's physical placement to ensure it does not block emergency exits or fire lanes, and provide guidance on health code compliance.
 - **Parent/Community Partners:** Provide bi-weekly vehicle transport of the collected food items from the school to the local community food pantry.
- **Connection to the Central Concern:** Unlike passive awareness campaigns such as school-wide assemblies or posters simply telling students "don't waste food" this solution directly targets the physical and logistical barriers. It provides a zero-effort drop-off point right along the student's natural exit path, successfully bridging the gap between daily school surplus and the local families who need nourishment.

Step 6: Evaluation and Reflection

Content: Explain how you will measure whether your Mission was successful and reflect on the change it brought to your community.

1. Successful Evaluation and Reflection Includes:
 - a. **Success Metrics:** Define clear, measurable indicators of success (percentage decrease in waste, number of meals saved, positive survey feedback).
 - b. **Reflection on the Process:** Conclude with a team reflection on how you believe that the mission positively affected the area and stakeholders.

Example:

Success Metrics

- **Waste Reduction:** We achieved a 21% decrease in total edible food waste discarded by the student body over a 3 month period.
- **Meals/Items Saved:** We successfully diverted and redirected 675 individual whole fruit and sealed dairy items per week from the school cafeteria to the local community food pantry over the 3 month period.
- **Ability to Feed Local Families:** The local food pantry increased its overall food inventories and was able to feed 15% more people than the same time frame the previous year.

Reflection on the Process

Reflecting on this mission, our team believes the project created a meaningful, lasting positive impact on our school and surrounding community. By implementing the unused food drop-off system, we successfully bridged the gap between daily school surplus and local families experiencing food insecurity. Not only did we prevent hundreds of pounds of edible food from ending up in landfills, but we also united students, cafeteria staff, and local pantry coordinators around a shared goal.

Mission Report Guidelines

1. The Mission title and each section of the Mission Report must be clearly labeled with each step.
2. The Mission Report must be written in size 12, Times New Roman or Cambria font.
3. The Mission Report must have 1" margins and be double-spaced.
4. Total word count for the Mission Report must not exceed 3500 words.
5. Submission deadline is approximately 2 weeks before the State Competition - see website for details.
 - a. Mission Report and Evidence Video Journal must be submitted together.

Evidence Video Journal

Content: The video journal serves as a visual and narrative log of your team's progress. Instead of just telling the evaluators what you did, your video must *show* the work in action.

Step 1: Mission Identification

Content: This opening segment sets the stage for your entire project. Judges need to see and hear proof that you didn't just guess at a problem, but rather investigated a real, localized issue using direct observation and evidence.

1. Include in this section:
 - a. **Visual Evidence:**
 - i. Footage or photos of the physical site where the problem occurs
 - ii. Capture proof that the issue you have chosen is occurring.
 - iii. Clips of your team actively gathering data such as taking notes, reviewing statistics, or observing the environment.
 - b. **Narration:**
 - i. Introduce the specific, localized challenge you chose to tackle and state where and why it is happening.
 - ii. Point directly to the specific symptoms you identified during your research. Explain how these visible signs prove that the problem is active and urgent.
 - iii. A clear statement of your Central Concern (Action, Goal, Rationale, Location, and Stakeholders) and an explanation of why your team chose to target the root cause rather than just the surface symptoms.

Step 2: Strategic Plan Implementation

Content: This is the core of your mission. Evaluators want to see how you brought your solution idea to life. This segment proves that your team can take a concept from the drawing board, gather resources, collaborate with stakeholders, and execute a real-world plan.

2. Include in this section:
 - a. **Visual Evidence:**
 - i. Footage of your solution being built, tested, or set up in the real world
 - ii. Clips or photos of your team meeting with key partners and stakeholders
 - iii. Real-time footage of your team setting up the initiative on-site before it launches
 - b. **Narration:**
 - i. Clearly explain what your solution is and how it functions on a day-to-day basis.
 - ii. Walk through the logistical flow of how the project runs from start to finish
 - iii. Highlight the specific materials used and explain how team members and community stakeholders divided up responsibilities to successfully implement the Strategic Plan.

Step 3: Impact and Evaluation

Content: This is the ultimate proof of your mission's value. While the previous steps showed your planning and setup, this segment proves that your solution actually worked. Evaluators need to see the project running live in the real world, backed by data and evidence of success.

3. Include in this section:
 - a. **Visual Evidence:**
 - i. Capture real-time footage of your project in motion during its operation
 - ii. Footage or photos documenting the final stage.
 - iii. On-screen graphics, charts, or close-up clips of your data logs, or summary graphs showing your results over time.

- iv. Brief clips of student participants, teachers, or community partners sharing quick positive reactions or survey responses about how the project helped them.
- b. **Narration:**
 - i. Briefly describe what is happening in the video footage as the project runs successfully.
 - ii. Clearly present your data. State your exact metrics
 - iii. Explain what those numbers actually mean for your community and stakeholders.

Step 4: Team Reflection

Content: This concluding segment brings your video journal full circle. While numbers and data prove that your solution worked, the team reflection proves that the mission changed you. It allows evaluators to hear directly from team members about the human side of the experience, what obstacles you navigated, and how the team and community were impacted throughout the process.

- 4. Include in this section:
 - a. **Visual Evidence:**
 - i. On-camera statements from team members reflecting either together or individually.
 - b. **Narration:**
 - i. Summarize how the mission positively changed the target area and improved the lives of the stakeholders involved.
 - ii. Briefly highlight a specific challenge or hurdle your team faced during implementation and explain how you adapted to solve it.
 - iii. Share what your team learned by engaging in this Mission: Possible competition.

Evidence Video Journal Guidelines

- 1. Evidence video journals must have a maximum runtime of 30 minutes.
 - a. Teams should divide their time logically across the required segments.
- 2. The video must clearly flow through the core project phases.
 - a. Footage must feature the actual student team conducting their work, interacting with stakeholders, and capturing real-world video.
 - b. The use of Generative AI or stock photos will result in a score of 0 for this section.
- 3. Videos must be submitted at a minimum resolution of 720p to ensure clarity for judges.
- 4. Clear narration is essential, and teams should limit unnecessary background noise that could potentially overpower speakers.
- 5. Video files must be properly linked with sharing permissions set correctly prior to the submission deadline.
 - a. Video submissions must be submitted as a private YouTube link or a Google Drive link.
 - b. Email submission to Chill@kaac.com
 - c. Subject line: School/Student Name, Division, (Team # - if the school has multiple submissions)
 - d. Submission deadline is approximately 2 weeks before the State Competition - see website for details.
 - e. Mission Report and Evidence Video Journal must be submitted together.
 - f. Attachments: Publication Consent Forms for team members and persons appearing in the video submission.

Interview

Content: The student interview serves a vital evaluation purpose that written reports and videos alone cannot capture. Specifically, it demonstrates three core things: Authenticity and Ownership, Critical Thinking and Adaptability, and Communication and Professional Presence.

Interviews will take place on the Monday of the State Finals Award Ceremony beginning at 10am EST.

Step 1: Problem Understanding and Research

Content: This category evaluates how thoroughly students investigated their chosen issue before jumping to conclusions. Evaluators want to see that students didn't just pick a broad, generic topic, but instead rooted their project in a genuine, localized problem that they personally observed and analyzed.

1. In this section students should be able to explain the following:
 - a. **Clarity and Precision of the Issue:**
 - i. Students can articulate the exact problem statement concisely, avoiding vague generalizations. They can pinpoint precisely where the issue occurs, who it affects, and why it matters to their local community.
 - b. **Depth of Investigation & Root-Cause Analysis**
 - i. Students look past surface-level symptoms to explain the underlying causes. They back up their claims with real-world evidence gathered through firsthand site observations, data collection, or research.
2. Potential Interview Questions:
 - a. *"How did your team first discover this problem in your community?"*
 - b. *"What data or firsthand observations did you collect to prove this was an actual issue rather than just a hunch?"*
 - c. *"What is the difference between the surface symptoms you saw and the actual root cause of this problem?"*

Step 2: Team Reflection

Content: This category evaluates the core execution of the mission. Evaluators want to see that the students' solution wasn't just a good theoretical idea on paper, but a practical, well-planned initiative that they successfully brought to life while navigating real-world limitations.

1. In this section students should be able to explain the following:
 - a. **Feasibility:**
 - i. The solution is realistic, actionable, and tightly bound to the project's framework. Evaluators want students to explain that the steps taken clearly address the stated Action, Goal, and Rationale established during the planning phase.
 - b. **Execution & Resourcefulness**
 - i. Students demonstrate how they managed physical, financial, and human resources. Judges look closely at how the team worked around real-world obstacles and how effectively they collaborated with adult stakeholders or community partners.
2. Potential Interview Questions:
 - a. *"How does your chosen solution directly connect back to your original goal and action?"*
 - b. *"What obstacles or pushback did you encounter when trying to set this up, and how did your team adapt?"*
 - c. *"How did you coordinate with outside partners, school staff, or volunteers to make sure you had the resources needed to succeed?"*

Step 3: Impact and Evaluation

Content: This category evaluates the tangible proof of the mission's success. Evaluators want to move beyond good intentions and hear hard evidence. This section ensures that students can back up their claims with concrete numbers and clearly explain how their intervention measurably improved their community and stakeholders.

1. In this section students should be able to explain the following:
 - a. **Concrete Metrics & Data Collection**
 - i. Students do not rely on vague statements like "everyone loved it" or "we made a big difference." Instead, they present specific, quantifiable data points tracked over time.
 - b. **Demonstrated Value & Community Benefit**
 - i. Students successfully connect their raw data back to a human, real-world outcome. They explain what those numbers actually mean for the target area and stakeholders
2. Potential Interview Questions:
 - a. *"What specific data did you track to prove your mission actually worked?"*
 - b. *"How did you measure your success against your original goals?"*
 - c. *"Beyond the raw numbers, what tangible difference did this project make for your stakeholders and community?"*

Step 4: Communication and Professional Appearance

Content: This category evaluates how effectively students present themselves and their work. Evaluators look at whether the team can articulate their ideas with clarity and confidence, while ensuring that the presentation is shared by all team members.

1. In this section students should be able to explain the following:
 - a. **Professionalism, Preparedness, & Clarity**
 - i. Students speak clearly, maintain professional body language, and organize their thoughts logically. They avoid relying heavily on memorized scripts or looking disengaged, instead demonstrating a genuine command of their mission details.
 - b. **Equitable Team Participation**
 - i. Every member of the team contributes meaningfully to the interview. Evaluators actively watch to ensure the conversation isn't dominated by a single spokesperson while other team members remain silent.
2. Evaluators look for:
 - a. *Smooth Transitions: How well team members pass the conversation back and forth to each other.*
 - b. *Active Engagement: Whether non-speaking team members remain attentive, nodding, and supportive while a peer is answering a question.*
 - c. *Confidence & Tone: A respectful, enthusiastic, and professional demeanor when engaging with the adult evaluation panel.*

Display and Engagement

Content: The display and engagement portion validates real-world impact by moving projects out of isolation and proving their value to the public.

Students will begin setting up their projects beginning at 8am EST on the Monday morning of the State Finals Competition. Public viewing will be from 9am EST to 12pm EST.

Step 1: Mission Framing and Problem Identification

Content: This section of the display board serves as the "hook" for judges. Within seconds of walking up to the table, an evaluator should immediately understand what the project is, where it is happening, and why it matters. It visually proves that the team investigated a genuine, localized issue backed by real evidence.

1. The display should include:
 - a. **The Mission Title**
 - i. A creative project name paired with a descriptive subtitle that instantly hints at the core focus.
 - b. **Evidence of Research and Observations**
 - i. Examples may include:
 1. Scrapbook or Folio
 2. Photos of the physical location showing the problem in its natural environment
 3. Arrows, text bubbles, or callout lines pointing directly to specific, observable symptoms within the photos.

Step 2: Strategic Plan Design and Implementation

Content: This section of the display bridges the gap between identifying a problem and developing a solution. Evaluators use this area to evaluate the team's engineering, planning, and resourcefulness. It visually answers the question: How did your team turn an idea into a working reality?

1. The display should include:
 - a. **Visual Documentation**
 - i. Examples may include:
 1. Photos capturing the team actively working to develop the project. Show students building structures, developing technology, collaborating with adult stakeholders and community partners, etc.
 2. Visual drafts of what was built such as early sketches, blueprints, layout maps of where the project was set up, or snapshots of digital designs.
 - b. **Timeline**
 - i. Examples may include:
 1. A linear diagram, numbered blocks, or a chronological flowchart that guides the judge through the project's execution timeline
 2. A small, highlighted sidebar on the flowchart detailing a specific hurdle the team hit during implementation

Step 3: Impact and Evaluation

Content: This section provides hard evidence that validates the entire mission. While the earlier sections showed what students planned and built, this area proves that the initiative actually worked. Evaluators look here for concrete, measurable results that demonstrate the success of the mission.

1. The display should include evidence of mission completion:
 - a. Examples may include:
 - i. **Data Visuals**
 1. Bar graphs, line charts, or pie charts displaying clear metrics over time
 2. Charts must feature clear axes, a descriptive title, and a highlighted callout box drawing attention to the most important takeaway
 - ii. **Samples from Project Development**
 1. Printouts or physical copies of materials used during the project that prove its real-world implementation.
 2. Optional: If their project involved building a physical product, tool, or signage system, bringing a sample version to display on the table.

Display and Table Guidelines

1. Physical Foot Print:

- a. The Display must include at least (1) 36"x 48" display board.
 - i. The display board must be able to stand securely on its own without leaning against walls, dividers, or requiring assistance to prop up.
 - ii. Displays must not exceed 7' or 84"
- b. Display Boundary: All project materials, samples, binders, and display boards must fit entirely within the assigned space - 8ft squared including table.
- c. Teams may bring a replica of their project design. The replica must remain within the assigned space.
- d. Displays may include table cloth or skirt as decided by the team.

2. Prohibited Materials

- a. No Open Flames, Chemicals, or Hazardous Materials: This includes candles, lighters, heavy chemicals, or toxic substances.
- b. No Perishable Foods or Liquids: Real food samples, open drinks, or items that attract pests or spoil are not allowed.
- c. If the display requires electronic components, they must use battery powered devices. Teams may not use extension cords or power outlets.
- d. Videos or digital presentations must be played at a low volume meant only for immediate conversation, or viewed using headphones, so as not to disrupt surrounding teams.
- e. Teams may not climb on tables or chairs to set up their project.

Evaluator Scoresheet

	Criteria	1-2 (Beginner)	3-4 (Below Average)	5-6 (Competent)	7-8 (Above Average)	9-10 (Exceptional)	Score
Final Report	Step 1: Mission Identification	Problem is extremely broad or abstract; lacks local context, stakeholder details, and goals.	Problem is identified, but local context, affected stakeholders, or target goals are vague.	Clearly pinpoints a localized problem with basic context, stakeholders, and a stated goal.	Pinpoints a specific localized issue, details solid local evidence, and sets a clear, measurable goal.	Exemplary framing: pinpoints a precise local core issue, rich contextual data, specific stakeholders, and a sharp measurable target goal.	
	Step 2: Symptoms	Features fewer than 3 symptoms or descriptions are repetitive or lack any real-world evidence.	Features 3-4 symptoms, or some symptoms overlap significantly or lack observational backing.	Features at least 5 distinct symptoms with basic observable signs and minimal real-world evidence.	Features 6 distinct symptoms, each with clear observable signs and solid real-world evidence.	Features 6 distinct symptoms, each featuring a sharp observable sign and rigorous real-world evidence without redundancy.	
	Step 3: Central Concern	The selected issue is overly broad or poorly defined, and the statement offers no clear direction for addressing the problem moving forward.	The selected issue lacks clear focus, and the strategy for addressing the issue moving forward is vague, generic, or underdeveloped.	Addresses a clear local issue and outlines a basic, logical path for how to address the issue moving forward.	Addresses a well-chosen, specific local issue and clearly demonstrates a sound strategy for addressing the issue moving forward.	Targets a highly specific, impactful local issue and brilliantly outlines a comprehensive plan for addressing the issue moving forward.	
	Step 4: Brainstorm Solutions	Fewer than 3 solution ideas; ideas are unrealistic and lack any critical evaluation.	Includes 3-4 ideas, but advantages/disadvantages lack realistic operational depth.	Includes 5 valid solution ideas with basic descriptions, advantages, and disadvantages.	Includes 6 unique solution ideas with clear descriptions, realistic advantages, and thoughtful obstacles.	Features 6 unique, fully articulated solution ideas, each with robust descriptions, clear advantages, and deep obstacle analysis.	
	Step 5: Strategic Plan Implementation	Incomplete plan; unfeasible, missing resource/role details, and disconnected from Step 3.	Outline is present, but lacks critical operational details regarding resources, roles, or workflow steps.	Provides a basic strategic plan, operational steps, and lists required materials and team roles.	Provides a strong operational blueprint with clear workflows, resource requirements, roles, and a solid tie to Step 3.	Exceptional operational blueprint: rich solution description, rigorous step-by-step workflow, detailed resources, defined roles, and a direct tie to Step 3.	
	Step 6: Evaluation & Reflection	Lacks metrics entirely and omits team reflection or community impact.	Vague mention of success ("everyone liked it") with little to no meaningful reflection.	Outlines basic success metrics and provides a short reflection on the team's experience.	Features clear metrics and a thoughtful reflection of mission's impact on the target area.	Exceptional metrics (percentages, exact counts) paired with a deeply moving, authentic team reflection of mission's impact on target area and overcoming hurdles.	
Evidence Video Journal	Step 1: Mission ID Video	No site footage or visual proof; relies entirely on static slides or text.	Minimal site footage, but narration glosses over specific symptoms and local context.	Shows site footage and briefly explains the localized challenge and observed symptoms.	Strong visual site footage paired with clear narration explaining the localized problem and symptom evidence.	Exceptional visual evidence of the physical site/data collection paired with authoritative narration proving urgent local need.	
	Step 2: Strategic Plan Implementation Video	No visual proof of execution; talking heads only with no real-world action shown.	Shows brief setup clips, but lacks operational details or does not explain how the solution functions.	Demonstrates basic implementation footage and explains how the solution functions.	Vividly captures the project running live on-site, setup, and stakeholder collaboration clips.	Exceptional visual documentation: dynamic footage of building/setup, stakeholder meetings, and real-time execution of the strategic plan.	
	Step 3: Impact & Evaluation Video	No data presented visually; claims lack any real-world proof or metrics.	Mentions data briefly, but lacks on-screen graphics, charts, or live mission results.	Shows basic data numbers or charts with a short description of mission outcomes.	Clearly presents data graphics, logs, or summary charts alongside live operational footage.	Exceptional impact footage: clearly captured mission operation, clean on-screen data graphics/charts, and authentic stakeholder reaction soundbites.	
	Step 4: Team Reflection Video	Missing team reflection entirely or features no student voices on camera.	Reflection feels heavily scripted, brief, or completely omits mission challenges.	Includes team members speaking on camera about what they learned.	Students speak authentically about community impact, hurdles, and mission takeaways.	Deeply authentic student-led reflections on camera discussing community transformation, specific pivots under pressure, and personal growth.	
	Video Quality and Compliance	Does not meet runtime limits, or Severe technical flaws: constant camera shaking, frequent out-of-focus shots, completely muffled or distorted audio, and disruptive background noise making narration incomprehensible.	Meets runtime requirements but has noticeable camera instability combined with inconsistent audio levels, or competing background noise.	Meets runtime requirements. Contains steady shots during key moments, acceptable resolution, and clear narration with minor audio balancing flaws or slight room echo.	Meets runtime requirements. Contains stable camera handling, smooth framing of action and interviews, clean and crisp audio with well-managed ambient sound levels.	Meets runtime requirements. Contains exceptionally steady camera work, dynamic framing, crystal-clear audio recording with zero distortion, and perfect balance between voice narration and background elements.	
Interview	Problem Understanding and Research	Students cannot explain their problem or show no understanding of underlying research.	Rely heavily on memorized scripts; struggle to articulate root causes beyond surface symptoms.	Students understand their project well, explain the basic problem, and connect it to initial research.	Students articulate the precise problem, local context, and root-cause analysis with strong confidence.	Students exceptionally articulate the precise problem, local context, and deep root-cause analysis backed by firsthand investigative knowledge.	
	Solution Feasibility and Obstacles	Solution is completely unfeasible or purely abstract. Students demonstrate zero understanding of how the project was actually run, failing to explain basic logistics, material management, or how they handled resistance.	Solution lacks realistic operational planning. Students struggle to articulate how resources were secured or managed, and when asked about hurdles, they provide vague answers or show they were unable to overcome initial pushback.	Solution is realistically planned and executed. Students explain the basic workflow and resource coordination, and can describe a minor hurdle they faced, though their explanation of how they adapted is surface-level.	Solution is highly practical and well-managed. Students clearly explain how goals were met within logistical constraints, detail specific obstacles or pushback encountered, and explain thoughtful steps taken to navigate around them.	Exceptional solution implementation and practicality. Students brilliantly detail how they managed physical, human, and time resources under pressure, providing vivid examples of adaptive problem-solving when facing major hurdles, while expertly crediting collaborative partners.	
	Impact and Evaluation	Unable to demonstrate data or impact. Students cannot cite any metrics when questioned, falling back on unsupported claims like "everyone liked it" or showing no awareness of whether the project worked.	Relies on vague generalities and surface-level observations. When asked about success, students struggle to provide numbers, offering only loose qualitative impressions without connecting them to actual stakeholder outcomes.	Presents basic tracking with literal explanations. Students comfortably share simple data points or counts collected during the project and can state in basic terms who benefited from the work.	Articulates specific data trends and tangible community outcomes. Students confidently explain concrete metrics tracked over time and clearly walk the evaluators through what those numbers actually mean for their stakeholders.	Exceptional command of evidence and human impact. Students effortlessly synthesize precise metrics tracked over time with deep, personal insights into how their project genuinely transformed their stakeholders' daily lives and community well-being.	
	Communication and Professional Presence	Unprepared, unprofessional body language, disengaged members, or unable to answer basic questions.	Professional appearance, but one student completely dominates while others stay silent.	Professional demeanor and basic equitable participation among team members.	Articulate, professional, and confident with smooth peer handoffs and active listening.	Exemplary professional presence: highly articulate, confident, enthusiastic, demonstrating seamless equitable participation and active team synergy.	

	Mission Framing and Problem Identification	Incomplete or messy. The board is missing basic elements like a title, problem summary, or site photos, and is hard to follow.	Basic parts are present, but unclear. The board has framing details, but the text is too long or dense, and the photos do not clearly explain the problem.	Clear and standard. The board includes an easy-to-read title, a clear problem statement, and basic photos showing where the issue happens.	Engaging and well-explained. The board immediately grabs attention with a strong title and problem summary, using photos with clear explanations.	Exceptional and instantly clear. The board features a creative title, sharp problem framing, and striking photos with precise explanations that make the problem obvious at a glance.	
	Strategic Plan Implementation	Process is missing or completely unclear. The display fails to show how the solution was built, set up, or put into action, leaving evaluators with no understanding of the operational journey.	Process depiction is superficial or confusing. The display includes brief mentions or scattered photos of the project, but fails to clearly show how the steps unfolded from concept to real-world execution.	Process is depicted in a straightforward manner. The display clearly outlines the basic sequence of steps taken to bring the solution to life, using a combination of explanatory text and supporting visuals.	Process is vividly and logically illustrated. The display clearly traces the operational progression of the project, effectively showing how resources were utilized and how hurdles were navigated during execution.	Exceptional visuals. The display brilliantly illustrates the real-world evolution of the project seamlessly blending action visuals, setup phases, and problem-solving adaptations into a compelling, easy-to-follow narrative of execution.	
Display and Engagement	Impact Data and Samples	No data or samples shown. Data visuals are entirely missing, unreadable, or lack concrete metrics, and no physical project samples are provided.	Minimal or poorly formatted data. Data charts are present but lack professional formatting, clear axes, or takeaway explanations, accompanied by very few samples.	Clear and straightforward data. Includes readable data charts showing basic metrics alongside a few printed project documents, surveys, or samples.	Strong data and tangible proof. Features clean, professional charts with clear axes and key takeaways, alongside tangible, high-quality project samples and materials.	Outstanding data presentation and samples. Features masterfully organized charts with bold takeaway highlight boxes, paired with an impressive collection of authentic, high-quality project samples.	
	Visual Design and Professional Layout	Messy and unpolished; handwritten elements, peeling text, glaring typos, poor contrast, and chaotic organization that strains the eye.	Functional layout, but visually uneven; text blocks are crowded, font sizes vary wildly, or color choices make sections hard to read.	Clean and organized layout with readable fonts, consistent color schemes, and a logical reading flow from top-left to bottom-right.	Highly professional aesthetic; neat boundaries, balanced use of white space, crisp typography, and purposeful color coordination that enhances readability.	Exceptional-quality presentation; striking visual hierarchy, flawless typography, pristine production value, and an exceptionally polished, eye-catching layout.	
	Verbal Engagement and Communication	Students are disengaged, avoid eye contact, fail to interact with passersby, or cannot explain their board.	Students are polite when approached but rely on passive standing, offering minimal unprompted explanation of their work.	Students comfortably answer direct questions from evaluators and visitors about their project workflow.	Students are actively engaging, welcoming, and clearly explain their project's journey to visitors and evaluators with confidence.	Exceptional engagement: students command the space with vibrant enthusiasm, drawing visitors in, explaining complex project layers seamlessly, and fielding questions with poise.	