MSEF
Massachusetts Science
+ Engineering Fair

MSEF Sample Timelines

The following pages have timelines that were shared with MSEF from teachers that support science fair projects both in and out of the classroom.

Setting incremental deadlines for various stages of the projects will set up students for success. Think about how that fits into your classroom schedule and assessment.

NOTE ABOUT DEADLINES: We encourage students and teachers to set deadlines for submitting paperwork for project approval based on the work they need to complete. While there are final dates for submission of forms based on regional fair dates, students should be submitting for approval to allow time for feedback, required adjustments and avoid disqualification

Adjust deliverables for Engineering projects as needed.

Note: *Regional and State deadlines listed below are examples. Please review deadlines for local, regional and State Fair participation and adjust accordingly. Regional Timelines determine participation in the State Fair. High School Regional Fairs occur in early march. Middle School Regional Fairs occur between early March and late April.*



Example #1

Steps	Suggested Pacing	Resources and Instructions
Pre-work to inspire creativity and question generation		Check out guidance in the Project Ideation Activities guide
Decide Topic/ Possible problem to solve	Week 1	Teacher account creation in zFairs.
In notebook: Students complete background research and turn in list of 5-10 sources in APA format. They should generate a list of questions for teachers, other sources.	Week 2	easybib.com citationmachine.com Guidance for notebook here.
Final Research Question/Engineering Problem	Week 3	Consider feasibility with time and materials available.
Hypothesis/Possible solutions	Week 4	For example, "If"... "then"... statement
Experiment or Engineering Design (material/procedure) -create an acct and upload paperwork -include project summary	Week 5	With a completed plan, create a student zFairs account and upload paperwork for approval.
Waiting for approval - gather materials, further research, lesson on data analysis, practicing mock presentations.	Week 6	Reviewer may ask for more information before approval is granted. Watch for emails and zFairs system.
Experimentation and testing: Initial Results - Table	Week 7	Try your procedure once and report your first set of results
Final Results – Table/graph	Week 8	Redo all the steps at least 3-5 times and report your results in table and graph
Data analysis	Week 9	Explore this guide from 826 Boston
First draft of project report	Week 10	
Final Draft of project report with corrections	Week 11	
Final poster board, notebook complete	Week 13	Poster board suggestions
Practice presentation with peers, family and/or mentors.	Week 14	Presentation Prep guidance
Date of local science fair	3-4 weeks before regional fair	Can be a showcase or a competitive fair. Schools can typically send 10 projects to the regional fair
Submit student/project list to regional fair for participation	Approximately 3 weeks before fair.	
Regional Fair	varies	Consult your regional zFairs site
State Fair participation based on performance at Regional Fair, plus direct entry per school	Mid May	Students can use time between fairs for additional practice and improving materials but not changing experiment.

Example #2

Developed by Sarah Kazmi (Al Noor Academy)

Steps	**Due Date/ Suggested Pacing**	**Resources and Instructions**
Decide Topic/ Possible question	Week 1	
Turn in list of 10 sources in APA format in science fair notebook	Week 2	easybib.com citationmachine.com Make note of questions you have from the sources to ask a teacher, mentor, other adult or peer.
Final Research Question	Week 3	Should be testable with the materials you have available.
Hypothesis	Week 4	"If"... "then"... statement
Experiment Design (material/procedure) *If a project requires pre-approval from Regional Scientific Review Committee (SRC), submit paperwork for review. See manual for details	Week 5	1. List of materials with amounts in metric units 2. Step-by-step procedure 3. Identify independent and dependent variables and controls
Initial Results - Table	Week 6	Try your procedure once and report your first set of results
Final Results – Table/graph	Week 7	Redo all the steps at least 3-5 times and report your results in table and graph
First draft of report including: 1.Cover page (Title/Question, name of student, date of fair) 2. Abstract 3. Introduction 4. Question 5. Hypothesis 6. Experimental (Material, procedure, tables of results, graphs) 7. Explanation of results and possible sources of errors 6. Conclusion - restate your hypothesis and explain if it was correct or not. 7. Bibliography - All resources in APA format.	Week 8	
Final Draft of paper with corrections	Week 10	
Deadline for Regional Fair entry SRC Forms Due	Mid-January	

Final Powerpoint presentation/slides, notebook due	Week 13	
Practice presentation with peers, family and/or mentors. *(If virtual: Upload presentation with voice recording)*	Week 15	
Date of local science fair	Early to Mid-February	
Deadline for Regional Exhibit Entry Form	Early to Mid February	
Date of Regional Science Fair	Early March	

Example #3

This is a timeline created to support the middle school MSEF by a teacher. You may find this helpful for your planning purposes in the future. This teacher began the process in early January with spring break in mid-March, and it could certainly be revised for a different timeframe. Developed by Melissa Herliczek.

Check it off!	Assignment	Due Date
❑	1.) **Topic Selection** - 2-3 brainstorms and mini- research	Tuesday, Jan. 12th
❑	2.) **Background Research** Notes (4-6 total)	Tuesday, Feb. 2nd
❑	3.) **Background Research Report** (or brief summary)	Monday, Feb. 8th
❑	**4.) "zFairs" Regional Paperwork Due - must receive approval from the region BEFORE starting experimentation!** **Note-** This is only for students who are using potentially hazardous tools or substances or are using themselves as a human test subject. Ex: stove, microwave, chemicals, pulse rate, basketball shooting techniques, etc.	Friday, February 12th- Online "zFairs" Registration and forms- see teacher with questions
❑	5.) **Gain approval to start experimentation** -meet with teacher or mentor as needed	Friday, Feb. 19th
❑	6.) **Lab Report Intro** (Purpose, Hypothesis, Variables, Procedure and Materials)	Monday, February 22nd
❑	7.) **Data Collection** (exact amount of data to be determined with your teacher/mentor)	Friday, March 5th
❑	**8.) Data Table and Graphs**	Monday, March 8th
❑	**9.) Results and Conclusion**	Friday, March 12th
❑	10.) **Abstract** (Project Summary)	Tuesday, March 30th
❑	**11.) Final Lab Report and Digital Notebook**	Friday, April 2nd
❑	**12.) Project Slideshow and Video**	Friday, April 9th
❑	**13.)In Class Presentations**	Monday, April 12th to the 15th
❑	**14.)Virtual Expos/Science Fair**	TBD