

Dear Parents:

**We're embarking on a new adventure in the Library Media Center!** Each January, we begin a junior high research project, which pulls together all of the research skills we've learned throughout our years at St. Bernard School. In this project, we walk our students through each step of the "Big Six" steps for research success, which we first learned about in 4<sup>th</sup> grade with the book [Our Librarian Won't Tell Us ANYTHING!](#) By Toni Buzzeo. This process is the same one we've used each year since 4<sup>th</sup> grade, as we've completed a variety of in-class research projects in our library and media center programs, so our students are very familiar with it. Whether our final project has been a poster, PowerPoint presentation, Animoto video, Prezi, or written paper, the process is the same ... and our students have already done it all! ☺

Research (and feedback from our alumni) has indicated that one weakness of students entering high school is being able to use this process to produce a longer, more involved research paper. The students appear to be more than capable of doing the research for a big paper, but their weakness seems to be in the area of focusing this great amount of information to support a thesis in an organized and logical manner. So that is exactly what 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade will be focusing on. Our 7<sup>th</sup> graders will start small and produce a 5-page research paper, while our 8<sup>th</sup> graders will expand on their success from last year and produce a 10-page research paper.

Each week we'll walk our students through a step of the process. We'll model each step, support it with handouts and information to refer to at home, and show our students how to use their technology to make tasks easier. Students will complete their tasks at home and turn in their results each week in class. Some items, such as the bibliography, outline, and drafts of the paper will be turned in through GoogleDocs so we can provide instant feedback. Other pieces of the project, such as a list of resources, thesis statement, and notecards should be brought in to class. Each assignment will be listed on our Media/Technology webpage on the St. Bernard School website. Parents and students can access this page through their class page (click the grade 7 or 8 button, and you'll see the Media/Technology button at the top of that page.) We would suggest that you subscribe to this page by entering your e-mail address – all subscribed members will receive an e-mail each time a new assignment is posted! This will help students stay on track and will communicate our activities to parents.

Since we understand that many of these tasks will be time-consuming, students will be rewarded with a language arts grade for each completed task. (This is a super-easy way to boost your language arts grade!) The completed paper will count as the Language Arts final exam (putting all of the language arts skills learned this year into practical use) and a history test/project grade (based on the depth and presentation of the research, as well as how well the paper supports its thesis.) Mr. Hughes is aware of this project and will tailor the students' homework and testing accordingly. He will also be correcting and grading the final papers.

If you have any questions about this project, please contact us! We look forward to making this a positive, empowering experience for your student!

Mrs. Lavoie ([mlavoie@sbsenfield.org](mailto:mlavoie@sbsenfield.org)) and Mrs. Frost ([kfrost@sbsenfield.org](mailto:kfrost@sbsenfield.org))

# Junior High Research Project

## Winter/Spring 2017

**Parents, please initial each item below to acknowledge that you are aware of the requirements for our upcoming research project in the SBS Library/Media Center and that you have reviewed this with your student(s.) Also please include an e-mail address that we can use to communicate with you directly, should the need arise. Thank you.**

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the parent letter for this project and understand what is involved.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am aware that my student will have weekly assignments that will count as language arts grades.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that these assignments are available for viewing on the Media/Technology web page. My student and I have subscribed to the Media/Technology web page in order to get assignment updates. IF for some reason, no assignment update arrives by e-mail weekly, we will check the page ourselves to be sure we are not missing something.

\_\_\_\_\_ In the event that the teachers need my assistance in helping my student stay on track with this long-term project, I can be reached at the following e-mail address:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I am aware that the completed research paper will count as a history test/project grade as well as the language arts final exam. Both grades will be determined by Mr. Hughes, who will read and grade the final papers in May.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Grade