

PSD Adapted Capstone Project Guidelines

A Capstone project is a multifaceted assignment that serves as a culminating academic, intellectual, and personalized learning experience for students, typically at the end of an academic program or learning pathway experience. The project must demonstrate the 21st Century Skills as defined by the Colorado Department of Education. [CDE Definition](#). Projects should also be directly related to the students' career goals and interests and ICAP (Individual Career Academic Plan).

A Capstone Project must include these five elements (use below as a checklist to complete)

- **Element 1-** Action Plan: Student must “do” something (i.e. research, internship, service learning, etc. and submit a proposal to a mentor for approval of their Capstone Project)
 - Submit Proposal
 - Gain Approval
 - Complete Pre-360 Evaluation-21st Century Skills
 - Meet with a mentor to discuss 360 Evaluation-21st Century Skills and your Reading and/or Math Competencies
 - Parent/guardian Capstone communication
- **Element 2-** Research & Implementation: Every student should become an expert in the content area/career area associated with their Capstone and be able to demonstrate proper research skills.
 - Research and/or implement an idea
 - Log project hours
- **Element 3-** Evaluation: Every student will be evaluated on their Capstone, their 21st Century Skills and application to English and/or Math competencies.
 - Complete Post-360 Evaluation-21st Century Skills after presentation
 - Meet with a mentor to discuss Post-360 Evaluation-21st Century Skills
 - Earn a score of 28 or higher on the Summary/Presentation rubric
 - Meet with a mentor to review Summary/Presentation rubric score
- **Element 4-** Summary: Each project will have some type of summary and reflection of the Capstone. This can be done verbally, in writing, groups, etc., as agreed upon between the student and mentor(s)
 - Set up a time and place for your presentation
 - Invite team members and any additional attendees
 - Organize artifacts and/or materials needed for presentation
 - Present the Capstone project
- **Element 5-** Artifacts: Each Capstone must have a minimum of 3 artifacts.
 - Artifact # 1 _____

 - Artifact # 2 _____

 - Artifact # 3 _____

Element 1- Action Plan

Choosing a Capstone Project

A Capstone Project is about doing and learning something that relates to your current and future goals. This may be something you want to do, learn about, have done, or in which you are currently engaged. This is your chance to choose a topic that will be interesting and worthwhile and will extend your knowledge of your career area. Topics should be related to your career interest.

- Topics should be broad enough to provide adequate resources and to yield a final product or presentation of your choosing.
- Topics should lend themselves to a manageable and affordable product/process project.
- Projects should have at least 2 mentors identified as part of the process.
- Project may be completed in coursework or extracurricular activities.

Options for Type of Capstone:

- Research a topic you want to dig deeper into learning
- Event Planning for a passion area (e.g., walkathon, school-wide event, ceremony to present fundraising)
- Experiment – Conduct an experiment in an area of interest.
- Service Learning – Create a Service-Learning opportunity that will enhance your community.
- Internship- To gain more awareness, understanding, and knowledge about a career.
- Research the career you have chosen in your IEP transition goals.
- Personal Wellness – Creating a personal wellness plan; passion, purpose, physical fitness, investment in relationships, substance use, etc.
- Productive Citizenship- Volunteer in community, fundraising, or other ways to be a productive citizen of your community.

Timeline:

- An individual timeline is created with the student mentors
- The Capstone elements may be compiled or completed in a semester
- This must be completed before graduation and is recommended to be completed the first semester of their senior year or before

Element 2 – Research and Implementation

- Every student should become an expert in the content area/career area associated with their Capstone Project and demonstrate proper research skills.
- Through your Capstone Project, address what are you want to know more about and how you can use this information in your future plans.

What I want to find out – during Element 2 you will explain what it is that you want to know (or uncover) about your topic. This is where you address the essential question. Why is this topic important to you and how does it relate to your future plans?

The Search – In this section you dig into your primary and secondary research.

- **Primary Research:** Research you conduct yourself. It involves going directly to the source to ask questions and gather information.
 - Interviews (new or existing acquaintances/family, friends)
 - Phone calls
 - Emails
 - Letters
 - Site Observations/Job Shadows
- **Secondary Research:** A type of research that has already been completed, compiled, gathered, organized and published by others. (Cite your sources using MLA formatting)
 - Studies done by government agencies, trade associations, or other businesses.
 - Internet research (please, from reliable sources)
 - Books
 - Media Center

What I learned – combine your ideas and prior knowledge, with the evidence you uncovered. What conclusions can you reach? What did you learn? Please input this information into your presentation.

Links:

***Reminder!!! Please keep all this research as part of your required artifacts.**

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Capstone Guidelines

Element 3 - Evaluation

Part of showing competency requires you to evaluate your work and assess your skill level in addition to other professionals evaluating your performance and offering feedback. You will need a total of 3 types of evaluations to show your competency:

- You will need a pre and post 21st Century Skills Assessment to be completed by **you** and **your mentor** at the beginning of your Capstone and after your presentation. After completing the 21st Century Skills Assessment you will sit down with your mentor to go over the feedback, notice areas of strength, and think about areas of improvement.
- You will need to pass your Presentation Rubric with a score of 28/42 or higher (this may be over multiple attempts)
- Your 3rd evaluation will be one of your choosing to show your knowledge and demonstrate learning/growth (this can double as an artifact):
 - ACE/PACE evaluations
 - Feedback form from people you worked with during your project
 - Letter of recommendation
 - Character Reference Letter
 - Or any type of documentation relevant to your project

Element 4 - Summary/Presentation

The reflective process is important and gives you an opportunity to reflect on the Capstone experience and project, address problems you encountered, analyze problem-solving strategies you used, and describe the resulting learning and personal growth.

- Each student will give at least a 10-minute presentation of learning to an audience of their choosing using the artifacts they collected and demonstrating what you have learned.
- This can be done multiple ways:
 - Videos
 - Speech
 - Presentation through a Power Point, Google Slides, Sway, Prezi, etc.
 - Experiment Demonstration/Review
 - Essay
 - Poster
 - Other approved summaries

Please include the following elements:

- State your topic and purpose; why I chose this topic?
- Address your learning process. Reflect on your 21st century skills (skills in preparation for after high school) and your Capstone journey.
- Discuss your project and how you went about your work, what you learned along the way, where you succeeded, and where you struggled.
- Tell your audience how your research or what you did relates to your Capstone project.
- Conclude with showing how you accomplished your goals and what you have learned from this journey. Include insightful reflection of your learning and how it applies to your future and the community.

*Prior to submittal, the student needs to gather feedback on the summary/presentation from both mentors. The student needs to review the feedback, revise and proofread for grammar, mechanics, and usage.

Element 5 – Artifacts

Each project must have a minimum of 3 artifacts. One needs to be student generated. Some options for this include:

- Promotion Materials
- Interview Notes
- Compilation of 3 or more Photographs
- Timelines
- Evaluations
- Assessments
- Brochures
- Flyers
- Letters, Thank You Notes, or Emails
- Posters

Other Artifacts that could be included:

- Research notes
- Rubrics
- 360 Evaluations
- Career Cruising Surveys
- Interest Inventories

Capstone Project Completed!

- Pass
- Fail

Mentor Signature _____ Date _____

Mentor Signature _____ Date _____

Student Signature _____ Date _____