

# Poudre School District

## 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 21<sup>st</sup> century skills as defined by the Colorado Department of Education. [https://www.cde.state.co.us/coreadingwriting/rwc\\_21st\\_century\\_skills](https://www.cde.state.co.us/coreadingwriting/rwc_21st_century_skills). Projects should also be directly related to the students' career goals and interests and ICAP (Individual Career Academic Plan).

### Resources:

[What is a Capstone:](#)

[Choosing a Topic](#)

### A capstone project should include these five elements:

**Element 1 - Action Plan:** Students must “do” something:

- **Research a topic he/she wants to dig deeper into learning**
- **Event Planning – for a passion area**
- **Experiment – Conduct an experiment in an area of interest**
- **Service Learning – Create a service learning opportunity to enhance our community**
- **Internship – to gain more awareness, understanding, and knowledge about a career**

Students may utilize projects they are working on in a class, or extracurricular activity if they are related to their career interest area.

**Element 2 - Research:** Every student should become an expert in the content/career area associated with their project and demonstrate proper research skills.

**Element 3 - Evaluation:** Every student will have a mentor/teacher complete a 360 Evaluation on their 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

**Element 4 - Written Summary:** Each project will have a minimum 2-page written summary and reflection of the project.

**Element 5 – Portfolio Artifacts:** Each project must have a minimum of 3 artifacts. Include documents, pictures, timelines, etc. that were used during the capstone process.

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## Element 1 – Student Action Plan Form

### Choosing a Project

A capstone project is about doing and learning something that you want to do and learn about! 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 the student’s career interest.
- The topic should be broad enough to provide adequate resources and to yield a written report of 2 pages or more.
- Topics should lend themselves to a manageable and affordable product/process project.
- Topic should have a teacher/mentor identified as a part of the process.
- Topics may be completed in coursework or extracurricular activities

Type of Capstone:

- **Research a topic he/she wants to dig deeper into learning**
- **Event Planning – for a passion area**
- **Experiment – Conduct an experiment in an area of interest**
- **Service Learning – Create a service learning opportunity to enhance our community**
- **Internship – to gain more awareness, understanding, and knowledge about a career**

Career Interest Area:

Capstone Project Title:

Capstone Project Description:

Number of hours to complete:

Timeline:

Mentor/Teacher:

Team members (if applicable):

Organization this project is affiliated with:

Resources needed:

## Element 2 – Research Form:

Every student should become an expert in the content/career area associated with their project and demonstrate proper research skills.

Through your Capstone Project, what are you wanting to learn more about

**What I Want to Find Out** - In this section you will explain what it is that you want to know (or uncover) about your topic. This is where you ask the essential question (thesis). Why is this topic important to you?

**The Search** - In this section you describe your primary and secondary research? – more example

**Primary Research:** is research you conduct yourself. It involves going directly to a source —usually customers and prospective customers in your target market — to ask questions and gather information. Examples of primary research are:

**Secondary Research:** A type of research has already been compiled, gathered, organized and published by others. It includes reports and studies by government agencies, trade associations or other businesses in your industry. Especially for small businesses with limited budgets, most research is typically secondary, because it can be obtained faster and more affordably than primary research.

**What I Learned** - In this section you combine your ideas and prior knowledge, with the evidence you uncovered. What conclusions did you reach? Do you have the same ideas or interests? What did you learn?



## Element 4 - Written Summary:

The reflective narrative is a purposeful evaluation of what was learned. The essay gives you a chance to reflect on the capstone process and project, address problems you encountered, analyze problem-solving strategies you used, and describe the resulting learning and personal growth.

- Paragraph #1: Engage your reader, state the topic of the paper and preview the essay's format.
- Paragraph #2: Address your learning stretch. Reflect on your 21<sup>st</sup> century skills and your ICAP journey.
- Paragraph #3: Discuss your project and how you went about your work, what you learned along the way and what you succeeded in or struggled with.
- Paragraph #4: Tell your reader how your research relates to your project.
- Paragraph #5: Conclude the essay for the reader and leaves the reader confident that you accomplished your goals.

(Prior to submittal, writing should be revised and proofread for mechanics and usage.)

## **Element 5 – Portfolio Artifacts:**

Each project must have a minimum of 3 artifacts. Include documents, website, promotion materials, interview notes, pictures, timelines, etc. that were used during the capstone process.

Insert Below:

Artifact #1:

Artifact #2:

Artifact #3:

**Give a 5-10-minute presentation of learning to an authentic audience using these artifacts and demonstrating what you have learned.**