Colorado Capstone Implementation Criteria

How to use this tool.

- This is a professional document to be used by **systems leaders and designers** of capstone processes in their local contexts. The intention of this document is to help system designers **self-assess** their capstone systems and processes, consider enabling conditions and systems needed to support learners and educators closest to implementation, and to make intentional shifts and improvements to their current practices. This document is NOT intended to assess individual student or educator capstone processes, experiences, or implementation practices.

- A Capstone Project is a multifaceted body of work that is district determined and serves as a culminating academic and intellectual experience for students. Capstone projects could:
    - include a portfolio of the student's best work -- curriculum or research-based;
    - feature a set of experiences organized around a central problem; and/or
    - showcase a work-based learning experience including a community service project or learning experience.

- Students who complete the District Capstone for [Graduation Guidelines](#) must include evidence of competency in [Reading, Writing and Communicating](#) and [Math](#), in addition to other content areas.

- The term "experience" refers to the capstone experience for *students*.

- The term "system" refers to district and/or school structures, practices and culture.

- Capstone is one of 11 measures in [Graduation Guidelines](#), which begin with the implementation of [Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAP)](#), [Colorado Academic Standards](#) for all content areas, and [Colorado Essential Skills](#).

- These criteria are designed for schools and districts that have created a Capstone system that is personalized for students who are engaged in the capstone process to meet expectations of Graduation Guidelines.

- "Community" is defined by the local context and includes a continuum from one-to-one mentoring relationships all the way to presentations that include the public as panel members.

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Capstone Criteria	Guiding Implementation Questions
Evidence of Alignment to District Vision, ICAP, and Colorado Academic Standards and Essential Skills	The district capstone system is aligned with the district vision, ICAP, and Colorado Academic Standards and Essential Skills. 1. Does the capstone process invite students to co-create a guiding question that prepares them for the next stage of life? 2. Does each student have a robust body of deeper learning work (artifacts)? 3. Does the capstone process invite each student to **articulate** deep metacognition/reflection about their mastery of and/or growth?
Evidence of Student Agency	1. Do students have the opportunity to co-design their capstone process to align with ICAP and Colorado Academic Standards and Essential Skills? 2. Is there room within the capstone process for students to personalize in ways that are culturally relevant and identity affirming? 3. Are students asked to go through a curation process where they make intentional choices about what evidence to include in their capstone? 4. Do students have opportunities to engage with the rubric and scoring practices **throughout** the capstone process *and* **prior to** presenting their capstone? 5. Does the capstone process help each student identify and internalize their gifts and talents in order to benefit their future and their community?
Evidence of a Shared Definition of Success	1. Are there school- or district-wide common rubrics and scoring practices for the capstone process aligned to Colorado Academic Standards and Essential Skills? 2. Is each member of the school community involved in the capstone process (participating students, educators, families, community members, etc.) trained and calibrated on the rubrics and scoring practices for the capstone process? 3. Does each member of the scoring panel use an evidence-based protocol to assess and provide feedback on the student's capstone presentation? 4. Is there evidence among stakeholders that students involved in a capstone process can and will successfully complete the process?

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Evidence of Deliberate School Design/ Structure	1. Are there clear benchmarks and scaffolds that support each student to successfully prepare for and complete a capstone process, i.e. time in their schedule to meet with mentors or staff members and models to support quality work? 2. Are opportunities for rehearsal/practice, feedback, and revision built into the capstone process?
Evidence of Professionalism and that Student Learning is Public	1. Are students asked to demonstrate strong public speaking and presentation skills? 2. Are all participants (students and adults) demonstrating the importance of the capstone process through attire, timeliness, language, etiquette, etc.? 3. Are students presenting their capstone to a robust, diverse panel? (A panel could include staff members, other students, caregivers, alumni, local college staff, community members, industry experts, etc.) 4. Does the panel ask high-quality reflective questions and offering meaningful feedback related to mastery of and/or growth in Colorado Academic Standards and Essential Skills?
Evidence of Community Involvement	1. Are there **opportunities** (work-based learning experiences, college visits and classes, work study, volunteer experiences, etc.) for students to learn in and with community partners (staff members, other students, caregivers, alumni, local colleges, industry experts, etc.) during their capstone process? 2. Does the capstone process provide students **opportunities** to positively impact their school, local, or greater community (short or long-term)? 3. Are students provided access to existing community structures and partnerships to support graduation readiness?
Evidence of Data Collection, Self-Analysis & Continuous Improvement	1. What systems are in place to monitor and track progress for individual students? 2. What types of student data/information from the capstone process were collected and analyzed to inform each student's demonstration of ICAP, Colorado Academic Standards and Essential Skills? 3. What data/information is disaggregated, when possible, by significant populations (gender, age, language, race/ethnicity, learning differences, etc.) and analyzed to examine progress towards equitable outcomes and/or goals? 4. Are stakeholders (students, teachers, school and district leaders, caregivers, industry partners, research evaluators, etc.) included in the analysis of capstone data/information? 5. Are data/information from the capstone process used to create responsive and inclusive instruction, assessments, professional development for educators, and/or capstone experiences for students?