

## Colorado Graduation Guidelines Promising Practice

**District** Falcon 49

**School**

**Contact Information**

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**Title of artifact** Pathways Brochure – Falcon D49

**Type of practice** Communications

### Brief description of artifact

This brochure introduces the district's 49 Pathways system. It describes ICAP, Career and Technical Education, Advanced Placement, Concurrent Enrollment, and International Baccalaureate options and directs students and families to a district webpage for more information and tools.

#### ***Types of practices in the CDE Graduation Guidelines Promising Practices collection:***

1. Communications, such as announcements to school community and business community
2. Implementation process plans, such as strategic plans and timelines
3. Implementation tools connected to local graduation requirements, for instance:
  - Testing implementation (ACT, AP, ASVAB, CMAS, IB, PARCC, SAT), such as classes and retreats, administration procedures and agreements
  - Capstone implementation, such as instructions and samples
  - Concurrent Enrollment implementation, such as classes and agreements
  - Career/academic assessment implementation (e.g., ACCUPLACER, COMPASS, Work Keys), such as administration procedures and agreements
  - Industry Certificates implementation, such as samples
4. Local graduation requirements aligned with state guidelines, such as board policies
5. Regarding students with exceptionalities
6. Other

# 49 Pathways



## STUDENTS

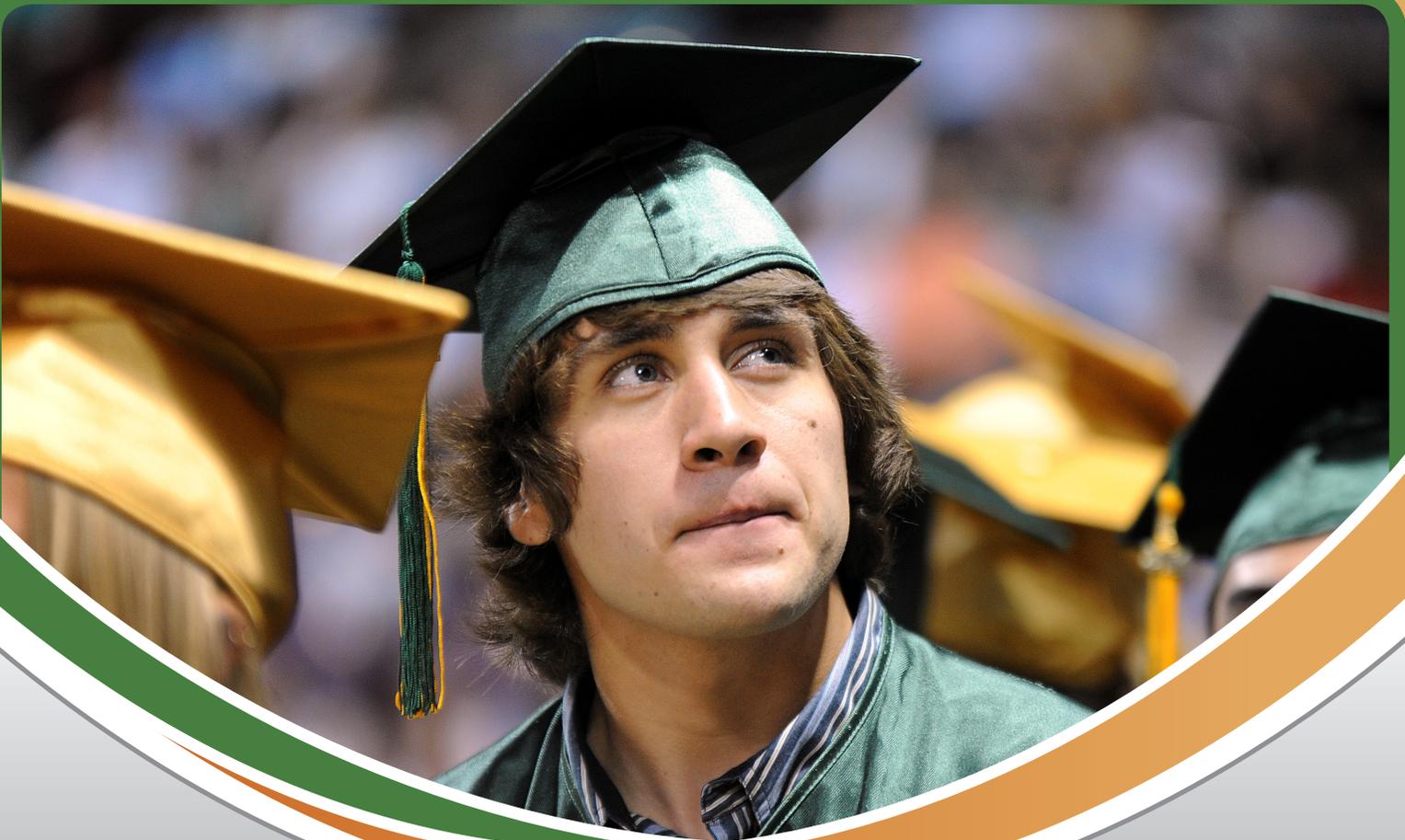
- Personalized
- Flexible
- Freedom

## PARENTS

- More Personal Attention For Students
- Financial Savings

## EDUCATORS

- Opportunity to Work with More Focused Students
- Make a More Direct Impact On Students



District 49 prepares students, in a safe and caring environment, to be successful, competent and productive citizens in a global society. Our teachers, administrators and staff members are committed to the creation of educational environments where all children can maximize their individual learning potential. Further, we are committed to meeting students' needs in all domains: academic, social and physical. An emphasis in all activities will be toward empowering students to take an active role in their own learning.





# Preparing Every Student For College And Career

**Education Is Changing.** The caps, gowns, and relieved faces will still look the same, but Colorado is changing what it means to graduate from high school. In 2007, the Colorado legislature created law that directed the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) to set new high school graduation guidelines. In 2013, the CDE approved those graduation guidelines and began changing the definition of what Colorado students must do to earn a high school diploma. In its most essential form, the law requires local districts to adopt graduation expectations that meet or exceed the state guidelines.



According to statute, the purposes of the graduation guidelines are to 1) articulate Colorado's shared beliefs about the value and meaning of a high school diploma and 2) to outline the minimum components, expectations and responsibilities of local districts and the state to support students in attaining a high school diploma.



**Implementation.** While the new guidelines address **what** needs to be accomplished **when**, they lack information on **how** these guidelines should be implemented. Since one of our strategic priorities-*Big Rock 5-is Launching Every Student to Success*, we aim to exceed the statute through our program of individualized secondary education called 49 Pathways. With an award-winning implementation of Individual Career and Academic Plans (ICAPs), District 49 is ready to lead Colorado in implementing the state's new graduation guidelines.

Peter Hilts  
Chief Education Officer

## COLORADO DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

- 2014-2015** School boards must inform parents of students in the class of 2021 about changes to graduation standards
- 2015-2016** School boards adopt revisions to meet or exceed state guidelines
- 2016-2017** Decide on menu of options for students to demonstrate college and career readiness
- 2017-2018** Implement starting with ninth graders
- 2018-2019** Implement with ninth and tenth graders
- 2019-2020** Implement with ninth, tenth and eleventh graders
- 2020-2021** Graduate first class under new guidelines

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### Now

The era of using seat time to earn credits as the primary mechanism for graduating from high school is coming to an end. In this soon to be obsolete system, students graduated after spending a prescribed number of years to collect a prescribed number of credits in a prescribed number of subjects. All students walked essentially the same road at the same pace and graduated at the same time.

### Tomorrow

The new graduation guidelines are meant to ensure that all students are prepared for success in college or a career after high school. The relevant statute gives local school boards specific responsibilities.

#### Local Graduation Requirements Must

- **State** the minimum academic competencies needed for students to demonstrate postsecondary and workforce readiness and the types of measurements used
- **Include** student demonstrations of 21st century skills in addition to the attainment of the minimum academic competencies
- **Allow** students multiple, equally rigorous and valued ways to demonstrate competency of the knowledge and skills necessary for postsecondary education and meaningful careers
- **Provide** information to students and families about the requirements for high school graduation and successful entry into college and careers no later than sixth grade.
- **Align** with the postsecondary and workforce readiness definition adopted in 2009
- **Align** with the Colorado Academic Standards, Colorado English Language Proficiency Standards and the Colorado Career and Technical Education Standards

#### Local Graduation Requirements May

- **Permit** students longer or shorter time to earn their diploma
- **Recognize and acknowledge** the importance of education in world languages, comprehensive health, physical education, music, dance, performing arts visual arts and career and technical education in strengthening student learning in other subjects and in supporting students' ability to succeed in the 21st century. [49](#)

# DEFINING

## EVERY STUDENT'S JOURNEY - 49 PATHWAYS

In our new system, which we call **49 Pathways**, District 49 students will graduate after designing their unique pathway, completing a series of classes, presenting capstone projects, earning industrial certifications, and achieving assessment results that demonstrate mastery of the knowledge and skills they will need to be successful. Our students will earn a diploma as recognition for completing the pathway specified in their individual career and academic plan. Every student will navigate their own path at their own pace toward the destination that matters most to them.

Educators in District 49 embrace every student's strengths, weaknesses and areas of interest as they progress down individualized pathways. As we lead every student down a unique journey to success after high school, our graduates will master core subjects and may attain an industry or technical certification prior to graduation.

49 Pathways brings more options to more students. It's personalized and flexible with freedom for the busy learner of the 21st-century. For parents it means more personal attention for students and financial savings options for students to earn college credit while in high school and to graduate ready to join a highly competitive global workforce.

### Individual Career and Academic Plan (ICAP)

**Counselors, teachers and leaders from across District 49 came together in 2014 and chose a familiar metaphor**—the journey—to help make learning progress meaningful to our students. Just as the epic heroes of mythology embarked on quests and adventures, our students are launching toward a lifetime of challenge and opportunity. For students in District 49, the ICAP combines a road map, a compass, a travel blog, and a financial planner.

The essential promise that inspires 49 Pathways is our commitment to creating excellent Individual Career and Academic Plans for every student. Our ICAP is a flexible, customized process by which all students are provided free valuable career and college preparation resources via College in Colorado and personal career and college advising.

#### Career and Technical Education

Preparation for the high-wage, high-skill and high-demand careers taught in our career and technical education programs is one of the ways post secondary and workforce readiness can be demonstrated in 49 Pathways. Obtaining an industry certification not only demonstrates competency in certain subject areas, but also prepares our graduates who are ready to join the workforce after leaving District 49.

Each ICAP lays a critical foundation for individual course planning, one that ensures each student's academic pathway is carefully aligned with postsecondary goals.

# THE PATH



## ICAP Grade Level Milestones

- Interest and career surveys
- Exploration of careers and programs/majors
- College comparisons
- Test preparation
- Resume building
- Financial Aid
- Scholarship information

## The ICAP - A Tool For Every Student

By incorporating student ICAPs through College in Colorado, and a district-wide class we are piloting called “My Path,” 49 Pathways gives students a structure to help them know their destination, mark their current position on the trail, celebrate the progress they are making, and keep moving down the path. Students who want to take advantage of free tuition and early college enrollment will need to demonstrate academic and personal readiness. That demonstration will be a gateway on their individual path. Students who choose a pathway through career and technical education will complete job shadowing and career inventories to match their interests to academic opportunities. For students who thrive in diverse academic settings, 49 Pathways offers a portfolio of traditional, honors, AP/IB, concurrent enrollment, blended, online, and individualized classes that begin in 6th grade and continue for six-nine years depending on each student’s unique needs.

In many ways, the ICAP will be an upgraded version of students’ old course planner. The difference is that this plan will include far more than traditional courses.

With assessments, college courses, internships, capstone projects, financial planning, and vocational progress all unified in a single plan, a student’s ICAP is both meaningful and a powerful guide on the path to independence and success and brings more options to more students. It’s personalized and flexible with freedom for the busy learner of the 21st-century. For parents it means more personal attention for students and financial savings with options for students to earn college credit while in high school and to graduate ready to join a highly competitive global workforce. **49**

### Advanced Placement

Some pathways will seek the benefits of Advanced Placements classes, obtaining skills necessary for college. Earning college credit with successful AP test scores will be available to students who seek to continue with a postsecondary education after earning a diploma from District 49.

# WALKING

## DEMONSTRATING MASTERY

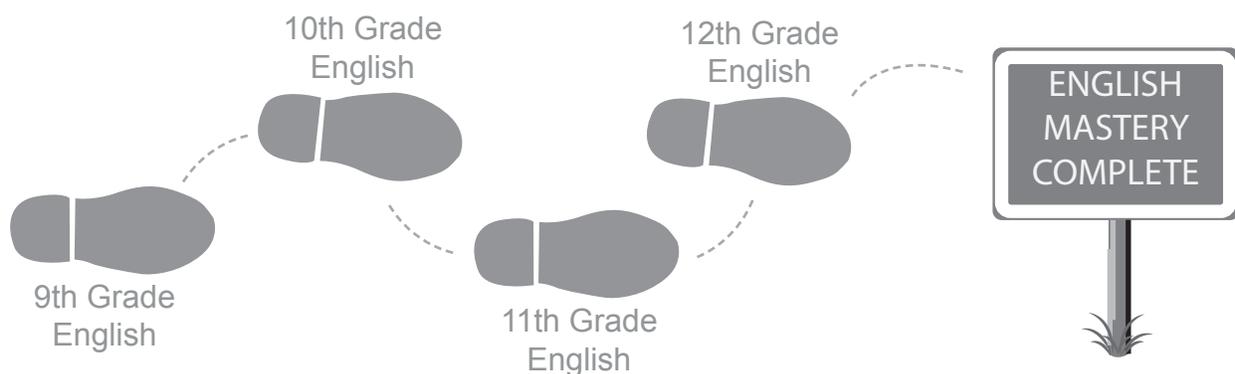
To take advantage of special opportunities like career and technical education, concurrent enrollment, internships or personalized capstone projects, students must work with their parents, teachers, and a trained advisor to select the learning experiences that help them demonstrate mastery. Along the way, students will achieve milestones and pass checkpoints to ensure learners are ready for the next leg of their academic journey.

There are multiple ways a student may demonstrate mastery in different subject areas. While traditional class assessments may still be used, other methods may be used to show the student has a deep understanding of particular skills:

- ACT and SAT scores
- Capstone projects
- Internships
- Industry certifications
- Technical certifications

Embracing the model of the unique pathway for each student, we recognize that some

learners may demonstrate mastery in core academic subjects and obtain the skills necessary for college or career in more or less time than the traditional four year sequence of high school.



The example path above shows how a traditional course sequence might be used to demonstrate mastery of the Colorado Academic Standards for English. In 49 Pathways, students will have multiple options for demonstrating mastery of standards, depending on the strengths, interests and goals defined in their own customized ICAP.

### CONCURRENT ENROLLMENT

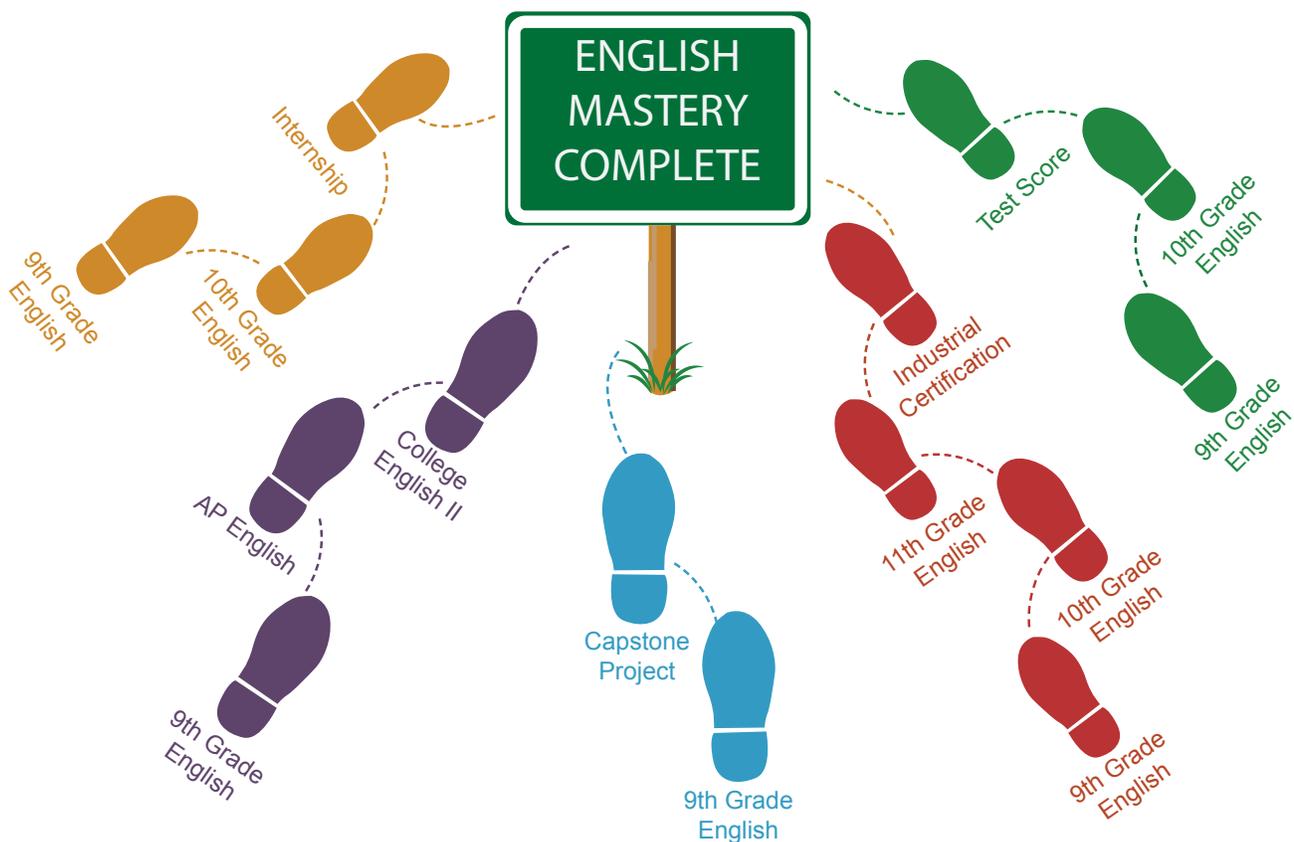
Some students may demonstrate competency of core subjects prior to graduation. Concurrent enrollment provides customized pathway options for our students to support their career and college goals by earning free college credit while in high school. Concurrent enrollment on District 49 campuses by certified college adjunct instructors and on college campuses by college professors allow our students to concurrently earn college credit while completing other components of the graduation requirements of their pathway as defined in their ICAP.

# THE PATH

A student on a path focused on science, technology, engineering and math, known as STEM, may use several English courses and a score on an exam to demonstrate mastery in English. A journey focused on professional technical skills may utilize an industrial certification combined with a segment of an English course sequence to demonstrate mastery. The path leading to a four-year liberal arts college may include a college English course through concurrent enrollment on the pathway to completing mastery of the English standards. 

## International Baccalaureate

The emphasis on creative and critical thinking of International Baccalaureate programs may be included on some individualized pathways. The IB Middle Years Program and Diploma Program can be completed on the journey of our creative, critical and reflective thinkers looking to make connections between their studies in traditional subjects and the real world.



**We are leading an intentional transition to individualized education for every student.**

Our District 49 team of pathbuilders is meeting regularly to make sure every aspect of general, special, career and technical, and non-traditional education is accessible on the path of every individual student we serve. Be on the lookout for more information in the months to come. Together, we are becoming the best district to learn, work and lead.

**After high school, where do I want to go and what do I want to do?** Will it be in a yet-to-be discovered career, military service, ministry or college? 49 Pathways helps students and their families set a course for their future. It's a guide through discussions about passions and interests. 49 Pathways helps navigate class selections, internships, professional certifications and capstone projects to launch students to success after graduation.

**Does high school have to be four years?** In our new model, 49 Pathways, high school may not mean four years for every student. Because it isn't based around seat time and earning credits, some students may take more than four years to demonstrate mastery in all areas. Some students may demonstrate it in two or three years.



 **Find 49 Pathways Information and Resources At Your Fingertips 24/7 at [D49.org/49Pathways](http://D49.org/49Pathways).** It's your one-stop shop about Colorado's new graduation guidelines, Colorado Academic Standards and ICAPs. More info will be added as District 49's pathbuilders team develops the navigational tools for students and families on their journey to success after graduation.



District 49 affirms that no person shall, on the basis of race, color, age, national origin, religious belief, gender, or special needs, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefit of, or be subjected to discrimination under any educational program or activity, including equal access to the Boy Scouts and other designated youth groups. For more information, contact our compliance officer, Dr. Louis Fletcher, at 719.495.1105, or visit us at 10850 East Woodmen Road in Peyton, Colorado.

