Capstone Implementation Criteria Alignment Tool

This is a professional document intended for use by system leaders and designers of capstone processes in their local contexts. The purpose of this tool is to support reflection and alignment to the **Colorado Capstone Implementation Criteria**, helping school and district teams identify strengths, opportunities, and areas for continued growth.

This document is **not** intended to assess individual student or educator capstone processes, experiences, or implementation practices. It is also **not used by CDE to evaluate or approve** a school or district's capstone system.

Purpose and Use of This Tool:

- Support self-assessment and reflection on current capstone practices.

- Identify enabling conditions that support implementation.

- Highlight opportunities to enhance alignment to Graduation Guidelines.

- Provide an optional opportunity for districts/schools to share their capstone system with others via [CDE's Graduation Guidelines website](#).

Schools and districts that choose to complete and submit this alignment tool to CDE for inclusion on the website will be helping to surface real-world examples for peers across the state. These submissions are optional, not subject to formal review or approval by CDE, and intended solely to support statewide learning and improvement.

Additional Information and Conditions:

- 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 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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Evidence of Alignment to District Vision, ICAP, and Colorado Academic Standards & Essential Skills
 	
The district capstone system is aligned with the district vision, ICAP, and Colorado Academic Standards & 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?
	1. Driving Question Lesson 1 & Driving Question Lesson 2
	   a. Students create a driving question for their capstone that they set out to answer through the scope of their project. They are also assessed on whether or not they successfully answer the question through the Capstone Rubric.
	2. We utilize unrulr which is an authentic documentation educational technology that collects evidence and artifacts of a student's Capstone project and their ICAP journey. Students are also assessed on their authentic documentation and evidence and artifacts through the Capstone Rubric.
	3. Students utilize unrulr to engage in deep metacognition to reflect about their growth throughout the process. Students can tag "COGS" which are similar to hashtags. We utilize our Profile of a Graduate's seven traits and skills and ICAP's 8-Quality Indicators as "COGS" that students can engage with and reflect upon.
	   a. Example Capstone using unrulr
	   b. Cañon City High School's unrulr Case Study

Evidence of Student Agency
 	
1. Do students have the opportunity to co-design their capstone process to align with ICAP and Colorado Academic Standards & 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
	1. Capstone is a student-driven passion project and students must prove competency in CCHS's Profile of a Graduate's seven traits and skills and ICAP's 8-Quality Indicators. Students must also prove competency in English and math.
	   a. Capstone Rubric
	2. Capstone is a student driven project and students have the freedom to personalize their project and they can choose how they prove competency in the above identified areas.
	3. Students create "posts" in unrulr on a weekly basis for the duration of their Capstone project. These posts must show their process of learning while also proving their competency in the above areas. Students are also reflecting on their posts and their learning.
	   a. Students are also engaging in unrulr posts in their traditional courses to display evidence of the Profile of a Graduate's seven traits and skills and ICAP's 8-Quality Indicators throughout their entire high school experience.
	4. Students engage with the rubric throughout their Capstone experience to include learning about it right at the beginning, watching exemplars and grading them, conducting self-evaluations using the rubric, and watching seniors present and having group discussions after the presentation.

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and internalize their gifts and talents in order to benefit their future and their community?	5. Students are encouraged to choose a project that is connected to their passions and talents in a way that benefits both the community and their futures.
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?	1. Our Capstone Rubric assesses our Profile of a Graduate's seven traits and skills, ICAP's 8-Quality Indicators, and English and math. 2. Students and staff are highly trained on the Capstone Rubric. We are currently creating an FAQ letter and video to better train our community partners who serve as professional consultants for students. CCHS staff has undergone multiple calibration processes. 3. Each member of the scoring panel uses evidence-based assessment to evaluate the student's capstone. Evaluators make notes and grade during the student's presentation. Students leave the room at the conclusion of their presentation and evaluators discuss the student's scores to reach a consensus. 4. Yes, since we require a community member for every student as a professional consultant, they are part of the process and witness firsthand student success. They are routinely on the judging panel for final presentations. Further, as our capstones are often aligned with our internships, community members get to know students in a meaningful manner as they are both a professional mentor and an employer.
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?	1. Students meet with their Capstone Advisor every Wednesday for an hour where they are provided with the Capstone curriculum which serves to scaffold Capstone information, requirements, and expectations. This is also where advisors can check on students' progress to make sure students are meeting the expected benchmarks. Students also view exemplar Capstones and engage in self and peer reflection. 2. Students receive feedback every week on the items they turn in based on the Capstone curriculum from their Advisor. Students are also required to present to their Advisors a minimum of three times before their final presentation and revise after each practice presentation. One practice presentation must happen with their peers in order to also receive peer feedback. a. Senior Resources

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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 offer meaningful feedback related to mastery of and/or growth in Colorado Academic Standards and Essential Skills?
	1. Students present their Capstone to a panel of three evaluators (Advisor, Professional Consultant, and one community member). They are evaluated on their public speaking skills using the Capstone Rubric.
	 2. Students' final presentation is a formal presentation. Professional dress is encouraged and timeliness is required.
	 3. The grading panel consists of three evaluators:
	    a. Advisor: the student's Capstone teacher who follows them from the beginning of their project to the very end (two years). The Advisor's job is to facilitate a student's learning and ensure they are meeting all Capstone and educational requirements.
	    b. Professional Consultant: a local community member (no teachers or family members) who has expertise in the area of the Capstone project. This person serves to provide the student with professional advice surrounding the topic of the project.
	    c. Community Member: students are encouraged to ask another community member to be their third evaluator (someone who hasn't been involved in the project). This person could be a past teacher from elementary or middle school, a college professor, their internship boss, etc.
	    d. Family members are encouraged to attend the student's presentation as an audience member only.
	 4. Students are required to present evidence of English and math. Students are also required to present evidence of TWO of CCHS's Profile of a Graduate's seven traits and skills (two pairs). Evaluators then ask the student to provide evidence of a third trait/skill pair and the student doesn't know which pair will be chosen (this ensures students have evidence for all trait and skill pairs). Upon the conclusion of the presentation, we enter a Q&A section where evaluators ask questions such as "how does this project prepare you for your future?" and "if you were to do this project again, what might you do differently and why?"

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	1. Students are encouraged (but not required) to connect their Internship to their Capstone project. Students are required to complete their "fieldwork" outside of the school environment (whereas, the Wednesday Advisory class is meant for completion of paperwork, slideshow, etc.). Students are also required to have a Professional Consultant (no teachers or family members) to support their Capstone fieldwork and to get students involved in the community. 2. The Capstone project is designed to provide students with opportunities to impact their school, local, or greater community through the partnership with the professional consultant and the requirement to

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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?	answer their Driving Question. Our students have impacted the local and greater community by building and installing "little libraries" throughout the city; hosting a summer-band camp for 8th graders; and planning and implementing a robust, black-tie fashion show that raised over $4,000 for suicide prevention. 3. Students have access to the existing community structures and partnerships in a variety of ways. Students are encouraged to connect their WBL experience with their Capstone project. Students are also required to reach out into the community to find a professional consultant to support their project.
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?	1. Students meet with their Advisor every Wednesday to monitor and track progress for individual students. Students are provided with a grade in their Advisory class for maintaining appropriate progress and meeting all competencies. 2. Students are required to prove competency in CCHS's Profile of a Graduate's seven traits and skills, ICAP's 8-Quality Indicators, and English and math. They are assessed using the Capstone Rubric. Advisors collect data of the student's engagement with all of these competencies using unrulr's analytics feature which allows teachers and students to determine how many times student's have utilized each of the COGS. 3. We have recently begun a partnership with Qualtrics to change our rubric from a Google Spreadsheet (as seen above) to a digital survey that automatically houses student's information. This new tool will allow us to collect disaggregated data (demographics, grade-level, SAT scores, GPA, group vs. individual, etc.) so that we can better examine progress towards equitable outcomes and goals. Qualtrics will also allow us to view scores by evaluator in order to determine where we need better calibration practices. 4. Yes. The Qualtrics dashboard allows us to view Capstone data in a variety of ways, including linking to student specific SASID data. We also participated in a study with CADRE who published this **report** about our program. 5. We review the Capstone curriculum using student and teacher qualitative and quantitative feedback every school year. A leadership team which includes district administration, school administration, Capstone Coaches, and teachers gets together every spring to discuss changes and updates that need to be made. These changes are made every summer with August implementation of each school year.

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		Teachers receive professional development every August and October. Grade-level Advisors also meet with their grade-level Capstone Coach once a month to discuss upcoming curriculum and expectations.