

CULMINATING PROJECT—DRAFT DISCUSSION DOCUMENT

DECISIONS (as outlined in October 30, 2009 Culminating Project Policy Brief)

1. Leave the rule as is.
2. Refocus the purpose of the Culminating Project by connecting it to essential skills represented by different or additional frameworks than goals three and four—or by identifying additional skills that the Culminating Project should address.
3. Define minimum components that all Culminating Projects must have.
4. Establish state-level rubrics or definitions for the criteria students should meet to satisfy expectations for the Culminating Project.
5. Advocate for funding for the Culminating Project.

Additional Decisions (based on October 30, 2009 MHSD Discussion)

6. Change the name of the Culminating Project to Learning Transition Project
7. Provide guidance on when the Culminating Project should begin.
8. Consider linking the Culminating Project and High School and Beyond Plan.

If the response to decision #1 is that change is needed, the following proposal addresses #2, 3, 4 and 8.

The proposal is written in the “shalls” of rule language; if these were guidelines, the “shalls” would become “shoulds.”

Proposal:

1. All students shall be required to complete a project or series of projects for graduation.
2. The project(s) shall include a portfolio, a presentation, and a product. The project(s) may also include a research or reflective paper, community service, a job shadow or an internship.
3. The project(s) shall be related to the student’s post-high school goals and interests per their High School and Beyond Plan.
4. The project(s) shall demonstrate core academic skills and learning competencies from each of the following Partnership for 21st Century Learning Skills¹ categories:
 - interdisciplinary themes (global awareness, financial literacy, civic literacy, health literacy)
 - learning and innovation skills (creativity and innovation, critical thinking and problem-solving, communication and collaboration)
 - information, media and technology skills
 - life and career skills (flexibility and adaptability, initiative and self-direction, social and cross-cultural skills, productivity and accountability, leadership and responsibility)
5. Assessment of skills and successful completion of project shall be determined by the local school district.

¹ http://21stcenturyskills.org/documents/p21_framework_definitions_052909.pdf

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CURRENT RULE

WAC 180-51-066. (i) *Each student shall complete a Culminating Project for graduation. The project shall consist of the student demonstrating both their learning competencies and preparations related to learning goals three and four. Each district shall define the process to implement this graduation requirement, including assessment criteria, in written district policy.*

CURRENT GUIDELINES

Basic content knowledge is tested through the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), Classroom Based Assessments (CBA), and various alternative assessments. However, there is no state-level test that assures the student knows **how to apply what they have learned to do** with that content. This experiential, hands-on project gives students a formal opportunity to **demonstrate in a variety of ways their learning competencies related to Washington’s learning goals three and four.**

Each student shall complete a Culminating Project, and they will have the **flexibility to construct his/her own Culminating Project.** As part of the Culminating Project, each student will **demonstrate essential skills** through reading, writing, speaking, production, and/or performance (Essential Academic Learning Requirements). There are many ways a student may demonstrate their skills of analysis, logic and creativity; and, to integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems. **The intent is that the student be able to guide their own process in completing the Culminating Project.**

School districts should clearly identify Culminating Project student outcomes and develop and publish assessment criteria to support those outcomes. Each district should have a clearly identified Culminating Project management system designed to support the students and staff. Districts should also have policies in place to handle special circumstances, such as district transfers, parental challenges to the project, etc.

Districts may opt to include the community in project planning, support, or feedback.

There is no state-level prohibition against doing joint projects of two or more students.

School districts shall ensure the safety of each student by complying with legal and risk management guidelines.