

[KRS 158.142](#) establishes the Early Graduation Program (EGP), an optional program in which a student may receive a high school diploma, Early Graduation Certificate and scholarship award from the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority (KHEAA) upon successful completion of all EGP requirements provided in [704 KAR 3:305, Section 5](#) in three (3) academic years or less.

Any student who chooses to enroll in the EGP must meet all requirements specified under 704 KAR 3:305, Section 5, including the **successful completion of a performance-based project, portfolio, or capstone, which shall be required of all EGP students**, beginning July 1, 2024, (7).

EGP Performance-Based Requirement (effective 2024-2025)

Per 704 KAR 3:305, Section 5(6), “By July 1, 2024, each local board of education shall establish a policy requiring high schools to determine performance descriptors and evaluation procedures for an EGP performance-based project, portfolio, or capstone, required for students who intend to complete the EGP beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year.”

Regulation further requires that the school’s performance descriptors and evaluation procedures “**shall provide an opportunity for the student to demonstrate attainment of... critical skills required for postsecondary and career success**,” (Section 5(6)).

Requirements for Performance Descriptors and Evaluation Procedures

A performance-based project, portfolio, or capstone (hereby referred to as “capstone”) is a multifaceted academic and intellectual experience culminating in a student-led demonstration of critical knowledge, skills, and capacities required for postsecondary and career success.

Per, 704 KAR 3:305, Section 5(6), performance descriptors and evaluation procedures shall provide an opportunity for the student to demonstrate attainment of the following critical skills required for post secondary and career success:

1. **Attainment of essential workplace ethics characteristics listed under [KRS 158.1413](#);**
2. **Demonstration of an ability to apply the [Kentucky Academic Standards](#), established in [704 KAR Chapter 8](#), as a life-long learner and contributing member of society;**
3. **Demonstration of written and verbal communication skills needed for postsecondary success; and**
4. **Demonstration of an ability to think critically, synthesize information and draw conclusions.**

Characteristics of High-Quality Performance-Based Experiences¹

See KDE’s sample [EGP performance-based capstone rubric](#) for further information on developing a high-quality performance-based experience.

Elicits evidence of learning that matters:

- The critical skills being demonstrated are in high demand and/or are highly transferable to the real world.
- The capstone aligns to the *Kentucky Academic Standards* so that the student may demonstrate acquisition of knowledge.
- The capstone is cognitively complex and challenges students to apply higher-order thinking skills while navigating and adjusting to novel experiences.

Criteria is specific:

- It is clear to students what skills and knowledge are required to successfully complete the capstone.

- Students know what learning is expected of them in order to demonstrate the requirements of the capstone, at a developmentally appropriate level.

Student-led:

- Students are expected to take charge of their capstone experience.
- The capstone experience is personalized by allowing students to:
 - Choose and design their own process and product;
 - Express their own views; and
 - Access personal strengths, interests, passions, backgrounds and cultures.

Authentic:

- The capstone is driven by a clear purpose and offers solutions to real world problems that directly impact the world around them.
- Provides opportunities for the student to engage with community stakeholders.
- The capstone allows the student to take intellectual risks.

A learning experience in and of itself:

- Learners can see how they have been challenged to think differently.
- Students understand the importance of their ability to effectively apply critical skills needed for postsecondary success.

Example Capstone Types

As a student-led experience, capstones can take many forms. 704 KAR 3:305, Section 5 does not limit students in their design. Some examples may include, but are not limited to:

Action research project	Co-curricular experience	Community engagement experience
Portfolio	Design/Prototype	Independent research project
Oral/visual presentation	Experience-based reflection	Argument or informational text

Supplemental Resources

Schools may wish to consider aligning the EGP capstone to their [local](#) Portrait of a Learner model.

KDE's sample [EGP performance-based capstone rubric](#) also serves as an option for how schools might align the EGP capstone requirements with the statewide [Kentucky Portrait of a Learner](#) framework.

For reference, below are sample student capstone assignments from districts throughout the Commonwealth.

- [OVEC Article on Frankfort High School Capstone Process](#)
- [Jefferson County Public Schools, Marion C. Moore Senior Defenses](#)

For additional information, visit the KDE's [Early Graduation Program](#) webpage.

¹ [Modified]. Envision Learning Partners (n.d.). *Performance assessment (PA) is the demonstration and evaluation of applied skills that can be taught and learned* [Google Slides]. Retrieved from https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1jzErReT22dni5c5xJmcqQXRiJK6CDgl43RCz4UxmDO4/edit#slide=id.ged822727e9_0_20.