

Overview

The Raymond Public Schools' Culminating Project (CP) is a student performance assessment of the Washington State Learning Goals and the Raymond Public Schools' Learning Standards. With the Culminating Project, students will be required to document, demonstrate, and defend a body of significant, rigorous work that is aligned with District learning standards. Timelines and criteria for this requirement will be made public to students and parents before work on the Culminating Project is initiated.

Why Require a Culminating Project?

Following the passage of state legislation (House Bill 1209) that initiated school reform efforts in Washington state, every school district was charged with helping all students to achieve four learning goals. These goals require students to go beyond recalling facts and applying set formulas. While those skills remain extremely important, in order to succeed after graduation students need to be able to apply their knowledge and solve complex problems. In order to assure high school graduates have all the skills and knowledge defined in the state's four learning goals, many districts have added to their graduation requirements performance assessments which require students to demonstrate the ability to apply what they have learned and show that they are prepared for work and/or further education.

The following illustrates the relationship between the state learning goals and the components of the Culminating Project.

How the Culminating Project Addresses Washington State Learning Goals

Washington State Learning Goals

1. Read with comprehension, write with skill, and communicate effectively and responsibly in a variety of ways and settings.
2. Know and apply the core concepts and principles of mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history; geography; arts; and health and fitness.
3. Think analytically, logically, and creatively, and integrate experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems.
4. Understand the importance of work and how performance, effort, and decisions directly affect career and educational opportunities.

Culminating Project

An opportunity for every student to demonstrate that they can think analytically, logically, and creatively, and can integrate experiences and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems.

The Culminating Project will assess a broad range of skills in reading, writing, communication, technology, reasoning, problem solving, and research through **four distinct components** presented to an audience of staff and community members who will interact with, ask questions of, and require the student to defend their work.

Part I: A scholarly paper initiated in grade 11 or 12 that examines, investigates, or researches a topic resulting from an extension of classroom learning in mathematics; social, physical, and life sciences; civics and history; geography; arts; or health and fitness.

Part II: A project and project report that requires the use of knowledge and skills to develop a product/event/process from inception of an idea through the evaluation phase and a paper that documents the learning.

Part III: An autobiographical letter that connects the knowledge and skills learned during their K-12 education with the student's future plans.

Part IV: A presentation that requires the student to present their project to an audience who will interact with the student, asking questions and requiring them to defend their work.

Monitoring of Progress

Raymond High School will develop procedures and check points to document each student's progress towards completion of the Culminating Project and will provide a handbook for students that details those requirements and the due dates for the completion of each step. Students need to follow the established timeline. All due dates will be in the handbook given to students and will include dates for resubmitting work, allowing for multiple opportunities for meeting standard. The high school will be responsible for notifying any student and his/her parent (s) if the student is not on track to complete the requirements.

Reporting and Recording

A system will be put in place to keep accurate records of each student's progress and parents will be notified if their student has not made adequate progress. As each Culminating Project component is completed, the official, signed record that the student has met standard will be placed in the student's file at the school.

Intervention and Remediation

If a student's work does not meet standard the first time submitted, he/she will be able to revise and resubmit. The school's timeline for completion of the Culminating Project includes multiple opportunities to resubmit work.

Timelines for Graduation

Completing all the components of the Culminating Project at standard is necessary for graduation from Raymond High School. The Scholarly Paper is usually completed during the final semester of the junior year. Two other components (the Autobiographical Letter and the Project with Project Report) are usually completed during the senior year. After successful completion of the first three components, students will give their Presentation to a panel of staff and community members on a prearranged day determined by the senior advisor.

Students will receive specific timelines for the completion of each phase of the four components. Deadlines will be established to help students finish their work successfully. **Meeting a deadline requires students to do more than simply turn work in on time; it also requires them to produce good work, which meets the standards established by the curriculum guides. Failure to meet these deadlines may jeopardize students' participation in commencement ceremonies.**

Out of District Transfer Students

Students who transfer into the Raymond School District and are given junior, sophomore, or freshman standing will be required to complete all four components of the Culminating Project.

Students who transfer into the District before the tenth day of second semester, and are given senior standing *and* have credit in Junior English or its equivalent, will be exempted only from the Scholarly Paper requirement and must complete the other three components.

Senior students who transfer into the District after the tenth day of the second semester, will be exempt from completion of the Culminating Project, providing that they are within **one semester** of attaining minimum building graduation requirements in all other areas.

Running Start

All students who participate in Running Start are required to complete all four components of the Culminating Project and meet their building requirements. Students who intend to participate in this program need to plan carefully to ensure completion of the Culminating Project within the school's published deadlines.

English Language Learners (ELL)

All ELL students will have an individualized plan designed to meet the Culminating Project requirements as specified in their plan. Each student's plan will be developed by a team including the senior class advisor, language teacher, counselor and/or special services provider and approved by the building principal.

Students With Disabilities

All students with disabilities which does qualify them for Special Education services may need accommodations and/or modifications to complete their work. Each student's Culminating Project plan will be developed by the IEP team. This team should include the student, parent/guardian, Special Education teacher, counselor, and general education teachers familiar with the student's needs. All Culminating Project plans will be approved by the building principal.

Safety

Although students, when designing and working on their Culminating Project , are encouraged to challenge themselves in original and creative ways, certain hazardous activities are prohibited. Such prohibited activities include hang gliding, automobile racing, and whitewater rafting. A more complete list of prohibited activities is available from the Culminating Project Coordinator.

During the selection phase of the Project, students must meet the standard for safety as noted on the Project Standards, before starting work on later phases. Raymond High School requires students to complete their project in keeping with commonly recognized safety standards and procedures, and may deny approval for any proposal that includes an activity judged to be unsafe or hazardous by the Washington Schools Risk Management Pool.

Cost

Despite its status as a graduation requirement, the Culminating Project need not cost any more than a typical school project would cost. The school expects students to work within their means. Of course, almost all proposals require at least some expense, including purchase of supplies and materials. However, individual teachers and the school are not responsible for providing such supplies and materials, or for any expense encountered during the planning or completion of the Culminating Project. During the planning phase, students will be encouraged to develop a reasonably accurate estimate of costs, and parents are asked to plan accordingly in order to help their student graduate.

Mentors

To assist students by offering expert experience, guidance, and advice, mentors are suggested for the Culminating Project. All mentors must be approved by the school.

Students may not begin working with a mentor until the mentor has been officially approved by the school. Mentors are required by the District to submit all paperwork associated with being a District volunteer. Background checks will be a part of the approval process. Volunteer paperwork is available in the business office.

Content & Performance Standards

Culminating Project: Autobiographical Letter

The Autobiographical Letter is an opportunity for seniors to reflect on themselves as learners and on their readiness for graduation in light of district and state graduation requirements. After examining their K-12 educational experience, they highlight specific skill and strengths that define themselves as learners.

In another section of the letter, they narrate in detail at least one pivotal educational experience that helped shape them as learners. Throughout, they credit the contributions that people, places, events, and/or ideas have made in their lives.

The letter concludes with an analysis of how they anticipate their current skills and knowledge will impact their future career and educational plans. (Washington State Learning Goal 4)

Autobiographical Letter Standards

At Standard: Content & Organization

- 1.1 Introduces self as learner.
- 1.2 Analyzes how identified academic skills and strengths indicate readiness to graduate.
- 1.3 Credits significant people, places, events, and/or ideas that have helped shape self as learner.
- 1.4 Narrates at least one pivotal experience, examining its implications for successful school performance and future learning.
- 1.5 Moves the reader through the text in a logical manner with smooth transitions.
- 1.6 Concludes with impact of skills and knowledge on future career and educational plans.

At Standard: Style, Format, & Conventions

- 2.1 Addresses intended audience in salutation.
- 2.2 Uses language that is precise, engaging, and well suited to the audience.
- 2.3 Correctly constructs sentences that have easy flow and rhythm.
- 2.4 Follows acceptable business letter format.
- 2.5 Word processes 2-3 page letter in 12 point Times/Times New Roman font.
- 2.6 Makes few convention errors.

STANDARD EVALUATION: AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL LETTER

PLACE A CHECK IN THE APPROPRIATE COLUMN NOTING IF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL LETTER

(1) DOES NOT MEET STANDARD, (2) MEETS STANDARD, (3) EXCEEDS STANDARD.

STANDARD: (1) (2) (3)

CONTENT & ORGANIZATION:

1.1	_____	_____	_____
1.2	_____	_____	_____
1.3	_____	_____	_____
1.4	_____	_____	_____
1.5	_____	_____	_____
1.6	_____	_____	_____

STYLE, FORMAT, & CONVENTIONS

2.1	_____	_____	_____
2.2	_____	_____	_____
2.3	_____	_____	_____
2.4	_____	_____	_____
2.5	_____	_____	_____
2.6	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

Culminating Project: Scholarly Paper

During either the junior or senior year, students complete the Scholarly Paper which demonstrates their own critical thinking and writing skills. Using research, they build a body of evidence and data to convince the audience of the validity of a position. Students select a topic from classroom learning in any content area, including mathematics, science, social studies, fine arts, vocational education, English, and physical education. Developing the thesis should reflect a learning stretch for the student. (Washington State Learning Goals 1 &2)

This Culminating Project involves developing and supporting a thesis and includes elements of argumentation such as citing primary and secondary sources, and providing analysis of the evidence and commentary to guide the organization of the paper. (Washington State Learning Goal 3)

Scholarly Paper Standards

At Standard: Thesis Statement

Develops a thesis statement that is:

- 1.1 Focused and clearly stated.
- 1.2 Manageable and achievable given time, resources, and length of paper.
- 1.3 Arguable (thesis merits being developed and represents a specific point of view).
- 1.4 Connected to classroom learning within a content area.

At Standard: Development of Thesis

- 2.1 Identifies at least six varied and credible sources.
- 2.2 Includes an introduction, body paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- 2.3 Arrives at reasonable deductions and logical conclusions based on facts, examples, and details.
- 2.4 Integrates relevant information that supports the thesis.
- 2.5 Supports thesis with analysis of evidence and commentary.
- 2.6 Addresses other points of view.
- 2.7 Moves the reader through the text in a logical manner with smooth transitions.
- 2.8 Provides a conclusion that is consistent with the thesis and the evidence presented.

At Standard: Style, Format & Conventions

- 3.1 Uses language that is precise, engaging, and well suited to the topic and audience.
- 3.2 Primarily uses third person.
- 3.3 Correctly constructs sentences that have an easy flow and rhythm.
- 3.4 Follows required MLA format.
- 3.5 Word processes 5-7 pages of text, double-spaced in 12 point Times/Times New Roman font.
- 3.6 Makes few convention errors.
- 3.7 Includes clear, well-placed visuals/charts/graphs to enhance key points (if used).

STANDARD EVALUATION: SCHOLARLY PAPER

PLACE A CHECK IN THE APPROPRIATE COLUMN NOTING IF THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL LETTER

(1) DOES NOT MEET STANDARD, (2) MEETS STANDARD, (3) EXCEEDS STANDARD.

STANDARD:	(1)	(2)	(3)
THESIS STATEMENT:			
1.1	_____	_____	_____
1.2	_____	_____	_____
1.3	_____	_____	_____
1.4	_____	_____	_____
DEVELOPMENT OF THESIS:			
2.1	_____	_____	_____
2.2	_____	_____	_____
2.3	_____	_____	_____
2.4	_____	_____	_____
2.5	_____	_____	_____
2.6	_____	_____	_____
2.7	_____	_____	_____
2.8	_____	_____	_____

STYLE, FORMAT, & CONVENTIONS

3.1	_____	_____	_____
3.2	_____	_____	_____
3.3	_____	_____	_____
3.4	_____	_____	_____
3.5	_____	_____	_____
3.6	_____	_____	_____
3.7	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

Culminating Project: Culminating Project

During their senior year, students complete a Culminating Project which provides them with the opportunity to use their foundational academic skills and content knowledge to gain new, deeper levels of understanding. The project must challenge the student and needs to be of significant value to the student, the school, and/or the community. (Washington State Learning Goals 1 & 2).

This self-directed learning experience involves thinking analytically, logically, and creatively and integrating experience and knowledge to form reasoned judgments and solve problems. (Washington State Learning Goal 3).

The Culminating Project requires documentation which the student may then use to compile his/her Project Report. Projects must comply with parameters established by the Risk Management Pool, federal and state law, and the policies and procedures of the Raymond School District.

Culminating Project Standards

At Standard: Project Proposal and Action Plan

- 1.1 Identifies learning goals that represent a challenge for the student.
- 1.2 Connects the project to content knowledge and district/state learning standards.
- 1.3 Explains the significance of the project to the student, the school, and/or the community.
- 1.4 Meets requirements as stated in the district Culminating Project handbook.
- 1.5 Includes an **Action Plan** which details the steps required to accomplish proposed project learning goals (allowing for modifications as the project unfolds).
- 1.6 Identifies a qualified mentor who recommends the approval of the Action Plan for the project.

At Standard: Documentation

- 2.1 The **Annotated Bibliography** includes five or more varied project sources, at least one interview, and an explanation of how each source contributed to their project.
- 2.2 The **Activity Log** lists dates, times, activities, and expenses throughout the project.
- 2.3 In the **Project Journal** entries the student explains, analyzes, and reflects on the progress documented in the Activity Log.
- 2.4 **Other Evidence** (photos, videos, tape recordings, sketches, rough drafts, receipts, etc.) also documents student activities and progress.
- 2.5 The final **Mentor Evaluation** confirms that the student has made satisfactory progress toward achieving the stated learning goals.

STANDARD EVALUATION: CULMINATING PROJECT

**PLACE A CHECK IN THE APPROPRIATE COLUMN NOTING IF THE CULMINATING PROJECT
(1) DOES NOT MEET STANDARD, (2) MEETS STANDARD, (3) EXCEEDS STANDARD.**

STANDARD: (1) (2) (3)

PROJECT PROPOSAL AND ACTION PLAN

1.1	_____	_____	_____
1.2	_____	_____	_____
1.3	_____	_____	_____
1.4	_____	_____	_____
1.5	_____	_____	_____
1.6	_____	_____	_____

DOCUMENTATION

2.1	_____	_____	_____
2.2	_____	_____	_____
2.3	_____	_____	_____
2.4	_____	_____	_____
2.5	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

Culminating Project: Project Report

In this Culminating Project component, students summarize the project, analyze the process they followed, and report what they learned from the project itself. Students discuss predictions, conclusions, and recommendations, and in so doing they reflect on themselves as independent lifelong learners. Finally, students discuss the importance of their work and anticipate how their performance, effort, and decisions will directly affect their future career and educational opportunities.

Project Report Standards

At Standard: Content & Organization

- 1.1 Reviews the Project Proposal and Action Plan
- 1.2 Describes each step of the project
- 1.3 Identifies previous knowledge/skills and the new knowledge/skills acquired through the project.
- 1.4 Discusses the differences between predicted and actual project outcomes.
- 1.5 Describes the difficulties encountered and the adjustments made.
- 1.6 Evaluates the contributions of the mentor and other resources for the project.
- 1.7 Discusses how project could have been improved or made more meaningful.
- 1.8 Speculates about the importance of this learning process and its impact on future learning.
- 1.9 Moves the reader through the text in a logical manner with smooth transitions.

At Standard: Style, Format, & Conventions

- 2.1 Uses language that is precise, engaging, and well suited to the project and audience.
- 2.2 Correctly constructs sentences that have an easy flow and rhythm.
- 2.3 Word processes 3-4 page paper, double-spaced in 12 point Times/Times New Roman font.
- 2.4 Makes few convention errors.
- 2.5 Follows MLA format for in-text citations when referring to sources from Annotated Bibliography.

STANDARD EVALUATION: PROJECT REPORT

**PLACE A CHECK IN THE APPROPRIATE COLUMN NOTING IF THE PROJECT REPORT
(1) DOES NOT MEET STANDARD, (2) MEETS STANDARD, (3) EXCEEDS STANDARD.**

STANDARD: (1) (2) (3)

CONTENT & ORGANIZATION

1.1	_____	_____	_____
1.2	_____	_____	_____
1.3	_____	_____	_____
1.4	_____	_____	_____
1.5	_____	_____	_____
1.6	_____	_____	_____
1.7	_____	_____	_____
1.8	_____	_____	_____
1.9	_____	_____	_____

STYLE, FORMAT, & CONVENTIONS

2.1	_____	_____	_____
2.2	_____	_____	_____
2.3	_____	_____	_____
2.4	_____	_____	_____
2.5	_____	_____	_____

COMMENTS:

Culminating Project: Presentation

This final component of the Culminating Project is an oral presentation to a panel of community and staff members. The Presentation is a defense of the student's readiness to assume responsibility for his/her own learning.

During the Presentation, students communicate how their experience with each Culminating Project component integrates into an overall assessment of themselves as learners.

Presentation of each component includes relevant details, anecdotes, and information as evidence to support the conclusions in their self-assessment. The content of the presentation reveals what students have learned about their own abilities, what they are most proud of, and why they are prepared to assume responsibility for their own learning. (Washington State Learning Goals 1,2,3 & 4).

Presentation Standards

At Standard: Content & Organization

- 1.1 Opens and concludes effectively.
- 1.2 Proceeds in a clear and organized manner.
- 1.3 Reveals an understanding of:
 - a. How the Scholarly Paper used research to build a body of evidence to convince an audience of the validity of a position.
 - b. How the culminating project involved self-directed learning to gain new or deeper levels of understanding;
 - c. How the Autobiographical Letter helped to define self as learner.
- 1.4 Draws insights from each component and develops them with relevant details, anecdotes, & information.
- 1.5 Links conclusions about self as learner to readiness to assume responsibility for lifelong learning.
- 1.6 Meets time requirements:
Presentation 15-18 minutes
Q & A up to 7 minutes

At Standard: Delivery

- 2.1 Appears practiced and prepared to present.
- 2.2 Delivers, does not “read” the presentation.
- 2.3 Uses facial expressions and eye contact to engage the audience.
- 2.4 Uses gestures to enhance the presentation.
- 2.5 Employs a clear voice and appropriate volume.
- 2.6 Choose words that are appropriate for topic, audience, and purpose.
- 2.7 Uses correct grammar.
- 2.8 Integrates technology and/or audio-visual (s) into the presentation.

At Standard: Impromptu Response & Justification

- 3.1 Responds effectively to questions and elaborates without prompting.
- 3.2 Responds to panelists in a respectful and appropriate way.
- 3.3 Responds in a way that reveals deep understanding.

STANDARD EVALUATION: PRESENTATION

**PLACE A CHECK IN THE APPROPRIATE COLUMN NOTING IF THE PRESENTATION
(1) DOES NOT MEET STANDARD, (2) MEETS STANDARD,
(3) EXCEEDS STANDARD**

STANDARD:	(1)	(2)	(3)
CONTENT & ORGANIZATION			
1.1	_____	_____	_____
1.2	_____	_____	_____
1.3	_____	_____	_____
1.4	_____	_____	_____
1.5	_____	_____	_____
1.6	_____	_____	_____
DELIVERY			
2.1	_____	_____	_____
2.2	_____	_____	_____
2.3	_____	_____	_____
2.4	_____	_____	_____
2.5	_____	_____	_____
2.6	_____	_____	_____
2.7	_____	_____	_____
2.8	_____	_____	_____

IMPROMPTU RESPONSE & JUSTIFICATION

3.1

3.2

3.3

COMMENTS:
