



# Performance Based Graduation Guidelines

## Capstone Project

Village Green Virtual Charter School

135 Weybosset Street

Providence, RI 02903

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**Overview:** In Rhode Island, high school graduates are subject to the regulations pertaining to the Performance Based Graduation Requirements, or PBGR. Requiring that graduates be able to demonstrate growth in not only standardized assessments, grades and coursework, but also in Capstone and Portfolio is part of a state-wide system which dates back to 2008. At VGV the PRGR system requires a Writing Portfolio as well as a Capstone Project. In using the Edgenuity Entrepreneurship course as a foundation, students are asked to complete a lengthy project and then publically present to a panel of adults and peers. The PBGR project at VGV uses the Applied Learning Standards as pioneered by the Institute for Learning at the University of Pittsburgh and as first promoted as part of the New Standards system in the late 1990's. At VGV, students are asked to develop a new business or product concept, write an MLA formatted essay describing the concept and its background and process, make a brochure in Publisher informing the public about the business or product, write a business plan as outlined by Edgenuity and exhibit their concept to a panel by using a Power point or Prezi. Panelists will assess the artifacts and presentations through the lens of either an investor or consumer.

**Purpose:** VGV desires to create for each student a capstone Project which is applicable to a real world concept. In going above and beyond the Edgenuity Entrepreneurship course students are taking the knowledge they acquired and applying it to a real world context. Every student is asked to conceptualize a business or a product which is original to them. This business or product then must be formulated and represented in a series of written artifacts; business plan with budget, essay, brochure and Power Point or Prezi. Students are asked to apply their learning in such a way as to take an idea and bring it to "reality" and exhibit that concept in front a group of potential investors or consumers.

**Method:** Once the Entrepreneurship course has been completed students must become introspective and imagine a business or product which is original to them and which could one day become fully developed. Panelists, using the school's Capstone grading rubric, assess a student's project by listening and watching the presentation and then asking questions. It is important to emphasize that panelists are not investors and do not have to view the business or product through that lens only.

**Expectations and timing:** Students are expected to become knowledgeable with the school's Capstone Handbook and the work with the school's Capstone Coordinator as they move through the process. There will be a series of revisions to their work over time and the feedback of the Coordinator is to be taken seriously. Students will have to upload to a cloud based online storage platform the artifacts they need to complete the project: business plan, essay, brochure and Power Point or Prezi. There may be other documents as well but this is at the student's discretion (web site for instance). The Capstone Exhibitions will be held February through May and the Coordinator and students are to work collaboratively in setting the Exhibition schedule. Exhibitions are to be no more than 45 minutes each.

**Capstone Exhibition:** The Capstone Exhibitions is a high stakes event in that it is a graduation requirement. However, if a student has all the artifacts and prepares their talking points then there is almost a certain expectation of success. Panelists cannot include questions which do not arise from the student presentations. Therefore, a litany of "have you ever thought of" type questions is counterproductive. Panelists should respond to the plan, presentation and artifacts and seek clarification only. Panelists should not believe that they are only an investor but a consumer too. The business' or product's viability is really the main concern. Panelists will complete a scoring sheet (rubric) which will then be averaged for a cut score between zero and one hundred. The Capstone Exhibition should consist of the following parts:

- ✓ Introduction and overview of business or product (including inspiration and consumer need met)
- ✓ Highlight the major themes found in the essay
- ✓ Discuss the Business Plan with regard to difficulties in writing it or in analysis of its strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ Discuss the design and capability of the brochure (attracting customers and costs of customer acquisition)
- ✓ Present concepts and take-away ideas of the artifacts (should be organized through the Power Point or Prezi)
- ✓ Questions and responses (limited to the time remaining, 45 minutes minus presentation time)