



Future Readiness Project Guidance

Implementation Guide

OVERVIEW

During the 2025 Legislative Session, the Idaho Legislature adopted updates to Idaho's High School Graduation Requirements (IDAPA 08.02.03.105.04). These updates represent the most significant revision to graduation requirements since 2009 and reflect changes in workforce demands, postsecondary pathways, and student learning experiences.

Beginning with the Class of 2028, all Idaho public school students must complete a Future Readiness Project by the end of grade 12 as a graduation requirement; this update is the replacement of the traditional Senior Project with a Future Readiness Project. This new requirement is designed to ensure that all Idaho students graduate with the skills, competencies, and self-awareness necessary to navigate post-high school opportunities.

The Future Readiness Project is a culminating experience that demonstrates a student's application of Idaho's college and career competencies through authentic, real-world learning experiences. Unlike the former Senior Project model, this requirement is intentionally flexible, competency-based, and aligned with diverse student pathways.

Core Purpose of the Future Readiness Project

The Future Readiness Project is intended to:

- **Demonstrate College and Career Competencies**
Students show evidence of acquiring and applying Idaho's college and career readiness competencies in meaningful contexts.
- **Support Exploration of Post-High School Pathways**
The project encourages students to explore potential futures, including employment, military service, apprenticeships, technical training, or postsecondary education.
- **Serve as a Culminating Capstone Experience**
The project brings together learning that occurs across courses, programs, and experiences throughout high school.
- **Value Learning Beyond the Classroom**
Students receive credit for real-world learning experiences that may occur outside traditional academic settings.

Required Experiential Component

A **required experiential component** is central to the Future Readiness Project. This component must demonstrably contribute to a student’s development of real-world skills and college and career competencies.

Acceptable experiential components may include, but are not limited to:

- **Work-Based Learning**
Examples: part-time employment, internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing
- **Service-Learning**
Examples: volunteer work, community service projects tied to learning goals
- **Research-Based Experiences**
Examples: in-depth investigations, applied research, scientific inquiry
- **Portfolio-Based Experiences**

Examples: curated collections of work that demonstrate skill development over time
Experiences such as extracurricular activities, leadership roles, and skill-building programs may count toward this requirement when aligned to competency development.

Local Education Agency (LEA) Flexibility and Responsibility

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and public charter schools retain **local control** over how the Future Readiness Project is designed and implemented.

LEAs are responsible for determining:

- How students will **demonstrate acquisition of college and career competencies**
- What **additional components or expectations** may be required locally
- How the project is integrated into existing coursework, advising structures, or graduation pathways

The Idaho State Department of Education (SDE) will provide **templates and implementation guidance** to support LEAs, while also overseeing statewide implementation to ensure alignment with statute.

RATIONALE & RESEARCH

A growing body of national and Idaho-specific research underscores the need for skills-based graduation requirements. Findings consistently show that:

- Employers value durable, transferable skills and favor candidates who can articulate them
- Students report feeling underprepared for life after high school, particularly in career decision-making and financial readiness
- Engagement and perceived relevance of learning decline as students’ progress through high school
- Career exploration during secondary school improves confidence and postsecondary decision-making
- Idaho employers report skills gaps among the current workforce

Collectively, this data supports a graduation framework that prioritizes **student agency**, **career exploration**, and **competency demonstration** as essential outcomes of high school education.

Competency-Based Education as a Foundation

The Future Readiness Project reflects a broader shift toward **competency-based education**, which recognizes that learning occurs in many environments—not solely within the classroom. Competency-based approaches:

- Value **authentic, applied learning**
- Support **individualized and meaningful experiences** for students
- Provide flexibility for schools to design systems that meet local needs
- Encourage students to reflect on and articulate what they know and can do

By pairing modernized course requirements with competency-based expectations, Idaho’s graduation framework supports both academic rigor and real-world readiness.

CREATING A QUALITY PROJECT

High-quality Future Readiness Projects are not about locking students into a single career choice. In a rapidly changing workforce, narrow career preparation becomes outdated quickly. Instead, strong Future Readiness Projects are designed to help students:

- Experience what it feels like to engage in professional work
- Understand how workplaces and various organizations function
- Explore different types of roles and responsibilities
- Learn how individuals contribute to solving meaningful challenges
- Build transferable competencies through action
- Practice communication, inquiry, collaboration, and reflection
- Apply learning in authentic, community-connected contexts

The Future Readiness Project is best understood as a work habits and thinking-skills accelerator, preparing students for success across *all* future pathways—not just their next step after graduation.

Anatomy of a High-Quality Future Readiness Project

Regardless of which type of experiential component students complete, all Future Readiness Projects share a common structure. High-quality projects include:

- **Research / Inquiry:** The investigation that informs the project’s focus and direction.
- **Project Design:** Clear goals, scope, and intended outcomes.
- **Project Implementation:** The actions students take, including timelines, methods, and deliverables.
- **Reflection:** Structured reflection connecting experiences to Idaho College and Career

Competencies and future goals.
This consistent anatomy allows for flexibility while maintaining rigor and equity.

Four Future Readiness Types

The Future Readiness Project may take multiple forms. LEAs do not need to limit students to a single model, nor should project type be confused with project quality.

Overview of Future Readiness Project Types and Future-Readiness Questions

Future Readiness Project Type	Purpose	Context	Guiding Future Readiness Question
Work-Based Learning	Learn about workplaces through observation and participation	Students experience real work environments and evolving industry expectations	<i>How is this field changing in the next 5–10 years, and what skills will matter most?</i>
Project-Based Future Readiness Project	Solving a real problem within the school or community	Students design and implement meaningful action	<i>What emerging needs or opportunities will your community face in the next 5–10 years?</i>
Portfolio Based Future Readiness Project	Present skills, readiness, and accomplishments	Students curate artifacts and reflections that tell their professional story	<i>How will professionals in this field present themselves in the future, and what story should your portfolio tell?</i>
Research-Based Future Readiness Project	Investigating a complex question	Students conduct inquiries, analyze data, and form conclusions	<i>What complex issue needs deeper investigation to understand the future of this field or community?</i>

Each project type emphasizes **future-facing thinking**, not just current conditions.

Examples of Student Deliverables

The Future Readiness Project flexibility extends into how students demonstrate their learning. Student-created evidence may include, but is not limited to:

- Research summaries or briefs
- Project design papers
- Work-based learning logs or workplace artifacts

- Digital or physical portfolios
- Data visualizations
- Community tools or guides
- Videos, prototypes, or presentations
- Written or recorded reflections

Implementation Using Universal Design

LEAs should approach designing Future Readiness Project options for their students using a single, universal project design template that can support all students and pathways. This approach supports consistency, clarity, and scalability across schools.

Recommended Universal FRP Design Template Elements

1. Future Readiness Project Type Selection + Guiding Question
 - Work-Based Learning
 - Project-Based
 - Portfolio-Based
 - Research-Based
2. Initial Research Summary
3. Rationale for Project Selection
4. Add Idaho Competencies to Strengthen
5. Identified Stakeholders or Mentors
6. Planned Deliverables
7. Showcase Student Understanding and Gain of Competencies
8. Timeline and Milestones
9. Reflection Prompts

FAQs

Is there a minimum hour requirement for student’s experiential component?

- There is no statewide requirement for the duration of a student’s involvement in their experiential component.

Is there a statewide rubric for evaluating students’ achievement of competencies?

- Competencies can enhance the content standards to meet learning objectives. When integrating across multiple courses or years, districts and LEAs may establish a process to determine when and how students can achieve these competencies throughout their educational journey.

When should students begin working on their Future Readiness Project?

- Although the Future Readiness Project is to be completed by the end of grade 12, districts are encouraged to initiate the process earlier. Research indicates that long-term projects, mentorship, and applied learning experiences can enhance student engagement and support postsecondary success.

Does the Future Readiness Project replace or supplement credit requirements?

- The Future Readiness Project is a graduation requirement, not a course credit requirement. Districts and LEAs may choose to incorporate Future Readiness Project activities into existing or new courses, advisories, or programs, but it does not specifically require credit unless locally determined.

For Questions Contact

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