

# THE TEEN APPEAL

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## Students debate merits, drawbacks of the Capstone Program

**Sean Roberts II**  
*Trezevant High School*

Many factors contribute seniors' stress levels.

They include, but are not limited to, graduation, homework, jobs, family and social pressures. Some seniors would add the Capstone Project to that list.

The Capstone Project is a project that all seniors must complete. It is comprised of four components: a research paper, an oral presentation with PowerPoint, a product and a portfolio.

The portfolio should include the research paper and documentation, copy of the product and PowerPoint and all the required forms as specified in the Capstone Manual (including parent/teacher approval forms, letter of intent, grading rubrics and any other documentation that is relevant to the student's topic).

The Capstone Manual (2009) states: "The purpose of the Capstone Project is to allow your child the opportunities to demonstrate what he or she knows and is capable of doing in the world after graduation."

Some seniors felt the Capstone was a waste of time, a limited commodity for most high school seniors.

Ebony Stanback, a senior at Trezevant High School, is one of them.

"It is not worth the effort, and it took up most of the seniors' time," Ebony said.

Michael Anderson, a senior at Manassas High

School, agreed.

"We've been in school since kindergarten. I don't think it's right for us to do a Capstone in order to graduate," Michael said.

Other students found the Capstone Project extremely helpful as they prepared for college.

Tiara Dilliard, a senior at Raleigh-Egypt High School, was one of them.

"It was worth the effort because it helps you write a research paper especially if you have never written one before," Tiara said.

Correy McClatchie, a senior at Manassas High School, expressed his appreciation for the project also.

"The Capstone helps enhance your abilities, especially if you plan to go to college," Correy said.

Department Chair for Special Education at Trezevant High School, Shameka Blair, emphasized the importance of the final high school learning experience.

"You will be more than likely required to complete a Capstone/research project in college, but the requirements will be much more extensive. So, this is a great idea to expose students to a portion of college curricula," Blair said.

Students expressed ideas about how to change the capstone in order to alleviate some of the senior year stress,

including beginning the capstone program earlier in a student's high school career.

Some seniors suggested the Capstone Projects begin during their junior year, continue throughout the summer, and end in the first semester of senior year.

Although Ebony said she thought the project was a waste of time this year, she felt it could be more effective if done differently.

"It would be best to start junior year so there is more time to prepare for it because it's a lot of work to do in one school year," she said.

"It would be best to give us the

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Photo by Sean Roberts II, Trezevant High School  
Trezevant senior Devuntre Edinburg presents his Capstone Project

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