




REFLECT Initiative

Researching Electronic *portFolios*: Learning, Engagement,
Collaboration *through* Technology

Helen Barrett
Research Project Director

Why The Reflect Initiative?

- Empirical evidence on effectiveness of e-portfolios in secondary schools
- Use portfolios to complement standardized tests
- Conduct a meta-study made of many smaller studies

The Goal:

- To collect data and draw conclusions about the impact of electronic portfolio on:
 - student learning
 - Motivation
 - Engagement

...in secondary schools

What participants receive:

- Free web-based software for all student participants
- Free regional workshops (Aug-Sept. 2005)
- Onsite visits (one a year)
- Online professional development for all teacher participants

Goals of the REFLECT Initiative

The overarching goal of **The REFLECT Initiative** is to collect data and draw conclusions about the impact that electronic portfolios have on student learning, motivation and engagement and how teaching practices and strategies change with electronic portfolio integration.

The REFLECT Initiative will study issues related to portfolio learning and reflection. The data collected will provide research-based evidence on the effect portfolios have on student learning, motivation, and engagement. To that end we will seek to identify what conditions facilitate and encourage students to care about their work and be proud of it. Can the project identify the conditions necessary to motivate students to maintain their portfolio as a record of their growth over time and as a story of their learning?

Some Key Research Questions

- How do e-portfolios provide evidence of deep learning?
- Under what conditions can e-portfolios be successfully used to demonstrate assessment for learning and assessment of learning?
- Under what conditions do students take ownership of their e-portfolios?
- What are the benefits of developing e-portfolios as perceived by students, teachers, administrators, and/or parents?
- What are perceived obstacles to implementing e-portfolios with secondary school students and how can they be overcome?
- How do paper portfolios differ from e-portfolios?

The Vision of REFLECT

To provide the teachers with the training and the students with the tools:

- To tell their *stories* with *pride!*
- To put *heart* and *soul* and *voice* into their portfolios!

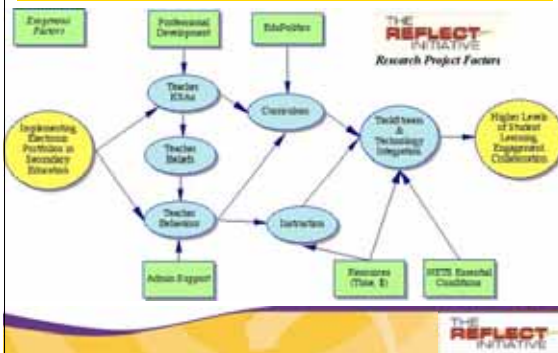


How Were Schools Chosen?

- Schools submitted a proposal for their project in Spring 2005
- All participating organizations needed to send at least one representative to the Inaugural meeting (Philadelphia just prior to NECC)
- Students must participate (and be supported) for the length of the entire program (2 years)



Research Project Factors

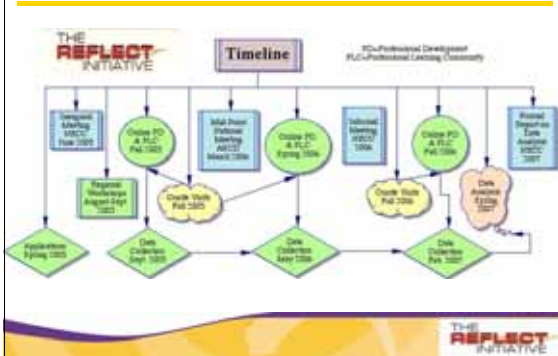


Summary of Research Protocols

- **Pre:** Fall 2005 (Sept-Oct)
 - Online surveys of students and teachers (UNT)
- **Ongoing:** through Online PD & Teacher Journals (blogs)
 - Sample student ePortfolio reviews
- **Site Visit observations:** Fall 2005/Spring 2006
 - Focus on introduction and implementation by teachers
- **Mid:** Spring 2006 (May)
 - Online surveys of students and teachers
- **Site Visit observations:** Fall 2006/Spring 2007
 - Add Student focus groups
- **Post:** Spring 2007 (March-May)
 - Repeat online surveys of students and teachers (UNT + HSSSE)
 - Paper survey of parents (English & Spanish)



Timeline



A tale of two paper portfolios

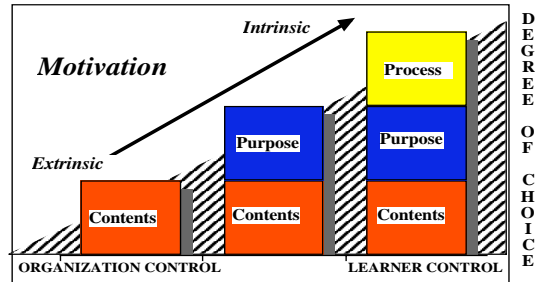
- High School graduates in Washington state (and Utah, too!)
- High school freshman (Jim Mahoney, *Power and Portfolios* published by Heinemann)



Difference between those two stories?

- What are the variables that produce these extremes in attitudes toward ownership of portfolios?

Learner Ownership and Control of Electronic Portfolio Development



Learner Control vs. Organizational Control Assumption:
Greater Learner Control leads to more Intrinsic Motivation

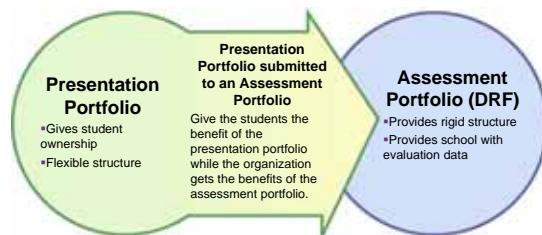
Getting Started

Each school needed to decide on the best implementation to fit the needs of the project.

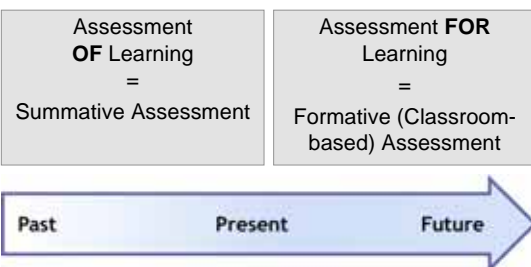
Many Choices....

- Showcase Portfolio?
- Assessment Portfolio?
- Combination of both?

What Type of Portfolio?



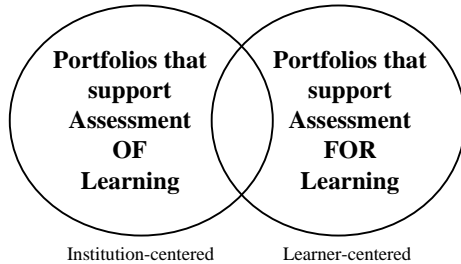
Purposes for Assessment



www.qca.org.uk/afl (ages3-14)



Overlap of Assessment Types



What is your portfolio philosophy?

- A standardized **checklist** of skills? (Positivist)
- or
- A reflective **story** of deep learning? (Constructivist)

A look at some of the REFLECT schools

Overall Cohort

- 14 Active Projects
 - Arizona (3)
 - New Jersey
 - California (5)
 - Florida
 - Maryland
 - New Jersey
 - Brazil
 - Tennessee
- 31 Active Schools
 - 15 in Arizona DOE Project
 - 4 in New Jersey DOE Project
 - 1 Elementary School
 - 1 Intermediate School
 - 29 High Schools
 - 2 Private Schools (MD & FL)
- ~133 Active Teachers
- ~3100 Students (Fall Semester)
 - Could double in Year 2

Mount Juliet High School (TN)

- Presentation Portfolio
 - Template created and distributed to all of the students
 - 470 participating students

Mount Juliet High School



Quotes

- “We have found the web-based portfolios are giving us a leverage not found in paper-based portfolio products.” - Diane Bennett, Project Leader

John O’Connell High School (CA)

- Directed Response Folio (Assessment Portfolio)
 - College to Career Classes
 - 450 participating students
 - French class
 - Spanish classes
 - AP Biology

John O’Connell High School

The screenshot shows a web-based portfolio interface. On the left, there is a sidebar with categories: 'Ready for Work', 'College to Career', and 'Creative Writing'. The main content area displays a student's portfolio entry titled 'I thought that the project was interesting...'. The entry includes a small image of a flag and a paragraph of text: 'I learned new facts about foreign countries. I learned the difference between the United States and other foreign countries. The food is different. The education is different. The people, religion and society other things was not like they are here. I think that I learned a new side of...'

Associado Brasil America

- Brazilian/American Bi-national Center accredited by the U.S. government
- It promotes cultural and educational exchange through English courses for adults, teens, and children and holds cultural events, courses and seminars for professionals, scholarship programs, Portuguese as a second Language, translation services and membership programs for U.S. alumni.
- Presentation Portfolios – one for each of eight semesters
- Portfolios Submitted to DRF
- 130 students

Associacao Brasil America

The screenshot shows a web-based portfolio interface. On the left, there is a sidebar with categories: 'Creative Writing', 'College to Career', and 'Ready for Work'. The main content area displays a student's portfolio entry titled 'Creative Writing'. The entry includes a list of sub-entries: 'Creative Writing', 'Ready for Work', 'College to Career', and 'Ready for Work'. The sub-entries are: 'Creative Writing', 'Ready for Work', 'College to Career', and 'Ready for Work'.

McGarvin Intermediate School (CA)

- Social Studies Classes
- 175 students
- Directed Response Folio Template

McGarvin Intermediate School



Looking Ahead... 2006

- Initial Surveys in the process of completion
 - Using Survey Builder and DRF within TaskStream
 - Student Survey (UNT's CAQ)
 - Faculty Survey (UNT's TAC, CBAM, Davies/Stiggins AFL strategies)
- Teachers submitting products
 - Weekly Journal
 - Professional Portfolio
- Phase 2 Professional Development (Pedagogy)
- Site visits to schools throughout Spring 2006
- March Meetings in Orlando (FETC) and Palm Springs (CUE)
- Spring Survey focus specifically on Portfolio Use

PD Needs Assessment (TaskStream-Phase 1)

Description	Percent
Maintaining a Reflective Journal with the Web Page Builder	27.78%
Using the Resource Folio to upload work samples	25.00%
Creating your Professional Portfolio using the Web Folio Builder	27.78%
Using the Lesson Builder and the Unit Builder	41.67%
Using the Rubric Wizard	30.56%
Using the Message Center (internal e-mail)	11.11%
Using the Discussion Board	25.00%
Creating a Directed Response Folio	36.11%
Creating a Template for the Web Publication Tools	19.44%
Creating a customized form for your students to complete	58.33%
Other	5.56%

n=36

PD Needs Assessment (Pedagogy-Phase 2)

Description	Percent
21st Century Learning	16.67%
Formative Assessment FOR Learning strategies	27.78%
Electronic Learning Portfolios	47.22%
Project-Based Learning	38.89%
Student Engagement and Motivation	47.22%
Effective Integration of Technology into Instruction	19.44%
Reflection to support deep learning	25.00%
Digital Storytelling	33.33%
Create school-based Professional Learning Community	13.89%
Other	5.56%

n=36

Site Visits

- 1 day classroom observation + conversation with teachers
- 4-8 page report with these topics:
 - Observation of Technology and TaskStream Use by Students
 - Rolling it Out: Planning and Early Implementation
 - General use of/or goals for TaskStream in this implementation
 - Computer Environment in the School
 - Implementation of Research Requirements
 - School Environment
 - General feelings about TaskStream and ePortfolios from teachers
 - Professional Development Needs
 - Review of Project Goals from the original Proposal
 - Observations and Comments on the Progress of Implementation

My Initial Observations

- Teacher's role is critical
 - Dual learning curve
 - Learning TaskStream (prior experience in TED program)
 - Using portfolios with students (prior paper portfolio experience)
 - Understanding reflection and metacognition
 - Using Assessment FOR Learning strategies
- Access to technology is also critical
 - Home access by students
 - Classroom access impact on in-school use

Validating my dissertation research

- When learning new **tools**, use familiar **tasks**
- When learning new **tasks**, use familiar **tools**



My Hope and Wish...

Electronic Portfolios
become dynamic
celebrations and
stories of deep learning
across the lifespan



Dr. Helen Barrett

- Research Project Director,
The REFLECT Initiative
sponsored by TaskStream
- eportfolios@comcast.net
- <http://electronicportfolios.org/>

