REFLECT Initiative
Researching Electronic Portfolios: Learning, Engagement, Collaboration through Technology
Helen Barrett, Research Project Director, Consultant

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

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 2005)
- Students must participate (and be supported) for the length of the entire program (2 years)

Timeline
Purposes for Assessment

Assessment OF Learning = Summative Assessment
Assessment FOR Learning = Formative (Classroom-based) Assessment

Past Present Future

Summary of Research Protocols

- **Pre**: Fall 2005 (Dec-Jan)
  - Online surveys of students and teachers (UNT)
- **Ongoing**: through Online PD & Teacher Journals (blogs)
  - Sample student ePortfolio reviews
- **Site Visit observations**: Winter 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)

Overall Cohort

- **15 Active Projects**
  - Arizona (3)
  - New Jersey
  - California (5)
  - Florida
  - Maryland
  - Michigan
  - Brazil
  - Tennessee
  - New York

- **26 Active Schools**
  - 6 in Arizona DOE Project
  - 4 in New Jersey DOE Project
  - 1 Elementary School
  - 1 Intermediate School
  - 23 High Schools
  - 2 Private Schools (MD & FL)
  - 1 International School

- **~60 Active Teachers**
- ~3100 Students
  - Could double in Year 2

School Demographics

- 4 - Urban
- 16 - Suburban
- 5 - Rural
- 1 - International

*more than 50 miles from a Major Metropolitan Area

Who is Implementing? (from 20 Site Visits)

- “One-sies” - Single teacher in a school (9)
- “Two-sies” - Two teachers in a school (4)
- Leader-led - tech coordinator supporting more than two teachers (6)
- Level-wide - all students in a grade level, multiple teachers (2)

Level of Implementation (from 20 Site Visits)

- **Low** - students using TaskStream primarily as online storage - little or no interactive feedback (teacher-to-student)
- **Medium** - promising, emerging use of TaskStream - using DRF - some interactive feedback (primarily teacher-to-student)
- **High** - creative use of TaskStream and/or other technologies, including DRF or multimedia, high levels of interactive feedback (including student-to-student)
Level of Implementation (from 20 Site Visits)

- By Person Implementing
  - Low (6)
  - Medium (7)
  - High (7)

Curriculum Areas (from 20 Site Visits)

- Technology (3)
- English/Language Arts or Foreign Language (6)
- Social Studies (3)
- Career & Technical Education (CTE) (4)
- Multiple disciplines (5)

Initial Observations from Site Visits

- 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 (quality feedback)
  - Technology integration strategies
  - Support system or close collaborator
- Access to technology is also critical
  - Home access by students
  - Classroom access impact on in-school use (scheduling)

Validating my dissertation research

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

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  - http://www.reflectinitiative.com/
  - http://electronicportfolios.org/