# **Teacher Electronic Portfolios**

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# OVERVIEW

Over time, student and teacher portfolios have taken several forms for a variety of purposes. Initially, portfolios were created in many educational settings to document learning. Portfolios were used as one means of assessment in course work or for senior graduation exhibitions. As calls for educational reform continued to be heard in forums ranging from local school board offices to the Oval Office, teacher accountability has become an issue of paramount importance. Parents and politicians alike want assurance that the most competent teachers are providing quality educational experiences for students. Thus, teacher assessment has become a "hot" political topic throughout our country.

In the last five years, teacher education programs across America have required that student teachers create portfolios as evaluation instruments to address the often-mandated INTASC (Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, 1987) principles required of all education majors prior to obtaining teacher certification and licenses.

Helen Barrett (2003) defines a portfolio as a "purposeful collection of [teacher] work that illustrates efforts, progress, and achievement in one or more areas over time" (http://ali.apple.com/ali\_sites/ali/exhibits/1000156/). This selective collection of teacher work and evidence of development and progress is gathered across diverse contexts over time and is grounded in critical reflection of one's teaching practice and professional growth. Its aim is to create a contextual view of a teacher's work. For assessment purposes, teacher portfolios are often framed by requirements, such as the need to show competence in state educational teaching standards and university-specific performance tasks.

The benefits of teacher portfolios in general include: making the invisible practices of teachers visible, enhancing teaching practices, and promoting self-reflection and authentic assessment. Portfolios have created opportunities for meaning-making and ownership of learning, and provided a venue for self-definition. This chapter describes the characteristics, processes, construction and audiences of student teacher portfolios. In addition, the chapter highlights specific traits of electronic portfolios and implications for the future.

# CHARACTERISTICS OF PORTFOLIOS

Student teacher portfolios are often created in one of two forms: hard copy or electronic. Electronic portfolios are often referred to with other synonymous terminology: "e-folios, digital portfolios, Web-based portfolios or Web folios, multimedia portfolios and electronically-augmented portfolios" (Kilbane & Milman, 2003, p. 7). Within the last five years, the electronic portfolio has become a popular, efficient way to provide evidence of teacher competence. Electronic teaching portfolios are unique because the use of technology allows the portfolio developer to collect and organize portfolio artifacts in a variety of media types (audio, video, graphics and text), allowing the contents to be displayed and manipulated in ways not possible in a binder portfolio. Kilbane and Milman (2003) outline a number of advantages of electronic portfolios over the traditional hard copy or binder-type portfolios, including "accessibility, portability and creativity" (pp. 8-10). For a more comprehensive comparison of hard copy and electronic portfolios, see Table 1.

# DEVELOPMENT OF AN ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIO

### Process

The process of developing an electronic student teacher portfolio is evolutionary, ongoing and recursive. Several

STRUCTURE• Standards• Chronolo,• Chronolo,• Chronolo,• Chronolo,• Thematic• Thematic• Thematic• CONTENT• Diverse aknowledgdisnositie	ds logical/	<ul> <li>I I much three rine hinder</li> </ul>	Can be high tech or low tech
Chronolo, Developn     Developn     Thematic     Diverse a     knowledg	logical/		
Developm       •     Thematic       •     Diverse a       knowledg		Organized with Table of Contents dividers	Web pages, PowerPoint, text, sound
CONTENT     Diverse a knowledg	omental	and tabs	and video
CONTENT     Diverse a     knowledg     dismeitic	ic		
knowledg	artifacts showing	Narratives	Hyperlinks and PDF files
dismositic	dge, skills and	<ul> <li>Personal/professional stories</li> </ul>	Multimedia
nnendern	ions as a teacher	Photographs	Can contain many things that do not
Can show	w best work,	<ul> <li>Paper artifacts, such as lesson plans, sample</li> </ul>	easily fit into traditional "notebook"
developm	mental process	of student work, etc.	Holistic view of creator
PROCESS • A recursiv	sive process of creating,	<ul> <li>Author sifts through files and folders of</li> </ul>	Author learns technological skill:
collecting	1g, selecting, rejecting,	paperwork, compiles artifacts, may use	Web-building, multi-media software
reflecting	ng, projecting	creative skills similar to scrap booking	adaptations
BENEFITS TO Teachers:		Easy to hand to others for one-on-one	• Easy to burn a CD or DVD to leave
AUTHOR • Select art	rtifacts.	feedback	with audience
Become 1	e learners		Portability
Chart gro	rowth		Accessibility to anyone with Internet
Gain sens	nse of accomplishment		capabilities
Have an	i edge in job interviews		Easily stored
			Teachers implement more technology
			in classes
BENEFITS FOR • Show evi	vidence of competence	<ul> <li>Interactive in interview</li> </ul>	Far-reaching audience, including
AUDIENCE and uniqu	que qualities of teacher/	<ul> <li>Multi-sensory experience</li> </ul>	students, parents, colleagues,
learner		<ul> <li>Artistic, human quality</li> </ul>	administrators, community members
		Use of creative formats	

Table 1. Comparison of hard copy and electronic portfolios

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