Digital Portfolios

By

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1. **Key area the practice aims to address**
   Knowledge Bank Category: Student learning
   Effective Schools Category: Focus on teaching and learning

2. **Key details about your institution/s relevant to the practice**
   Name of school or organisation: Sale Cluster
   Cohort: Grades 5 & 6 and Year 7 students
   Region: Gippsland
   Like Schools Group: 7
   Level: Primary and Secondary

3. **This practice:**
   Demonstrates improvement (Exemplary practice)

4. **What are we doing or improving?**
   The Sale Cluster identified a number of focus areas including integrated ICT, assessment and reporting, student engagement, thinking skills and transition as specific areas which commonly needed to be improved across the Cluster. As a result, the Cluster made a joint decision to implement digital portfolios into each school. All of the portfolios have a common structure, designed by the Cluster and require minimal ICT specialist training to introduce the portfolios to students.

5. **How we did it/are doing it**
   Two members from the Cluster participated in an ACEP digital portfolio workshop (Australian Centre for Effective Partnerships - Maureen O'Rourke and Kaye Fletcher). The workshop provided us with the knowledge we needed to be able to design a template for the digital portfolios. Through in house PD a teacher from each Cluster school was then given information on how to implement the portfolios into their school and classrooms.

6. **How do we know it is working?**
   The portfolios are still in their early days and as yet have not been included as a tool during reporting or assessment. However, the feedback and enthusiasm from the students to work on their portfolios has been overwhelming in all of the schools which have started them. Students in lower grades in the primaries have found out what the older students have been doing and have been asking their teachers if they can be involved in them as well. ‘Students asking to learn!!!’

7. **What are the outcomes of the practice?**
   The portfolios have many intended outcomes:
   - To be used as a tool during reporting time to generate conversation about learning between parents, students and teachers.
   - To help improve student, thinking and reflection skills.
   - To be used as an accurate sources of information (student work) during transition from primary to secondary school. It is intended the portfolios will move with the students as they progress through their years of schooling. Items in the portfolio will be replaced at the discretion of the student - a new portfolio is not started each year.
   - As a means to integrate ICT into a range of subject areas in the secondary setting.
   - To provide students with the opportunity to use a range of multi-literacies.

8. **What have we learnt?**
   It’s very important to provide teachers with the common template for the development of the portfolios, to ensure the digital portfolios maintain a similar theme from school to school.

   The nature of the activity has encouraged a lot of peer teaching amongst students.
The teacher does not have to be ICT trained. Once the template is given to the students they run with it. The teacher's role should be focussed on reflection and the content of the portfolio rather than the ICT skills.

9. What are we doing next, and can the practice be extended and sustained long term?

The Cluster agreed to use 2005 as the trial year and make digital portfolios compulsory for transition at the end of 2006. The Cluster is looking to extend the practices through professional development to be delivered in a team teaching situation across the year. The Cluster is also looking to investigate the use of ‘professional students’ (students who have developed an outstanding portfolio in their own school) to help those schools which are struggling with ICT skills. The portfolios are to be used during transition from primary to secondary school and then from the junior campus to their senior campus as a means to ensure they are used and sustained over a long period of time.

10. What did we use?

Computers, digital cameras and scanners.

11. What idea, theory or research did we base our project on?

Professional Development delivered by ACEP.

12. Funding or resources

Computers, digital cameras and scanners.

13. Timelines

Year one:
- Participate in the PD
- Designed a template for the Cluster.
- Provided basic ICT skills to teachers across the Cluster.
- Let teachers dabble with the portfolios and worked closely with those that were keen and competent.
- Develop a cluster commitment to have the portfolios up and running in all schools within the cluster by the end of 2006.

Year two: Work closely with those teachers which need further assistance.

14. Contact Details.

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15. Further information on our practice.

Additional Information

See attachments:
- Digital portfolio requirements
- Step-by-step guide: How to make a digital portfolio
- Example digital portfolio
SaleCluster Innovations and Excellence
Digital Portfolio Requirements.

- To be completed in Power Point.
- Should include a front page.
- Should include the four headings as agreed by the cluster, MY Creativity, MY Thinking, MY Teamwork, MY Reflections.
- I found it easier to put a content page at the start of each of the four sections.
- The first piece of work to include in the MY Creativity section is information about the student using the headings Past, Present, Future. Try to encourage students to use pictures etc to explain their lives instead of all text.
- Another piece you could include in the MY Creativity section is, 5 Things you don’t know about me.
- In the MY Teamwork section students could include any work they have completed in a group, any teams they have been a member of inside and outside of school, and committees they have been on etc.
- In the MY Thinking section they can include any work they have completed in any subjects.
- In the MY Reflection sections students should link with the work they have included in the three other sections to reflection on their own progression and outcomes. Some students will find this process very difficult so to assist them the cluster is using the theme Head, Heart, Hand. The Head refers to what the student thought, the Heart should tell what the student felt and the Hands is what the student produced.
- A few tips for the portfolios. Hyperlink the section headings to each page.
- When you are typing in the portfolio use a blank page for each slide and insert a text box to insert writing. This can be found under insert on the tool bar.
- To hyperlink move the mouse to the outside of the textbox and move it around until you get an arrow pointing up and down. Right click on the arrow and go down to hyperlink. Then you will have the option to link inside the document and the page to another slide in your presentation. Choose the slide you want and press ok.
- Remember to see if your hyperlinks have worked, you must be in the view slideshow program. It will not work in the normal working document mode.
SaleCluster Innovations and Excellence Step By Step - How to Make a Digital Portfolio.

From the desk top:
- Double click on the Microsoft Office Power Point icon.

How to get a blank slide:
- Go to Format (on the tool bar at the top of the screen) → Slide Layout
- Left click on the 1 slide in the left hand column
- Left click on the 'blank' content layout slide (located on the right hand side of the screen)

How to insert a new slide:
- Go to Insert (on the tool bar at the top of the screen) → New Slide.
- Change the slide layout to blank (as you did above)

How to insert a text:
- Go to Insert (on the tool bar at the top of the screen) → text box.
- Left click on your page and drag to make a box.
- Type the text into the box.

How to Hyperlink:
- Ensure all the slides you intend to like have headings and are easy to recognise.
- Left click on the text you want to link to highlight the text box.
- Place the curser on the shaded line of the box to form a four way arrow.
- Right click on the arrow.
- Go down to Hyperlink.
- Select place in this document.
- Chose the slide you want to link with.
- Select ok
- Remember – to see if your links have worked you must be in Slide Show → View Show.

How to insert a picture:
- Go to Insert (on the tool bar on the top of the screen) → picture.
- Chose from where the picture is located e.g. From one of your files or from clip art etc.
- Double click on the picture to insert it.

How to move a picture:
- Left click on the picture to bring up the small circles which surround the picture.
- Left click on any of the ‘corner only’ circles to drag the picture to where you would like it to go. It may take a few different drags in different directions to get it where you would like it.
DIGITAL PORTFOLIO

DEBORAH FOX

SALE COLLEGE
MY Creativity

MY Team Work

MY Thinking

MY Reflections
MY Creativity

Content Includes:

• Find out about my Past, Present and Future.

• Learn 5 things you don’t know about me
MY Team Work

Content Includes:

MY Creativity
MY Thinking
MY Reflections
MY Thinking

Content Includes:

• Innovations and Excellence - Newspaper Article.
MY Reflections

Content Includes:

MY Creativity
MY Team Work
MY Thinking
I was born on the 14th July 1976, making my star sign cancer. I lived in several towns including Balliang, Kanyapella, Tongala, Echuca and Sale. I moved to Melbourne when I was eighteen to attend Uni at RMIT. I studied Human Movement and completed a Diploma of Education.

Currently I’m a teacher at Sale College. I teach Year 9’s in the Module Program, Active Girls and Year 10’s in the Advance Program. I am also the Sale Cluster’s Innovations and Excellence Coordinator.

In the future I would like to teach some senior classes and help students achieve the best result possible. I would also like to complete further study to better my career.
I love to play and coach netball.

I have a little dog called Jessie.

These are my great friends from Echuca.

I got married on the 8th January 2005.

I really enjoy teaching this class.

Click here to view more photos.
Sale Cluster’s Innovation and Excellence Program.

The Innovations and Excellence Program was a government initiative designed to improve the broad areas of literacy, numeracy, attendance, engagement and retention in the Middle Years of Schooling. Funding was allocated to clusters of schools across Victoria in an effort to improve and strengthen the links between Primary and Secondary Schools to further enhance the educational experiences for all public school students.

The Sale Cluster is one of the biggest clusters in Victoria and includes: Araluen PS, Bundalaguah PS, Cobains PS, Guthridge PS, Lochsport PS, Longford PS, Nambrok/Denison PS, Rosedale PS, Sale 545 PS, Seaspray PS, Wurruk, PS, Sale Special School and Sale College.

Starting in 2004 the Sale Cluster worked very hard to firstly identify areas within each of the schools requiring further development. Each school surveyed their students on how they perceived their teachers taught in the classroom and how the students preferred to learn, staff were also surveyed to gain an insight into their own teaching styles and to identify areas for professional growth.

In consultation with all of the schools involved the Cluster used the survey results to develop an action plan which included specific targets and strategies. Through the Cluster, and the teachers involved, links between the schools are being strengthened and an increased understanding of the education continuum across the middle years of education has occurred.
The Sale Cluster is driven by the Cluster Coordinator and a Middle Years Coordinator from each of the schools involved. This group meets once a fortnight to plan initiatives, programs and curriculum for the cluster schools. To date all of the teachers from grades five, six and year seven have participated in Professional Development delivered by Lane Clark titled Preparing Students for their Future not our Past. Follow up programs have been planned for later in the year to build on recent learning. A cluster website has been created to improve the communication between schools and staff and can be found at www.salecluster.ims.net. Multimedia projectors and digital cameras have been placed in all of the schools for students to access and use.

Most of the schools are about to begin an alternate program for nine to ten days in their classrooms called “Kidsville”. The program was developed by Kevin Greenway from Maffra and centres around turning the classroom into a small town where each student takes on a particular community identity within that town. Together they use teamwork to coordinate the town and manage the impact of a natural disaster.
All Middle Years teacher are members of the MYCG (Middle Years Cluster Group) and meet once a term at different locations across the cluster. These are designed to provide teachers with time to share ideas, encourage professional talk and an opportunity to network with other teachers within the cluster. Teachers have also been given the opportunity to participate in a Teacher Shadowing Program.

Currently the Sale Cluster is looking at strategies to implement student digital portfolios before the end of the year to help with the transition between primary and secondary school, and to also assist with a variety of learning outcomes and assessment within the curriculum.

The Sale Cluster has been providing a very successful Primary Schools Music Program coordinated by Claire Cochran from Sale College.

The Sale Cluster has a number of initiatives it plans to implement over the next two years all of them are innovative and designed to improve student’s thinking skills, decision making and learning.

Further information regarding the Cluster can be obtained from Cluster Coordinator, Deb Hobbs at Sale College.