

Electronic portfolios present a mechanism for individuals to represent understanding but also growth in their performance. They can use pieces of work that enable them to provide evidence that they learned specific material and met specific learning results. However, they also are able to use the tool to visualize their growth over time. Typically, assessments take place over distinct segments of time and when done are replaced by the next required performance indicator. Portfolios offer students a reflection piece that they can use to stimulate recollection of concepts over time. They also can be proud of their accomplishments and are less reliant on outside praise.

The different programs and forms of portfolio development are all nice, but involve costs that are not always acceptable.

The FolioTek system offers a lot of connectivity between educator and student that simple depositories of work do not have. FolioTek makes the connections during the creation of the Assignments by the teacher. Then when the student uploads that product, the area is documented and connected with the identified Learning Results.

Chalk and Wire just appeared to be a similar system with different pictures and a little more control. This system appears to be geared more toward higher level learning systems. I was impressed with the math assignment by the high school in Hawaii. The students had an excellent integration of technology into their learning and were then able to present that in the portfolio. I did not notice a connection to specific Learning Results, but assume that it is probably feasible.

The drawbacks to these systems for our district is the cost issues. Although they are not extreme, they are more than we have to offer. The price for FolioTek starts at \$15 per student for one year up to \$55 per student for 5 years. A final advantage of larger prepacked systems such as FolioTek and Chalk and Wire is the security and storage options. By housing the information offsite, there is less hardware issues for the school.

There are a few other options for manual development of portfolios out there that are gaining potential for schools as well. The latest to be offered in Maine is the inclusion of the Noteshare program on all the laptops. It is not specifically a portfolio system, but it appears that it could be adapted. This program offers a way to compile material and compress it to a PDF file for sharing. It also allows multiple users to develop products. You can produce multipage products with embedded multimedia pieces of work. The difficulty with these systems seems to be the lack of direct connectivity with the Learning Results. Also, self-developed systems need to be managed more carefully because of lack of security and hardware requirements.

The development of a portfolio system in our school is going to be a part of a plan to show progress on technology integration in our educational system. We are getting laptops and tools from the state and are now going to need to present evidence of success. As our schools Tech Teacher Leader, I am proposing that teachers plan to develop one or two lessons a semester that integrate technology in a meaningful way to post to a school portfolio. Initially, these may be simple replacement activities; however, the goal is to have the teachers use a portfolio to monitor their progress towards higher level thinking activities. It also is a way to share ideas and collaborate on successes. As the portfolio develops, it could be used as a recruiting tool to show our community of our successes. After the school-wide system is developed, I believe that it will be easier to require students to complete them for individual work. They will be able to see examples and have models of quality work to produce as well as importance for the project.