

ePortfolios at Albany Senior High School

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NZ Ministry of Education 2010 seminar

The curriculum structure and how it fits with the use of eportfolios
(<http://ashs.school.nz>)

Our curriculum structure has three main strands – tutorials, specialist subjects and impact projects. It actually aligns really nicely with our logo as well so we actually have it written into our logo, but you can't see that at the moment unfortunately. Underpinning all that things were so timely for us because the new curriculum came out at the same time.

The first strand – our specialist subject areas, we made a conscious decision to keep focus in specialist subject areas so that students could really develop a deep understanding in their specialist subjects and work towards developing the dispositions of becoming an artist using their knowledge in different ways, doing things the performativity.

One of the things that we want to make sure that we are doing, is that we are being driven by evidence and data, we are using data to inform our practice. Eportfolios are fantastic for this because as students collect work we can see evidence of their performance and we can give them feedback and help them move their learning forward. We do what is called profiling and eportfolios can help us with profiling and knowing where our students are at. And the evidence comes through also in terms of our professional inquiry, which Mark will talk about, and the step forwards in terms of how we decide we are going to work in our classrooms with our students to move their learning forward. It links right back of course to excellence in all that we do.

The second strand is tutorials. Now although these are separate strands the think about eportfolios is it transcends these boundaries that we've made. Because the learning in specialist subjects that students are choosing to share with teachers and with their peers in tutorials are from specialist subjects and they are getting feedback in tutorial time. Tutorial time is two 100 minute blocks throughout the week. It is not about collecting rolls and doing that kind of thing, it's not administrative. It is actually about empowering our learners and building learning capacity. So we are looking at examples of work from classes and working as a small team together to try and improve the level of work, the quality of work that our students are doing. So I suppose we liken to a pitt crew. So our students will bring to us, in groups of say 12 students, bring to us work and we'll talk about what needs to happen to move their learning on, what specialist subject support we need to get for those students, and we run things like workshops and that kind of thing in that time to really pinpoint the needs of

the student and make sure we are being responsive. Responsivity is one of the key drivers for us as well.

The last strand that we have is the impact projects. It is about project based learning, it's also about finding the treasures that our students bring to us and allowing us to build on those treasures. So it is about treasure hunting. And we do believe that every student has gifts that they bring to us and it is our job to work with them to build and develop those. So impact projects are a fantastic opportunity for this. This is actually a whole day on Wednesday every Wednesday. What we do is work in groups with teachers, the groups are determined by student interest, it is completely student driven. And we support our students to develop projects around their interests. Our vision wants us to contribute while we are still at school, not to have students leaving school and then contributing to the world. So this is our opportunity we want it to allow our students to deepen their learning while they are at school, but another aspect of impact projects is they need to be contributing to the community and enriching the community in some way.

In terms of eportfolios it has actually been a great answer to a problem we faced in terms of capturing evidence of learning along the way. When you talk to students they can really tell you in depth and detail about some of the problems they have come across and what they have had to overcome and in discussion you can draw out more information. But when we were using the written reporting that richness was lost. So we are looking forward to using the eportfolios and we've got some examples I'll show later, to show how we can actually capture that evidence of learning as we go. So that is quite exciting for us.