Voices of Experience: Issues to Consider When Selecting an ePortfolio/Assessment Product
Welcome and Introduction

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Welcome and Introduction

Other members of the Implementation Team

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Professor of Elementary Education

Susan Dell
Chair of the Special Education Department
Overview of Presentation

I. Background
II. Implementation with Challenges/Resolutions
III. Examples
IV. Tips
V. Questions and Answer Time
Background

- True Outcomes (web-based assessment system) was initiated at the University of RI in 2004
- A state decision was made for RI College and CCRI to adopt True Outcomes in 2008
- Technical and program upgrade support for True Outcomes was discontinued in 2009
- A year long “discussion” followed in the School of Education at RIC
- In 2009 a group was charged by the VPAA to review and select a vendor
Reviewed 5-6 different electronic portfolio products to be used by the School of Education

Choose a product that provided three important features:

- Electronic Portfolio
- Assessment & data collection of Teacher Candidate work
- Reporting
Implementation

- Challenges
  - Going to scale
  - Timeframe
    - E.g., whole school at once, from beginning of program, at program exit; mandatory, voluntary, etc.

- Resolution
  - Pilots
  - Volunteers
Implementation-Pilot I and II

- Pilot I Fall 2010 Project
  Student Teachers, Cooperating Teachers, College Supervisors
  (Student Teachers= 28 ELED, SPED, and some Secondary Programs (dropped from 42) then Cooperating Teaches and College Supervisor for Total=62)

- Note-Selected this population as the students already owned the product. In past the Efolio/Assessment Product used only for courses

- Pilot II Spring 2011
  All SPED Student Teachers & Interns
  (Students Teachers=59, Interns=12 then Cooperating Teaches and College Supervisors for Total=154)
Challenges
Big questions—what to do, how to do it and why?

How to select programs and students?
-Entrance? Exit? Number of programs?
Number of students and faculty? Why?

Timeline?

How to train those involved?

Technology issues/staffing?
Challenges/Resolutions for Pilot 1

How to select programs and students? Challenges

- Team decided—no cost to the students (unsure if vendor would be adopted)
- Used students who had previously purchased the product (But then this created a “real” challenge)
  - TC’s, CS, and CT used the product to enter their formal observation reports, but an electronic data entry system was already in place
    - Some felt more comfortable with the data system they already knew
    - Some participants (TC, CS, CT) self selected withdrawal
    - Some gave up without trying
Challenges/Resolutions for Pilot I

Timeline challenges?
- Forced to work with the given time (late decisions)
- Late August (Other factor here-new leadership)
- Hired a part time technology expert who would be our “go to” person

How to train those involved?
- Scheduled tech room and late afternoon trainings
- Targeted each group of learners (TC, CS, CT)
- Tech person conducted one-on-one sessions for those unable to attend trainings
Challenges/Resolutions for Pilot I

Technology issues/staffing challenges?

- Used trainings to teach the product to participants
- Used late afternoon training dates (but we learned some of the times were parent-teacher conference times)
- Delegated responsibilities (Administrative questions to one person, tech issues to tech person—see Team Diagram later)
  - Tech person dealt with all the “techie” questions and details
    (losing pass code, how to do functions, problems…)
  - Admin. person dealt with all of the who, what, when, why questions
Pilot II Resolutions

For Pilot II—Challenges—Used all the feedback from Pilot I
Comments, suggestions, survey, team decisions

Resolutions for Pilot II
(With better understanding of the product and needs of the users)

Participants—all from one program (SPED). Many felt comfortable with the product already. Low cost—many already had a subscription

Product—many owned it but was now required

Resources readily available. Tech person had time to create videos and white papers

Training more efficient and better organized (explained later)
Pilot II Resolutions

Trainings-Each group learned each other’s role
Challenges/Resolutions for Staffing

- **Challenge**
  Who should work on this pilot/project?
  Needed team of people to plan, implement, evaluate
  (See next slide with visual of the team)

- **Resolutions**
  Faculty and new part time technology person
  Team formed
  Many emails
  Team meetings every few weeks
  Final evaluation with survey and review at end of Pilots
Challenges/Resolutions for Staffing

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Training Sessions

- **Pilot I Training Sessions**
  - Three sessions for teacher candidates (September 7th, 8th, and 9th)
  - Three sessions for supervisors and cooperating teachers (September 14th, 16th, 20th)

- **Pilot II Training Sessions**
  - Still divided up by teacher candidates and assessors
  - Multiple sessions scheduled in one day
    - Teacher candidates on February 10th
    - Supervisors and cooperating teachers on February 3rd
Training Sessions

□ Improvements from Fall to Spring
  ▪ Better understanding of the program
  ▪ Supplemental training materials readily available
  ▪ Shorter sessions were more efficient
  ▪ Stressed both sides of the process

□ Challenges
  ▪ Public School Calendar
    ■ Parent-Teacher conferences
Support from Vendor

- **Support Offered**
  - Multiple means of communication
  - Fairly assessable
  - Training offered
    - Three day intensive

- **Support Lacking**
  - Undefined technical support
    - A primary contact available
  - Lack of training materials
    - Guides “assumed” that the user knows the system

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Support from Vendor

- **Meeting the Challenges**
  - Created our own pool of training materials
  - Make use of the primary contact
  - Make use of all forms of communication available
Understanding Users

- Challenges
  - Faculty, cooperating teachers, and teacher candidates have differing levels of technology experience, comfort with technology, perceptions of usefulness of online assessment
  - We wrongly thought that cooperating teachers would be resistant

- Resolution
  - Ongoing efforts to gather feedback from stakeholders
  - Recognition that training and support needs of various users are different
Assessment Format

- **Challenges**
  - Vendor recognized rubrics as the only valid form of evaluation
  - We had to force fit assessments to a rubric format

- **Resolutions**
  - We complained strongly about this to the vendor
  - We used an online survey tool in addition to the product
  - Vendor is expanding options available to assessors
Innovative Product Features

- **Challenges**
  - We were the first ones to use them!
  - They were largely untested; we inadvertently served as a beta site

- **Resolutions**
  - We have identified bugs and recommended solutions
  - We have a say in the refinement of these innovative product features
Reporting

- Challenges
  - Reporting capabilities are sophisticated, yet difficult to carry out due to insufficient documentation
  - We cannot link data from surveys/forms to standards or other assessments
  - We sometimes cannot “find” data that has been submitted

- Resolutions
  - We are working through this, a little bit at a time
III. Examples
Artifact Development

Option One: Students can create their work within the portfolio

Portfolio: Sue Dell
Page: SPED 526 Science Curriculum Mod Project

Overview of Lesson: 4th grade, Earth and Space Science Lesson

General Education Lesson: (In one paragraph, describe the general education lesson)

In this lesson, the students will describe the physical properties of a rock. Students will distinguish and identify the characteristics by using a multi-sensory approach. The students will be able to differentiate between rocks of different textures (Smooth or Rough).
Artifact Development

**Option Two:** Students can create their work on their own computer and paste it within the content window of their e-portfolio. Students can edit their work prior to submission to the professor.
Students receive email when work is assessed. Assessor feedback provided by criterion of grading rubric (rating and comments)

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<td>Communication Objective</td>
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<td>Content Objective</td>
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Assessment Choices

- Faculty can choose a number of options for assessment based on their grading preference:
  - Faculty grades a paper copy, input data/comments only (Express Assessment)
  - Faculty grades an artifact with complete grading rubric
Providing Student Feedback

Faculty comment options:
- Areas are highlighted
- Record Audio comments
- Document Spelling Mistakes
- Document Grammar Mistakes
- Provide Regular Comments

Add comment:
- Vocalizations are the sounds one may use to express thoughts and ideas. These may not be understood by all, but are valid attempts to communicate with others.

Your definition of vocalizations certainly discriminates it from speech. It provides a value in a non-typical communication style.
Standards-Based Reporting

Standard: RI  Professional Teaching Standards

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Support Materials

What is Chalk & Wire?
Chalk & Wire Login Procedures
How can I learn how to use Chalk & Wire?

What is Chalk & Wire?

Chalk & Wire is an online program that allows users to create electronic portfolios. These portfolios can contain a wide variety of information and media, which can then be assessed by other users. From these assessments, reports can be generated in order to tabulate data on the institution level.

One of the main uses for Chalk & Wire here at RIC will be for submitting Observation Reports and Teacher Candidate Work Samples for Student Teaching, however Chalk & Wire can also be used for specific classes.

Click here to go to Chalk & Wire.

If you have any technical questions about Chalk & Wire, please contact Ryan Hanley and Dr. Greg Kniseley at chalkandwire@ric.edu, or by calling (401) 456-2806 (RIC ext. 2806).
Examples of Hiring e-portfolios

Heather Santoro, Elementary Education (SPED)

Course: ELED 300 Concepts of Teaching (Fall 2010)

Click on Course Portfolio
Lessons Learned

The Takeaway…

The “right” Eportfolio/assessment product might also have many challenges.
Tips

- See handout for questions to ask when selecting an Eportfolio/assessment product
Questions?
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