

**Title of Session:** e-Portfolios  
**Moderator:** David Weksler  
**Title of File:** 20061018eportfolios  
**Date:** October 18, 2006

Room: ePortfolios Group

**DavidWe** joined the room.

**BjB** cheers for David. David has offered to lead the discussion until the scheduled leader shows up.

**StephaniRe:** Hi, and Thanks David

**DavidWe:** Not that I really know too much, but...

**DavidWe:** Intros, Bj?

**BjB:** sounds good, David

**BjB:** please let us know where you are located and what you teach or hope to teach

**BjB** . o O ( and if you have any prior knowledge of digital portfolios )

**CristinaV:** I am a student teacher in Texas. I am currently in a fourth grade classroom.

**BjB:** I'm a communications teacher in Pennsylvania

**SandraCar:** I am a student teacher in Houston, TX, currently placed in fourth grade, no prior knowledge in digital portfolios... looking forward to find out about them.

**StephaniRe:** Hi, I am in AZ and I am currently the Technology Teacher for a K6 Elementary School. I am hoping to learn something to share with my colleagues.

**DavidWe:** I'm David Weksler and I'm in northern New Jersey, near New York City. I thought I did my Tapped In discussion leadership role yesterday, but....

**DavidWe:** Here I am!

**DavidWe** reads the other intros

**DavidWe:** I work with math teachers a lot, but I have a friend who has done A LOT with Digital Portfolios

**StephaniRe:** share the knowledge.....

**DavidWe:** Do any of you know much about Digital Portfolios (E-Portfolios)?

**CristinaV:** Yes please share

**DavidWe:** Do you currently try to have your students keep digital portfolios?

**CristinaV:** No not really

**SandraCar:** I hadn't really heard about them.

**StephaniRe:** I took one seminar on e folios but the gentlemen basically just used powerpoint slides to showcase students works.

**DavidWe:** Same as a regular portfolio, except examples of student work kept in electronic (digital) form rather than on paper or other materials

**SandraCar:** I had the idea. We do keep regular portfolios.

**DavidWe:** So, David Niguidula, who works and lives in Rhode island, has been working with teachers and digital portfolios for a number of years

**StephaniRe:** I have read several chapters in various technology textbooks. Mostly these just covered the why of a portfolio and a rubric on what should be in a portfolio

**DavidWe** nods to Sandra

**DavidWe:** He used to work for the Coalition of Essential Schools (school-reform movement some of you may have read about - started by Ted Sizer)

**DavidWe:** He currently has a NEW company (just googled the old company) called Richer Picture

**DavidWe:** Here is the "About Us" page:

**DavidWe:** <http://www.richerpicture.com/about.php>

**CristinaV:** Sandra is it like our CUIN 3113 portfolios

**DavidWe:** You might take a quick look at that

**DavidWe:** I'll read it as well

**SandraCar:** You are right, just that it is for the students we teach.

**DavidWe:** Are the schools you are working in already looking to augment traditional test scores and in class exams with other measures to evaluate students' work?

**SandraCar:** I read the page... like the part about PD to learn how to use the tools.

**SandraCar:** oops. I don't think my school is.

**DavidWe:** Here's the web page about Digital Portfolio Software and an explanation:

**DavidWe:** <http://www.richerpicture.com/digital.php>

**DavidWe:** No problem, Sandra, it may in the future

**DavidWe:** I believe that most efforts at school reform are looking to have students work with technology and also to create more opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge

**DavidWe:** Two of you are in Texas, right?

**SandraCar:** that's right.

**CristinaV:** Yes

**DavidWe:** You know about the TCEA conference in Austin in February

**DavidWe:** . o O ( I think it's in Austin in February )

**SandraCar:** I think I've heard it mentioned.

**DavidWe:** Here's the web site for Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA)

**DavidWe:** <http://www.tcea.org/>

**DavidWe:** They also seem to host events throughout the school year

**SandraCar:** okay.

**DavidWe:** Here's the starting web page for the Convention in Austin, 5-9 February 2007

**DavidWe:** <http://www.tcea2007.org/Attendees/Default.asp>

**DavidWe:** I think it is a pretty high-level conference and my guess is that someone there will be speaking about digital portfolios

**SandraCar:** The school I am in is a Magnet school for technology, so I'm sure I will be hearing more about it.

**DavidWe:** So, Bj and I apologize for the absence of the regular discussion leader for this discussion

**DavidWe:** We're trying to fill in with some useful stuff that we are just pulling together right now

**CristinaV:** Thanks for doing this

**StephaniRe:** Sandra, as a Magnet school for technology do you have smartboards and use pda's?

**DavidWe:** But, if this topic is of interest to you...you know now that we have a regular monthly discussion on E-Portfolios

**SandraCar:** We appreciate it.

**DavidWe:** No problem. Fun to try to fake it

**SandraCar:** But tell us, is this something that is widely used or is it just getting out?

**DavidWe:** Some of you are teaching elementary school, so multiple subjects, right?

**SandraCar:** right

**StephaniRe:** Yes,

**DavidWe:** I think this is becoming more and more common

**CristinaV:** right

**DavidWe:** A brand new high school in Philadelphia opened 6 weeks ago

**DavidWe:** Everyone has a laptop; all the students can project their work wirelessly onto the "blackboard"

**DavidWe:** I've not visited the school yet, but I'm anxious to see it in action

**CristinaV:** Wow

**SandraCar:** wow. that sounds great!

**StephaniRe:** I wish all the school were that tech savvy

**DavidWe:** So, EVERYTHING is digital, or rather almost everything

**BjB:** [http://www.essentialschools.org/pub/ces\\_docs/resources/dp/getstart.html](http://www.essentialschools.org/pub/ces_docs/resources/dp/getstart.html)

**SandraCar:** that must be expensive!

**DavidWe:** Well, I'm sure there are glitches and growing pains

**BjB:** from that page: If you are interested in starting to work on Digital Portfolios in your school, please understand that they are not a magic bullet. Digital Portfolios can be a "provocation" to help a school think about its systems, its vision, and what it wants students to be able to say about themselves. They can also be just another gimmick that turns off a school to technology, portfolios, or both.

**DavidWe:** Microsoft has been involved and the laptops are from Gateway, but the city of Philadelphia spent something like \$60 million + to build an environmentally sensitive, NEW school

**DavidWe:** It's an experiment, but it's trying to jump to a new level - to really embrace technology

**DavidWe** apologizes for talking at cross purposes

**DavidWe** agrees with Bj's comments

**DavidWe:** NOTHING is a one shot panacea!

**BjB:** Sorry, David. I interrupted you.

**DavidWe:** Good teaching is good teaching

**DavidWe:** The technology can support it, but, IMHO, NOT replace it

**BjB:** That webpage looks like a good resource though

**StephaniRe:** Very true statement!!!

**DavidWe:** You all may want to take a look at that web page from the Coalition of Essential Schools

**SandraCar:** so true

**DavidWe:** Schools need to be more like learning communities

**DavidWe:** Tapped In is a virtual community of educators - we try to be a "community of practice"

**CristinaV:** I agree

**StephaniRe:** This is a good start!

**DavidWe:** So, even though I'm not an expert on digital portfolios, I know enough about them (and people working with them) to have something (hopefully) intelligent to say

**SandraCar:** you are doing good, we are with you... tell us more.

**DavidWe:** The goal of Tapped In at the outset was to provide an online PLACE for teachers to interact with each other - learn from each other

**DavidWe:** Thanks, Sandra

**DavidWe** smiles

**DavidWe:** You may have heard that the state of Maine provided laptops for ALL the 7th and 8th graders 5 years ago (30,000 iBooks)

**StephaniRe:** David, with the teachers you have worked with did they have the students do their work directly into computers or where they scanned or was another form of digitizing used.

**DavidWe:** When EVERYONE has access to a computer WHEN THEY WANT/NEED to use it, then it is a useful tool - like a pencil or pen

**DavidWe:** Well, I don't know if any of you know the Geometry software the Geometer's Sketchpad

**DavidWe:** It's WAY cool software that I know quite a bit about

**DebiC:** Were the students able to take the laptops home?

**DavidWe:** Mostly for middle and high school, but I've seen people use it with elementary students

**SandraCar:** The thing is, did they all have the background knowledge to be able to efficiently use them?

**DavidWe:** Since the "sketchpad" is a computer file, it is very easy to keep all the "work" on a computer - a digital portfolio of math

**DavidWe:** But, if you only have one computer (for the teacher) and a projector - it becomes a digital blackboard (whiteboard)

**DavidWe:** It's a great teaching tool if there is only one computer

**SandraCar:** I see.

**CristinaV:** So the kids are creating the portfolios or are the teachers having to take time to do this

**DavidWe:** For something in between, teachers have learned a number of strategies - group work, learning centers, having students take turns, etc.

**DavidWe:** A lot depends on the "landscape" of the classroom/school/school district

**DavidWe:** Obviously it is the rare school where EVERYONE (like The School of the Future in Philadelphia) but the models are starting to be there

**DavidWe:** I believe, personally, that for \$1000 a student has a laptop that should last 3 or 4 years

**SandraCar:** At my school, there is lots of tech., but we are not that advanced.

**DavidWe:** Relative to the per pupil cost to school districts over that period of time, \$1000 is a small fraction

**DavidWe:** I think HAVING the tech is a start; USING the tech takes more time and effort and trial and error and teacher professional development, etc.

**SandraCar:** That's true, but students don't take care of them the way they should, fixing laptops gets expensive.

**CristinaV:** I guess so when you put it in that perspective

**DavidWe:** My friend David Niguidula's company is doing teacher training solely on Digital Portfolios - that's their focus as a way to approach school reform and tech use

**DavidWe:** Things will always break

**SandraCar:** pencils are easier to replace.

**DavidWe:** We don't question that students (and some teachers) will make a mess when they USE the school - we simply have a janitorial staff

**DavidWe:** Yes, Sandra. Absolutely, true

**SandraCar:** Okay, so even if we are not able to give each child a laptop, can we still create digital portfolios?

**DavidWe:** But, cars are big, expensive pieces of equipment and we have high hopes that young people can learn to drive responsibly, too, right?

**DavidWe:** You know those small USB storage devices?

**SandraCar:** Let's not go there David!

**BjB** smiles and thinks David touched a nerve!

**CristinaV:** Yes

**DavidWe:** \$20 for 500 Mbytes at Staples - every student carries one around on a lanyard or keychain - that's the digital portfolio

**DavidWe:** Good teaching makes all the difference, I think

**SandraCar:** I'm just joking David.

**DavidWe:** Things will always get broken, stolen, used inappropriately

**CristinaV:** You're right

**DavidWe** thought Sandra was sensitive because her username ends in "Car"

**BjB** chuckles

**SandraCar:** funny!

**DavidWe:** Again, the trick is to think about the long-range problems (insurance, replacement parts, etc.)

**DavidWe:** Acceptable Use Policy

**StephaniRe:** When using technology in the classroom you have to budget for repairs

**SandraCar:** I like the idea of kids carrying their portfolio in a keychain, just like I do with mine.

**DavidWe:** Students will find pornography whether they are using laptops or desktop machines in libraries

**DavidWe:** Yes, Sandra. It's almost ridiculously cheap, now

**DavidWe:** Let me share with you one more organization and its web site

**StephaniRe:** I work in a low income school and I recommended out students get jump drives to store their projects on.



**DavidWe:** Again, this is a new group dedicated to ONE-TO-ONE computing...

**DavidWe:** Excellent, Stephanie

**DavidWe:** I bet someone could hit up Staples for school donations (or should)

**DavidWe:** The Anytime Anywhere Learning Foundation just held an inaugural conference in Boston this past June. It was excellent

**CristinaV:** Good idea

**SandraCar:** True David.

**DavidWe:** They are dedicated to getting the computer/student ratio as close to 1 as possible

**DavidWe:** Here's the web site:

**DavidWe:** <http://www.aalf.org>

**DavidWe:** The other resource for the Digital School that you should ALL know about is the publication of the George Lucas Education Foundation

**DavidWe:** The FREE magazine, which is EXCELLENT, is called Edutopia

**DavidWe:** I think there is a link to subscribe to it on this page:

**DavidWe:** <http://www.edutopia.org/magazine/index.php>

**DavidWe** is wondering where people are at the moment

**StephaniRe:** I have a superintendent and principal that see technology as our future. Consequently, they went after a technology bond for our district. This year our district bought 1700 new computers for our 15 schools and bought about 500 last year.

**DavidWe:** Try, if you can, Stephanie, to have them budget something for tech support, training, repairs, etc.

**DavidWe:** It's easy to buy stuff, but....

**DavidWe:** Teachers need time "in the sandbox" to play with stuff

**SandraCar:** totally with you David.

**StephaniRe:** They actually did plan for training and tech support is weak but they are working on that too.

**DavidWe:** Some guided instruction, time to attend a conference, workshops, etc. is really critical

**CristinaV:** Practice makes perfect

**DavidWe** smiles

**DavidWe:** Usually

**SandraCar:** Our tech support person is busy all day trying to train teachers and fix their problems with tech. all day.

**StephaniRe:** Our really big issue is getting teachers to go to trainings. Unless you make it mandatory the dinosaurs won't show up.

**DavidWe:** Bj, what is Roger calling his discussion at the moment?

**BjB:** Faculty Resistance to Online Learning

**DavidWe:** Sometimes it may not be worth FORCING the dinosaurs, but I'm not sure I know what the answer is to that one

**DavidWe:** A college teacher leads that discussion which deals with some of these same issues

**DavidWe:** It's later in the month, right, Bj?

**BjB:** right. October 26

**DavidWe:** Do all of you know about the transcript you will receive after you logout?

**DavidWe:** Do all of you know how to find the Tapped In calendar of events?

**SandraCar:** yes to both Q's.

**DavidWe:** Good

**CristinaV:** I do

**StephaniRe:** We received a lot of really good technology but we can't get the teachers to integrate so the technology just sits in their room gathering dust.

**DavidWe** is running out of ideas at the moment

**DavidWe:** I think someone mentioned something really interesting in my discussion (math ed. and tech) last night....let me try to find it

**CristinaV:** That is very true Stephanie

**SandraCar:** I bet kids would really enjoy creating portfolios and watching their progress.

**DavidWe:** It had to do with allowing the students to help "teach" the teachers

**DavidWe** checks his email

**StephaniRe:** It is really sad, the kids love computers and anything techie. Yet, the teachers don't use what they have.

**CristinaV:** So how do we get teachers to start using more tech. in their classrooms

**DavidWe** looks some more

**BjB:** bring them to Tapped In, Cristina!

**DavidWe** finds it!

**DavidWe:** MichelleVT: honestly , I think we as teachers need to learn from our students,

**DavidWe:** and if they learn better from an introduction in their regular class or from

**DavidWe:** the tech class, so be it

**CristinaV:** Their excuse is that there isn't any time

**SandraCar:** I guess it has to do with the fact that technological advances are coming at us fast and they just don't feel they have the time.

**DavidWe:** TIME is a four letter word, usually, in schools

**StephaniRe:** I think part of it is you have to show teachers that in the long run using technology will make their lives easier but in the short run it will take more time.

**SandraCar:** Kids love tech. because they are growing up with it, but teachers, especially older ones, are having to take it in all at once.

**DavidWe:** Well, I wish I could replay for you a math conference at Rutgers University I attended last Spring

**StephaniRe:** We also, have to show teachers how to integrate that we are not really adding to their work load.

**DavidWe:** Teachers basically were told that they were going to use more technology (Geometer's Sketchpad especially) and they had their doubts, but now, after a few years, they find it really DOES save TIME

**CristinaV:** What was it about?

**DavidWe:** They store good teaching materials and share things with each other - things are on a shared computer and so preparing for stuff is now much simpler - it's been done before and is easily accessed

**DavidWe:** The presentation I heard (there were two presentations by two teams of two teachers) an older woman (she taught, took time off for kids, then returned) and a new teacher explaining how the Dept. Chair had both pushed and encouraged them

**DavidWe:** And, as a team they moved forward with the glitches and problems, but now (after a couple of years) they are presenting at teacher conferences about HOW the technology REALLY MADE THEIR JOB EASIER

**DavidWe:** The change will be painful at times, awkward and frustrating

**DavidWe:** But then, change tends to be that way

**DavidWe** smiles

**CristinaV:** That's the key teaching them that tech makes their job easier

**DavidWe** passes around the virtual cookies

**DavidWe:** Well, it's a good incentive

**DavidWe:** Anyone have questions? Topics we have not addressed?

**SandraCar:** You said the word David, frustration! Teachers are getting so frustrated just with putting their attendance and grades into the computer...

**BjB:** Thank you so much for leading this discussion, David. This hour has flown!

**DavidWe:** Some of you may have heard of the One Laptop per Child project that is being run from MIT

**StephaniRe:** A good example of time saving and portfolio generating is a web based program call MY ACCESS.

**DavidWe:** You're welcome, Bj

**SandraCar:** I can't imagine how willing they would be to start something great like digital portfolios.

**DavidWe:** Trying to get the price of a functional laptop down to about \$100

**DavidWe:** Really amazing

**DavidWe:** <http://laptop.org/>

**SandraCar:** that sounds great!

**DavidWe:** Let us help you with the discussion, if we can, Sandra

**DavidWe:** There's a wealth of teacher support you can draw on through Tapped In

**DavidWe:** Examples of people doing things in other school districts

**StephaniRe:** MY ACCESS not only six traits students writing but keeps track of each draft. It also generates feedback for the teacher so they know what lessons they still need to give.

**DavidWe:** Sounds good, Stephanie

**SandraCar:** I like that.

**DavidWe:** I think teachers are coming up with these good ideas and running with them as the technology tools get easier to use

**CristinaV:** That's neat

**DavidWe:** This group discussion has a room with an asynchronous message board - feel free to use it

**DavidWe:** You need to be a MEMBER of the discussion group to post to the Message Board

**DavidWe:** If you aren't sure how to join a discussion group, we can help you with that

**SandraCar:** I know how.

**DavidWe** smiles

**DavidWe:** Great

**SandraCar:** Thanks!

**DavidWe:** We'll do our best to get the real discussion leader here next month

**StephaniRe:** Thanks!

**DavidWe:** Do the elementary folks know about the K-3+ Resources discussion - twice a month - very high quality

**CristinaV:** Thanks, everyone

**SandraCar:** I'm completely new to Tapped in, but I'm really liking it.

**DavidWe:** It's led by Susan Roseman and is on the calendar - Tuesdays at 8pm

**DavidWe:** Great, Sandra. Welcome to the Tapped In community

**StephaniRe:** I saw it on the calendar but haven't had a chance to check it out.

**DavidWe** nods

**CristinaV:** I will have to join that discussion group next Tues

**SandraCar:** I've been trying to make it to it, but my schedule hasn't allowed.

**BjB:** join the group, Sandra...

**DavidWe** smiles

**BjB:** lots of great resources in the K-3 Resources room

**DavidWe:** What else is happening tonight, Bj?

**BjB:** Lesley Farmer is leading a discussion for librarians...but on a generic topic...

**BjB:** Positive ways to address technology

**BjB** . o O ( pretty much a continuation of this discussion )

**SandraCar:** when is that?

**BjB:** in a half hour

**DavidWe:** 7:30pm EDT

**DavidWe** hugs Bj

**BjB** hugs David. Thanks again.

**BjB:** be safe

**DavidWe:** Thanks

**DavidWe:** No problem. If I do this one more time, I'll feel like I know what I'm talking about

**DavidWe** grins

**SandraCar:** thanks for the info. David.

**DavidWe:** Thanks for being part of the conversation, Sandra

**DavidWe:** Good luck

**CristinaV:** Thanks again everyone

**SandraCar:** same to you. Good night to all!

**StephaniRe:** bye

**DavidWe:** Ciao, folks