

6-30-2015

## Perceptions of Preservice Teachers' E-Portfolios for Hiring Decisions

Molly Zhou

Marilyn M. Helms

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gerjournal>



Part of the [Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Zhou, Molly and Helms, Marilyn M. (2015) "Perceptions of Preservice Teachers' E-Portfolios for Hiring Decisions," *Georgia Educational Researcher*: Vol. 12 : Iss. 1 , Article 6.

DOI: 10.20429/ger.2015.120106

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.georgiasouthern.edu/gerjournal/vol12/iss1/6>

This mixed methods research is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. It has been accepted for inclusion in Georgia Educational Researcher by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons@Georgia Southern. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@georgiasouthern.edu).

---

# Perceptions of Preservice Teachers' E-Portfolios for Hiring Decisions

## **Abstract**

Preservice teachers often build E-portfolios of their work prior to graduation, but their use beyond the college classroom is not clear. To identify if E-portfolios are used during the teacher hiring process, 170 administrators from 84 (K-12) schools in eight North Georgia districts were surveyed regarding their use of E-portfolio materials. Based on the mixed methods used, E-portfolios were not strongly favored for use in decision-making. To increase their usefulness, preservice teachers should actively provide access to artifacts valued by potential employers including certification documents, classroom management plans, evidence of work with Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) students, ability to work with families, and their ability to use technology in the classroom.

## **Keywords**

E-portfolios, hiring, principals, teacher education, job search, higher education

## **Creative Commons License**



This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 4.0 License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

## Perceptions of Preservice Teachers' E-Portfolios for Hiring Decisions

Molly Zhou  
Dalton State College  
Dalton, GA

Marilyn M. Helms  
Dalton State College  
Dalton, GA

**Abstract:** Preservice teachers often build E-portfolios of their work prior to graduation, but their use beyond the college classroom is not clear. To identify if E-portfolios are used during the teacher hiring process, 170 administrators from 84 (K-12) schools in eight North Georgia districts were surveyed regarding their use of E-portfolio materials. Based on the mixed methods used, E-portfolios were not strongly favored for use in decision-making. To increase their usefulness, preservice teachers should actively provide access to artifacts valued by potential employers including certification documents and classroom management plans. In addition, prospective teachers should also provide evidence of work with Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) students, their ability to work with families, and their ability to use technology in the classroom.

*Keywords:* E-portfolios, hiring, principals, teacher education, job search, higher education

## **Perceptions of Preservice Teachers' E-Portfolios for Hiring Decisions**

### **Introduction**

With the growing trend of assessment and assurance of learning in higher education, many colleges and universities have adopted the use of student portfolios to serve as a repository of student's graded work. These materials are often stored electronically or maintained as hard copies throughout a student's bachelor's degree program. These portfolios have been defined as "purposeful, collaborative, self-reflective collections of work" (McRobbie, 1992, p. 9) and "a fusion of processes and product -- the process of reflection, selection, rationalization, and evaluation, together with the product of the process" (Moseley, 2005, p.59). Today, such portfolios are widely used in Schools of Education in preparing K-12 teachers. Often industry-specific software is used to maintain these materials electronically using cloud-based storage of the E-portfolio. The documents, materials and artifacts in the E-portfolios are often used for accreditation and other course and program-embedded documentation for validation of learning by faculty and peer-review committees. Preservice teachers have generally been asked to build portfolios during their candidacy in teacher education programs throughout the US. However how to use the on-line versions or E-portfolios to assist preservice teacher in the job search or whether their portfolios are used to assist employers in making decisions is not clear. The study examined the use of E-portfolios by prospective employers, typically school principals and other teachers, during the hiring process.

## Literature Review

### Use of E-portfolios in Education

E-portfolios have been widely adopted for various education programs because their use helps increase students' learning, knowledge, critical thinking, and reflection. The use of E-portfolios in turn leads to improved academic performance, teaching, and learning practices (Chang & Tseng, 2009; Sturmberg & Farmer, 2009; Yoo, 2009; Jones, 2010; Peacock, Gordon, Murray, Morss, & Dunlop, 2010; Lin, Yang, & Lai, 2013). Moreover, the E-portfolio facilitates the development of a range of competencies for teacher preparation, such as reflective and technology skills (Herner-Patnode & Lee, 2009). The E-portfolio development process is also shaped by context, culture, and traditions (Dysthe & Engelsen, 2011). For example, a great dividing line was found between the use of E-portfolios in the academic setting to assess and document an education major's learning results and the external use of E-portfolios by principals and search committees for hiring new teachers

Educational settings, particularly for screening teachers, have been the subject of several studies of E-portfolios and their importance. Abernathy, Forsyth, and Mitchell (2001) found that discrepancies on the value of E-portfolios between students and principals were present due to the culture of the groups. Teacher education programs following the trends of standard-based assessments, use the E-portfolios for credential review. Synder, Lippincott and Bower (1998) found the credential E-portfolio often included the teacher candidate's documents showing proficiency toward a set of state level standards.

In educational programs for teacher training, Zeichner and Wray (2001) found portfolios have become more commonplace in the US and their study profiled ways to conceptualize and implement the use of portfolios to impact teacher development and teacher assessment.

Hammond and Snyder (2000) found such authentic assessments of teaching, including cases and portfolios appear to support teacher learning and are a more valid assessment of teaching.

### **Benefits of E-portfolios**

The benefits of E-portfolios are varied. E-portfolios were found to be a good tool for professional development and social learning (Garreth, 2011; Tammets, Pata, & Laanpere, 2012; Stephens & Parr, 2013). It is also suggested their use can move programs towards more student-centered, outcome-based learning as students more clearly understand what documents are required, how they will be assessed, and the body of work and examples required within the E-portfolio (Burch, 2011; Loeb, 2011; Rhodes, 2011; Lambe, McNair, & Smith, 2013). The process of building the E-portfolio creates motivation and increased learning (Davis, 2009; Cimer, 2011). Heinrich, Bhattacharya, and Rayudu (2007) found for engineering and computer science fields, the preparation for lifelong learning was enhanced by using E-portfolios. They found their use supported engagement with learning objectives and reflection as well as assisted students in showcasing their competences.

In a study exploring the value and potential of professional portfolios, Winsor and Ellefson (1995) agree such materials do supplement traditional applications for teaching jobs. At the time of their study, the materials were not yet fully on-line but they found the products of self-evaluation and collaborative evaluation were important to school superintendents. Theel and Tallerico (2004) agree they continue to use E-portfolio documents for teacher hiring. Yu (2012) agrees the E-portfolio in its early stages of development along with the collection of materials holds future promise in obtaining a deeper, more complete level of information about an applicant's characteristics and potential. Strohmeier (2010) urges that materials should be a meaningful collection of items in electronic format and he calls for organizational and technical

measures to improve future E-portfolio usage in recruiting. To prepare the E-portfolio for employment purposes, career orientation could be included in the program objectives. The alignment of program objectives with university objectives should be in place to reduce overlap in documenting requirements to reduce faculty and students burden (Loeb, 2011).

### **Use of E-portfolios in Hiring**

Ward and Moser (2008) agree there is a dearth of research addressing how often employers consult E-portfolios as a part of the selection, recruiting and hiring process. Blair and Godsall (2006) further note most students have not yet considered contents of the artifacts or examples of work that could be used to provide documentation for job applications. Those examples include resume, samples of recommendation letters from field supervisors, lesson plans, class management plans, or videos of their teaching. Mason and Schroeder (2010) called for a reduction in the variation among hiring practices of K-12 principals and they mention a lack of knowledge about the relative importance of portfolios in the hiring process. In their study of principals, portfolios and E-portfolios, were rated lowest in importance after verbal references, written references, and first impressions.

Cimer (2011) suggested successful E-portfolio implementation was facilitated by guiding students both at the beginning of and during the preparation process, providing continuous and prompt feedback and making self-reflection clearer. Directions on artifacts' selection are needed and training needs to be provided on E-portfolios to both teachers and students (Tangdhanakanond & Wongwanich, 2012). Furthermore, using E-portfolios for employment purposes is still in its early stage of development. Yu's (2012) findings from interviews with Human Resources managers indicate a high and consistent level of interest by employers, suggesting a promising future of the E-portfolio as a job search tool.

E-portfolio use for employment could be further encouraged in light of availability and easy access to technology and social media. Tzeng & Chen (2012) studied the behavior of college students' intentions and attitudes and found that career-commitment status substantially influenced college students' use of E-portfolios. Also, overlap in the functions of weblogs and E-portfolios does not directly result in higher or lower levels of intention to use an E-portfolio. A composite system providing career services, goal-oriented self-presentation, and personality-driven self-expression is also recommended.

Research supports the value and quality of E-portfolios in relation to preservice teachers' knowledge and skills (Burch, 2011; Loeb, 2011; Rhodes, 2011; Lambe, McNair, & Smith, 2013). E-portfolios are powerful tools to demonstrate students' learning for accreditation assessment. In that sense, E-Portfolios serve a combination of learning and assessment purposes (Rhodes, 2011; Chen, Mou-TeChang, Chen, Huang, & Chen, 2012). Literature suggests further potential for employment purposes and informative purposes including professional development growth. In the ideological dimension of the E-portfolio, students are encouraged to promote self-cultivation and self-promotion (Collins, 2011; Tzeng & Chen, 2012). As students interact with the various technological functions of E-portfolio preparation software, their use for a variety of additional purposes will increase (Moores & Parks, 2010).

Concerns on implementation of E-portfolios include legal and technical issues as well as flexibility of computer systems. Barriers to E-portfolio use remain primarily due to the lack of understanding about personal development and reflection, and their role in the academic environment, initiative fatigue, and lack of access to information technology (Peacock, Gordon, Murray, Morss, & Dunlop 2010). Still other concerns are the time constraints allowed for the hiring process and time to review the E-portfolio documents (Theel & Talerico, 2004). Since E-

portfolios are new to the hiring process for preservice teachers, many school districts lack the confidence in the E-portfolio's abilities to demonstrate proficiency in teaching (Peterson, 2002; Connors, Coppola, & Scricca, 2004; Papa & Baxter, 2008).

### **E-Portfolio Content Studies**

Building the E-portfolio could be time consuming and labor intensive despite the positive learning results (Davis, 2009; Ntuli, Keengwe, & Kyei-Blankson, 2009; Herner-Patnode & Lee, 2009; Peacock, Gordon, Murray, Morss, & Dunlop, 2010; Burch, 2011; Cimer, 2011). However, with proper support, students could learn and perform better using E-portfolios than traditional methods. Lin, Yang, and Lai (2013) identified three categories of support: peer, instructional, and document support. Providing sufficient structure during the building process could greatly enhance learning outcomes as well as student's satisfaction (Sturmberg & Farmer, 2009; Garreth, 2011; Sullivan, Harriss, Hughes, Toohey, Balasooriya, Velan, Kumar, & McNeil, 2012).

Increasing students' satisfaction, attitudes and perceived uses of E-portfolios are important. Chen, Mou-TeChang, Chen, Huang, and Chen (2012) stated that a systematic understanding of prospective users' perceptions of the E-Portfolio system is needed. Cimer (2011) suggested successful implementation includes guiding students both at the beginning of and during the E-portfolio creation process, providing continuous and prompt feedback during the process, and offering self-reflection guided by reflection prompts.

In terms of what artifacts to select for the E-portfolio, training is needed for both teachers and students (Tangdhanakanond & Wongwanich, 2012). Ringgenberg (2008) studied the hiring decisions of principals whose school district hired a physical education teacher to identify artifacts that the hiring team viewed as important in an E-portfolio, such as lesson plans, reflections, or classroom management plans. The shifting of focus for E-portfolios could be from

an exit or employment focus, which is summative in nature, to a formative focus, where the students' professional growth and development can be represented over time (Wray, 2008). The potential of E-portfolios can alter higher education at its very core and can be a significant technological innovation on campus (Rhodes, 2011).

Artifacts and examples should be kept within manageable limit, however. A student introduction process that highlights the importance of providing evidence for achieving all learning outcomes, not just theoretical knowledge and skills, may be helpful in overcoming student concerns over E-portfolio building as well as support preparation for lifelong learning and encourage reflection about clinical practice (Davis, 2009). Regarding the technological commercial products available for adoption, research did not indicate a strong preference for products or software for creating and maintaining the E-portfolio (Everhart & Cerlach, 2011). With distinctive designs, large-scale deployment at state or national level is possible and at a very cost-effective manner. Cloud computing with intelligent digital asset management and search features creates numerous opportunities for E-portfolios in education (Kim, Ng, & Lim, 2010).

The purpose of this research is to assess E-portfolio use by hiring committees for screening and selecting new teachers in the K-12 environment. The study is exploratory as no theory or theoretical framework exists for using E-portfolios for hiring decision making. Their use is emerging in higher education settings and has only recently moved beyond the classroom to the external community for other uses, like candidate screening and hiring. This mixed method research polls principles and hiring decision makers on E-portfolio use in the hiring process.

## Methodology

### Research Questions

Given the interest and nascent potential of E-portfolios in educational settings, three research questions about the use of E-portfolios in the hiring process to make final hiring decisions, emerged and were used to guide the study:

1. *If provided, would principals use preservice teachers' E-portfolios to help them make hiring decisions of new teachers?*
2. *When would principals use preservice teachers' E-portfolios during the hiring process?*
3. *What materials would principals find most helpful in preservice teachers' E-portfolios to aid hiring decisions?*

### Study Setting

The study included eight US county school districts in north Georgia. The teacher education programs of the researchers' institution established partnerships with all public school districts in the study. A total of 84 schools were included in the sample including 47 elementary schools, 21 middle schools, and 16 high schools. The county population (Whitfield) is 32.9% Hispanic and the city 48.0% Hispanic and the schools featured a high percentage of Hispanic students (US Census Bureau, 2012). The study was approved by the college IRB committee and approvals from the superintendents' office and equivalent authorities of eight counties in North Georgia, USA, were obtained.

In the study, 170 principals and assistant principals of elementary schools, middle schools, and high schools in the eight schools district were polled. Principals and assistant principals participating in this study were seen as representative of the population of principals

throughout the state of Georgia in their levels of employment, school enrollment, years of teaching experience and K-12 administration.

### **Instrument and Data Collection**

Using questions created by Moseley (2005) and by Ringgenbert (2008) as a guide, this study adapted these survey instruments to assess principals' use of E-portfolios for new teacher hiring decisions (see the *Teacher Education E-Portfolio Survey* in Appendix A). The survey consists of three sections: Hiring and Screening Experience, Teacher Education E-Portfolio Experience, and Demographic Information.

This survey was administered online via Survey Monkey ([www.Surveymonkey.com](http://www.Surveymonkey.com)). The first survey link-embedded emails was sent to all participants in March 2014 with a description of the study. Two follow-up e-mail notifications were again sent to all potential respondents during April 2014. Data were collected electronically from Survey Monkey and were analyzed by using Survey Monkey reporting tools and Excel to include percentages and summary statistics.

### **Research Findings**

A total of 30 administrators out of 170 responded to the survey. This was a response rate of 18%. The respondents' demographic information is summarized in Table 1. The vast majority of the study participants were Caucasian and non-Hispanic (92.3%) and slightly over half were female (51.7%). The administrators had advanced degrees with 72.4% holding the Ed.S followed by masters (20.6%) and Ed.D. (6.9%). Most (62.1%) of the respondents held the title of Principal and all participants had hiring experiences in selecting or serving on search committees to hire new teachers in K-12 educational settings.

Table 1

*Demographic Information of Participants*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>	Male	48.30%
	Female	51.70%
<b>Race</b>	White (Caucasian)	100%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Non-Hispanic or Latino	92.30%
	Hispanic or Latino	7.70%
<b>Age</b>	31-40	24.10%
	41-50	44.80%
	51-60	20.70%
	61-70	10.30%
<b>Years of Experience</b>	16-20	24.10%
	26-30	20.70%
	6-10	17.20%
	11-15	17.20%
	Over 30 years	10.30%
<b>Highest Degree Earned by Respondent</b>	Ed.S.	72.40%
	Masters	20.70%
	Ed.D.	6.90%
<b>Grade/Programs at their School</b>	Elementary Schools	55.00%
	Middle Schools	25.00%
	High Schools	20.00%
	Special Education	44.80%
	ESOL	24.10%
	Gifted Education	1.00%
<i>N</i> =30		

Item by item analysis results are summarized in Table 2. For questions with the option for open-ended responses, comments are included.

Table 2

*Teacher Education E-portfolio Survey Results by Item*

Category	Items/Artifacts	Percentage
<b>Documents Currently in Use for Decision-Making</b>	Resume/Vita	100
	Reference Letters from School Supervisors	82
	Reference Letters from College professors	55.20
	Students' Work Samples	48.30
	Cover Letter	48.30
	College Transcripts	37.90
<b>Access to E-Portfolio</b>	Yes	20.80
	Not Sure	17.20
	No	62
<b>Usefulness of Portfolio Artifacts</b>	Certification Documentation	90
	Classroom Management Plan	73
	Evidence of Involvement in IEP	70
	Evidence of Effective Communication with Families	63
	Ability to Use Technology and the Internet	60
	edTPA	57
<b>Beliefs on E-Portfolio</b>	Allow Me to Access a Candidate in Greater Depth	42.90
	Give a Clear Idea on How a Candidate Will Fit into a Particular Job	42.90
	Information Overload and Too Much to Review	32.10
<b>When to Access E-Portfolio</b>	With the Initial Application	35.70
	During the Interview	24
	Only for the Final Pool of Candidates	17.90
<b>Hiring Decision-Making</b>	Principal with Additional Input (Committee or Team)	85.70
	Hiring Committee's Consensus	10.70
	Principal Alone	3.60
<b>Last 3 Years' Experience</b>	I Have Checked Candidate's References	93.10
	I Have Made Final Hiring Decisions	75.90
	I Have Served on New Teacher Hiring Committees	69
	I Have Worked With Others to Recommend Candidates	65.50
	I Have not Assisted With Hiring and Screening	0
N=30		

When asked if the school administrators would use the E-portfolio, participants expressed their views in open-ended comments. Some seemed to be more positive than others about the usefulness of E-portfolios, while others were concerned with the work load demands for the reviewer or search committee.

*“E-Portfolios will provide an insight to a teacher candidate we rarely get to see in the interview process.”*

*“I like the idea of getting to see more of the candidate's background and evidence of work rather than just having a resume. This would help narrow down the field when trying to screen applicants for interviews. We have so many applicants these days, this information would be valuable.”*

*“Over the last several years, we are hiring fewer and fewer teachers. I rely more heavily on the face to face interview than anything else. I am not sure an E-portfolio would change that.”*

*“Portfolios add little to the hiring decision. I have no time to review portfolios.”*

The findings found limited support for *Research Question 1 -- If provided, would principals use preservice teachers' E-portfolios to help them make hiring decisions of teachers?*

The findings revealed that although not strongly favored, participants of the study expressed a positive agreement they would use E-portfolio artifacts for hiring decision-making. Table 2

indicated that close to 36% of the administrators would use E-portfolio materials with the initial application; 24% of them indicated that they would use E-portfolios during the Interview; and only 18% of the participants indicated that they would use E-portfolios for screening the final pool of candidates. Most respondents noted they have not had access to teacher candidates' portfolios in the past but E-portfolio materials could help them by narrowing down candidates and gaining further knowledge about a candidate.

*For Research Question 2: When would principals use preservice teachers' E-portfolios during the hiring process?* The study participants expressed the usefulness of E-portfolios in every phase of the hiring process. It is obvious from the exploratory study results, most participants felt E-portfolios could be most useful in the initial application process and during the interview process. As previously mentioned in Table 2, almost to 36% of the candidates would use E-portfolio materials with the initial application. In addition to the options offered on the survey instrument, participants also mentioned that documents currently in-use include the: Employment Website Teach Georgia, Reference Checking, and Certification Verification.

Administrators' open-ended comments about the ability for E-portfolio to be able to truly capture teacher candidate's knowledge, skills, and abilities included:

*“My concern is that each student is under a supervising teacher. If paired with an exemplary teacher with excellent classroom management then I would expect a solid behavior management plan. However, it is the generalization piece. Can they take from that setting and apply? Often what is produced at the college level is not relevant.”*

*“An E-Portfolio would be beneficial if it truly captured candidate’s learning and the ability to implement what they had learned. Again, if a student is placed in an exemplary teacher’s classroom, often behavioral and other challenges are not there. I have a very bright teacher who brought a solid portfolio to her original interview with another principal. Unfortunately, she has been unable to generalize her skills and has been on a professional growth plan.”*

*“The best help would be for colleges to spend time asking schools what we need. We are often seeing teacher candidates who are unfamiliar with the RTI (Response to Intervention) process, Common Core, and other very basic teaching practices. It is concerning.”*

Regarding *Research Question 3: What materials would principals find most helpful in preservice teachers’ E-portfolios?* Respondents indicated certification documentations were the most important materials needed for hiring decision-making by school administrators, as shown in Table 2. Other artifacts including classroom management plans, evidence of ability to work with Individualized Educational Plan (IEP) students, and interactions with students’ families were indicated to be both important and helpful evidence for hiring decision-making in the selection process. Similarly, the ability to use technology to teach and the access to candidates’ edTPA (Teacher Performance Assessment for teacher candidates) work samples were identified to be important.

## **Discussion and Conclusions**

Based on the researching findings in the study, it is evident that E-portfolios are not yet a strongly favored option for administrators when making hiring decision. Some concerns were expressed between the gap of the evidence of E-portfolios and the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed in classroom teaching. Other concerns are the lack of access to E-portfolios because preservice teachers often do not share their E-portfolios or do not know how to share their E-portfolios with their potential employers. The preparation of an E-portfolio is time consuming and the Principal and review committee would need to review the documents and do so consistently for each candidate. The practical use of the E-portfolio could vary by systems. In a small school system, for example, with a single feeder college for new teacher candidates and much involvement by the education faculty, the use of additional E-portfolio materials might not be necessary. Administrators in such settings often rely on professional recommendations from clinical supervisors and professors of teacher candidates and hiring committees might not need the additional knowledge provided by the E-portfolio artifacts.

The use of other employment-related websites has made employment materials highly valued and easily accessible by administrators. These materials include the resume, references, and a cover letter. Regardless of technology support for information sharing, reference checking was the most highly valued job search information by the principals for hiring decision-making. To increase the use of E-portfolios in job search and employment, preservice teachers are encouraged to provide access to E-portfolios materials to potential employers. More facilitation and training on using the E-portfolio for administrators, students and faculty should be provided to promote more understanding and greater use for employment purposes.

To increase the usefulness of E-portfolio documents for hiring decisions, preservice teachers and teacher educators should focus on providing artifacts valued by potential employers such as certification documents, classroom management plans, evidence of ability in working with IEP students, ability to work with families, and ability to use technology in the classroom. The Teacher Performance Assessment for preservice teachers (EdTPA) is perceived to be a useful artifact in this study, so providing access to edTPA sample work, preservice teachers may further expand the use of E-portfolios. This study highlighted the importance of reference checking in hiring decision-making. Therefore, preservice teachers are encouraged to add evidence of working with classroom supervisors and include their recommendation letters in their E-portfolios. Preservice teachers who are seeking employment should actively provide E-portfolio principals and hiring committees immediate access their online E-portfolios. Principals and hiring committees too may need further training and policies on how E-portfolio materials from applicants can be used in the screening and hiring decisions.

### **Areas for Future Research**

There are a number of limitations of this exploratory study. First, the lower survey return rate may have decreased demographic representativeness (Holbrook, Krosnick, & Pfent, 2007). However, literature also suggests low response rates do not necessarily yield less rigorous results or any significant difference in comparison to studies with higher response rates (Curtin, Presser & Singer, 2000; Keeter, Kennedy, Dimock, Best, & Craighill, 2006; Visser, Krosnick, Marquette & Curtin, 1996). Second, the specific geographic and culture setting may limit the interpretation and generalization of the study findings for other US or international location.

Additional studies with a larger sample size and across the entire US should compare the hiring success of groups using the additional information in the E-portfolio. International

samples could compare the importance of additional information and compare and contrast the hiring process of new teacher candidates. For example, are candidates with an E-portfolio considered more carefully or in more detail than those teacher candidates without the additional materials? How does the presence of such materials aid the candidate in the hiring process?

Future research could explore the potential of E-portfolios for employment use and the use of E-portfolios for job searches and making hiring decisions in comparison to other electronic tools such as social media and electronic employment websites. Studies too should examine the issue of access to the E-portfolio materials and whether principals and hiring committees are actively offered access to preservice teachers' program training documents.

Researchers should explore innovative ways of building E-portfolios and develop a list of standard artifacts to include in preservice teachers' E-portfolios to reduce work load in preparation and screening for both teacher candidates and reviewers. With emerging technology, future research should explore the technological options for more cost-effective and resource-efficient techniques for teacher candidates. Questions that should be examined in the future include how E-portfolio materials help evaluate how well a teacher candidate will perform in the classroom setting and if the use of E-portfolios leads to an advantage for teacher candidates in the hiring process.

Future research should evaluate how other variables influence the use of the E-portfolios such as school enrollment, the school level, the principals' experience with the technology, and other demographic and macro-environmental factors. Other research should examine whether search committees are better able to assess applicant's knowledge, abilities, and skills with the additional information provided by the E-portfolios.

Given that E-portfolios ensure students have similar experiences and add similar content to their on-line E-portfolios, future research should explore whether those education majors with portfolios are better prepared for the world of work. In essence, is the preparation of the content for the portfolio correlated with success or even satisfaction and longevity in the field of education? Finally, additional research should examine the usefulness of an E-portfolio for other teaching careers in addition to the entry-level or first teaching job. Could the materials have use over time to improve the employability of a teacher for promotion or movement within the profession? Moving beyond the field of education, studies should investigate the use and acceptance of E-portfolios in other job search processes, including business or other professional fields where sample work or presentations could be helpful. Comparing the use and value of such additional materials is needed to determine which fields and which graduates could benefit from their use.

## References

- Abernathy, T. V., Forsyth, A. & Mitchell, J. (2001). The bridge from student to teacher: What principals, teacher education faculty and students value in a teaching candidate. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 28, 109-115.
- Blair, R. & Godsall, L. (2006). One school's experience in implementing E-portfolios: Lessons learned. *Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 7(2), 145-154.
- Burch, V. (2011). Portfolios for assessment and learning: Guide supplement 45.1 viewpoint. *Medical Teacher*, 33(12), 1029-1031.
- Chang, C., & Tseng, K. (2009). Use and performances of web-based portfolio assessment. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 40(2), 358-370.
- Chen, M., Mou-TeChang, F., Chen, C. Huang, M., & Chen, J. (2012). Why do individuals use e-portfolios? *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, 15(4), 114-125.
- Cimer, S. O. (2011). The effect of portfolios on students' learning: Student teachers' views. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 34(2), p161-176.
- Collins, R. (2011). Lives on file: A critical assessment of the career portfolio genre. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 32(3), 329-342.
- Connors, G. E., Coppola, A. J., & Scricca, D. B. (2004) You're hired! *Principal Leadership*, 4, 47-52.
- Curtin, R., Presser, S., & Singer, E. (2000). The effects of response rate changes on the index of consumer sentiment. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 64(4), 413-428.
- Davis, M. H. (2009). Student perceptions of a portfolio assessment process. *Medical Education*, 43(1), 89-98.

- Dysthe, O. & Engelsen, K. S. (2011). Portfolio practices in higher education in Norway in an international perspective: Macro-, meso- and micro-level influences. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 36*(1), 63-79.
- Everhart, B., & Cerlach, J. (2011). The perceptions of unit heads toward the role of online assessment products in standards-based alignment within teacher education. *Education, 132*(1), 97-109.
- Garreth, N. (2011). An e-portfolio design supporting ownership, social learning, and ease of use. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society, 14*(1), 187-202
- Hammond, L. D., & Snyder, J. (2000). Authentic assessment of teaching in context. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 16*(5-6), 523-545.
- Heinrich, E., Bhattacharya, M., & Rayudu, R. (2007). Preparation for lifelong learning using ePortfolios. *European Journal of Engineering Education, 32*(6), 653-663.
- Herner-Patnode, L. M. & Lee, H. (2009). A capstone experience for preservice teachers: Building a web-based portfolio. *Journal of Educational Technology & Society, 12*(2), 101-110.
- Holbrook, A., Krosnick, J., & Pfent, A. (2007). The causes and consequences of response rates in surveys by the news media and government contractor survey research firms. In J. M. Lepkowski, N. C. Tucker, J. M. Brick, E. D. De Leeuw, L. Japac, P. J. Lavrakas, M. W. Link, & R. L. Sangster (Eds.), *Advances in Telephone Survey Methodology* (pp. 499-678). New York, NY: Wiley.
- Jones, E. (2010). Personal theory and reflection in a professional practice portfolio. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, 35*(6), 699-710.

- Keeter, S., Kennedy, C., Dimock, M., Best, J., & Craighill, P. (2006.) Gauging the impact of growing nonresponse on estimates from a national RDD telephone survey. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 70(5), 759–779.
- Kim, P., & Ng, C., & Lim, G. (2010). When cloud computing meets with semantic web: A new design for e-portfolio systems in the social media era. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 41(6), 1018-1028.
- Lambe, J., McNair, V., & Smith, R. (2013). Special educational needs, e-learning and the reflective e-portfolio: Implications for developing and assessing competence in pre-service education. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, 39(2), 181-196.
- Lin, C., Yang, S., & Lai, C. (2013). Support as a mediator of the impact of cognitive load of students' e-portfolio learning outcomes. *Social Behavior & Personality: An International Journal*, 41(1), 17-30.
- Loeb, R. (2011). Rethinking the teaching portfolio in a learning-outcomes climate. *American Biology Teacher*, 73(4), 205.
- Mason, R. W., & Schroeder, M. P. (2010). Principal hiring practices: Toward a reduction of uncertainty. *The Clearing House*, 83, 186-193.
- McRobbie, J. (1992). Using portfolios to assess student performance. *Knowledge Brief*, 9, 2-9.
- Moores, A., & Parks, M. (2010). Twelve tips for introducing E-Portfolios with undergraduate students. *Medical Teacher*, 32(1), 46-49.
- Moseley, C. (2005). The value of professional teaching portfolios to prospective employers: School administrators' views. *Professional Educator*, 27(1), 58-72.

- Ntuli, E., Keengwe, J., & Kyei-Blankson, L. (2009). Electronic portfolios in teacher education: A case study of early childhood teacher candidates. *Early Childhood Education Journal*, 37(2), 121-126.
- Papa, F., & Baxter, I. (2008). Hiring teachers in New York's public schools: Can the principal make a difference? *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 7, 87-117.
- Peacock, S., Gordon, L., Murray, S., Morss, K., & Dunlop, G. (2010). Tutor response to implementing an E-Portfolio to support learning and personal development in further and higher education institutions in Scotland. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 41(5), 827-851.
- Peterson, K. (2002). *Effective teacher hiring: A guide to getting the best*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Rhodes, T. (2011). Making learning visible and meaningful through electronic portfolios. *Change*, 43(1), 6-13.
- Ringgenberg, S. W. (2008). An examination of the extent to which physical education portfolios are used in the hiring process and what are the key artifacts of the physical education portfolio that principals deem important when making hiring decisions. (Doctoral dissertation). Retrieved from ProQuest Database. (UMI No. 3323579).
- Snyder, J., Lippincott, A., & Bower, D. (1998). The inherent tensions in the multiple uses of portfolios in teacher education. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 25, 45-60.
- Stephens, J., & Parr, M. (2013). The development of media-driven clinical skills through using the E-skills portfolio. *International Journal of Therapy & Rehabilitation*, 20(7), 336-342.
- Strohmeier, S. (2010). Electronic portfolios in recruiting? A conceptual analysis of usage. *Journal of Electronic Commerce Research*, 11(4), 268-280.

- Sturmberg, J., & Farmer, L. (2009). Educating capable doctors: A portfolio approach linking learning and assessment. *Medical Teacher*, 31(3), 85-89.
- Sullivan, A., Harriss, P., Hughes, C., Toohey, S., Balasooriya, C., Velan, G., ... & McNeil, H. P. (2012). Linking assessment to undergraduate student capabilities through portfolio examination. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 37(3), 379-391.
- Tammets, K. Pata, K., & Laanpere, M. (2012). Implementing a technology-supported model for cross-organizational learning and knowledge building for teachers. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 35(1), 57-75.
- Tangdhanakanond, K., & Wongwanich, S. (2012). Teacher attitude and needs assessment concerning the use of student portfolio assessment in Thailand's educational reform process. *International Journal of Psychology: A Biopsychosocial Approach*, 10, 71-88.
- Theel, R. K., & Tallerico, M. (2004). Using portfolios for teacher hiring: Insights from school principals. *Action in Teacher Education*, 26(1), 26-33.
- Tzeng, J., & Chen, S. (2012). College students' intentions to use e-portfolios: From the perspectives of career-commitment status and weblog-publication behaviors. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 43(1), 163-176.
- US Census Bureau. (2012). State and county quick facts. Retrieved from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/13000.html>
- Visser, P. S., Krosnick, J. A., Marquette, J., & Curtin, M. (1996). Mail surveys for election forecasting? An evaluation of the Colombia dispatch poll. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 60, 181-227.
- Ward, C., & Moser, C. (2008). E-portfolios as a hiring tool: Do employers really care? *Educause Quarterly*, 31(4), 13-14.

Winsor, P. J. T., & Ellefson, B. A. (1995). Professional portfolios in teacher education: An exploration of their value potential. *The Teacher Educator, 31*(1), 68-81.

Wray, S. (2008). Swimming upstream: Shifting the purpose of an existing teaching portfolio requirement. *The Professional Educator, 32*(1), 44-59.

Yoo, S. Y. (2009). Using portfolio as a learning tool to develop preservice teachers' inquires and perspectives in early science teaching in South Korea. *Education, 130*(1), 72-77.

Yu, T. (2012). E-portfolio, a valuable job search tool for college students. *Campus wide Information Systems, 29*(1), 70-76.

Zeichner, K., & Wray, S. (2001). The teaching portfolio in US teacher education programs: What we know and what we need to know. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 17*(5), 613-621.

## TEACHER EDUCATION E-PORTFOLIO SURVEY

### Part I: Hiring and Screening Experience

- 1. What have been your experiences in hiring and screening applicants during the past three years: (check all that apply)**
- I have served on new teacher hiring committees
  - I have chaired search committees for hiring new teachers
  - I have actively recruited candidates
  - I have checked candidates' references
  - I have worked with others to recommend candidates
  - I have made final hiring decisions
  - I have not assisted with hiring and screening

### Part II: Teacher Education E-Portfolio Survey

- 2. In the process of screening new teachers, which of the following documents do you currently use in making a hiring decision? (Check all that apply.)**
- Cover Letter
  - Resume/Vita
  - College Transcripts
  - Reference Letters from College Professors
  - Reference Letters from School Supervisors
  - Examples of Work (Lesson Plans, Rubrics, and Teaching Videos)
  - Other, please list \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. The hiring decision in my school is made by:**
- Principal with Additional Input (Committee or Team)
  - Principal alone
  - Hiring Committee's Consensus
  - Other, please list \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Students in the School of Education at Dalton State College add supplemental materials to an online portfolio as they complete their Bachelor's degree. This material is used for assessment but could easily be shared with principals and hiring committees as part of the job search process. Have applicants provided you with access links to their online materials in the hiring process?**
- Yes
  - No
  - Do Not Know

**5. For each item/attribute below, indicate whether you believe it should be required in candidate's job search portfolio or would be an optional item. Also indicate how useful the document would be to you in assessing a potential new teacher.**

- a. Resume/Vita**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- b. Letters of recommendation from cooperating/supervising teachers**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- c. Self-assessments**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- d. Transcripts**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- e. Certification Documentation**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- f. Autobiographical sketch**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- g. Statement of teaching philosophy**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- h. Classroom management plan**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- i. Lesson plans**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- j. Examples of record keeping**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- k. Evidence of effective communication with families**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- l. Evidence of parent-teacher conference attendance**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- m. Photographs and video clips**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- n. Demonstrations of ability to use the internet or other technology**  
 Check one:  Required  Optional  
 Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All

- o. Candidates designed tests**  
Check one:  Required  Optional  
Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- p. Reflections**  
Check one:  Required  Optional  
Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- q. Evidence of culturally responsive teaching**  
Check one:  Required  Optional  
Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- r. Evidence of involvement in IEP (Individualized Education Plan)**  
Check one:  Required  Optional  
Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- s. Evidence of professional conference and service**  
Check one:  Required  Optional  
Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All
- t. edTPA (Teacher Performance Assessment)**  
Check one:  Required  Optional  
Check one:  Very useful  Somewhat Useful  Not Useful At All

**6. I believe if additional information were available in an electronic portfolio accessed via a website, it would: (check all that apply)**

- a. be a good means of identifying an individual's strengths
- b. allow me to assess a candidate in greater depth
- c. be helpful in distinguishing one candidate from another
- d. provide information that is not available using other methods
- e. make it easier to assess candidate's abilities objectively
- f. give a clear idea as to how a candidate will fit into a particular job
- g. portfolio would provide an opportunity for candidates to efficiently present a great deal of information

**7. During the hiring process, when would portfolio items be most beneficial to you?**

- a. with the initial application
- b. only for the final pool of applicants
- c. during the interview
- d. after interviewing
- e. I would not review the additional information provided.
- f. Other, (Please Specify) \_\_\_\_\_

### Part III: Demographic Information

#### 8. Gender

- Female
- Male

#### 9. Race

- African-American or black
- Asian
- Caucasian/White
- Native American/Alaska Native
- Pacific Islander/Hawaii
- Other, (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

#### 10. Ethnicity

- Hispanic or Latino
- Not Hispanic or Latino

#### 11. Age

- 20 Or under
- 21-30
- 31-40
- 41-50
- 51-60
- 61-70
- Over 70

#### 12. Total years of teaching/administrative experience

- 0-1
- 2-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- over 30 years

#### 13. Are you in a tenure track position?

- Yes
- No

#### 14. If yes, do you have tenure?

- Yes
- No

**15. Highest degree earned**

- Bachelors
- Masters
- Ed.S.
- Ed.D.
- Other, (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**16. What is your current job title?**

- principal
- assistant principal
- instructional coach
- teacher
- para-professional teacher
- Other, (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

**17. What grades are taught at your school? Check all that apply.**

Pre-K, K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, Special Ed, ESOL, Other \_\_\_\_

**18. Please share any additional comments about the use of an e-Portfolio to screen teacher candidates:**

---

---

**19. If you would like to have a copy of the results of this survey, please provide your e-mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_