The Value of Professional Teaching Portfolios to Prospective Employers: School Administrators' Views

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Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to assess administrators' views in a mid-western state regarding the development of a job search portfolio for pre-service teachers. All pre-service teachers must complete the professional portfolio, a requirement for initial teacher certification, during the teacher preparation phase of the degree program. It is proposed that with input from administrators who hire beginning teachers that the professional portfolio can be modified/adapted for use as a job search portfolio. Subjects (*n = 252) volunteered for this study by responding to a survey mailed to 675 state school administrators. Recommendations gathered from the study are provided.*

"An education student in her last month of residency recently went to her professor and said 'You won't believe what happened today! I showed my supervising teacher my portfolio and after looking through it for a few minutes, she put it under her arm and said let's go. The principal must see this!' She practically dragged me into the principal's office and said 'Look at this! I've been telling you we need to interview this student for our faculty. Her portfolio is outstanding.' After looking at the portfolio for a few minutes, the principal scheduled an interview with me and requested that I bring my portfolio." (Morgan, 1999, p. 416)

Introduction

More and more states now require demonstration in a teaching portfolio of an acceptable level of proficiency on a set of externally defined teaching standards as part of the initial teaching licensure process. However, even though teacher education programs may require their students to include evidence of proficiency on a recognized set of standards, there is much variation as to the types of artifacts selected or recommended to include in the teaching portfolios. This is true not only from one state to another, but can also be seen across teacher education programs within the same state.

Much has been written about portfolios, their use in teacher education, and the need to consider their purpose when designing and implementing a portfolio program. The research on portfolios has primarily focused on the information that a portfolio provides about a teacher candidate, how portfolios should be structured and what they should contain (Vavrus & Collins, 1991; King,

1991; Shulman, Haertel & Bird, 1988).

The use of the portfolio as a job search tool has been addressed less extensively. There is little research available that documents the extent to which portfolios are currently used by school administrators (Weinberger & Didham, 1987; Williamson & Abe, 1989). This limited research has shown that although school administrators express support for the use of portfolios in employment decisions, they tend to rate traditional hiring tools as more useful than the integrated performance measures.

As the use of portfolios in teacher education program assessment increases, the need to modify portfolios for job searches increases as well. The full collection of material that may be required to reflect the elements of a professional education program portfolio will be too extensive for a building principal to find helpful in making a hiring decision. How can students make this transition from completing a professional portfolio used for teacher certification purposes to one

used in the job interviewing process? Simply put, what exactly should one include in a beginning teacher employment portfolio?

Research Questions

Three major questions were addressed in this study:

1. Do administrators use the portfolio in the hiring process? Why or why not?
2. What should be included in the job interview portfolio?
3. What type of portfolio format or presentation is most conducive for administrators' use in the hiring process?

Theoretical Framework

Teaching Portfolios

A portfolio is generally characterized by depth of learning. This notion of depth is evidenced by several authors who define a portfolio as:

- *The structured documented history of a carefully selected set of coached or mentored accomplishments substantiated by samples of a learner's work and fully realized only through reflective writing, deliberation, and serious conversation* (MacIssac & Jackson, 1995).
- *Being more than a container — a portfolio also embodies an attitude that assessment is dynamic and that the richest portrayals of teacher (and student) performance are based on multiple sources of evidence collected over time in authentic settings* (Wolf, 1991, p. 130).
- *A fusion of processes and product. It is the processes of reflection, selection, rationalization, and evaluation, together with the product of those processes* (Winsor & Ellefson, 1995, pp. 68–69).

The ability to better understand the nature of an individual's learning through the use of portfolios is enhanced through the development of teaching portfolios (Loughran & Corrigan, 1995). A teaching portfolio is defined as a structured collection of evidence of a teacher's best work that demonstrates a teacher's accomplishments over time and across a variety of contexts (Edgerton,

Hutchings, & Quinlan, 1992). Kenneth Wolf (1991) declares, "Portfolios provide a connection to the contests and personal histories of real teaching and make it possible to document the unfolding of both teaching and learning over time" (p. 129). The teaching portfolio is seen as a more "authentic" form of teacher assessment (Barton & Collins, 1993) as well as a way to better capture the complexities of teaching and learning over time and across different contexts in authentic settings (Shulman, 1988). In addition, the teaching portfolio is intended to be a dynamic portrayal of teacher performance based on multiple sources of evidence (Valencia, McGinley & Pearson, 1990). And, finally, Brown and Wolfe-Quintero (1997) defined a teacher portfolio as "a purposeful collection of any aspects of a teacher's work that tells the story of the teacher's efforts, skills, abilities, achievements, and contributions to his/her students, colleagues, institution, academic discipline, or community" (p. 28).

Currently, portfolios are being widely used across the country by teacher preparation programs to promote student learning, professional development, and reflection and to provide evidence for evaluation (Stone, 1998). Teaching portfolios in pre-service teacher education can be used as a way of encouraging student teachers to document and describe their skills and competence as a teacher. Portfolios have the potential of providing much richer information than do traditional assessment methods (Long & Stansbury, 1994). Results of the four-year Teacher Assessment Project at Stanford reported that engaging in the process of portfolio development appears to encourage teachers to become generally more reflective about their teaching practices (Vavrus & Collins, 1991). Mokhtari, Yellin, Bull and Montgomery (1996) reported in their study that when pre-service teachers maintain a portfolio of their work, they learn to assess their own progress as learners. In addition, Ford and Ohlhausen (1991) found that participation in the teaching portfolio process played a critical role in changing students' attitudes, beliefs, and classroom practices related to alternative forms of assessment. Developing a portfolio can be difficult for pre-service teachers who are unfamiliar with this assessment process

and who have limited time to devote to the project (Stone, 1998).

Several tensions associated with using portfolios, including time and understanding the portfolio concept, as identified by Anderson and De-Meulle (1998), surfaced quickly as the university in their study made plans to implement the state requirement of professional portfolios. Portfolios were seen as "another task in a very crowded certification year" (Anderson & DeMeulle, 1998). In addition, students questioned the value of the portfolios and lacked an understanding of the purpose of them. Krause (1996) found that specific instruction was needed in order for students to comprehend portfolio development, as well as sufficient time and support from supervisors. Students needed assistance from faculty on the reflection process of their work, extended engagement in the ongoing portfolio process, and the understanding on how the portfolios will be used in conjunction with other forms of assessment.

Job Interview Portfolios

Several different kinds of teaching portfolios have been identified in the literature. A "learning portfolio" (Wolf & Dietz, 1998) refers to a teaching portfolio that engages student teachers in inquiry about their teaching and documents professional growth over time. A "credential portfolio" is used to determine whether student teachers have demonstrated some level of proficiency on a set of teaching standards that are defined at the university or state level (Snyder, Lippincott, & Bower, 1998). An increasingly more common example of a teaching portfolio seen in recent years is one used for employment purposes. This job interview portfolio typically "showcases" students' best work and is used when students apply for teaching positions (Zeichner & Wray, 2000).

In agreement with the National School Reform Faculty of the Annenberg Institute for School Reform (Cushman, 1999), whatever the uses of professional portfolios, they will be seen not as an end in themselves but as an ongoing tool in a practice that includes routine opportunities for thoughtful reflective dialogue throughout the school community. Portfolios have the potential to be a form of assessment that shift the responsibil-ity and ownership of learning to the student, encourage students to reflect on their learning, integrate theory with practice, and become more knowledgeable about assessment issues (Stone, 1998). In addition, portfolios are having a positive impact on preservice teachers because they promote reflection, facilitate learning, and assist in the job search (Anderson & DeMeulle, 1998).

A study conducted by Boody and Montecinos (1997) among Iowa school principals suggested that the teaching portfolios of beginning teachers were being underutilized in the hiring process. Another study by the Education Placement Consortium as reported in Jacobson (1997), which surveyed more than a thousand members of the American Association of School Personnel Administrators, also showed that interview portfolios tend to be underused. Only 6% of personnel directors and 4% of superintendents reported reviewing portfolios prior to interviews, but more than 50% of those surveyed preferred portfolios for the final interviews. Principals were the most likely group of administrators who indicated a preference to reviewing the portfolio. Most of the respondents in that study said that even though they are not currently requiring portfolios from applicants, more school officials are beginning to request them. Administrators are finding that portfolios provide important insights into a teacher's individual talents and beliefs about education.

Administrators who do use or encourage the use of portfolios for job searches do so for several reasons. One of the most often mentioned reason for portfolio use is that the portfolio provides visual evidence of skills and abilities (Guillaume & Yopp, 1995; Jonson & Hodges, 1998; Wiedmer, 1998). Portfolios benefit the interview process by encouraging students to reflect on their teaching, strengths, weaknesses and beliefs. This enhances the quality of the interview time because the candidate has already given thought to the areas the interviewer may wish to discuss (Guillaume & Yopp, 1995; Maskeiwicz, 1998; Wiedmer, 1998). McLaughlin and Vogt (1996) and Jonson and Hodges (1998) add that the use of portfolios by a candidate suggests that, as a teacher, the candidate may be more open to using a variety of assessment methods, especially portfolios, with

their own students.

Advice concerning job interview portfolio content has emphasized efficiency and brevity. Based on a survey done by Jonson and Hodges (1998), administrators' interviews primarily focus on teacher competencies in subject matter content and curriculum development. To effectively address either area, teachers found the portfolio to be of great help. Most administrators in a study done by Guillaume and Yopp (1995) indicated unit plans, evidence of communication with students and families, and evidence of classroom management skills were desirable skills to demonstrate. Some advised the use of videos while others discouraged them. Newman (1993) found that the use of proper English and the presentation of error free work were important for creating a positive impression. Many administrators reported that although they value portfolios, time constraints preclude reviews of lengthy documents (McLaughlin & Vogt, 1996).

Rationale for Study

In 1997 the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (OCTP) announced that portfolios would become an element of state teacher accreditation procedures and this requirement would be incorporated into all state teacher education programs. As a result of that mandate, a major university within that state designed a policy for portfolio assessment that spans ten teacher education programs and four colleges (Colleges of Education, Arts and Sciences, Agriculture and Natural Science, and Human Environmental Sciences). Students submit their professional portfolios three times during their professional development, once for full admission to professional education, once prior to the final student teaching experience, and once at the end of student teaching and prior to the institution's recommendation for state licensure.

The development of professional portfolios as required for state certification could be seen by pre-service teachers as just "one more thing to do" in an already busy teacher education program as students attempt to complete university and state requirements for licensing, in addition to focusing on obtaining a teaching job. Much has been writ-ten about the values of portfolios in teacher education. They foster reflection, engage the students in the evaluation of their own work, help students clarify their own goals, point out strengths and weaknesses, and provide visual evidence of learning. However, as students at the university presented in this study became involved in their portfolio development, there were times when these values were either too abstract for them to recognize or students felt that these values already existed in other parts of their professional education experience. Many students began to consider the portfolios as intrusive and just additional busy work. As Guillaume and Yopp (1995, p 100) indicated, portfolios can become a "low stakes endeavor" for students since there are so many other evaluation elements such as case studies, research papers, and lesson and unit plan development in existing programs. The required professional portfolio quickly became one more cumbersome, time-consuming requirement—of benefit to the state and the institution, but not to students.

At the same time, anecdotes about job search portfolios were being heard throughout the educational community. Some of the teacher education graduates reported that several school districts were requiring portfolios for job interviews. However, some reported that administrators did not like portfolios and were refusing to look at them if offered. Thus the following study was conducted to examine the use of portfolios in the hiring process. The goals of the study were to determine if school administrators in the state used portfolios, why and how they used them, what did they believe was useful content, and how the portfolios could be presented most effectively during the portfolio process. The ultimate goal of the teacher education faculty was to acquire information in order to advise students how to best edit the extensive collection within the professional portfolio so it would become useful as an employment tool.

Methodology

Participants

Subjects who participated in this study included 252 school administrators whose districts are within the university's student teacher placement region. Respondents included superintendents, building principals, assistant principals, assistant superintendents and others who are involved in the teacher hiring process. Administrators surveyed were from private, public and vocational education sectors. School district sizes, by enrollment numbers, ranged from fewer than 500 to over 10,000 K–12 students.

A questionnaire, accompanied by a cover letter and a self-addressed stamped envelope, was originally sent to 675 school administrators. Surveys were mailed to school district superintendents and principals at each school in the region. Forty percent of those surveyed returned completed, usable questionnaires. A single mailing was used with no mail or telephone follow-up. This single mailing was done because of fund limitations. The majority of the respondents were building principals (73.3%) who had the major responsibility for reviewing job applications and portfolios.

The schools represented in this sample included as many as 12 different grade level arrangements from Pre-K through high school, with various districts configuring those grade levels in various ways (e.g., K–6, K–8, K–12, 7–9, 10–12). For the purpose of data analysis the administrators were grouped, based on their response to Question #15 on survey, into the following categories: elementary school (n = 126, 52.7%), middle school (n = 21, 8.6%), junior high school (n = 7, 2.9%), high school (n = 38, 15.6%), vocational/technical school (n = 2, .8%), and others (n = 25, 10.3%).

Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was a survey consisting of a total of 19 items, which solicited information about the job search portfolio. Five of the nineteen items were used to secure demographic information about the administrators. Questions 1–7 were scored using a five-point Likert scale. Question 7 of the survey was adapted from the Beginning Teacher Portfolio Checklist developed by Williamson and Abe (1989) to create a Professional Portfolio Checklist for this study. A panel of experts in the field reviewed the complete survey instrument to ensure content validity and clarity of the statements (see Appendix A).

Professional Portfolio Checklist

Weinberger and Didham (1987), in their work with student teachers, developed a list of items that were used in portfolios for elementary and secondary majors. Williams (1979) also suggested a list of items for prospective teachers to include in portfolios that would help the applicant convince hiring personnel they had the skills necessary for demonstrating competence as a teacher. Taking the lead from Weinberger and Didham (1987) and Williams (1979), Williamson and Abe (1989) developed a portfolio checklist, which was first field-tested with 25 administrators in southern Georgia. Respondents were asked to consider the items listed and make deletions or additions that would be helpful in the creation of a final checklist. The final Beginning Teacher Portfolio Checklist was then used in a research study given to 245 administrators in southern Georgia. Using the checklists developed in these three studies and additional items required for inclusion in the professional portfolio for Oklahoma Teacher Certification, a Professional Portfolio Checklist was developed for this study. An example of this checklist is found as a component of the survey in Appendix A (Question 7).

Results

Two hundred and fifty-two surveys (40%) were returned by the respondents. The surveys were used to present a list of items considered important by those involved in hiring beginning teachers. This task was achieved by computing "Means" for each item on the checklist based on the averaging of total responses on a five-point scale (1 = strongly agree, 2 = agree, 3 = disagree, 4 = strongly disagree, and 5 = don't know).

As shown in Table 1, the most commonly requested items are traditional hiring tools: résumé (99.2%), certification documents (97.9%),

transcripts (94.6%), and letters of recommendation (90.2%). Items that are more integrated measures of teaching performance, such as individual case studies (31.9%), research papers (24.8%), and videotapes of teaching (28.9%) are seldom requested.

Two exceptions to the more traditional hiring tools that are frequently requested are a classroom management plan (93.3%) and a statement of teaching philosophy (92.0%).

Table 1
What Should Be in a Portfolio?
Frequency (n = 243)

Item	Strongly Agree and Agree
Resume/vita	99.2%
Certification document	97.9%
Transcripts	94.6%
Classroom management plan	93.3%
Letters of recommendation	90.2%
Statement of teaching philosophy	92.0%
Goal statement	91.0%
Evidence of communication with families	85.0%
Lesson plans	81.8%
Autobiographical sketch	88.0%
Unit plan	78.1%
Demonstrations of technology usage	80.5%
Content depends on the subject area of candidate	73.5%
Assessment philosophy	79.2%
Self assessment	71.8%
Examples of record keeping	63.1%
Photographs	67.9%
Instructional aids	60.9%
Candidate designed tests	60.5%
Critiques of standardized tests/curricula/texts	35.7%
Case studies	31.9%
Art projects	34.9%
Research papers	24.8%
Video tapes	28.9%
Audio tapes	15.0%

Ratings were based on a five point scale: 1 = Strongly Agree; 2 = Agree; 3 = Disagree; 4 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Don't Know

As seen in Table 2, results from 22 respondents (10% of 242 total respondents) who do not use portfolios as part of the job interview process show that the lack of structure (86.4%), time

constraints (63.6%) and excessive amounts of material (63.6%) were the most frequent reasons given. Likewise, as reviewed in Table 3, 159 respondents who do use portfolios in job interviews, do so because they: a) provide an opportunity for candidates to efficiently present a great deal of information (81.1%), b) allow assessment of a candidate in greater depth (76.7%), c) provide information that is not available using other methods (74.8%), and d) are a good means of identifying an individual's strengths (65.6%).

An overwhelming number of respondents (90.1%, n = 243) agreed that portfolios will pro-vide hiring information which is not available using other methods (Table 4). However, only 46.1% of these same respondents felt that the portfolio plays a major role in the hiring process, and 35.8% of the administrators felt that the portfolio should only include a teacher candidate's best work as opposed to that work from which a candidate learned the most. A descriptive caption is desired on each item by 70.9% of the respondents, which should include context and date in which the artifact was created, description of the task and skills that are demonstrated, and a reflection on the significance of the artifact.

Table 2
Reasons Why Administrators Do Not Use Portfolios

Item	Frequency (n = 22)
Portfolios are too unstructured	86.4%
Review of portfolios too time consuming	63.6%
Portfolios contain excessive amounts of material	63.6%
Portfolios make it too difficult to assess a candidate's abilities objectively	22.7%
Portfolio evaluation lacks focus	18.2%
Portfolios lack depth	13.6%

Table 3
Reasons Why Administrators Use Portfolios

Item	Frequency (n = 159)
Portfolios provide an opportunity for candidates to efficiently present a great deal of information	81.1%
Portfolios allow to assess a candidate in greater depth	76.7%
Portfolios provide information that is not available using other methods	74.8%
Portfolios are a good means of identifying an individual's strengths	65.6%
Portfolios are helpful in distinguishing one candidate from another	65.4%
Portfolios make it easier to assess a candidate's abilities objectively	39.6%
Portfolios give a clear idea as to how a candidate will fit into a particular job	33.3%

Table 4
Portfolio Usage and Format
Frequency (n = 243)

Item	Strongly Agree and Agree
Portfolios will provide hiring information which is not available using other methods	90.1%
I like using portfolios as part of the hiring decision	84.8%
In my experience, the portfolio plays a major role in the hiring process	46.1%
The employment portfolio should include only a teacher candidate's best work (as opposed to that from which they learned the most)	35.8%
Each item in a portfolio should have a descriptive caption.	70.9%
Captions should include:	
Context in which evidence was created	93.0%
Description of task or assignment	96.3%
Description of skills demonstrated	91.7%
Reflection on significance of the item	87.7%
Date item was created	91.3%

Conclusions

One major issue that has emerged in the use of portfolios in teacher education is a frequent conflict in purposes among teacher educators and their students (Zeichner & Wray, 2000). The students' focus on the "showcase" aspects of portfolios and in presenting a favorable image to prospective employers sometimes conflict with the goal of using the portfolio for professional development and assessment and has created tensions between student teachers and teacher educators. As reported in a study done with teaching portfolios at the University of Colorado (Borko et al., 1997), student teachers were most concerned about the use of their portfolios as an aid in gaining employment while teacher educators were most concerned about using portfolios to promote professional development and to make assessments.

One way of dealing with the above mentioned tension is to use separate portfolios to address the different purposes. This can either involve the construction of totally separate teaching portfolios as is done at the University of California-Santa Barbara (Snyder et al., 1998), or as recommended selections made from a professional portfolio for an employment portfolio after the completion of the teacher education program, as done at University of Wisconsin-Madison (Zeichner & Wray, 2000). Information and feedback gained from this study will assist teacher educators with recommendations from administrators as to what selections would be most beneficial in an employment portfolio.

The overriding implication of this study is that, based on the evidence derived from the survey, teacher education faculty can help direct students in the organization and preparation of a portfolio that will aid them in seeking employment. Differences among school districts are recognized, but there is a general interest in portfolios, which allows a candidate to showcase his or her ability to effectively communicate, plan sequenced instruction and organize and manage a classroom. This information will help faculty direct students' efforts as they begin the highly competitive process of interviewing and obtaining

a teaching position. The findings in this study corroborate previous data reported by Guillaume and Yopp (1995) who state "many administrators are impressed by the initiative displayed by student teachers' efforts to compose portfolios and that interviewers welcome the portfolios as vehicles to encourage professional discourse during interviews" (p. 96). This study also corroborates results from the study done by Williamson and Abel (1989) in that inclusion of resumes and transcripts are highly recommended by administrators for the job interview portfolio.

The use of teaching portfolios in the teacher education program was initially designed to assist the pre-service teachers in understanding and articulating their developing professional knowledge. In a study done by Loughran and Corrigan (1995), it was not until the pre-service teachers linked the notion of presenting their views on their learning to a prospective employer that a better understanding of the portfolio process began to emerge. By considering their target audience (prospective employers), the pre-service teachers began to develop portfolio items so that themselves and others could recognize the educational basis of their views. This, in turn, led to the teachers deliberately linking a variety of ideas from their own experiences and making judgments about those ideas by thinking about and questioning their own learning.

The time and effort to create a professional teaching portfolio appear to be valued most when the pre-service teacher begins an initial job search. As stated by Hurst, Wilson, and Cramer (1998):

"Our experiences and the experiences of our students with teaching portfolios show that they are a powerful instrument for placement or career advancement. Moreover, the process of creating teaching portfolios refines an individual's professional and personal goals. It often encourages reflection and creates an awareness of a teacher's professional journey. Just as teachers now emphasize a holistic view of students, taking into account the diversity of learner abilities and experiences, administrators can benefit from the same approach as they examine teachers' portfolios. Professional portfolios can provide a more holistic picture of pre-

service or in-service teachers, assist teachers in job interviews, document teaching strengths and competencies, and clarify future goals and objectives for the educator. (p. 582)

While the data in this study is descriptive and one should be cautious about attempts to generalize, it is felt that the results do support the premise that administrators find portfolios useful and they are willing to spend some time in reviewing them. There was also greater agreement than expected regarding the preferred format and important types of evidence to include.

Further studies should be done to lend to deeper understandings of the construction, use and benefits of teacher portfolios. Interviews with administrators as a follow-up to the surveys would allow for richer descriptions and insights into their perspectives and attitudes about portfolio assessment. In addition, pre-service teachers also need to be surveyed and interviewed as to their perspectives about the purpose of portfolios. Barton and Collins (1993) noted *the first and most significant act of portfolio preparation is the decision on the purposes for the portfolio* (p. 203). Do conflicts in opinion and understanding exist between teacher educators, pre-service teachers and ultimately administrators as to the true purpose of the professional portfolio? And if so, how might these conflicts be impacting the nature and quality of the portfolios themselves, as well as the perspectives and attitudes of those involved in constructing the portfolios as well as those reviewing and assessing them?

Implications for Teacher Education

The information gathered from this study has been compiled into a presentation now being made to all student teachers prior to graduation. The following items are suggested to students as they transition from their professional program portfolio to a job search portfolio, based on the responses from administrators:

1. *Do administrators use portfolios?* Yes, 85.8 % of the respondents in this study like to use portfolios in some capacity as part of the hiring process.

2. *Who reads the job portfolios?* As a result of this survey, it was clear that building level interviewers, such as principals or interview committees, are the ones who desire to review the portfolios.

3. *When should student teachers submit portfolios for job applications?* Most of the administrators prefer the portfolios to be given to the school district at the interview stage and not as part of the initial application.

4. *What do administrators want in the portfolio?* Almost all of the administrators desire transcripts, resume, certification information and letters of reference to be included in the portfolio, if they are not already included in the application. The following items were responded to positively by over 80% of the respondents to include in the portfolio: philosophy of teaching, autobiographical sketch, classroom management plan, goal statement, lesson/unit plan, evidence of technology competency, and evidence of communication with parents/families.

5. *What do administrators not want in the portfolio?* The following items were reported by over 50% of the respondents to not include in the portfolio: case studies, research papers, art projects, audiotapes, and videotapes.

6. *Warnings:* Time is of the essence. Those administrators who do not like to use portfolios find them too time consuming or lacking depth and focus. Students should be highly selective of what evidence is included and keep the number of items in the portfolio to around 10 to 12. The readers of the portfolios want depth, not flash. Captions for each artifact are desired if they are brief and direct the reader to the skills demonstrated.

The overriding implication of this study is that, based on the evidence, faculty in the teacher education program can now help direct students in the organization and preparation of a portfolio that will aid them in seeking a teaching position. There will be some differences among school districts, but there is a general interest in portfolios that allow candidates to highlight their ability to communicate effectively, plan sequenced in-struction and assessment, and effectively organize and maintain a classroom.

Above all, students should be advised that the portfolio they have developed through their pre-service years is not the one they want to present as their professional job portfolio, without some modifications. The former focuses on documenting their professional growth towards achieving professional competency. The latter should focus on demonstrating and highlighting achievement of their professional competency and excellence.

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Appendix A

Survey Instrument

Listed below are statements about the use of the portfolio in the hiring process. Where requested, please indicate your agreement or disagreement with the statement …

Please note the scale runs:

SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, D = Disagree, SD = Strongly Disagree, DK = Don't Know.

1. Portfolios will provide hiring information which is not available using other methods.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
2. I like using portfolios as part of the hiring decision.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
3. In my experience, the portfolio plays a major role in the hiring process.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
4. The employment portfolio should include only a teacher candidate's best work (as opposed to that from which they learned the most).	SA	A	D	SD	DK
5. Each item in a portfolio should have a descriptive caption. If you agree, what should be included?	SA	A	D	SD	DK
Context in which it was created	SA	A	D	SD	DK
Description of the assignment or task	SA	A	D	SD	DK
Description of what skills are demonstrated	SA	A	D	SD	DK
Reflection on the significance of the item	SA	A	D	SD	DK
Date	SA	A	D	SD	DK

Other (please explain):

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6. Artifacts in the portfolios should provide evidence that the candidate can:					
a. Create learning experiences that make the central concepts and methods of the subject matter meaningful.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
b. Provide learning opportunities that support intellectual, social and physical development of students.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
c. Create instructional opportunities that adapt to student differences.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
d. Demonstrate curricular integration which encourages critical thinking, problem solving and performance skills and use of technology.	SA	A	D	SD	DK

e. Use best practices related to motivation and behavior, encouraging positive social interaction and active engagement.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
f. Use a variety of effective communication techniques.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
g. Adapt instruction based on assessment and reflection.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
h. Use a variety of assessment strategies	SA	A	D	SD	DK
i. Evaluate the effects of his/her choices and actions and seek opportunities for professional growth.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
j. Foster positive interaction with colleagues, parents/families and the community.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
k. Foster career awareness and career concepts in the curriculum.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
l. Value continuous life long learning.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
m. Understand the legal aspects of teaching.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
n. Develop instruction based on the Oklahoma Core Curriculum.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
o. Incorporate the criteria for Effective Teaching Performance in designing instructional strategies.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
7. The following items should be included in a professional portfolios.	SA	A	D	SD	DK
a. a resume/vita	SA	A	D	SD	DK
b. letters of recommendation	SA	A	D	SD	DK
c. self assessments	SA	A	D	SD	DK
d. transcripts	SA	A	D	SD	DK
e. certification documentation	SA	A	D	SD	DK
f. autobiographical sketch	SA	A	D	SD	DK
g. statement of teaching philosophy	SA	A	D	SD	DK
h. research papers written for class	SA	A	D	SD	DK
i. case study write ups	SA	A	D	SD	DK
j. critiques of standardized tests/curricula/texts	SA	A	D	SD	DK
k. assessment philosophy	SA	A	D	SD	DK
l. goal statement	SA	A	D	SD	DK
m. classroom management plan	SA	A	D	SD	DK
n. lesson plan	SA	A	D	SD	DK
o. unit plan	SA	A	D	SD	DK
p. examples of record keeping	SA	A	D	SD	DK
q. evidence of effective communication with families	SA	A	D	SD	DK
r. instructional aids	SA	A	D	SD	DK
s. art projects	SA	A	D	SD	DK
t. audio tapes	SA	A	D	SD	DK
u. video tapes	SA	A	D	SD	DK
v. photographs	SA	A	D	SD	DK
w. demonstrations of ability to use the internet or other technology	SA	A	D	SD	DK
x. candidate designed tests	SA	A	D	SD	DK
y. content depends largely on the subject area of candidate	SA	A	D	SD	DK
z. other items you think should be included (please explain).					

What is the maximum number of items you would prefer to review? _____

Portfolio Practices

8. In the hiring process do you:
   _____ a. require portfolios (go to #10)
   _____ b. discourage portfolios (go to #9)
   _____ c. encourage portfolio (go to #10)
   _____ d. not consider portfolios (go to #9)
   _____ e. have no preference concerning portfolios (go to #11)

9. If you discourage the use of portfolios or do not use them as part of the hiring process, please check any of the beliefs which contribute to your decision.
   _____ a. Portfolios are too time consuming to review in the hiring process
   _____ b. Portfolios are too unstructured.
   _____ c. Portfolios contain excessive amounts of material.
   _____ d. Portfolio evaluation lacks focus.
   _____ e. Portfolios lack depth.
   _____ f. Portfolios make it too difficult to assess a candidate's abilities objectively.
   _____ g. Other. Please explain:_____

   _____

10. If you do use, or encourage the use of portfolios in the hiring process, please check any of the beliefs which contribute to your decision:
   _____ a. Portfolios are a good means of identifying an individual's strengths.
   _____ b. Portfolios provide an opportunity for candidates to efficiently present a great deal of information.
   _____ c. Portfolios make it easier to assess a candidate's abilities objectively.
   _____ d. Portfolios give a clear idea as to how a candidate will fit into a particular job.
   _____ e. Portfolios allow me to assess a candidate in greater depth.
   _____ f. Portfolios are helpful in distinguishing one candidate from another.
   _____ g. Portfolios provide information that is not available using other methods.

11. If your district uses portfolios for hiring decisions, the responsibility for reviewing them falls on:
   _____ a. Superintendent   _____ c. Principals
   _____ b. A hiring committee   _____ d. Other. Please specify: (_____)

12. How long has the use or non-use of portfolio review been your practice? (Answer according to whatever your current practice is.)
   _____ 0 years   _____ 1 to 2 years   _____ 3 to 5 years   _____ over 5 years

13. How many portfolios have you reviewed personally as part of the hiring process? (Answer even if you do not do so currently.)
   _____ a. 0   _____ b. 1 – 10   _____ c. 11 – 20   _____ d. over 20

Demographics:

14. Are you a: (check one)
_____ a. Building principal
_____ b. Superintendent
_____ c. Assistant principal
_____ d. Assistant superintendent
_____ e. District Personnel Director
_____ f. Other (Please specify:_____)

15. If you are in a school administrator position, is your school:
_____ a. Elementary School   _____ d. High School
_____ b. Middle School   _____ e. Vocational/Technical School
_____ c. Junior High School   _____ f. Other (Please specify:_____)

16. If you are a school administrator, your school is:
_____ a. public   _____ b. private

17. The grade range of your school district is:
_____ a. K – 6
_____ b. K – 8
_____ c. K – 12
_____ d. Other (Please specify: _____)

18. The number of students enrolled in the district is:
_____ a. over 10,000   _____ d. 500 – 999
_____ b. 4,000 – 9,999   _____ e. under 500
_____ c. 1,000 – 3,999

Additional Comments: