

When I started my [innovation project](#), I drafted a [proposal letter](#) to our technology department. My [literature review](#) contained research to support using ePortfolios within the classroom and its benefits, as well as using the growth mindset and [COVA approach](#). In this day and time, the world of technology is continuously moving, growing, and changing. Information is readily available at all times with the internet and a click of a few buttons. My students assisted me in creating a "Call to Action" [video](#) about using ePortfolios in the classroom. It was created using Google Slides, all videos and photos taken by me with a Samsung Galaxy S7 phone, Smart Recorder App used for voice overs, inserted and edited with iMovie, and completed in the Houston area.

Next is my hopeful [implementation outline](#) of the disruptive innovation plan to incorporate ePortfolios in the lower grades. This outline will help build a foundation of technology skills and be an extension of the current technology requirements students will fulfill in third grade. This plan of action includes a pilot program as well as a multi-step implementation plan for the future. Lastly, more information about innovative education and ePortfolios is found in an [annotated bibliography](#) of additional resources.

I am still at the beginning stages of my project. It has taken longer to work out all the kinks and details than I originally planned. There are many obstacles, undiscovered factors, and detours that have happened that were unexpected. So many changes have occurred at school and in the classroom that have made it hard to incorporate this process. For example, my grade level had to shift students around to different classes with other teachers due to the large enrollment numbers making it challenging to be consistent with the students and their projects. Also, students had less computer skills than the previous set of students which made for the students having a difficult time remembering rules and procedures. It was imperative that we make the ePortfolio process simpler.

My BHAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal) is that learners (Pre-K students - four year olds) will become digital collaborators and digital communicators with a sense of good digital citizenship which they will use to build foundational knowledge for their educational future.

While trying to accomplish this goal, I completed two different types of lesson designs. We focused our learning on [Fink's 3 column table with a BHAG](#) and then used the [Wiggins and McTighe's Understanding by Design - Backwards Design Process](#). I prefer the [UbD](#) over the learning outcomes with a [3 column table](#) because UbD allows me to work backwards which is similar to starting with the end goal in mind. I believe the UbD allows a more focused plan which will help us to attain our goals, and it lends itself to adding more details and specificity.

We did make some necessary adjustments to the project this school year due to the large enrollment and all the movement between classes due to overcrowding issues. We started using Seesaw for students' ePortfolios rather than making a Google Site and using the students' district logins to the Google Drive. It was also very convenient for my teaching assistant to help post students assignments and projects to their personal ePortfolio for parents to easily and readily view. Parents have enjoyed viewing their child's work and what they were doing in class.

I pondered over the idea that with one full day pre-k class would help simplify the process of

ePortfolios. Next year the district is actually implementing full day pre-k which might help eliminate some obstacles and allow more time for ePortfolios. Although, at this time, I am not certain what restrictions and requirements the district is going to add to our schedule.

Even with detours that occurred along the way, we did well last school year once we found a consistent rhythm, and students were really on board with the project. They enjoyed getting to do something special and “helping” with the project. They were very proud of their work and enjoyed being a part of the group that helped me with my homework.

Due to these changes mentioned, we (my pre-k class) are still testing out what works and does not work before inviting other teachers to try the process. Due to the skills and time restraints of others, I want to continue to explore different options and decide on which process is best. Using Seesaw to begin their ePortfolios is working right now. We will revisit the idea at the end of this school year. It is hard to put a timeframe on the next steps of the project, due to the amount of time and changes this first part has taken. Fortunately, I know my fellow co-workers well and how they will act and react to new things. If they have any issues, they will not continue to use something new. I want to make the road to success for them as smooth as possible.

Being able to analyze, assess, and reflect on the process has been insightful. The main thing to keep in mind when doing a project is to take it slow and steady. There will be unpredictable stumbling blocks that occur and each one needs to be re-evaluated and hopefully solved at the time they occur.

The idea of ePortfolios and collecting work samples for later review is a great idea and does work in Pre-K. I created a ["WHY" statement](#) that will help us promote our innovation plan. It needs to speak to the heart as well as the mind. We also want to have a great sense of urgency. We are to include "HOW" and "WHAT." Simon Sinek says in his TED Talk video, "People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it."

Having a plan in place is necessary, and it has to be worked and reworked throughout the endeavor. Research needs to be done so we can learn from others. Staying focused on the end goal allows for modifications and improvements along the way. The ePortfolio can be used in all grades, for different reasons, with different subjects, with a variety of purposes. In each grade, the ePortfolio will have different objectives depending on the needs of the students. Ultimately, it can help determine if students have met the requirements for their grade level.

The [Influencer Model](#) is an important tool when making changes and wanting to influence people to do something new. First, I decided what my results would be during this change. My goal was for students to use an ePortfolio as a foundational learning tool to showcase their creativity, explore opportunities, and find their educational voice. The next step was to create three vital behaviors that would help the class reach our goal. Then I needed a way to measure what we were doing in the class and help fix any issues that might occur. Lastly, I had to consider who would be the influencers.

The [infographic](#) details the vital behaviors needed in order for us to reach the desired results in

our pre-k classroom with energetic four year olds.

Influence and change go together like peanut butter and jelly. They are both good, but together they are better. I used the six sources of influence to help influence my team. I am targeting motivation and ability in three specific areas: personal, social, and structural. I am using different approaches to different areas to help increase the chances of success.

As stated in the article, “How to 10X Your Influence”, the six sources of influence are:

1. Make the undesirable desirable
2. Over invest in skill building
3. Harness peer pressure
4. Find strength in numbers
5. Design rewards and demands accountability
6. Change the environment

With the principles in mind, I created the [infographic](#) to show how I can incorporate that at my organization. I developed an [Influencer Strategy](#) with the 6 Sources of Influence. I learned about the [4DX model](#) and the five stages of change. Lastly, I learned about [Self-Differentiated Leadership with Crucial Conversations](#). When talking to others about my project, I considered all the things I have learned. In the book, [Crucial Conversations](#) (Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler, 2012) they say there are three parts to a conversation (p.3). The parts are: opinions vary, the stakes are high, and emotions are strong.

The book also mentions that people fall into different categories (p.13). Those categories are people who make threats or call people names, others are fuming without talking, and people who can speak openly and honestly. I seemed to connect with the information in Chapter 7 - State my Path: How to Speak Persuasively Not Abrasively. I made a [graphic](#) that will help me with my upcoming conversations.

I want my pre-k students to develop a love for learning, learn from their learning, and take ownership of what they are learning. The district’s pre-k program is a play-based program. The students are engaged in play for part of the day while learning. I want the students to become independent thinkers and be prepared for the real world they will enter after graduation. By incorporating my innovation plan at this grade level, the students will have the experience and knowledge they need as they move forward in the educational system. The [learning outcomes](#) for my students should inspire them to be “a dot connector, not a dot collector” as Godwin mentions in his video. (Godin, 2012).

The process and methods that I used for the ePortfolios are where improvements can be made. Learning from the mistakes or missteps is a good place to start the improvement process. It is important to spend more time researching the plan. Making sure to keep the process in mind, and not the idea of new tools helps you stay focused. We have to learn the purpose of new tools and align the purpose with the goal of the overall project.

The [call to action slideshow](#) highlights the things that worked and some things that did not work

when implementing an innovation plan. My [action research literature review](#) covers details of the positive aspects of the ePortfolio usage in all the grade levels. It includes many subject areas and regions of the world. It does not cover the specific needs of the different grade levels.

The use of the ePortfolio in schools is a popular educational tool that is gaining a great deal of popularity among educators and students. The ePortfolio can be used in all grades to help show the personal educational growth, characteristics of a student's personality, reflection of previous knowledge, and showcase the work samples of students. An ePortfolio allows the student to take an old boring idea and make it refreshed and new again.

Also, there are some questions that have not been answered that have caused some gaps in research. Finally, included here are some questions that I would like answered in the future. It covers details of the positive aspects of the ePortfolio usage in all the grade levels. It includes many subject areas and regions of the world. It does not cover the specific needs of the different grade levels.

I have learned that ideas are great, but putting them into play is very challenging. When it isn't something the whole district or the whole grade level is doing, there really isn't time to add anything extra due to the tight schedule, state requirements, and district requirements. When doing a small thing that might only take a few minutes can usually be added to the day, but trying to involve something that takes lots of time and many months to complete becomes very difficult.

I plan to promote and communicate my innovation project by talking to other teachers. I will find out what they need and develop a project with their needs in mind. I want to help other teachers as much as possible.

I will apply what I have learned to the next project. I will remember to focus on the needs of the students and their work rather than the devices or the amount of money spent on a project. A plan with details is what is needed before beginning a project of any size. Everyone involved has to be willing and open to making changes. Change is a slow process that happens over time. When making small changes the progress will happen over time.

In the beginning of this ePortfolio project it seemed unlikely, but with research, time, and patience, I have learned that anything is possible. During this process I thought about the quote, "The only impossible journey is the one you never began," by Tony Robbins. I now believe, more than ever before, that with hard work and determination, the possibilities are endless.

References

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