

PROGRAM:

Electronic Portfolios

OBJECTIVES:

Facilitate student access to an electronic portfolio and provide technological skills for all students to create their own electronic portfolios.

LOCATION:

East Valley High School, Yakima, WA

DESCRIPTION:

The electronic portfolio project provides a mobile computer lab and a dedicated server to help students develop electronic portfolios. At the end of four years of high school, students in the program are able to produce the necessary media needed to enter a college or university, and produce a resume needed for application to a trade school, technical college, or apprentice programs. Students also have access to the WOIS/Career Information System (Washington Occupation Informational System), which provides the structure for the implementation and compilation of their academic and community efforts. It has been demonstrated that the WOIS electronic portfolio is a convenient method for storing a student's career research, educational plans, assessment records, and work or community experiences.

The WOIS program offers four assessment tools for the students' discovery of the careers that relate to their skills and abilities. It offers more than 500 up-to-date career descriptions that help students learn the career tasks and activities, skills and training required, and wages they would expect to earn. Assessments cover the following four areas:

- Career interest areas
- Activity interest profiler
- Work importance locator
- Skills assessment

These assessments are cross-referenced to occupations and educational programs arranged by clusters and career paths, and provide links to professional associations, college websites, financial aid and college searches, actual job openings, and licensing agencies, with additional connections to Essential Academic Learning Matrix, and are cross-referenced to Washington State's EALRS.

The originators of this program believe that mobile wireless network technology has become widespread, and it is essential to educate students about this new form of communication. The designers of the program felt that one of the benefits of mobile computing education was that classes focusing on this topic would support new methods of education. In particular, they have stated that the development of wireless communication together with portable devices allows freedom of both mobility and creativity in curriculum and assignments.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE:

PREPARATION ACTIVITIES:

East Valley High School decided to partner with the Two Valleys One Vision (TVOV) and SKY's the Limit (SKY) GEAR UP Programs. It was observed that during the 4th year of the program, cohort students would complete the 9th and 10th grades respectively, and the TVOV program would serve 250 students, while the SKY program would provide services for 200 students.

The designers of the Electronic Portfolios program created a mobile lab to solve the problem of lack of space for an additional computer lab. The mobile lab provides additional computers for students in the classroom, as opposed to taking students to the traditional computer lab. The lab is fully functional with Internet access, iBooks, Word Processing and Laser printing; it is mobile so that it can be rolled into the classroom. The mobile lab was designed to make it possible for classes to get computer access when it otherwise might have been impossible since the regular computer labs have been heavily used, especially by classes that book for an entire term.

Students are expected to move around with the computers or sit in whatever seating arrangement desired, such as small groups that may facilitate collaborative learning. With the flexibility of wireless technology, the program designers believe that teachers would find it easier to implement a collaborative, student-centered classroom compared with using a conventional computer lab. Hopefully this would result in the classroom becoming more of a community in which all members would interact more effectively.

The development timeline included the following steps:

- First meeting to discuss concept.
- Follow-up meetings and designated assignments of teachers and staff.
- Arrangement for the enrollment of students.

FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES:

Develop evaluation plan that includes effective use of the mobile lab, number of students completing electronic portfolios, effectiveness of connection with WOIS program.

COSTS OR COST CONSIDERATIONS:

- The budget for the project included the following items: staff stipends, travel, snacks, and supplies; the hardware components in the configuration including a Bretford mobile cart, with slots to store and recharge up to 32 laptops, as well as a six-wheel design easy to move from room to room; 20 Apple iBooks that have AirPort cards for wireless networking; laptops fully charged overnight.

- A Mobile Lab with an 802.11b-compliant Apple AirPort Extreme Base Station that provides wireless network access within a perimeter of about 150 feet - more than adequate for any classroom. An HP LaserJet P2015dn laser printer, two Canon Powershot A460 digital cameras, two Canon Camcorders Mini DV ZR 800, and M-Audio Oxygen 8 Controller keyboard.
- School funds-professional development for training.
- Partner funds and/or resources.
- Volunteers for event, including community members, faculty, and staff members.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Luis L. Cordero
GEAR UP Site Coordinator
East Valley High School
1900 Beaudry Road
Yakima, WA 98901
(509) 573-7478
cordero.luis@evsd90.wednet.edu

RESOURCES:

Article: T H E Journal, October 1, 2003, Styron, Ronald Jr., Disher, Fan, "Improving School Performance and Career Preparation with a Wireless Computer Lab"