

USING ELECTRONIC PORTFOLIOS TO
ARCHIVE STUDENT PERFORMANCE

by

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ABSTRACT

This study regards the use of portfolios for evaluating and documenting student progress and performance. In consideration of the far reaching and global nature of education, the researcher included educators from both the United States and other countries. Based upon the great importance that many countries and states have placed upon servicing students by alternative means, the population sample examined included 500 teachers instructing by both conventional and distance education modalities. Many current educational reform measures and legislative issues concern the attainment of job skills; therefore, both vocational and non-vocational instructors were included in the study.

Examined in the study are the media utilized in retaining portfolios (paper, product samples, audio/video tape recordings, computer diskette files, electronic mail files) by both conventional and distance education instructors. Paper and product samples in portfolios are considered as non-electronic methods for archiving student work. Audio and video tape recordings, computer files, and electronic mail files are considered electronic methods for portfolio archiving. Distance education and vocational

educators, respectively, are examined for the use of electronic and non-electronic portfolios.

A six question instrument was developed and a pilot study was conducted. The instrument included a question on whether or not the instructor used portfolios and a written description of the type of portfolio currently used. Those educators indicating the use of portfolios then classified, by type, the methods used in maintaining the portfolios. The respondents were further asked if they taught by distance education modalities. An additional questions ascertained the forms of distance education used to provide instruction. A final question asked the respondent to list the program or subject that she/he taught the majority of the time.

Findings indicate that approximately 40% of the educators surveyed use portfolios, but several of the respondents indicated the implementation of portfolios in the near future. No difference was found to exist between the use of electronic and non-electronic portfolios among teachers using portfolios. The same was true for both distance educators and vocational instructors using portfolios.

This dissertation is dedicated to the spirits of two very wonderful people.

Cupiedean Willis Pirkle

George Howard Pirkle

My grandparents have been wonderful inspirations throughout my life in the development of my desire for education. My grandmother died during the final phase of the preparation of this document, but her spirit continues to invade my thoughts and feelings as I complete this work. Granny will certainly be watching closely as I walk across the stage to be hooded.

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