

York Catholic District School Board: 2015 - 2016

Project Title	Board-Wide Implementation of ePortfolio in Support of Creating Pathways to Success: An Education, Career/Life Planning Program
Description	<p>This Round 5 Innovation Research Initiative builds on “lessons learned” and seeks to introduce and scale <i>ePortfolio</i> to every teacher and every student from Grades K-8. To facilitate the creation and curation of student ePortfolios, teachers will be provided with resources and support, including training on how to create “a collection” within the context of the four inquiry questions as listed in <i>Creating Pathways to Success</i>. Additionally, they will learn how to use the iPad app to curate the material.</p> <p>This Round 5 Innovation Research Initiative seeks to test the effectiveness of a model for board-wide implementation of a single application in pursuit of policy goals. It also seeks to measure student learning with respect to one specific goal within <i>Creating Pathways to Success</i>; namely, the extent to which <i>ePortfolio</i> helps students from Grades K-8 develop the knowledge and skills to make informed education and career/life choices.</p>
Context	<p><i>Number of students: 6,497</i></p> <p><i>Number of teachers: 267</i></p> <p><i>Number of schools: 89</i></p> <p><i>Grades/Program: K-8</i></p>
Impact on Students	<p>The primary focus of this Round 5 Innovation Research Project was to test a professional learning model aimed at “spreading” the use of a specific “app” (i.e., <i>ePortfolio</i>) to support pathways goals from K-8 and the implementation of <i>Creating Pathways to Success</i>. As such, our findings focus mostly on the “spread” element among teachers (i.e., system scaling) and the impact on teacher practice. To the extent that our data helps us understand the impact on student engagement, learning and achievement, the data is not conclusive, but it is promising.</p> <p>Teachers were asked, “<i>To what extent are your students able to make more informed decisions because of their use of ePortfolio this year?</i>” 33.3% of respondents answered “To a Moderate Extent” and 5.6% answered “To a Large Extent”. 29.6% answered “To a Small Extent” while 31.5% answered “To a Very Small Extent”. Many respondents expressed a sense of optimism for “next year”.</p> <p>Teachers were also asked, “<i>To what extent were your students engaged in the collection, selection and reflection process?</i>” 41.0% of respondents answered “To a Moderate Extent”, 13.3% answered “To a Large Extent”, and 2.9% answered “To a Very Large Extent”. 24.8% answered “To a Small Extent” and 18.1% answered “To a Very Small Extent”.</p> <p>There was a noticeable sense of optimism for future impact on student achievement.</p>

<p>Impact on Instruction</p>	<p>The principle policy focus was implementation of <i>Creating Pathways to Success</i>. To that end, the teacher training had a healthy amount of policy, pedagogy and technology, and proceeded in that order. In terms of teacher knowledge and practice, we saw significant shift.</p> <p>Following are the “pre” and “post” comparisons to a series of questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>How aware are you of the four inquiry questions that form the foundation of our Education and Career/Life Planning program?</i> “Not at all familiar” went down to 1% from 38%. “Somewhat to Moderately Aware” went down to 51% from 56%. Significantly, “Extremely Aware” went up to 48% from a starting level of 5%. • <i>To what extent can you identify existing lessons, activities or learning tasks in your teaching practice that provide opportunities for students to explore each of the four inquiry questions?</i> When we analyzed the number that answered “To a Very Great Extent”, positive shifts were observed with respect to each of the four inquiry questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Who Am I? – 52%, up from 33% ○ Who Do I Want to Become? – 36%, up from 20% ○ What Are My Opportunities? – 24%, up from 14% ○ What is My Plan for Achieving My Goals? – 27%, up from 17% • In the “pre” and “post” surveys, teachers were asked a series of questions around their use of digital tools with students to capture evidence of learning and thinking as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>I am helping students capture evidence of their learning and thinking through digital images</i> – 83%, up from 58% ○ <i>I am helping students capture evidence of their learning and thinking through videos</i>– 56%, up from 31% • Teachers were asked “<i>What is your level of comfort using technology (e.g., digital cameras, iPads, computers/laptops, Chromebooks, smartphones) to capture evidence of student learning and thinking?</i>” The proportion that responded “Comfortable” increased to 87% from a starting level of 67%.
<p>Impact on System</p>	<p>In many regards, the project was an initiative focused mostly on the “spread” element within school communities as a major contributor to system scaling. To that end, each elementary school had a team of three teachers – one each for Primary, Junior and Intermediate - who received direct training on the use of <i>ePortfolio</i> within their division as a tool to capture evidence of student thinking and learning in contexts that are relevant to the division. These same teachers then worked with an administrator to develop a school-wide implementation and training plan that responded to the needs and circumstances of the school, with a</p>

view to scale and spread to every teacher and student in the school. Schools were also provided with I-Pads to enable the work.

This innovative research project sought to create teams of “champions” in each school as catalysts for spread. To that end, teachers were asked “*What is your current level of knowledge about ePortfolio (i.e., the "App") and its potential as a web-based tool to collect and store evidence of student learning and thinking?*”

The proportion that answered “I know a fair amount about *ePortfolio* and understand how to use it” rose to 33% from 5%. Those who answered “I know a lot about *ePortfolio* and can explain to others how to use it” rose to 29% from 2%.