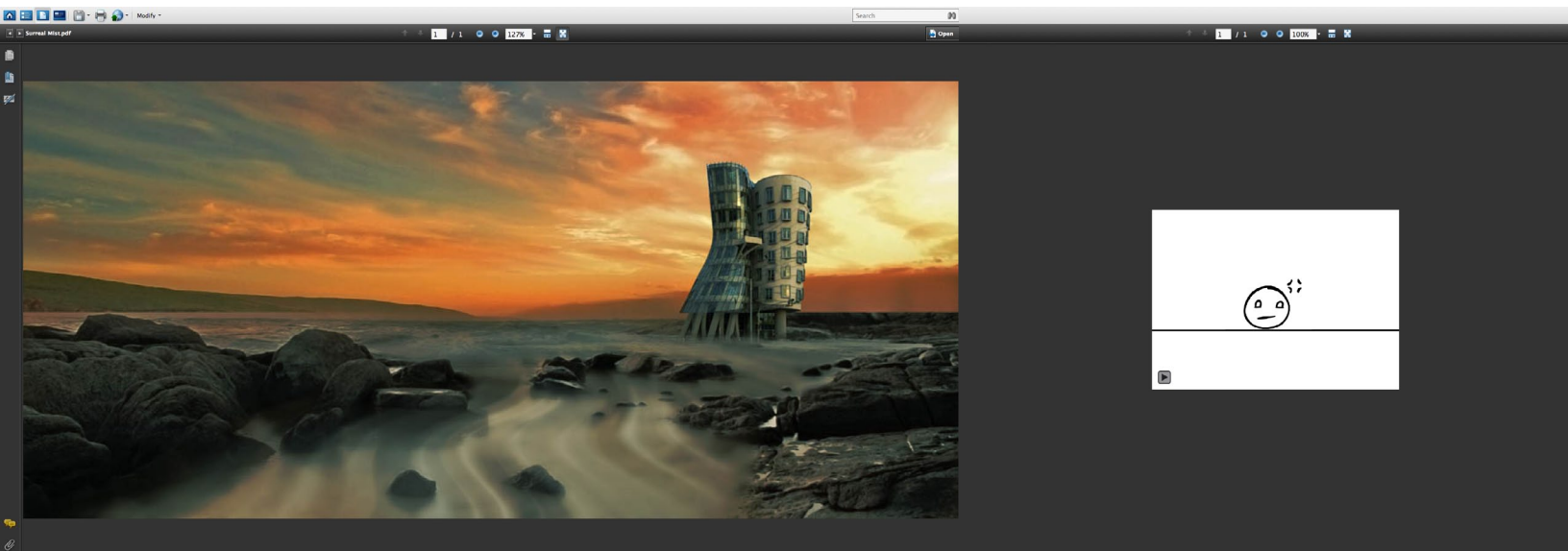


ePortfolios and the evolution of digital media in secondary education

# Meeting the demands of the digital age



Portfolio by Tina Fleming



#### Viera High School

Brevard County, Florida

<http://vhs.brevardschools.org>



#### Denton, Texas Independent School District

Denton, Texas

[www.dentonisd.org](http://www.dentonisd.org)

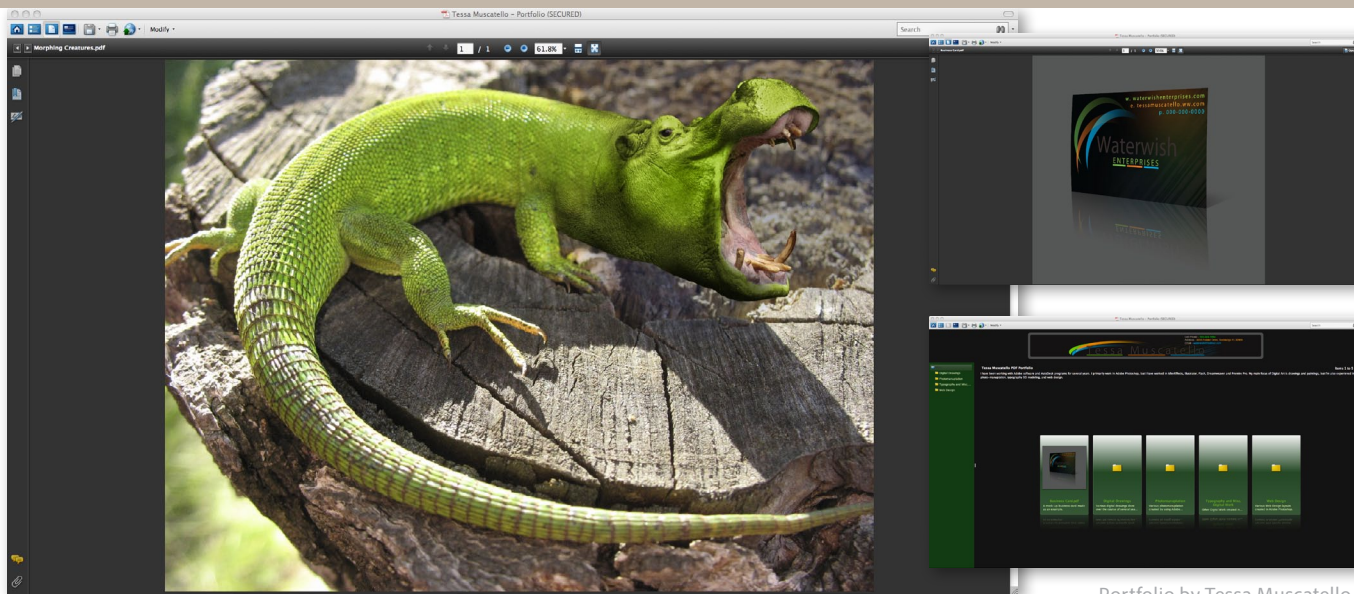
## High schools across the country enhance curricula to meet the demands of 21<sup>st</sup>-century learning and skills development using Adobe® Acrobat® Pro and ePortfolios

Unlike students in previous decades whose work consisted primarily of written papers and paper-based graded exams, today's high school students are expected to possess a set of skills that enables them to collaborate and communicate using a variety of media. They need to be adept at completing engaging multimedia projects and be prepared to compete in an increasingly technology-dependent, visually driven society.

In addition, educators today need effective ways to monitor and assess students' ongoing progress in the classroom and enable them to take a more hands-on approach to student learning. With a focus on formative, classroom-based assessment for learning, teachers, administrators, and parents can improve student achievement and better prepare them for success after high school.

To meet these demands, teachers and administrators are challenged to create well-rounded, interdisciplinary academic programs that use the latest technologies to help students in all areas of academic study develop 21<sup>st</sup> century skills they can use in pursuits after high school. High schools across the country have begun adapting and modifying their curricula to offer an array of courses to help students create expressive, dynamic multimedia presentations to communicate what they've learned.

Select school districts in Florida and Texas are using Adobe Acrobat Pro to enable students to create robust, multimedia PDF Portfolios. The ePortfolios are compact Adobe PDF files that allow students to quickly update, secure, and share their work with audiences anywhere, anytime.



Portfolio by Tessa Muscatello

### Challenge

- Effectively teaching advanced collaboration and communication concepts
- Monitoring and evaluating educational growth and progress
- Enabling students to combine and collect their work in a central portfolio

### Solution

- ePortfolios
- Select school districts in Florida and Texas are using Adobe Acrobat Pro to enable students to create robust, multimedia PDF Portfolios. The ePortfolios are used as a central part of the schools' CTE curriculum and help students develop advanced collaboration and communication skills to prepare them for success after graduation.

### Benefits

- Enabled ongoing monitoring of educational progress and peer-to-peer reviews
- Helped students create professional-grade portfolios to use in college admissions or job interviews
- Enhanced school curricula to address evolving skill requirements
- Strengthened students' abilities to communicate across a variety of media

### Toolkit

Adobe Acrobat Pro  
Adobe Creative Suite

In two school districts—Denton Independent School District (ISD), Texas and Brevard County, Florida—administrators introduced robust curricula to help students develop key digital collaboration and communication skills using Adobe Creative Suite® software. The aim was to help ensure students had the skills to succeed in higher education or in the job market.

"The professional and academic worlds have evolved and, as a district, we determined that our approach to preparing students for success after high school had to evolve as well," says Pete Episcopo, a digital arts and media instructor at Viera High School in Brevard County. "We designed a curricula built on real-world applications in which students learn a wide range of employable skills like creating interactive reports, designing advertisements, and developing newsletters that incorporate text, images, audio, video, and motion graphics that can be used in virtually any area of study."

The enhanced curricula offers students new ways to express their views and demonstrate their understanding of a variety of subject matter, but it also presents a set of new challenges. The volume and size of students' multimedia projects can make it difficult for teachers to actively monitor academic progress and tough for students to manage the numerous individual files created with an array of programs.

"We needed to find a way for teachers and parents to monitor a student's progress, expose students to peer-to-peer reviews of their work, and help them build and maintain a compilation of work over time for future use," says Episcopo. "ePortfolios created with Adobe Acrobat Pro were the logical and ideal choice because of their compact size, portability, and support for a wide range of content."

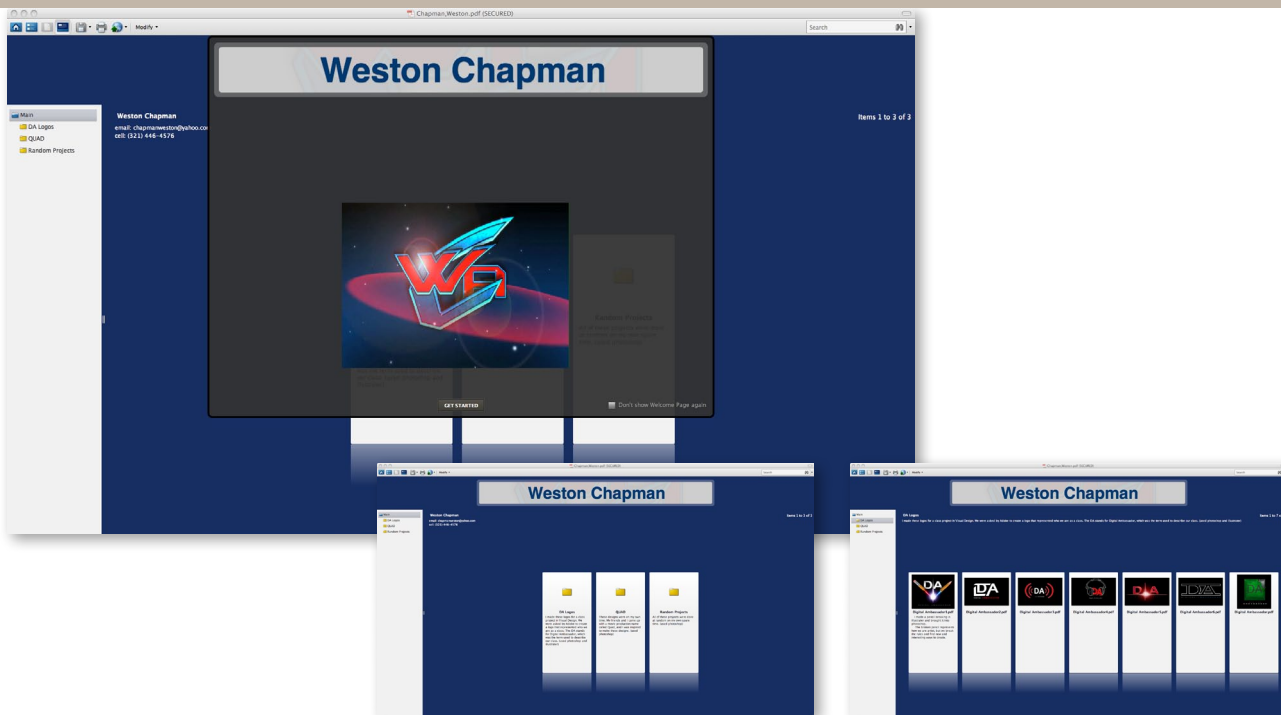
The Adobe solution makes it easy for parents and teachers to review student work and assess development from virtually anywhere. Unlike web-based electronic portfolios that must be accessed through a web browser, Adobe ePortfolios can be accessed online or offline using only the free Adobe Reader® software. In addition, students can update and change Adobe ePortfolios dynamically, meaning that they can modify elements in files without having to completely redesign the document—something that cannot be done with a standard web-based portfolio.

### Sharing ideas easily and instantly

Using ePortfolios, students at schools in Brevard and Denton counties can build professional-grade, multimedia collections of their work in a convenient, portable, and easily transferrable PDF Portfolio that enhances their ability to present their work and document their progress.

The ePortfolios make it easy for students to convert their work—printed materials, video, audio, and multimedia content—into a compact, secure PDF Portfolio that can be shared easily with other students, teachers, colleges, and employers.

ePortfolios created with Adobe Acrobat Pro make it easy for parents and teachers at Viera High School or Denton ISD to review student work—including printed materials, video, audio, and multimedia content—and assess development from virtually anywhere.



Portfolio by Weston Chapman

*“Adobe Acrobat makes it easy for me to review and comment on student work at any time to monitor their progress and then share that information instantly with the students or even their parents. It’s a compelling way to show parents their student’s work and keep them involved in their child’s education.”*

Pete Episcopo  
Digital arts and media  
instructor, Viera High  
School, Brevard County,  
Florida

“The freedom to personalize an ePortfolio lets students create unique collections of their work by incorporating custom templates and imagery that truly exemplifies their creativity and goals,” says Dena Wilson, a graphics design teacher at Denton ISD, Texas. “They can instantly communicate a wide range of work with any audience, just as they’ll be expected to do once they reach college or the workforce.”

Wilson has experienced first-hand the potential and power of a well-designed ePortfolio. She recounted a story about one of her students who had long desired to attend the same university as his father. However, his entrance exam scores prevented him from immediately gaining acceptance. To impress the head of the visual communications program at the college and be admitted to the school, the student compiled a powerful ePortfolio of his work—demonstrating not only his artistic and creative skills, but also revealing his determination to achieve his goal.

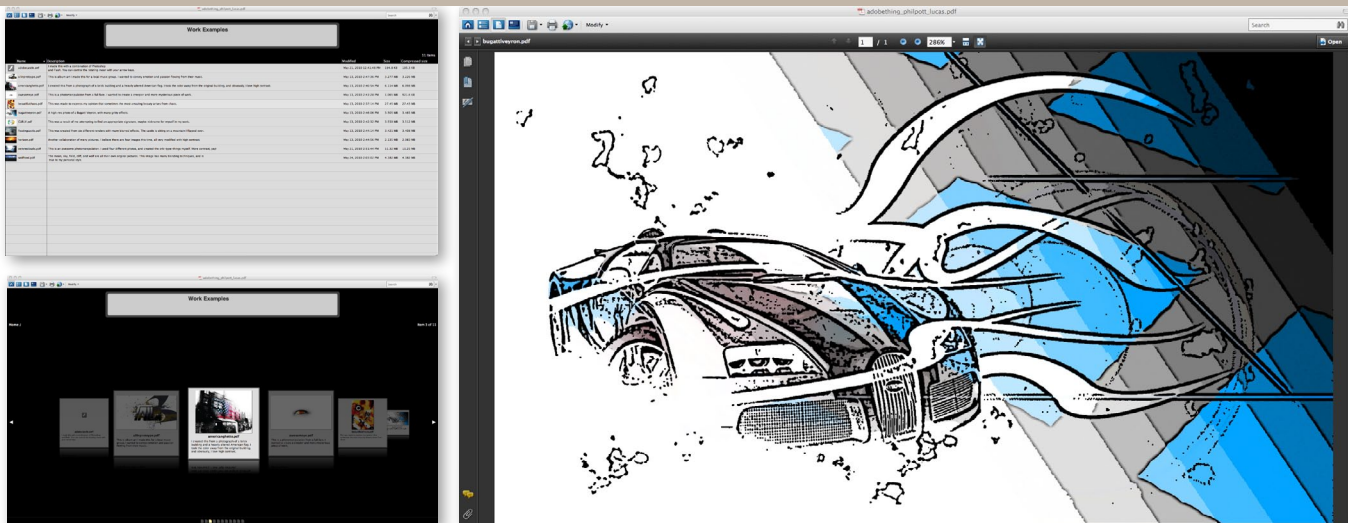
In addition to helping students compile their work into a dynamic, sharable ePortfolio, Adobe Acrobat Pro and PDF Portfolios help teachers tackle another key challenge: monitoring a student’s progress. Though students work in an assortment of applications—such as design tools, word processing applications, and video editing software—their final files are stored as Adobe PDF files.

“Adobe Acrobat makes it easy for me to review and comment on student work at any time to monitor their progress and then share that information instantly with the students or even their parents,” says Episcopo. “It’s a compelling way to show parents their student’s work and keep them involved in their child’s education.”

### **Preparing for life after high school**

Adobe Acrobat Pro and PDF Portfolios are changing the way that schools prepare students to compete in 21<sup>st</sup> century work environments.

Adobe Acrobat Pro and PDF Portfolios are changing the way that schools prepare students to compete in 21<sup>st</sup> century work environments. Some students will use their ePortfolios to gain entrance into the college or technical schools, while others will use theirs to impress prospective employers with their creative and organizational skills.



Portfolio by Lucas Philpott

*“Our job as educators is to prepare our students to succeed, regardless of what path they choose. With Adobe Acrobat Pro and ePortfolios, students leave our program with an array of skills—and a compelling, dynamic portfolio to prove it.”*

**Dena Wilson**  
Graphics design teacher, Denton ISD, Texas

#### For more information

[www.adobe.com/products/acrobat](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat)  
[www.adobe.com/education/k12](http://www.adobe.com/education/k12)

Get off to a quick start with Adobe software. Join the Adobe Education Exchange to access free teaching and learning resources contributed by a community of educators and the Adobe Education Team.

<http://edexchange.adobe.com>

Over the course of their high school careers, students develop and enhance their critical communications and thinking skills. With the help of PDF Portfolios, students can create powerful collections of their work, demonstrate their understanding of different topics, and display mastery of advanced technologies.

Some students will use their ePortfolios to gain entrance into the college or technical school of their choice. Meanwhile, others—like two of Episcopo's students who secured paid internships with a local marketing company—will use theirs to impress prospective employers with their creative and organizational skills.

Whatever the application, the faculty at Brevard County's Viera High School and Denton ISD in Texas are excited about the enhanced teaching environment Acrobat Pro and PDF Portfolios help create.

“Our job as educators is to prepare our students to succeed, regardless of what path they choose,” Wilson says. “With Adobe Acrobat Pro and ePortfolios, students leave our program with an array of skills—and a compelling, dynamic portfolio to prove it.”



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